



Learning to Live on Planet Earth

National Conference on Education for Sustainable Development
March 20 - 21, 2007 at Avari Towers, Karachi

Education for Sustainable Development and Civil Society

Introduction

Civil society plays a vital role in mobilizing various interest groups to fulfill their responsibilities for developing a healthy and productive society through capacity building, advocacy and networking. Due to the vast scope of this sector and its ability to influence multiple stakeholders, it can work as an effective conduit for promoting sustainable lifestyles. In this context, ESD aims to enable civil society workers to analyze, recreate and initiate development processes that promote sustainable development.

The workshop would focus on assisting key civil society institutions in the country to reorient their work towards sustainable development. Many of these organizations may already have incorporated environmental concerns and imperatives in their operations through association with institutions such as IUCN Pakistan, World Wide Fund for Nature and the Environment Protection Agency (EPA). Still, it remains a tag on theme trotted out on a need basis rather than being an integral part of their work. Additionally, civil society in general lacks energy and initiative to address pressing issues related to the environment in particular and sustainable development in general. To this end, the workshop will use the ESD approach to provide a holistic outlook to the work carried out by civil society in the country. Good examples from the region would also enable participants to learn from the experience of others.

Facilitators

- Kiran Desai is among the founder members of the Centre for Environment Education (CEE), India. He is associated with CEE for more than 20 years during which he has worked in various capacities, including head of the interpretation group, coordinator for rural and wastelands development programmes and programme director for training in environmental education. Desai has specialized in developing communication and training strategies for natural resource management projects.
- Atul Pandya is Programme Director, Rural Programmes Group at CEE with which he has been associated for the last 23 years. Pandya has specialized in education for sustainability, innovations in education, community organization and natural resource management. He has conducted several participatory rural appraisal, micro-planning and development exercises.

Participants

Representatives of various NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs), especially those working in urban, suburban and rural settings on community development, poverty, gender, health and sanitation, human rights, HIV, non-formal education and other social issues, concerned government departments such as the social welfare department and other relevant groups and organisations, IUCN members and partners.

