

The Environmental Information System acronymed as ENVIS was implemented by the Ministry of Environment & Forests by end of 6th Five Year Plan as a Plan Scheme for environmental information collection, collation, storage, retrieval and dissemination to policy planners, decision makers, scientists and environmentalists, researchers, academicians and other stakeholders.

The Ministry of Environment and Forests has identified Consumer Education and Research Centre (CERC), Ahmedabad, as one of the centers to collect and disseminate information on “Eco-labelling and Promotion of Eco-friendly Products”. The main objective of this ENVIS Centre is to disseminate information on Eco products, International, and National Eco labeling programs.

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Foreword

Sustainable development and sustainable consumption are an integral part of each other. Access to and knowledge of sustainable products and services is the key to a sustainable future.



Sustainable consumption (SC) requires consumers to consider issues that may be less personal, such as the impact of products or services on our environment and the well being of others. In order to obtain a better understanding of how to encourage consumers to follow SC in their daily lives, analysis of their purchasing patterns and accordingly making them aware is needed. Consumer behaviour reflects the impact that the society has on the environment. The actions and choices of the consumers, to consume certain products and services or to adopt a certain way of life all have direct and indirect impacts on the environment, as well as on personal (and collective) well-being. This is why the issue of 'Sustainable Consumption' has become the central focus for national and international policies.

Consumers are fundamental to driving sustainable production and play a central role in sustainable development. Government takes initiatives to promote SC, with an emphasis on individual policy tools and instruments and their effective combination. Civil society organisations and business industries can also play a major role towards the promotion of SC by raising consumers' awareness and providing useful information to influence their consumption behavior. Promoting SC is equally important in order to limit negative environmental and social externalities as well as to provide

sustainable markets for sustainable products. The sustainability of consumption is always considered in economic, environmental, and social terms. Therefore, the policies increasingly take into account the social and ethical dimensions of products, how they are produced as well as their ecological impacts.

Consumer Education and Research Center (CERC) in cooperation with the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) had organised a two-day conference on "Sustainability: Our Collective Social Responsibility For A Livable Planet" on 1st and 2nd Dec 2012 with the objective to enlighten youths and students on sustainable consumerism to make planet livable. Sustainability is not just a topic for national governments and international organizations, but is also, and maybe even more so, an issue for the private sector and civil society.

The overall objective of this conference was to identify the needs/ methods/ approaches of civil society organisations to take a call to encourage consumers on a sustainable path, to build a green economy to achieve sustainable development, to raise public awareness on the need to integrate environment and development, to demand eco-friendly and ethically-made products and to focus on practical measures for implementing sustainable development, based on the many examples of success created as well as their environmental effects.

This newsletter has reproduced the executive summary and presentations of eminent experts who had presented their views on Eco Labelling & Eco Friendly Products and their impact on market and ultimate control on consumers. Eminent experts of different field recommended for making concerted efforts to establish viable consumptions patterns through collaborative efforts, collective strength of united consumers than individual consumer, technology to be used wisely, products with good design, revival of Indian Eco Mark Scheme, children to be taught about sustainability from an early age, and enlightenment of public at large.

Executive Summary

Consumer Education & Research Centre in cooperation with GIZ and in partnership with



Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB) organised a two- day conference on the subject of "Sustainability: Our Collective Social Responsibility For A Livable Planet" on 1st and 2nd Dec 2012. It was held at the Ahmedabad Management Association, Ahmedabad.

Representatives from the GPCB, CPCB, Food and Civil Supplies Department- Government of Gujarat, GIZ, corporate sector, certification bodies, NGOs, and entrepreneurs attended the event.

Dr. V.G. Patel, Chairman CERC and Dr. K.U. Mistry, Chairman GPCB inaugurated the conference. Dr. B. R. Naidu, Zonal officer & Additional Director CPCB in his opening address said that managing sustainability in a developing country like ours was a challenging responsibility. In her welcome address Ms. Ruth Anna Buttner, Project Head GIZ, emphasised that it was important to inculcate awareness of sustainability and green at an early age, like in Germany, where eco friendly products were trendy with the youth and had become a way of life. Their eco label, the Blue Angel was a resounding success. The first session was devoted to Sustainability Issues. Dr. Manish Patel from INCOTEC India spoke on the importance of seed in agriculture, importance of technology in improving seed yield, and said that

the Government should control pollution in agriculture. Ms. Vasudhara Deodhar of the Mumbai Grahak Panchayat spoke on the role of consumer bodies in encouraging sustainable lives.

Mr. Arun Baid, Aura Herbal Wear spoke on how he had seen a lot of pollution in textile manufacturing and wanted to innovate and do green textile manufacturing. Ms. Mili Sethia spoke of sustainability from a designer's perspective.

Mr. Prashant Pandya, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation spoke on Solutions For Waste Management and said AMC was committed to making Ahmedabad clean and green backed by an effective solid waste management department.

Ms. Minati Patel from Suzlon said that in the quest for development we had achieved material abundance but at a cost of resource depletion and environmental degradation. Wind power was an excellent and sustainable means of power generation.

Mr. Gaurav Sarup from Emergent Ventures found that internally within companies there was very little understanding of sustainability. Thinking was purely market related. Ms. Clea Stone from Swechha explained, sustainable shopping meant that we were aware of the environmental, social, and economic aspects of what we were consuming.

The second session dwelt on Social Movement For Sustainability: Formats For Sustainable Business. Mr. Ankur Baruah, Programme Coordinator VIKSAT spoke about the meaning of the Fair Trade movement, its objectives, and VIKSAT and the Fair Trade movement. Mr. Lucas Caldiera, CEO of Asha Handicrafts said fair-trade stood for eradication of poverty, transparency, equal opportunities and wages for women and elimination of the middleman who squeezed the artisan's income in the name of marketing. Mr. Apurva Dave, Advocate, Gujarat High Court presented that it was possible for

India to promote fair trade only if there were stipulations and guidelines. Certain protections for the consumer, labels with date of manufacture, expiry etc. must be present and in these we were lacking. Ms. Jabeen Jambhughodawala Director & Managing Trustee, SAHAJ said that the most important aspect of sustainability was building consumer confidence and decreasing consumer confusion.

The second day and the third session began with the subject Organic Products And Environment.

Dr. Rajendra Khimani, Registrar, Gujarat Vidyapith asked if agriculture was really as safe for the environment as it was thought to be. With the changes in agricultural methods and with changes in the environment, the planet's temperature was increasing.

Organic farming would reduce methane emissions, fix carbon, use renewable energies and improve sustainability. Mr. Virendra Rawat, Member-Environment & Technology Board, Gujarat Technological University, spoke on how a green school should function. Mr. Nisarg Buddhadev, Ecocert Representative, Gujarat, said that his company was a third party company certified organic products according to government standards. When a firm or organization was certified by them they would have many benefits. Ms. Parna Mukherjee, Asst. Professor, Visiting Faculty Law spoke on Environmental Impact Assessment.

The fourth session was devoted to Understanding The Green Market: Eco Labeling and Eco-friendly Products. Mr. Praveen Nahar spoke on eco products. Mr. Rashesh Vyas, GPCB spoke on the Eco Mark scheme. Ms. Simi TB from CUTS International spoke on the Eco Mark scheme and a comparison between the Indian and international scene. Mr. Vivek Gilani spoke about the eco label, The Green Signal that he had cofounded.

The fifth session dwelt on Selling Green. Ms. Anandita Mehta, Chemical Lab CERC, spoke about

comparative testing of food products with eco friendly specification. Ms. Shweta Mahajan, Electrical Lab CERC spoke about comparative testing of electrical products with eco friendly specifications. Mr. Sanjay Chakraborty from Triton Communications spoke on the role of marketing in creating awareness. Mr. Shailesh Goyal, Simulations spoke on challenges in spreading the sustainability message. Ms. Anushree Poddar from Samajhdar Sintu spoke on green teams-leveraging sustainable innovations and strategies.



The sixth and the last session was a discussion on Eco-preneur Showcase: Successful Approaches. Mr. Anand Patel, an architect spoke about sustainable building materials and Mr. Pervez Murshid from ECS Group spoke on green electronic waste management.

The conference concluded with an expression of thanks to the participants and the attendees by Ms. Gauri Wagenaar.

Understanding the Green Market: Eco Labeling & Ecofriendly Products

Speakers:

Mr. Praveen Nahar- National Institute of Design (NID)
Mr. Rashesh Vyas- Gujarat Pollution Control Board (GPCB)
Ms. SimiTB- CUTS International
Mr. Vivek Gilani- The Green Signal

Mr. Praveen Nahar spoke on Eco products.

He said that a famous design thinker once said that the two most dangerous professions in the world were industrial design and advertising. In industrial design we designed products, which made a heap of garbage and advertising made us buy things we didn't need. Industrial design strongly influenced the way we did



things from manufacturing sector to the user. At NID he taught eco or green design or sustainable design and also systems thinking in design, design processes that were more helpful to the environment. Waste was created faster than it could be reconstituted to quality resources. It was estimated that 99% of the original materials used in the production of, or contained in the goods made, became waste within 6 weeks of sale. Functionality was only part of the reason for disposing of a product-sometimes only a very small part. Therefore, there was much more to how we related to products than function. He went on to explain that there were five design requirements for Eco products.

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Cyclic- The product was made from organic materials, and was recyclable or compostable, or was made from minerals that were continuously cycled in a closed loop.

Solar- The product used solar energy or other forms of renewable energy that were cyclic and safe, both during use and manufacture.

Safe- The product was non-toxic in use and disposal, and its manufacture did not involve toxic releases or the disruption of ecosystems.

Efficient- The product's efficiency in manufacture and use was improved by a factor of ten, requiring 90% less materials, energy and water than products providing equivalent utility earlier.

Social- The product and its components and raw materials were manufactured under fair and just operating conditions for the workers involved and the local communities.

If you brought in environment factors, designing products could be a win-win situation. Eco Products could be functional, beautiful, appropriate, durable, and renewable.

The environmental impact of products could be divided into three categories - ecological damage, human health damage, and resource depletion. He gave examples of innovative eco designs some designed to bio mimic nature, some using reused or recyclable materials, some minimizing the number of production methods and operations, others reducing product or packaging weight, reducing water use inefficiencies, designing for easy maintenance and repair capabilities, creating a timeless look or fashion, providing for reuse of components and providing for ability to biodegrade. Finally he spoke about the concepts of consumerism and prosumerism.

Consumerism: (defined as a term only in 1944) the theory that an increasing consumption of goods was economically desirable. Also a preoccupation with an inclination toward the buying of consumer goods.

Prosumer: A prosumer on the other hand was a pro-active & conscious consumer; culturally, environmentally, and socially aware, and they took an active role in choosing a product or service.

Mr. Rashesh Vyas from GPCB spoke on Eco-Mark Scheme.

Mr. Vyas spoke on the issue of eco mark labeling scheme playing a pivotal role in motivating people to



include more eco friendly products in their routine by guiding them towards identifying such products.

The need to protect environment was imminent to each and every one of us considering its impact on

humans, animals, and the overall ecological cycle. There were several conferences that happened on the national and international level where environment issues had been successfully raised and there had been several protocols designed to ensure that the environment was safeguarded including the Kyoto Protocol and Rio Conference.

On the national level, there were several rules to protect the environment and Mr. Vyas also shared a broad outline of these laws before embarking on the topic of eco mark labeling scheme. Starting with the Environmental Protection Act and the Prevention of Water Pollution Act, there were several laws to protect the environment. Apart from government organizations, even the judicial system had played a pivotal role in ensuring that the environment protection rules were well implemented.

The main cause for environmental degradation was unplanned urbanization and rampant industrialization. The best way to control it from further deteriorating was to convince them to shift towards eco-friendly products. In order to help consumers identify such eco friendly products, the government came up with eco mark labeling scheme in 1991. With the symbol being a "Matka", the purpose of this symbol was to convey that a product needed to be as eco friendly as an earthen pot that was completely biodegradable.

An eco friendly product needed to be made keeping in mind that there was no harm to the environment and the product was high on quality. In fact, even manufacturers should be motivated to opt for eco friendly products. Every person understanding their responsibility towards the environment and accordingly fulfilling it was one of the best ways to ensure our future generations got to be part of a happier environment.

Ms. Simi from CUTS International spoke on Eco Mark Schemes- Indian & international Scene-A Comparison

An eco label was a label which identified overall



environmental preference of a product or service based on lifecycle considerations. All environmental labels were not eco labels. An eco label was voluntary, based on scientific evidence and life-cycle considerations, third party, and independent, and distinctive on environmental performance. Some successful eco labels around the world were the EU Flower label, Germany's Blue Angel, the Nordic eco label, USA's Green Seal, and Taiwan's Green Mark.

The common characteristics among all these labels were that they were voluntary, their criteria were revised regularly to follow technological evolution, procedures were simplified and transparent and stakeholder participation was ensured.

However there was one major difference between India's Eco Mark and the labels of other countries. In India a company needed the added ISI certification to be able to get Eco Mark certification-that is it actually needed two certifications and the unnecessary cumbersome and difficult requirements put off

producers from getting the label onto their products so much so that only 12 manufacturers had obtained the Eco Mark license till today and even they hardly used it.

The Eco Mark label needed a big boost. It had a three-tiered system of administration where communication between the MoEF, CPCB, and BIS was virtually non-existent, there had to be more awareness raising efforts about the label, there had to be periodic review considering technology and market criteria, and there had to be a working plan and a forward looking agenda with adequate stakeholder participation from all industries, SME's, crafts, business organizations, trade unions, traders, retailers, importers, consumer and environment organizations. Finally she said that the country was in urgent need of a good eco label.

*Mr. Vivek Gilani, Co founder The Green Signal spoke on
Eco Certification & Eco Testing.*

India needed a functional and active eco label. He said The Green Signal was perhaps the eco label that everyone had been waiting for. It was founded by the CII. Two reasons for the birth of this label were, the current Eco Mark scheme had no resonance or emotional connect with consumers, secondly when you looked at labels and sustainability reports they were very qualitative in their assessment. They wanted to make sure that their eco label had a strong component of measurability, reportability and verifiability.

The Green Signal philosophy-Once an organisation had fulfilled the basic prerequisites of looking at its

own sustainability performance, it had implemented measures such a carbon ARP, or life cycle assessment, if a product had done life cycle assessment and from that has developed a strategy to further reduce its environmental impact, implemented all those measures which were part of a sustainability strategy, the outcome of that cyclical process was eco labeling. Importantly, the entity has to transform itself internally before receiving the eco label.

To resonate with the new India and to convey the idea of gradation- with a symbol that all Indians could associate with- what better than the phone signal? The Green Signal obsessed with the idea of numbers, the Green Signal could differentiate even within a category, hence it provided with an incentive to climb up the ladder.

It was also a dynamic system, so as the overall population became greener, you would have to run to keep pace, and it gave you a healthy aspiration to become better. The green signal was a more embracing label, because entities that were genuine cases for being environmentally friendly could get the Green Signal. Also he felt people not only in India but all over the world were very concerned about climate change, so if one was to marry the eco label with carbon emissions we could tell whether the product was not just environmentally better but it also told us the climate change impact of that product.

The eco label was a graded eco label, certification of products was done by- initially the entities received an award only for data disclosure, in the second phase, the methodology moved from disclosure to benchmarking and disclosure.

He showed the CGH Hotel Group methodology. He went through the nuts and bolts of the conservation practices. He said it was a very elaborate process, they created key performance



indicators- the biodegradable carbon materials that were being used by the organization, and they had criteria such as looking at the percentage of total materials used on a cost basis, which was certified, recycled paper. They tried to come up with criteria that were India specific, which a business could fulfill. For example one way of demonstrating you were doing water conservation was how many of your cisterns had dual flush systems. This was a key performance indicator they had come up with so this helped to create a baseline. It was a very rigorous process and they had done this for many categories.

GreenNGood the first green online retail store in India had received the eco label. They were currently in the process of inviting other online retail stores such as Flipkart, Healthkart etc. They wanted to be the official eco label and make The Green Signal a pan India eco label.

Selling Green

Speakers:

Ms. Anandita Mehta- Consumer Education & Research Centre

Ms. Shweta Mahajan- Consumer Education & Research Centre

Mr. Sanjay Chakraborty- Triton Communications

Mr. Shailesh Goyal- Simulations Public Affairs

Ms. Anushree Poddar- Samajhdaar Sintu

Ms. Anandita Mehta, Chemical Lab, CERC, spoke on Comparative Testing of Products with eco friendly specifications.

She said that two categories of products were tested in the CERC TORCH labs. They were food and electrical/electronic products. In terms of food products, they had to conform to both BIS and the eco certification norms to be classified as eco friendly. The specific requirements, which were needed to be met by foods wanting to be certified

as organic- according to the BIS and PFA Act were-

- 1) Display of eco-criteria was to be there on the package itself.
- 2) The package should be recyclable or biodegradable.
- 3) Declaration of dates of manufacture and expiry was very important.
- 4) No fungal toxins should be present in the food items.
- 5) There should be specific instructions for proper use, storage, and transport.

Among testing on foods, they had done testing



on Organic Tea and Lipsticks. In Comparative Testing on Lipsticks, 43 brands of lipsticks and three brands of lip-gloss were tested for the heavy metals. Lead content in particular

was checked. Lead content was an important parameter because lead was never excreted from the body; it accumulated in the body over a period of time and caused health problems. All of them were found to contain lead. The BIS had an acceptable limit of 20 parts per million of Lead. She said that they requested the BIS to revisit their standards and reduce the limit further because even the smallest quantities of Lead if consumed, were dangerous.

Ms. Shweta Mahajan, Electrical lab, CERC, spoke on Comparative Testing of Products with eco friendly specifications.

She began by saying that testing in CERC labs were done to take into consideration not just energy efficiency of products but also safety, performance and environmental compatibility to check potential harm to the environment. In case of electrical products, if there was more consumption of

electricity, one has to pay higher bills but if the whole country switched to CFL bulbs there will be a large saving of energy. She explained about the comparative testing CERC had done for exhaust fans, hand blenders, and food mixers. She explained the important criteria to test the environment compatibility of appliances. India's energy security was critical to maintain its high growth rate. Currently, India faced a peak power capacity shortage of about 9.8% of its total electricity demand. Standards and labeling for appliances was one of the major areas for improving energy efficiency and bridging the gap between demand and supply of energy in India.



There were two ways to promote Energy Efficiency:

- Promotion of Energy Efficiency products
- Adoption of Energy Efficiency technologies

Both were challenging as they involved diverse stakeholders, such as policymakers, manufacturers and consumers with varying consumption habits and preferences. She explained the procedures followed by BEE in the Energy Labeling Program. Finally she spoke about good practices for using electrical home appliances.

Mr Sanjay Chakraborty from Triton Communications spoke on "How Green Is Green-Role of marketing to create awareness."

He began by saying

In a society there were three identities,

Individual

Corporate

Marketing and Advertising.

Some examples of corporate green propositions were The Orchid, or Ecotel Hotel, A green MBA started by an online education firm, online eco-friendly product stores and CFL bulbs. Examples of

social responsibility were Gujarat Gas in Ahmedabad, which went around villages creating awareness about environment. Olympus cameras had come out with environment friendly campaigns. Hewlett Packard disseminated environment friendly communication through its advertisements. He then showed us the HP campaign on screen.

He said Corporates could initiate green habits by having green offices. Among the ideas he suggested were turning off the computer at the end of the day, printing on both sides of paper,



using AC reasonably, using your own mug instead of plastic cups, carpooling, going walking or going by train.

Advertising and Media could do its bit too. Some examples were-

The Earth Care Awards by Times Of India, Ahmedabad Mirror's Clean Ahmedabad campaign, NDTV's yearly Greenathon, Times Of India's Earth Hour with a Celebrity Rahul Bose the brand ambassador for a green blog to create awareness of environmental issues.

He suggested more creative contribution from advertising agencies.

The advertisement agencies should be action oriented rather than award oriented and recommend for eco friendly ideas. Eco friendly business cards should be used. Donate media space in association with companies to come out with advertisements. Green Events should be held. Donate communication intellect. He gave the case study of marketing of Nike shoes-whose entire value chain was built on eco friendliness. Their target was to cut energy, reduce toxics, slash water waste, reduce waste, support communities, and empower workers. They had a campaign that asked people to give them back old shoes, which they recycled into turf, they invested in a process for dyeing that didn't use a drop of water, they made

jerseys for Olympians with recycled plastic bottles, and they used the famous disabled champion Jason Lester as their brand ambassador. Their stores were also made from salvaged wood. They even came out with a recycled advertisement that was a combination of pictures and videos of old advertisements. They held contests online to know if people knew about the environment. Finally, he said that policies and practices must be in place and marketing should be done only if you actually practiced what you preached.

Mr. Shailesh Goyal spoke on Green Products Hoax: Challenges in spreading the sustainability message.



Communication and marketing strategies were facing a fundamental challenge in matters related to promotion of green products. A Green product was a secondary choice for many consumers. He explained the challenges faced

by marketers among them, the average customer was not yet prepared to pay a premium for ethical trade products, purchasing price still remained the dominant decisive factor and source of competitive advantage, lack of information on what was 'Sustainable' and lack of labeled products. It was imperative to create Communication Campaigns to explain the importance of individual actions in a positive way and reduce consumer skepticism. Concrete programs were needed that allowed customers to "experience" sustainable choices. Some of the marketing communication he spoke about for Green Products was- create campaigns to show green products in a positive way, imbibe the fact that green products created value for business and prosperity. He suggested conducting live programs that allowed consumers to experience

Green products in form of binders and recyclable products. Marketing should not be money making machine. The basic idea of marketing the product should be catchy. It should cultivate science, technology, spirit and faith. It should explore the social context for a mutual journey towards sustainability. His final comment was "Don't change values but change perception towards values in life"

Ms. Anushree Poddar of Samjhdar Sintu spoke on Green Teams: leveraging sustainable innovations and strategies.



She said there was a great trend of comic strips in the west. They wanted to see if this would work in India too, which is how the Samajhdar Sintu comic strip was born. Sintu was a fictional character; he was a 7 year old. Samajhdhar Sintu was a kid who taught 'green' and tried to create a social impact by learning through his mistakes. It was not a boring way of learning about the environment but an interesting and funny way of learning for elders and kids, especially kids because this was the right age to learn to protect one's environment. The comic strip was placed in Newspaper in Education of the Times of India and reached out to 50,000 schools all over India. It ran for one and a half years. Some of the topics taken up in the comic strip were solar water heaters, public transportation, saving electricity, saving water, rechargeable batteries and even Anna Hazare!

She believed the comic strip was a bridge between them and the consumer and today this green message was much needed.

Write to us

We value your views and suggestions. Please send us your feedback on this issue.
We would also like to have your contribution on the information relevant to the Eco product and Eco labeling.
Please mail: cerc-env@nic.in

Green Event

"Going Green" is a phrase referring to the pursuit of knowledge and practices that lead to more environmentally friendly and ecologically responsible decisions and lifestyles, thus helping protect the environment and sustaining its natural resources.

PGPIBM students of Ahmedabad Management Association had organised a national level management fest at Ahmedabad Management Association on 15th & 16th February 2013. The title of the event was AMAzing'13 - "Go Green". The objective of the event was to looking for some easy ways to go green and to help increase environmental awareness. Dr. Kartikeya Sarabhai, an environmentalist, chief guest of the event, had acclaimed the idea of taking such serious issues in such events in a Management Fest. He said it always motivates the entrepreneurs and students to do business in ethical manner, which protects the environment as well. Different issues for going green had been discussed at large. Students had organised an event called "Hara Bazar" and invited different entrepreneurs who were promoting eco friendly products, to set their stalls. People of different strata of the society visited the stalls and made aware them about the importance of eco friendly products. How these products were different from their counterparts and their impact on market and ultimate control on consumers. ENVIS team of Consumer Education & Research Centre (CERC) guided them for organising the event.



Such events help students, entrepreneurs, and public at large to know more about the environmentally friendly products, their impact on environment, and can pledge to do simple, green actions.



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GOVERNMENT OF INDIA



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कहाँ है खुशहाली ॥

