



Education for Change

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FEATURE

Conservation Education: Planning to Educate, Educating to Plan

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Context

Conservation Education (CE) is an opportunity to create platforms to deliberate on wildlife conservation issues with different segments of the society (Ved, 2013). Conservation education needs to move beyond organising random events, to be effective and relevant, as well as provide a depth which the complexities of the day warrant. Such CE needs to be based on structured and robust planning. To make education worthwhile and effective, a strategy to address the existing threats/issues and relevant target groups is needed. Such a strategy needs to be focused, structured, thematic and participatory (Trivedi *et al*, 2006). Citing the example of the Tiger Conservation Project in Manas National Park, such a strategy along with concerns is discussed in this article.

Project and the Landscape

Tiger conservation project, initiated during 2015, presented an opportunity to join hands for CE in an ecologically critical landscape. The authors responded with alacrity which ensured that the significance of CE was at par with other project components; these included monitoring, protection and livelihood. CE involves exploration, deliberation and negotiation, and there is a dire



need to bestow on it the time and efforts it merits (Ved, 2012). The project was implemented in Manas landscape which lies in Baksa, Chirang, Udalguri and Kokrajhar districts of Assam ($26^{\circ}37'$ - $26^{\circ}50'N$, $90^{\circ}45'$ - $91^{\circ}15'E$), India (Goswami & Ganesh, 2014).

Aaranyak, an organization headquartered at Guwahati, implemented the project with its partners. Titled 'Securing Source Population of Tiger, Prey and Habitats in Indo-Bhutan Manas Landscape', the project aimed to achieve 50 per cent increase in tiger population in the project area in the next 10 years by reducing human disturbances in the habitat and thus increasing the tiger and prey population.

Seeds of the Workshop

The first step was to invest time and efforts to develop a robust and long-term plan for CE in the landscape, which not only looked beyond the project term but was also sensitive to the complexities the landscape offered and brought multiple stakeholders on board. The question then was whether the planning exercise should be undertaken by the team itself or by a larger group which included people experienced in CE. The team included, besides the authors, enthusiastic and young members associated with the CE component of the project.



After deliberations, it was decided to invite a set of people and experts well-versed with CE, and seek quality and critical inputs. This helped the plan to move beyond the limited knowledge of the team and also enhance the team's awareness on multiple aspects of CE.

Initial discussions

During initial discussions, a common understanding was developed:

- Focus on conserving tigers across the landscape
- Focus on developing materials that could be used during the project
- Explore overlaps with the livelihood component of the project
- Assimilate learning from emerging disciplines like experiential education and transformational education

The plan looked beyond tigers and was open to learn from other emerging and developed disciplines and pedagogies. Materials were discussed to the extent that the plan warranted. Emphasis was laid on using existing CE resources rather than starting *de-novo*.

Approach

- Activity based programmes, including free-flowing and animated conversations, and activities by participants, were adopted. Conventional power-point presentations were not preferred.
- The format was made flexible avoiding a rigid structure, to allow space for creativity to delve deeper into CE.
- Short duration (5-6 days) workshops, including nature trips, preferably away from internet connectivity, to let participants settle, absorb and contribute effectively were conducted.
- A lengthy debate ensued on the degree to which the workshop should be planned and structured beforehand. It was agreed to keep the workshop as loosely structured as possible to allow the participants and experts to contribute in shaping the event and enriching it further.

Workshop Design

The workshop was designed in a way that the participants are exposed to the natural surroundings, including wildlife and the community. Plenary sessions by experts with a focus on team needs; panel discussions with participants well-versed in the issues on CE in the landscape; discussions on challenges; process documentation, monitoring and evaluation; capacity building and space creation for participants; were some of the major activities of the workshop.

Resources and Preparations

Experts were selected based on projects undertaken during recent years, overlap of skill-sets with those sought by the team, familiarity with the landscape, and positive outlook. Resources included CE activities undertaken at Aaranyak and learnings from it; CE in Assam by other organizations and individuals, with a focus on the landscape; CE as a part of the school curriculum in Assam; details of the project and landscape.

The Event

The workshop, organized during June 2016 at Bansbari, turned out to be six days of fun filled learning. The venue, bereft of walls on three sides, set the desired tone: of being at ease and lack of formality. The first half of the workshop included trips inside the Manas National Park, with sightings of the rhinos and Bengal floricans being the highlights; interactions



organized with individuals and groups at multiple locations in the landscape; and a panel discussion with representatives of the state education department and people renowned for their knowledge of local cultural values of the landscape.

This laid the platform to launch the second half. The deliberations were focused and upheld a high quality, stressed on group activities and ensured a high degree of participation. Plenary sessions by experts focused on issues like interpretation centres, experiential education, material development, communication in the context of CE and CE with school children. Detailed discussions made it possible to explore topics like key threats to the habitat and activities that could be undertaken to mitigate them. The



The planning component ventured beyond school going children and explored CE with crucial but difficult to engage with stakeholders like grazers and self-help groups.

Way Ahead

The workshop was a small but ambitious first step that has put in place a robust base to move ahead on CE, in the landscape and beyond. The team now needs to take up actions on the path laid out by the workshop. These include:

- putting in place detailed activities for each of the stake-holders,
- deliberating on the critical feedback received from the participants,
- drafting a document that would highlight the process,

- forging linkages and collaborations based on opportunities identified, and
- facilitating creation of platforms and utilizing existing platforms to enable the team to explore CE meaningfully.

Acknowledgements

The authors are indebted to the workshop participants for investing their time and contributing to make the workshop meaningful and fun; especially the experts Lima Rosalind, Prashant Mahajan, Tanver Hossain, Pramod P and Rengaswamy Marimuthu. The authors are grateful to the project partners Panthera, Awely, Wildlife Conservation Trust, Forest Department of the Bodoland Territorial Council and the Integrated Tiger and Habitat Conservation Program, IUCN for supporting the project. They also wish to warmly acknowledge the support and co-operation of the entire team at Aaranyak for making the workshop possible. We also thank Swati Chaliha for her critical comments on the draft.

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Crocodiles at Sundarvan, Ahmedabad

Sundarvan Nature Discovery Centre at Ahmedabad has now two crocodiles of the endangered African slender-snouted crocodile species. The crocodiles have been flown from Chennai to Sundarvan - a mini-zoo as designated by the Central Zoo Authority, India. This species has never been housed before in any Gujarat zoo.

The crocodiles have come from Madras Crocodile Bank Trust (MCBT) as a gracious gift under the Zoo Animal Exchange Programme.

A grand viewing of these crocodiles along with a talk “Croc talk” was organised by Sundarvan Authorities on August 23, 2016.

There have also been many fun filled activities for raising awareness about these reptiles including “Selfie with the life-like croc” for the kids.



A beautiful new enclosure with viewing areas for enhanced visitor experience has been built through the support of Mr. Nishant Shah, Director, Nishant Constructions. Free transport of crocodiles from Chennai was made possible through Air India.

To have look at the videos of these giant lizards log on to <https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=Sundarvan%2C%20Ahmedabad%20crocodile>
[s](#)

Share with us or Ask Us!

Did you know the differences between Crocodiles, Alligators and Gharials?

Comics for Change

Comics provide a unique way to communicate, using both visual images and animated text to convey relevant messages effectively. Comics can therefore trigger behavioural change among children and instill in them good values. Comic characters like Batman, Superman, Spiderman, Captain America, Shaktiman, Chacha Chaudhary and more recently Chhota Bheem are seen as heroes of change.

On the occasion of this year's World Environment Day, *Dainik Bhaskar*, India's largest and the world's fourth largest circulated daily, has unveiled the first of the three part series of comics named 'Comics for Change' to promote responsible consumption of water, food and electricity through creative storytelling. Just as vividly as comics convey the feats of superheroes, 'Comics for Change' will also leverage the power of visual storytelling to amplify awareness amongst children and youth about the Sustainable Development Goals related to minimizing Water, Food and Electricity wastage, thereby helping them to become more responsible citizens. The other two comics will be published on Food and Electricity

Sundarvan Adventures - Mystery of the Missing Water is the first comic to be published in this series. *Sundarvan Adventures*, conceived in alignment with the World Environment Day theme, tells the story of a fun loving, energetic school going rabbit called Adi, along with his adventurous set of friends including a jovial little Parrot - Cheenu, a pretty little doe - Roli and an intelligent Tortoise – Golu, who saves the day for the villagers of Sundarvan from the villainous acts of Paplu Bhai – a notorious Jackal. Abhijeet Kini, creator of popular characters like Suppandi and Angry Mausi, has done the art and layout for the Comic Series. Comic workshops will be conducted in more than 400 schools in the country to spread awareness about the need to use water resources judiciously.

“Using Superheroes to weave stories around issues that matter to us is an interesting way to bring about a significant change in the society by creating super heroes of tomorrow.”

Mr. Girish Agarwal, Director, Dainik Bhaskar Group

“The launch of this comic book series in India for children and teens to help them better understand the importance of environmental conservation and a sustainable lifestyle, strengthens UNEP's World Environment Day's global advocacy of awareness and action to protect our environment.”

Ms. Isabelle Louis, Acting Regional Director, UNEP Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

“The UN Global Compact's Ten Universal Principles provide a universal definition for responsible businesses. Global challenges like food and water crises are in need of contribution from the private sector. Companies that do business responsibly and find opportunities to innovate around sustainability will be the business leaders of tomorrow.”

Ms. Lise Kingo, Executive Director, UN Global Compact, New York.

“I would like to congratulate Dainik Bhaskar to come up with such a wonderful initiative to make children aware of Sustainable Development Goals, also called as Global Goals, pertaining to Water and Climate action.”

Mr. Pooran Chandra Pandey, Executive Director, UN Global Compact Network India.

Being signatory to the UN Global Compact Network, Dainik Bhaskar Group's CSR initiatives contribute to UN Sustainable Development Goals of Quality Education, Zero Hunger, Clean Water and Sanitation, Sustainable Cities and Communities and Climate Action.

The comic can be downloaded from

<http://i10.dainikbhaskar.com/dainikbhaskar2016/images/Comics-For-Change.pdf>

Source: <http://www.indiawaterportal.org/articles/comics-change>

World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) 2017

Education is key to addressing the toughest challenges facing communities around the world today – poverty, conflict, inequality, unemployment, environmental sustainability and future challenges. There is a widening gap between the education systems currently in place and those required to meet the needs of future generations. WISE is a response to the necessity of revitalizing education and providing a global platform for the development of new ideas and solutions. WISE is an international, multi-sectoral platform for creative thinking, debate and purposeful action.

WISE has established itself as a global reference in new approaches to education and is promoting innovation and building the future of education through

collaboration. Since 2009, WISE has evolved into a thriving global, multi-sectoral community, engaged in fruitful dialogue and productive partnerships.

The WISE community is a network of education stakeholders - from students to decision-makers - from about 200 countries who share ideas and collaborate to seek creative solutions to solve challenges facing education.

WISE Awards

Each year, the WISE Awards recognize and promote six successful innovative projects that are addressing global educational challenges. Since 2009, WISE has received more than 2,850 applications from over 150 countries and 48 projects have been awarded, from a wide variety of sectors and locations for their innovative character, their positive contribution and their potential for scalability and adaptability. These projects represent a growing resource of expertise and sound educational practice.

Selection Process

Project representatives from any region, educational sector or level may submit applications which demonstrate the quality and impact of their activities in accordance with the criteria.

Following this global annual call for applications, a Pre-Jury composed of education experts assesses the submissions to select the Finalists. Following this, a Jury bringing together leading personalities from the education world chooses the six Award winning projects. Winners receive global visibility along with a prize of \$20,000 (US) and are honoured at the global biennial summit.

Support and Collaboration

Members of the WISE Awards network gain global visibility and are given an opportunity to collaborate through various platforms:

WISE Communications: Projects recognized by WISE are featured on the website, showcased and shared with the WISE community via social media. WISE media partner Euro News also promotes the Award-winning projects on the weekly television magazine Learning World.

Multimedia Productions: Special documentaries and videos are produced to showcase the work of the winning projects.

WISE Books: Several WISE Awards finalists and winning projects have been featured in WISE Books which explores current challenges and solutions facing 21st century education.

The WISE Summit: Representatives from Award winning projects are also given the opportunity to present and discuss their work at a dedicated Summit session during the global biennial summit in Doha, Qatar. In addition, projects are offered an opportunity to participate in global events organized in collaboration with WISE.

For more information, please visit <http://www.wise-qatar.org>

BOOKS

Teaching and Learning in Diverse and Inclusive Classrooms: Key Issues for New Teachers

Editors: Gill Richards, Felicity Armstrong

How can you develop effective teaching strategies so that *all* the children in your classroom are included in meaningful and enriching learning experiences?

What can you do to help young people from diverse backgrounds achieve their full potential?

Addressing the wide variety of issues of diversity and inclusion routinely encountered in today's classrooms, this comprehensive text provides both a theoretical background and practical strategies.

Chapters from leading figures on inclusive education present and analyse the latest debates, research studies and current initiatives, including considerations for teaching and learning and concluding with key questions for reflection and additional resources.

Moving beyond simple theory about diversity, to what this means for real teachers' practice, the contributions focus on issues relating to values and professional practice for teachers, emphasising inclusive approaches and the importance of understanding the perspectives of learners. Topics discussed include:

- understanding inclusive education
- ethnic and cultural diversity
- challenging behaviour
- bullying
- gender identity and sexuality
- gifted and talented learners
- traveller children
- special educational needs
- collaborative working in schools
- the perspective of parents.

Designed to stimulate and strengthen teachers' professional understanding, the book also reflects on legislative duties, personal values and the importance of listening to the voice of individuals who experience disadvantages in educational settings.

Teaching and Learning in Diverse and Inclusive Classrooms is a key resource for teachers, supporting their learning throughout their initial training and early professional development. It will also be of interest to more experienced teachers interested in diversity and inclusion, particularly those mentoring NQTs through their induction and Masters level studies.

Source: <http://www.amazon.in/Teaching-Learning-Diverse-Inclusive-Classrooms/dp/0415564638?tag=googinhydr18418-21&tag=googinkenshoo-21&ascsubtag=67c32208-688f-480a-8760-ccd2dd484df1>

An Introduction to the Convention on Wetlands

The Secretariat of Ramsar Convention has launched the first Handbook in the 5th Edition Ramsar Handbook Series. It is entitled "An Introduction to the Convention on Wetlands" and replaces "The Ramsar Convention Manual". It aims at a diverse and extensive audience and explains the role of the Convention and how it works.

The 5th Edition Handbook is organized under three sub-series, covering International Cooperation on Wetlands; Wise Use of Wetlands; and Wetlands Conservation and Management.

The 5th Edition Series includes:

Sub-series i: International Cooperation on Wetlands

Handbook 1: An Introduction to the Convention on Wetlands

Handbook 2: The Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024

Handbook 3: International cooperation

Handbook 4: Ramsar Regional Initiatives

Handbook 5: Partnerships

Sub-series ii: Wise use of Wetlands

Handbook 6: Wise use of wetlands, sustainable development and poverty eradication

Handbook 7: Freshwater-related guidance

Handbook 8: Wise use of wetlands in the coastal zone and small islands

Handbook 9: Wetland cities

Handbook 10: Wetlands and health

Handbook 11: Wetlands, including peatlands, climate change and disaster risk reduction

Handbook 12: Implementing CEPA with participatory skills

Handbook 13: Strategic environmental assessment

Handbook 14: Wetlands and culture

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SUB-SERIES III: WETLAND CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT

Handbook 15: National wetland policies, laws and institutions

Handbook 16: Designating Ramsar Sites

Handbook 17: Addressing change in wetland ecological character

Handbook 18: Managing wetlands

Handbook 19: Avian influenza and wetlands

Handbook 20: Inventory, assessment and monitoring

Handbook 21: Wetland education centres

Source:

http://www.ramsar.org/sites/default/files/documents/library/handbook1_5ed_introduction_toconvention_e.pdf

Children's Book: Something To Chew On



Kalpavriksh's new book for young readers, 'Something to Chew on', talks about different aspects of the food we eat — where it comes from, its history, and the different stories behind the food we consume.

This 84 page book can be ordered by emailing at kvbooks@gmail.com

NEWS

UN Climate Summit says education primes societies for global change

The role of education in preparing societies for global change and a greener future was the message at a thematic day held during the UN Climate Conference COP22 in Marrakech, Morocco (8-15 November, 2016).

UNESCO, with national, international and UN partners, organized a number of side-events and roundtables throughout the day on 14 November, focusing on the role of education in the implementation of the Paris Agreement and in particular on the nationally determined commitments (NDCs) of each country.

Traditional knowledge plays a key role

A panel discussion, "[Leaving no one behind in climate change education](#)", organized by the [UN Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness](#) of which UNESCO is a member, focused on the role and initiatives of vulnerable groups in climate action. Experts and representatives of indigenous peoples, refugees, disabled people, youth and women's organizations, highlighted the importance of ensuring that the rights, needs and contributions of different learners are taken into account when designing and promoting climate change education.

Source: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/resources/online-materials/single-view/news/un_climate_summit_says_education_primes_societies_for_global/

COURSE

Certificate Course on Mangrove Biodiversity and Ecosystems

To celebrate International Mangrove Day (26 July 2016), the UN University Institute for Water, Environment and Health and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) have launched a unique 10-Unit online Certificate Course on Mangrove Biodiversity and Ecosystems.

This is an open-access post-graduate course for professionals and is designed to build expertise in mangrove biology, ecology, assessment, management, and restoration and is predominantly aimed at young academics, professionals, managers and any other interested individuals, especially from developing countries.

The curriculum aims to bring awareness about the importance of Mangroves to healthy ecosystems and human communities.

Course Topics are:

Unit 1: Introduction to Mangroves

Unit 2: Ecosystem Structure & Function

Unit 3: Floral Diversity

Unit 4: Faunal Biodiversity

Unit 5: Mangroves and Climate Change

Unit 6: Mangroves and Coastal Defense

Unit 7: Mangroves and People

Unit 8: Mangrove Restoration and Afforestation

Unit 9: Economic Valuation for Mangrove Conservation

Unit 10: National Policies and Laws and International Agreements Applying to Mangroves

The Course can be accessed at <http://www.conservationtraining.org>

For more information: <http://inweh.unu.edu/postgrad-mangroves/>

VIDEO

THE DUGOUT - Working together A community can heal itself - 2011

19 young people, off the grid on an island in the Yukon River, must carve a sea-going canoe true to an ancient design that will carry them off the island. In the process they will live together bonded by creative work, and transform themselves. This documentary film is about the redemptive power of art and about the power of community to heal its members.

