



Setting the Agenda- 'Greening Education for a Sustainable Future'

19th September, 2024 at 10:30-11:30 Hrs

Venue: IHC, Stein Auditorium, New Delhi

Background

Education is a powerful tool that empowers learners of all ages to tackle global challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and inequality. It shapes the mindsets and behaviours that drive positive environmental impact. By instilling sustainable practices and fostering a sense of environmental responsibility, education paves the way for a greener, more sustainable future.

Environmental education is dynamic and continuously evolving to adapt to modern changes. It equips individuals and communities with an understanding of the interplay between biological, physical, social, economic, and cultural factors. This education broadens perspectives, highlighting the interdependence between natural and constructed environments and the link between current actions and future consequences. "Greening" education embeds sustainability into all aspects of learning, instilling the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary for responsible stewardship of the planet. It fosters critical thinking and problem-solving, encouraging informed decisions and actions for sustainable living.

The global movement for environmental education began at the United Nations Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972, leading to the establishment of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) and the launch of the International Programme in Environmental Education (IEEP) by UNESCO and UNEP in 1975. Key milestones include the 1977 Inter-Governmental Conference on Environmental Education in Tbilisi, the 1980 World Conservation Strategy, and the 1987 Brundtland report "North-South – A Programme for Survival." Significant efforts to integrate sustainability into education include the 1990 World Declaration on Education for All, the 1992 Rio Earth Summit's Agenda 21, and the 2000 Dakar Framework for Action. The UN General Assembly's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) from 2005-2014 advanced this agenda, fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders to embed sustainable development principles into education. The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), launched before the Rio+20 Conference, united UN entities and nearly 300 universities globally. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly SDG 4, and the Incheon Declaration at the 2015 World Education Forum emphasized inclusive, equitable, and quality education, supporting lifelong learning and sustainable development goals.

Environmental conservation has deep roots in Indian culture and religion, with ancient texts like the Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads, Mahabharata, and Ramayana emphasizing conservation and caution against resource exploitation. India's educational system began integrating environmental education in the 1930s. The Kothari Commission's report in 1964–1966 laid the groundwork for informal environmental education. Following the 1972 Stockholm summit, India enshrined environmental concerns in its constitution through the 42nd Amendment in 1976 and prioritized environmental education (EE) with the establishment of the Ministry of Environment and Forests in 1980. The 1986 National Education Policy emphasized integrating EE across all levels of schooling. A landmark achievement came from a 1991 Public Interest Litigation by Shri M.C. Mehta, prompting the Supreme Court to declare EE a compulsory subject. In 2003, the National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) formulated a model EE syllabus, endorsed by the Supreme Court for nationwide adoption. The present National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 reinforces the commitment to environmental education by integrating sustainable development goals and environmental literacy into the curriculum. It promotes a holistic, multidisciplinary approach to education, emphasizing environmental awareness to shape well-rounded individuals and responsible global citizens.

About the Session

The 6th International Conference on Sustainability Education (ICSE) will set the tone on 'Greening Education for a Sustainable Future'. This session will showcase innovative practices and successful programs that integrate sustainability into education. It will discuss advancements and strategies for embedding sustainability into educational policies and curricula at all levels. The session will explore ways to engage communities, governments, and other stakeholders in promoting environmental education and sustainable practices. It will examine the role of technology in enhancing environmental education and fostering sustainable development. Real-world case studies will demonstrate the positive impacts of environmental education on various communities. Additionally, the session will identify emerging trends and future opportunities for advancing environmental education globally.

Session Objectives

- **Showcase Innovative Practices:** Present innovative approaches and successful programs that effectively integrate sustainability into education, demonstrating practical examples of how environmental education can be implemented across different educational settings.
- **Discuss Policy Integration:** Explore advancements and strategies for embedding sustainability principles into educational policies and curricula at all levels, providing insights into the policy frameworks needed to promote environmental education and sustainable practices.

- **Promote Stakeholder Engagement:** Discuss ways to engage communities, governments, and stakeholders in promoting environmental education and sustainable practices, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts in driving environmental awareness and action.
- **Explore Technological Integration:** Examine the role of technology in enhancing environmental education and fostering sustainable development, highlighting the potential of digital tools and platforms to facilitate learning and engagement in environmental issues.

Expected Outcomes

- Participants will learn actionable strategies for integrating sustainability practices into educational settings, advancing the agenda of greening education.
- Discussions will yield practical strategies for engaging communities and stakeholders in environmental education initiatives.
- opportunities to leverage technology for enhancing environmental education and fostering sustainable development.
- Through case studies, participants will become aware of emerging trends shaping the future of environmental education globally.