

Echoes of Eco



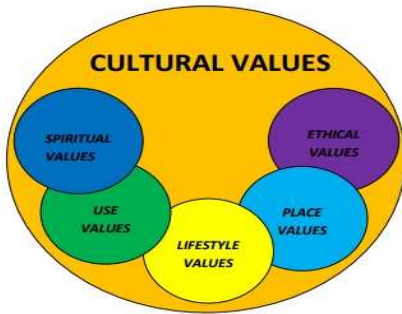
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Vivekananda Kendra- **nardep** Newsletter

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Cultural Values and Bio-Diversity

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Spiritual values: Sacred natural sites include sacred groves and springs, sites of worship, rituals and offerings, burial sites, and locations associated with spirits or deities. Numerous sites exist around the world and many are managed to support both conservation objectives and spiritual functions. ... The entire island of Bali is sacred to the Balinese, a landscape in which the forces of good and evil must be balanced by worship and offerings at specific sites.

Use values: Use values have been employed in community conservation projects as economic incentives rather than cultural benefits for communities. Though use cannot be divorced from economics, the underlying cultural drivers of the behavior are generally ignored. Specific resources are often essential for the maintenance of cultural practices or necessary for rituals including prayer, initiation and purification rites. Others are needed to make material cultural artifacts or are linked to valued lifestyle activities, such as hunting or fishing.

Lifestyle values: Collection of foods may be necessary to prepare traditional dishes. Many West African people, for example, collect forest plants to prepare characteristic dishes. Grazing 'beautiful cows' link the Bahima pastoralists of Uganda to their ancestors and locate them within the pastoral landscape, and define their values, tastes and ethnic identity.

Place values: Place values are established at and by locations of cultural or historical importance such as battle sites, graves, memorials and ruins that establish the identity of a people. Natural features may have been created by acts of gods or ancestors; actions may be required or proscribed to maintain the harmony or healthiness of landscapes, and maintain a people's place and links to it.

Ethical values: Ethics or moral philosophy allows communities, groups and individuals to address questions of morality in relation to behaviors towards the natural world, and separate actions that are right from those that are wrong, those that are good from those that are bad. These judgments are intrinsically linked to the higher values of a people, perhaps especially their religious and spiritual values, which, together, provide a set of overarching moral principles that can help resolve complex moral problems. Though less direct than the other values discussed above, ethics are important in governing normative behavior and though they will not always result in decisions in favor of nature conservation over community needs they provide a moral compass to balance material demands on the natural world and others species.

[An Excerpt from the paper 'Integrating Cultural, Spiritual and Ethical Dimensions into Conservation Practice in a Rapidly Changing World', 2010 by Mark Infield & Arthur Mugisha]

True Worship



Godhead is always present in all living beings as their very essence. if someone worships Divinity only in images such worship is only an empty show. When such people who insult Divinity in Living beings worship Godhead with various rituals Divinity is not at all pleased.

-Srimat Bhagavatam III.29.24 & 27



Service to humanity is the highest form of worship – Swami Vivekananda



The basic pattern of life is a network. Whenever you see life, you see networks. The whole planet, what we can term 'Gaia' is a network of processes involving feedback tubes. And the world of bacteria is critical to the details of these feedback processes, because bacteria play a crucial role in the regulation of the whole Gaian system. – Fritjof Capra



This Month ...



This Month ...



This month...



Members of SHG undergoing an outdoor session on sustainable technologies at Gramodaya Park.

District Watershed Development Agency, Dindigul organized a study tour of 100 SHG members to the Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 17th of this month. SHG members learned about Vermi compost and Azolla technology.

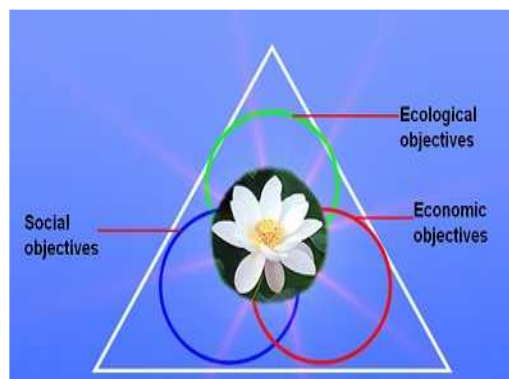
Seven students from Killikulam College of Agriculture, visited the Gramodaya Park, Vivekanandapuram on 10th of this month and learnt the Azolla and Bio formulations technologies.

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



Networking Activities

National workshop on “Rural Housing Knowledge Network” was jointly organized by the Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India, & IIT, New Delhi at the Seminar Hall, IIT Delhi, Hauz Khas, New Delhi on 16th. Shri.G.Vasudeo attended the workshop.



Green Health Home at Vivekanandapuram functioned for 6 days and treated 120 patients.

Workshop on “Siddha Herbal Medicines for Anemia” was organized by Dhan Foundation, Madurai and was held at Kalanjum Thozhilagam, Madurai on 21st 250 persons attended it and Dr.V.Ganapathy was the resource person.

Freed Medical camp was organized by Zigma Medical Trust, Nagercoil at Athi Parasakthi Siddhar Peedam, Nagercoil on the 31st of this month. 400 persons attended and benefitted. Dr.V.Ganapathy and his team served as resource persons:



For regular updates on our Siddha programmes you can also visit Dr. Ganapati's facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/ganapathy>

Our Website gets a new look...



Dear Friends of VK-nardep, As you should have noticed already, we have revamped our website and we will be happy to receive your feedback on the changes we have made. Send your suggestions to vknardep@gmail.com.

Providing medicines to participants of ‘Siddha Herbal Medicines for Anemia’ workshop





We believe that every being is divine, is God. Every soul is a sun covered over with clouds of ignorance; the difference between soul and soul is owing to the difference in density of these layers of clouds. First, believe in the world—that there is meaning behind everything.
 –Swami Vivekananda



Happenings: This month



On 12th of this month Sister Saraswati gave a talk on 'Home herbal gardens' (Vettumooligai Thottam) at AIR Thirunelveli.



Traditional Bone fracture healing also involves herbal formulations: As part of the workshop the participants share and learn different herbal medicines used in the healing of bone fractures. They also have a hands-on training session on the preparation of these herbal formulations.



Handing over of the Tailoring Units as a part of Village Development programme at Athalavilai Village, Kanyakumari Dist.



Happenings: This month

A workshop was held on "Traditional Siddha Bone Fracture Treatment" at Technology Resource Center on 24th and 25th of this month, with DST, Core Support. 57 persons attended the workshop. The participants were mostly research students, traditional physicians and also interested public with awareness of this treatment. The resource persons were Dr.V.Ganapathy and his team



Traditional bone-fracture treatment demonstration is conducted at the workshop: for more pictures of the workshop log on to Dr.Ganapati's facebook account given in the previous page.



Happenings: This month

One day Workshop on "Kitchen Waste based Bio-Methanation Plant (Shakti Surabhi) was conducted at Technology Resource Center, Kalluvillai on 21st of this month. The programme was supported by DST Core support. 13 persons attended the programme and Shri.V.Ramakrishnan was the resource person.

Seminar on "Waste to Energy" (Solid Waste Management) was organized by Arulmigu Palaniandavar Polytechnic College, Palani on 31st. 150 persons attended it and the resource person was Shri.V.Ramakrishnan,

Fixed model Shakti Surabhi 1 cubic meter bio-methanation plants were constructed and installed at 9 places in Ramnad.

2 Portable model 1 cu.m Shakti Surabhi plants were supplied to parties from Tuticorin and Indore.

1 Shakti Surabhi portable model 6-cu.m plant was installed at Puducherry.



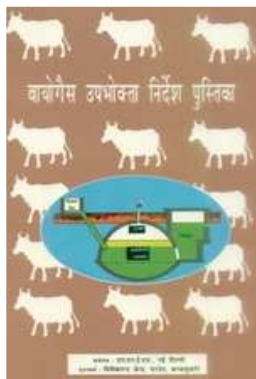
From the point of view of deep ecology, what is wrong with our culture is that it offers us an inaccurate conception of the self. It depicts the personal self as existing in competition with and in opposition to nature [We fail to realise that] if we destroy our environment, we are destroying what is in fact our larger self. –Freya Matthew



From our Publications



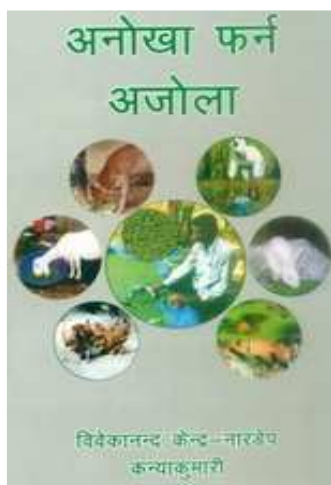
Our Hindi Publications



This is the Hindi version of the book "Biogas Users Guide" - on how to use and maintain the biogas plant. It gives the details of initial feeding of the plant. It also covers daily, weekly and yearly maintenance of the plant. The booklet also covers regular upkeep of the biogas stove. It also gives a table showing how biogas is superior than conventional fuel in terms of not only economics, but also by way of environment accounting, social accounting, health accounting etc.



This is the Hindi version of the manual "Biogas Manures Users Guide" which explains how to use the biogas slurry as a nutrient supplier for the adjoining garden in the homestead. The booklet gives table of nutrient value of various composts along with biogas slurry. It also covers a few case studies to prove its superiority over regular compost.



This is the Hindi version of the book 'Azolla the Wonder Fern'. Azolla the wonder fern has played an important role in the evolutionary history of this planet and has vastly influenced the planetary climate. Now VK-nardep brings back the wonder fern in a big way with the backyard Azolla cultivation technology and use of Azolla as a broad spectrum bio-feed for poultry and livestock. This book is a guide to the livestock and poultry farmers (both lair and broiler) for using Azolla as biofeed. There are also guidelines to use Azolla as both nitrogen-fixer and weed suppressant in paddy cultivation. The book also provides ideas to develop integrated systems like Azolla-fish-duck-paddy cultivation system. This book contains color plates explaining step by step how to cultivate Azolla in the backyard through cost-effective technology. The book has been appreciated by eminent agricultural scientist Dr.M.S.Swaminathan.



This is the Hindi version of the much acclaimed "Repair and Maintenance Manual" of the biogas plants. This contains very useful information for the maintenance and repair of the biogas plants. It gives very useful tips and also simple maintenance techniques for the daily users. It informs the end-users including house-wives methods for getting optimum use of the biogas plant. It also cautions the users of the common errors they may do. The manual also helps maintenance personnel identify and solve general problems that may arise with the plant. Apart from these the manual also shares user experiences of plant usage.



This is the Hindi version of the book that gives all the multi-colour panels of the famous 'Gramodaya for Right Living' eco-technology exhibition lodged at Vivekanandapuram, Kanyakumari. The book gives in Hindi highly informative educational panels which explain sustainable technologies and principles behind them in the field of cost-effective construction, water management, holistic health and sustainable agriculture. This is a very good introduction to sustainable development for students as well as those interested in sustainable development in Indian context.



Nature is our first mother. She nurtures us throughout our lives. Our birth mother may allow us to sit on her lap for a couple of years, but Mother Nature patiently bears our weight our entire life. Just as a child is obligated to his birth mother, we should all feel an obligation and responsibility towards Mother Nature.- Mata Amritananda Mayi



Eco-Vision

It is at least not impossible to regard the earth's parts—soils, mountains, rivers, atmosphere, etc.—as organs or parts of organs, of a coordinated whole, each part with a definite function. And, if we could see this whole, as a whole, through a great period of time, we might perceive not only organs with coordinated functions, but possibly also that process of consumption and replacement which in biology we call metabolism, or growth. In such a case we would have all the visible attributes of a living thing, which we do not now realize to be such because it is too big, and its life processes too slow.... if the Earth has both organs with coordinated functions and a metabolism that there would also follow that invisible attribute—a soul or consciousness—which . . . many philosophers of all ages ascribe to all living things and aggregations thereof, including the 'dead' earth"... Possibly in our intuitive perceptions, which may be truer than our science and less impeded by words than our philosophies, we realize the indivisibility of the earth—its soil, mountains, rivers, forests, climate, plants, and animals, and respect it collectively not only as a useful servant but as a living being, vastly less alive than ourselves in time and space—a being that was old when the morning stars sang together, and, when the last of us has been gathered unto our fathers, will still be young.



Aldo Leopold
Ecologist



Eco-Science

In the Mahabharatha there is a touching passage where Yudhishtira asks the fallen grandsire Bhishma about the proper life discipline. The grandsire answers by enunciating the thousand names of Vishnu which begin with 'Visvam Vishnu...'- Nature as the embodiment of the Supreme Entity - Study of the world, of the dynamic and the static, of the many-splendored but undivided: This is Physics. All that moves, moves by virtue of the principles of Physics. When the world is seen as the manifestation of the Divine study of the world and contemplation of it, Physics, becomes an act of devotion. When the world is seen as including the observer and all his experiences, all the richness of nature and its many phenomena as being variety without fragmentation: then it becomes a path of integration, a coming together.... The path to integrated awareness is the path to more efficient action, the path of reduction of entropy of the mind, of the restoration of the unfragmented state. It is not the path of changing the world 'out there' but of changing the world by changing the state of awareness. It is an empirical method and a path of experiment. One has to participate to benefit. Any method that leads to it is a 'coming together', yoga. It is a case of tuning into existence, of abandoning individuation not by an intellectual process but by an overwhelming "happening".



George Sadarshan
Theoretical Physicist



Eco-Dharma

The idea of ecology has been around for a quarter of a century. We have become used to it. We consider its ramifications good, namely, to have clean air, clean water, clean soil. But ecology is much deeper and more far-reaching than cleaning up polluted physical environments. While cleaning the environment is important, it is only a small part of the task. For what are ultimately responsible for the polluted planet are not dirty technologies, but polluted minds — careless, unseeing, alienated, contaminated minds produce, almost of necessity, contaminated environments. ... A true ecology heals all three environments simultaneously — physical, mental, and spiritual. Thus our dharma must be extended and deepened to include new realms. Our most important task is both to clean the earth and to cleanse ourselves from mental pollution. Our minds are as polluted as our air, our rivers, and our soil. Preserving the wholeness of the earth and the integrity of our souls is a twofold aspect of our present dharma. Hence the importance of ecological dharma, not only for the preservation of the earth, but for the preservation of the conditions that enable us to become fully human, thus enabling us to follow the path of the Buddha or the path of Shiva or the path of Krishna. Seen in this light, ecological dharma has an importance second to none. If you are a spiritual person, you must care about ecology, for the earth is your spiritual cradle.



Henryk Skolimowski
Eco-Philosopher