



CENTRE FOR ACTION RESEARCH ON ENVIRONMENT SCIENCE AND SOCIETY

CHILDREN'S PERCEPTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Images courtesy CARESS/ANET

International Year of the Reef 2008 Activities

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Children's Perception of the Environment IYOR 2008 Activities

Summary

This project was carried out between April and November 2008 as part of the IYOR 2008 activities. The concept and activities were developed by CARESS, to address the need for a communications and outreach program in Coral Reef Areas. An environment education toolkit for educators in South Asia developed by CARESS/IUCN South Asia was tested out during the teachers workshops. The participants valuable comments have helped in improving and strengthening the toolkit. The Andaman and Nicobar Environment Team (ANET), Barefoot Resorts, Barefoot ecotours, and Barefoot Seacology provided ground support in organizing the workshop and field trips at Havelock Island.

A total of 16 teachers from 4 schools, 16 volunteers from 5 organisations (MDS, ANET and Barefoot Dive Centre, Minicoy Dive Centre and Barefoot ecotours) were trained for carrying out coral reef and associated ecosystems awareness work and learnt about the importance of MCPA's. At the Havelock workshop the participants learnt that they lived on the fringe of the **Rani Jhansi Marine National Park**.

A total of 150 children from 4 schools participated in the activities.

Awareness exhibits put up at the Barefoot Seacology Environment Centre, Havelock Jetty, and the SPORTS centre at Minicoy Island. The exhibits included displays on responsible fishing, coral reefs, mangroves, diorama of marine life and children's outputs based on the field trips.

Short films on the coral reef web of life and night time on the reef were projected for the teachers and students. These were downloaded from the teachers domain and we found them an extremely useful tool in explaining coral reef connections.

The exhibits were open for the general public and around 500 people visited the exhibit both during the workshop and at the Valedictory function. The outputs from the projects were shared with Francis Staub, IYOR, IUCN, and members of the SACRTF





Teachers Workshop's

The teachers workshop's were held to provide the teachers and other educators with a coastal and marine environment orientation to school education.

A learning by doing methodology was followed. The teachers had the opportunity to participate and guide children in various field activities. We held classroom sessions for the teachers and followed it up by field activities which included the children.

The teachers were responsible for getting both the creative and scholarly outputs from the children.

The teachers also helped, in linking the activities to the school curriculum. Creative activities are linked to the art, computer studies (power point) and language curriculum and scholarly outputs to their science projects and science and social science curriculums.



Awareness exhibits

Awareness exhibits included printed posters on coral reefs, responsible fishing, marine ecosystems, posters from the Andaman and Nicobar wildlife department.

Children's created awareness posters and exhibits during the workshop. this included charts, posters, paintings, poems and diorama of marine animals.

During the Valedictory function the teachers and students spoke and sang songs, about their experiences. The children did a role play of their favorite marine animal and explained what ecological services they performed and how the ecosystem would deteriorate should their numbers be reduced. The students of JNV also made a power point presentation





Field trip Activities for Teachers and Children



The children were taken on field trips, which include boat trips, snorkeling, interviewing fishers and elders in the community.

1. What do we know? and what do we want to know?

Planning the investigation: Before the field visits, the teachers prepared the children for the field trip and told them what to bring with them.

They explained the aim of the trip, what activities would be undertaken and what outputs were expected after the trip.

2. Conducting the investigation: choosing the site, sampling method, transect/quadrat for biodiversity inventory. noting all observations and details in field note books

3. What have we learnt? presenting the findings. After each field trip the children describe what they learnt using drama, role play, artwork and scientific charts.

4. Suggested classroom and Internet work for science projects focusing on coral reefs, mangroves and related ecosystems.

A day with Nature

by Zaahira KMG,
Class 10 JNV, Minicoy

When we were told about a trip
to the scenic coral patch
How very glad I was;
to have day with nature,

I stepped my foot inside the boat
Along with my friends
We sang songs
And reached Viringlili

There we bathed in sea;
Took a walk around the island
How difficult it is for corals
To feed themselves; we could know
When we played coral feeding
game!!

The we saw war between two eels
I understood there is war and peace
in the ecosystem
Then we had some snacks;
we went to the resort

The food web game taught us
dependencies in the ecosystems
A tasty lunch after that
Then its the final moment
We have to go back.....
Started the tempo - the driver was
ready

Oh! We climbed into it
Waving our hands to the Man-
groves and Corals.



Some Creative Literary outputs

We considered this the best conservation poem on coral reefs amongst the works of both Andamans and Lakshadweep students

Save Me

by Shany John

Class VIII, JNV, Minicoy

*I am a little polyp
Who builds the coral Paradise*

*I am the little builder
who makes this Island*

*I made this island
With the remnants of me*

*The rising heat starves me
The raging pollution scares me*

*The damaged waste stifles me
The plying vessels deafens me*

*My skin gets bleached
My vision gets blurred*

*My lings crave for freshair
My beauty is on the wane*

*If you don;t bother soon
Nature will destroy us soon*

*Lend a ear to my cries
Think smart and act wise*

*If you save me
I will save you back*

*We both will make our abode
And make it a heaven under the sky!*

This song was composed by the Lobster group, while they were returning on the boat from a field trip to look at the corals in the lagoon in front of Elephant beach - locally known as Pipal Dera

Sung to the tune of dil ko bazzar bar toka toka FILM murder

A song of the sea

*Hum chale pipal pipal pipal dere
Apni masti me sab ko ghare ghare ghare
Sagar ko jaana
Corals pebhana
Sagar hai jeevan yar
Corals ko bachana*

*Bacchna ise manav se bacchna
Dhushto ki dosti se bacchna
Insane ko hai jagna
Hum ko hai unko jagana
Lalaccha ka bazaar yabaa hai
Unse na phir dhoka kbana*

*Hum chale pipal pipal pipal dere
Apni masti me sab ko ghare ghare ghare
Sagar ko jaana
Corals pebhana
Sagar hai jeevan yar
Corals ko bachana*

English translation of chorus

*we are going to Pipal Pipal Pipal dera
fun and mischief surround us
we learnt about the ocean
recognized corals
for the ocean to have life
my friend, we must save the corals*



Valedictory function and Follow up

A valedictory function was held to conclude each workshop. The local dignitaries, head of the department of environment and forests and children's families were invited. This provided the children with a platform to perform and communicate with the authorities. The chief guest distributed the certificates and prizes to the workshop participants.



At Havelock the DCF Mr. Yadav came as the chief guest and had an interactive session with the children. The children showed their concern about the state of the environment wanted to know what enforcement the forest officers did to protect the environment. They wanted to know who to call and report any issues. And took down his phone number and address.

The Coastal and Marine Environment Orientation workshops lasted a week at each Site. There is now a focal group at each site that can carry out such awareness programs and have periodically carried out at Minicoy and the Andamans. Thereby creating more environmental stewardship and the need for community involvement in creating and protection of MCPA's for ensuring sustainable livelihoods

The Havelock workshop also served as a forerunner for the Awareness Activities carried out at the Mahatma Gandhi National Park at Wandoor, by ANET.

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