

Echoes of Eco



January, 2012

Vivekananda Kendra- nardip Newsletter

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Building a Sustainable Society



A sustainable world must be based on visions of what sustainability is, and our experiments with it around the world are helping us create it... If we accept the notion of the living Earth, and the body of humanity as an integral part of it, then we have no choice but to implement a healthy win/win world that can continue indefinitely, which means a sustainable world. As long as you are healthy and avoid accidents, you are sustainable for a natural lifetime. In the same sense, a healthy world is a sustainable world....Many people wonder how long we have to turn things around. It is really not a question of some critical turning point, but of nurturing more viable systems even as the old ones decay.

One metaphor for our changing world is Norie Huddle's story of a caterpillar's metamorphosis into a butterfly. After consuming hundreds of times its own weight daily as it munches its way through its ecosystem, the bloated caterpillar forms its chrysalis. Inside its body, new biological entities called imaginal discs arise, at first destroyed by its immune system. But as they grow more in number and begin to link up, they begin to survive.

Eventually the caterpillar's immune system fails, its body goes into meltdown and the imaginal discs become the cells that build the butterfly from the spent materials that had held the blueprint for the butterfly all along. In just this way, a healthy new world, based on the principles of living systems, can emerge through today's chaotic transformation. There are as many ways to build a new world of living systems as there are creative people who want to do it!

Remember that we have seen all evolution as an improvisational dance. the healthy features of living systems at their best. From there we need only the will and the love to create a better future for all living beings. Each person, as an imaginal disc, can contribute to the process of today's metamorphosis in some unique way. What matters is that we all understand the Earthdance and the healthy features of living systems at their best. From there we need only the will and the love to create a better future for all living beings.

Excerpt from Elisabet Sahtouris' book 'Earth dance'. Elisabet Sahtouris is a Greek Evolutionary Biologist and a popular lecturer on ecology and sustainable future. .

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Meditate upon Speech



Speech is, verily, greater than a name. Speech makes one understand the inner and outer sciences, as also righteousness and unrighteousness, the true and the false, the good and the bad, the pleasant and the unpleasant. Verily, if there were no speech, neither righteousness nor unrighteousness would be known, neither the true nor the false, neither the pleasant nor the unpleasant. Speech, verily, makes us know all this. Meditate upon speech.

-Sama Veda



At bottom, the whole concern of religion is with the manner of our acceptance of the universe.— William James



This Month ...



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Dr.Pillai honored at Dairy Mela

Dept. of Dairy Development, Govt. of Kerala conducted the Dairy Mela at Indira Community Hall, Chirayinkal Taluk, Trivandrum Dist. This was held on 20th and 425 persons attended it. Dr.Pillai gave a power point presentation on "Azolla as a Bio-feed". Minister K.C.Joseph honoured him for getting "Societal Innovation Award" from NRDC, New Delhi.

Workshop on "Propagation of Azolla Technology" was held under the auspices of Dept. of Dairy Development, Thiruvalla Dist., Govt. of Kerala. It was conducted at the Technology Resource Center of VK-narddep at, Kalluvillai on 26th and 27th and the participants numbered 50. They also visited and studied the Gramodaya Park for right living and learnt the various technologies. Dr.P.Kamalasanan Pillai was the resource person.

Participants of Azolla camp viewing the Gramodaya panels.



Water was tested from 14 wells in Kanyakumari Dist – programme of Central Ground Water Board, Chennai.

Green Health Home at Vivekananda puram functioned for 7 days and treated 161 patients.



Networking Activities

Working Group meeting on Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation for 12th Five year plan, Planning Commission, Govt. of Tamilnadu was held at the PWD Conference Hall, Secretariat, Chennai on 10th. Shri.G.Vasudeo attended

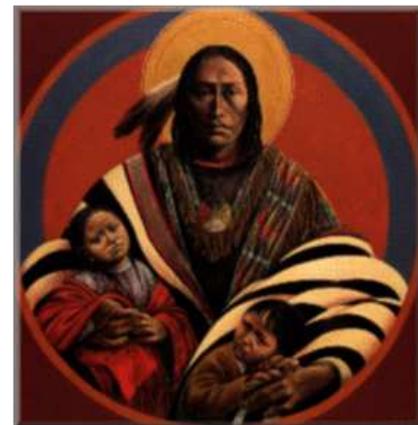
Dr.Ganapathi is now in the facebook and you can follow him for keeping track of his valuable programmes at :

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1108936657>



Participant in Dairy Mela with Azolla kit.

Pawnee –Native American Prayer Song



Remember, remember the circle of the sky the stars and the brown eagle the supernatural winds-breathing night and day from the four directions. Remember, remember the sacredness of things running streams and dwellings the young within the nest a hearth for sacred fire the holy flame of fire.



The battle we have fought, and are still fighting, for the forests is part of the eternal conflict between right and wrong, and we cannot expect to see the end of it...So we must count on watching and striving for these trees, and should always be glad to find anything so surely good and noble to strive for.

- John Muir



Dr. Ganapathi providing Varma treatment to a patient suffering from back pain due to IVDP. Venue: Green Health Home, Vivekananda Kendra Kanyakumari.



100 cubic metre Shakti Surabhi Bio-Methanation Plant constructed by VK-nardep at Anna University Chennai



Happenings: This month

Young Scientists Programme 2011-12 was conducted by Kumari Arivial Peravai at the Gramodaya Park on 8th and Sis.V.Saraswathi gave a talk on "Environment Protection". 50 students attended the programme



Green talk by Sis. Saraswathi on the Green lawns of Gramodaya Park Kanyakumari: Students listening

Happenings: This month

Inter-vertebral Disc Prolapsed, Lumbago-Sciatica is one of the common most causes for the severe acute back ache. Varma Foot Massage therapy provides very effective relief. For this the healer physician uses the Keel Suzhiyadi Varmam, Ellu Kalam, Naayuruppu – all these Varma points are harnessed properly and professionally by the healer and the patient is relieved in 20 minutes.



Sri.Munneswaran is explaining Shakti Surabhi technology to the participants of the training session.



Happenings: This month

Intensive Training and workshop on "Kitchen Waste (Shakti Surabhi) Biogas Plant with the DST, Core Support was held at TRC, Kalluvilai on 21st and the resource person was Shri.V.Muneeswaran. 2 persons attended and benefitted.

100 cum Bio-methanation plant based on Kitchen and Vegetable waste was installed at Anna University, Chennai. It was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor of Anna University on Friday, 20th January.

Among the environmental trends undermining our future are shrinking forests, expanding deserts, falling water tables, collapsing fisheries, disappearing species, and rising temperatures. The temperature increases bring crop-withering heat waves, more-destructive storms, more-intense droughts, more forest fires, and, of course, ice melting. We are crossing natural thresholds that we cannot see and violating deadlines that we do not recognize.

-Lester Brown

People usually consider walking on water or in thin air a miracle. But I think the real miracle is not to walk either on water or in thin air, but to walk on earth. Every day we are engaged in a miracle which we don't even recognize: a blue sky, white clouds, green leaves, the black curious eyes of a child -- our own two eyes. All is a miracle. – Thich Naht Hanh



A sacred structure to harvest rain water



Murugan Kuntram Water Harvesting Structure

Murugan Kuntram is a small hillock with a temple for Deity Murugan, Skanda – a very popular Tamil Deity, at its top. Its proximity to the popular pilgrimage center Kanyakumari. A good water body by the side of the hillock temple in that rocky area has been a long time wish of the devotees as well as local community. Hence, with the support of Sri. R.G.Keswani, Mumbai and also the participation of local communities, VK-nardep started the work of construction of a rain water harvesting structure. The proposed tank site was in a rocky terrain. It was deepened with explosives (after getting due permission from authorities) and layers of accumulated silt was removed with JPC. Then the loving physical labour was provided by local communities, students, Kendra volunteers and the pond started getting shape. Temple ponds have a traditional structure. This pond too was created with the same traditional features including an elaborate form of steps for people to come and take bath as well as do ritual oblations.



From the unyielding outer surface of a rocky terrain, slowly and definitely a temple pond takes shape. JPC is removing the silt and Kendra volunteers are participating in providing labour for the deepening of the pond by removing tons of stones.



The rain water around the hillock was channelised to the tank and for that channels were made and also structures, in the form of 4' PVC pipes (left) have been embedded in the walls of temple tank. Deepened, ready with proper infrastructure constructed and aligned topographically to receive rain water, now the structure started expecting the monsoons to fill it with water and transform the landscape with the precious resource for life.



Murugan Kuntam rain water harvesting structure as it is today with the monsoon rain water held in it; A beautiful garden is also coming up by its side. In a major ceremony VK-nardep handed over the rain water harvesting structure to the local community.

God forbid that India should ever take to industrialism after the manner of the west... keeping the world in chains. If [our nation] took to similar economic exploitation, it would strip the world bare like locusts.

- Mahatma Gandhi



**Societal Innovation
Award
To be awarded to
Dr.Kamalasannan Pillai in
February 2012**



For decades our Senior Scientist, Dr.Kamalasannan Pillai has been working on Azolla as a bio-feed through a backyard cultivation technology.

Dr.Pillai, identified a stress resistant high bio-mass producing Azolla strain, He further continuously worked on strain improvement and selection over the period of more than a decade.

Today he offers Azolla as an organic bio-nitrogen production system, bio-protein production system and a carbon-di-oxide sink. He also has found Azolla to be an Oxygen generator and a synthesizer of a variety of vital amines and mineral proteins. Though the nitrogen fixing capacity of Azolla was known earlier, there was no fool-proof technology package for its mass production and



He also developed a technology for high value Azolla production for feed pellet production. This technology allows further harnessing of its potentials as a nutraceutical. Dr.Pillai's work transcends the walls of research lab and has been taken to the people and has had revolutionary impact on the ground. The production technology is not only easily adaptable but also can be efficiently integrated with the agro-eco system of the farmer. Thousands of farmers from Kerala, Tamilnadu and Andhra Pradesh took up the backyard Azolla cultivation to feed their livestock with good results, increasing the milk, meat and egg production and significantly reducing the external inputs.

Azolla technology has arrived in time for rural India. Today one of the major problems is the deficiency in biologically fixed Nitrogen in the agro-eco system. This is compensated today by chemical fertilizer, the excess application of which makes the soil almost biologically dead. Further the chemical residue in food and environment leads to a variety of new generation diseases in both humans and also human domesticated animals. The deficiency of protein in livestock and humans is compensated by industrially produced chemical protein analogues like urea and melamine in feed and food. Needless to say this also has dangerous side-effects. Now, one can understand how crucial and vital the Azolla innovation offered by Dr.Pillai and his team.

Ever humble Dr.Pillai sees this award as yet another opportunity to make more farmers get to know Azolla. His aim is to see Azolla bed in the backyard of every farmer in India. Ultimately Azolla should become an integral part of Indian rural household...almost like a family member, that is his target.

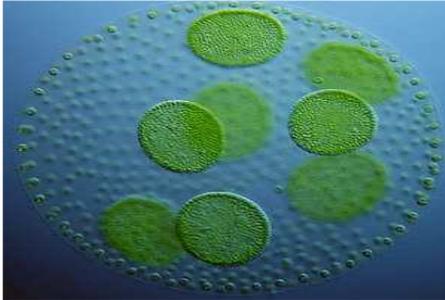


All these hard work of VK-Nardep has borne fruit in the form of technology being accepted by dairy farmers from across the nation. Today livestock farmers of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and even Bihar use the backyard technology developed by Dr.Pillai and his team to cultivate Azolla and use it as bio-feed. All progressive farmers in Kerala today have Azolla in their backyard. Milk co-operatives and poultry units across the states show interest in Azolla. The green fern is causing a white revolution of not just milk but also eggs.

The one and a half decade work of Dr.Kamalasannan Pillai, in not only innovative research but also zealously taking the technology to the people, received recognition this year by way of 'Societal Innovation Award – 2010' from National Research Development Corporation, New Delhi (Ministry of Science and Technology). The award carries a certificate and prize money of Rs.3 lakhs which will be given at a public function sometime in February, 2012.

Human consciousness arose but a minute before midnight on the geological clock. Yet we mayflies try to bend an ancient world to our purposes, ignorant perhaps of the messages buried in its long history. Let us hope that we are still in the early morning of our April day.

- Stephen Jay Gould



Story of Oneness

Our story tells us of the sacredness of life, of the astonishing complexity of cells and organisms, of the vast lengths of time it took to generate their splendid diversity, of the enormous improbability that any of it happened at all. Reverence is the religious emotion elicited when we perceive the sacred. We are called to revere the whole enterprise of planetary existence, the whole and all of its myriad parts as they catalyze and secrete and replicate and mutate and evolve. Ralph Waldo Emerson invites us to express our reverence in the form of a prayer. "Prayer," he writes, "is the contemplation of the facts of life from the highest point of view. It is the soliloquy of a beholding and jubilant soul." ... I profess my Faith. For me, the existence of all this complexity and awareness and intent and beauty, and my ability to apprehend it, serves as the ultimate meaning and the ultimate value. The continuation of life reaches around, grabs its own tail, and forms a sacred circle that requires no further justification. ... If religious emotions can be elicited by natural reality — and I believe that they can — then the story of Nature has the potential to serve as the cosmos for the global ethos that we need to articulate.



Ursula Goodenough
Cell Biologist



Oneness of All

We are absolutely one; we are physically one, we are mentally one, and as spirit, it goes without saying, that we are one, if we believe in spirit at all. This oneness is the one fact that is being proved every day by modern science. To proud man it is told: You are the same as that little worm there; think not that you are something enormously different from it; you are the same. You have been that in a previous incarnation, and the worm has crawled up to this man state, of which you are so proud. This grand preaching, the oneness of things, making us one with everything that exists, is the great lesson to learn, for most of us are very glad to be made one with higher beings, but nobody wants to be made one with lower beings. ... That is exactly the teaching of the Advaita, about which I am lecturing to you. The Self is the essence of this universe, the essence of all souls; He is the essence of your own life, nay, "Thou art That". You are one with this universe. He, who says, he is different from others, even by a hair's breadth, immediately becomes miserable. Happiness belongs to him who knows this oneness, who knows he is one with this universe.

- Swami Vivekananda



Oneness of Forms

Each life form has a beginning, an arc of a life story, and then an ending. Most of our internal and external attention and communication circle around the particulars of how we define ourselves as collective life and how we define ourselves, or others, as particular life. We all come from life-giving energy, are infused and animated by life energy to become a particular life-form, and we all end in returning to formless life. Along the way there are small and great dramas, crossroads of destiny and surprises both wondrous and horrific. Some life stories end very quickly and some go on and on. There are countless dramas within this bigger, incomprehensible universal story. Stories are sung, put into sacred books, memorized, dramatized and consulted generation after generation. Our collective cosmic story is a teeming theater of lifeforms appearing and disappearing. Forms are born, live through many stories and then die. Before any form appears, life is here. During the lifetime of any form, life is animating that form. After any particular form dies, life -- while withdrawn from that form -- remains here. Life is true. It is always here.

Gargaji
Spiritual Master

