

# Echoes of Eco



July, 2010

Vivekananda Kendra- **nardep** Newsletter

Vol:2 No:5

## Of Life and Network



When you study the principles and basic concepts of ecology you can see them as basic principles of all living systems. We have tried to turn these principles into bite sized pieces for teaching, distilling them into 6 principles of ecology. For each one we have created a symbol and photos and we have been teaching it in schools. The 6 principles are;

1. Networks
2. Nested Systems
3. Cycles
4. Flows
5. Development
6. Dynamic Balance

Networks is listed as the first principle because it is the defining characteristic of life.

Wherever there is life there are networks, be they metabolic networks, food webs, human social networks. These principles are all different ways of seeing the same thing..

Nature sustains life by creating and nurturing communities. We all know what a community is, even if we don't have it. It is something that, if we have it, we recognise it, and if we don't have it we feel its absence. Be it English football hooligans or US inner city gangs, they are all seeking community. Community is visceral and real, and that is why I think it is central to a definition of sustainability. The experience of a living network is the experience of a living community. The network concept is important, as sustainability is the quality of a community, an individual cannot be sustainable. Creating communities is creating sustainability.

- Fritjof Capra

### In this issue:

- Of Life and Network
- Co-Creation at BOP-II
- The Happenings-I
- The Happenings - II
- Our Publication
- Visions of Wisdom

## The Cycle of Life



***For one who lives by Eternal harmony the winds are full of sweetness; the rivers pour sweets; so may plants be full of sweetness for us. Sweet be the night and sweet be the dawns and sweet the dust of the Earth***

- Rg Veda (1.90.6-8)



The real source of inner joy is to remain truthful and honest- *His Holiness Dalai Lama*



## Co-Creation at the Bottom of the Pyramid-II

Ayurvedic system is not an exotic secret eastern science as has been made out by some of its popularisers in the west. Ayurvedic health spas that poor and the middle class can only glimpse at from well outside their compound walls is only a fraction of its real nature or even may be a mutant travesty of the great system.



On the other hand Ayurveda is a highly localized, de-centralized, cost-effective health solution that even today caters to the medical needs of vast majority of the billion Indians.

It is highly diverse like every aspect of Indic culture. Its canonical books continue to get produced and evolve through localized knowledge-bases and changing social environments. Thus it is not just the market and the needs that are present at BOP. That space called BOP also has an untapped dynamic practical wisdom that needs appropriate structures to be made into monetary wealth producers.



The same goes for the local food systems which have been harmonized with the local climes and populations of the specific areas. Even the way people greet for festivals have innovative possibilities at local levels. For example during the Tamil Hindu festival of Karthika (Pleiades) the greetings take the form of aromatic leaves enveloping a sweet-rice cookies. Today we have Cokes and Colas of imported kinds with burgers and Pizzas denying us choices and destroying the local culinary diversity. Traditional festivals simply linger like traces of faint memories.



Pongal used to produce glittering calendar art again unique to the divinities of Tamil soil.

Today Pongal greeting cards which as I remember people of all economic strata used to buy and send have been completely wiped out by multinational card companies which cater to an urban minority for English speaking de-rooted species of Indians.

We are not only ignoring the fortunes of many dimensions at BOP. We are destroying it with a vengeance aping the West



Prahalad's look at BOP thus teems with possibilities which if innovative Indic minds, rather than multinational companies take up, can transform India into a great wealth producer in the holistic sense of the term and a leading light for developing countries. Perhaps that can also be the true tribute we pay to his memory. [concluded]

## Medicine: This month



- Green Health Home treated 160 patients in 6 working days.
- On 5th Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a lecture on Siddha Diagnosing tools and its basic concept at All India Siddha Vaidyars Association, Kanyakumari 55 Vaidyars attended the programme.
- On 6th Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a lecture on Traditional Siddha Varma bone setting techniques and methods of its application at Senkottai, Tirunelveli Dist. (organized by FRLHT, Bangalore and Tamilnadu Paramparia Vaidya Sammelam, Chennai) 55 Vaidyars attended the programme.
- On 12th Dr.V.Ganapathy gave a lecture on Siddha Varma Medical system and Pancha patchi sastrham at Tamilnadu Paramparia Siddha Vaidyar Association, Vellore (venue Government Museum) 160 traditional physicians attended the programme

**Vivekananda Kendra -  
NARDEP  
Core Supported Group  
of SEED, DST, New  
Delhi**



*Peace is the result of a convergence of measures relating to inner ecology, social ecology, in which the principal theories of the established paradigm are taken into consideration and find their place in an integrated manner. - Pierre Weil*



## Sustainable Agriculture

As a part of training of Core Staff, Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai attended the Interface Meeting with the NGOs of the country at Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Izatnagar, U.P. The session was held at Indian Veterinary Research Institute Campus on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> with 60 persons.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai gave a power point presentation on Organic farming at the ATMA meeting at the Tamilnadu Agricultural Dept., The venue was Agricultural Technology Development. Building, Collectorate Campus, Kanyakumari Dist. 50 persons attended and benefited.

Sister Saraswathi attended the National Horticultural Mission 2010 – 2011 at Dist. Mission Committee meeting, Dept. of Horticulture, Govt. of Tamilnadu on 23<sup>rd</sup> along with 40 participants from various government agencies and NGOs



Azolla-training: 4 persons were given intensive Azolla training by Smt, Premlatha on 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2010



## Water and Sanitation

Water measurement from 14 wells in Kanyakumari Dist was carried out by VK-NARDEP as part of the programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai



On 12<sup>th</sup> 34 students of Noorul Islam College (Arts and Science/Micro biology and Bio-technology) visited our technology park and studied the sustainable technologies.



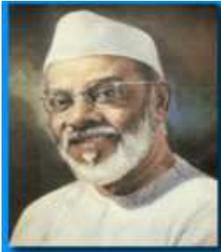
On 14<sup>th</sup> 17 students of American College, Madurai (M.Sc Zoology) visited our technology park and studied the sustainable technologies.



Shakthi Surabhi Training: 24<sup>th</sup> July



Energy conservation is the foundation of energy independence. - Thomas H. Allen



Dr.J.C.Kumarappa - eminent Gandhian Economist was the first to propound the Tao of Biogas technology : for Energy and Nutrient Management He saw Biogas plant as backyard fertilizer plant for marginal farmer.



### This month... Shakti Surabhi

### Media Coverage for Bio-Methanation plant

Training programme on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methanation plant under the (RIF) NABARD scheme was held at TRC, Kalluvilai on 24th. 29 persons attended. The Resource Person was Shri.V.Ramakrishnan

12 Shakti Surabhi plants were commissioned in the month of July under (RIF), NABARD, Chennai programme.

On 17th Shri.V.Ramakrishnan conducted Awareness programme on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methanation plant under (RIF) NABARD, at Sirumalai, Manachanallur TK., Trichy Dist with 78 persons.



District collector Shri.Rajendra Ratnoo, IAS gives stove to one of the participants of the training camp at Kanyakumari on 24<sup>th</sup> July.

On 19<sup>th</sup> Shri.Vramakrishnan conducted Awareness Programme on Shakti Surabhi Bio-methanation plant at Puducherry under (RIF), NABARD, Chennai project. The programme was organized by VVEVARSH Trust, Puduchery. 25 participants attend.



Shakti-Surabhi the Bio-methanation plant had a good coverage in various vernacular and national newspapers



## From Our Publications



### The usage guide for backyard herbs (Manaiyadi Mulihaigai Sasthram)

This is an introduction to common herbs found in the backyard of most houses in rural Tamil Nadu.

Usually common ailments if left untreated tend to become chronic diseases and for the common people can become a real problem of life and death. Preventive medicine through medical institutions are costly and out of reach for most of our rural population. In such circumstances what is needed is a house-based preventive care system. This book aims to give the rural households such a system through establishment of herbal home garden and utilization of herbal plants that may already be there in the rural households.

The following herbs are listed with their common name, scientific name and black and white photographs. For each herb the common ailments for which they are cure is given. It also provides the way to cleanse the herb before preparing the formulation and the extraction of the medicinal component and then the procedure to prepare and administer the formulation. A brief description of how to grow the herb in the backyard is also given.

Of the fourteen plants listed, some are well known food plants and the book shows how these plants also have medicinal value. As the back cover of the book explains, this is a system where food itself acts as a medicinal fortification of body against the diseases.

The following are the herbs and plants listed in the book.

Aloe vera, Indian gooseberry, Hibiscus, Tulsi, Solanum trilobatum, Indian borage (Plectranthus ambonicus), Nilavembu (androgaphis paniculata), pomegranate, Kesuria (Wedelia calendulacea) Adathoda, papayra, Moringa, Vitex, Solanum nigrum,

In South India every rural house will have surely more than one of these plants as they have food value, aesthetic value etc. By revealing their medicinal properties in a way the housewives can use them to handle daily ailments the book has provided a useful guide for the rural households to face one of their major problems: health care with self-reliance.

The usage guide for backyard herbs (Manaiyadi Mulihaigai Sasthram).

Tamil (pages:28)

Author: Dr.V.Ganapathi  
VK-NARDEP publication



## Biogas Slurry for Sustainable Agriculture



**The goal of mankind is knowledge ... Now this knowledge is inherent in man. No knowledge comes from outside: it is all inside. What we say a man 'knows', should, in strict psychological language, be what he 'discovers' or 'unveils'; what man 'learns' is really what he discovers by taking the cover off his own soul, which is a mine of infinite knowledge. –Swami Vivekananda**



## Diversity

One key principle is self-awareness, to know what you believe in and value, what deeply motivates you, your deepest purpose in life. Being vision- and value-led is also important. This means acting from principles and deep beliefs and living life accordingly. In my life, I would include celebration of diversity, which is valuing other people and unfamiliar situations for their differences, not despite them. In natural complex adaptive systems, the presence of the different other causes the system to evolve and leads to good mutations, adaptations, new situations. If you just meet others like yourself, then your own system doesn't change, and it might even begin to atrophy from lack of stimulation.

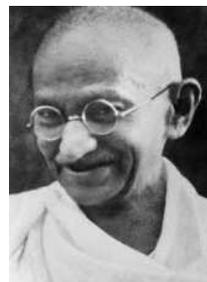
- *Darab Zohar* Author and physicist



## Education

A teacher who establishes rapport with the taught, becomes one with them, learns more from them than he teaches them. He who learns nothing from his disciples is, in my opinion, worthless. Whenever I talk with someone I learn from him. I take from him more than I give him. In this way, a true teacher regards himself as a student of his students. If you will teach your pupils with this attitude, you will benefit much from them....If teachers impart all the knowledge in the world to their students but inculcate not truth and purity among them., they will have betrayed them and instead of raising them set them on the downward road to perdition. Knowledge without character is a power for evil only, as seen in the instances of so many talented thieves and gentlemen rascals in the world.

- *Mahatma Gandhi*



## Interconnectedness

In the thick of life today, intense and complex as it is, a person practically forgets that he, and all of mankind, from which he is inseparable, are inseparably connected with the biosphere—with that specific part of the planet, where they live. It is customary to talk about man as an individual who moves freely about our planet, and freely constructs his own history. Hitherto neither historians, scientists in the humanities, nor, to a certain extent, even biologists have consciously taken into account the laws of the nature of the biosphere—the envelope of Earth, which is the only place where life can exist. Man is elementally indivisible from the biosphere. And this inseparability is only now beginning to become precisely clear to us. In reality, no living organism exists in a free state on Earth. All of these organisms are inseparably and continuously connected—first and foremost by feeding and breathing—with their material-energetic environment.

- *V.I. Vernadsky*  
- Geologist

