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Newsletter on Eco-labelling and Eco-friendly Products

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Eco and Sustainable Textile for Society





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Contents

Foreword 2

Organisations promoting sustainable textile 3

Eco friendly Natural Dyes 6

Eco Labels for Textile 9



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Sustainability has been at the heart of every marketing campaign during the last many years. The concept of ethical and responsible production and consumption has become a part and parcel of governments' economic and social policies in many countries. Textile/clothing sector because of its environmental and social impacts is a focus of sustainability movement. The textile industry is one of the most ecologically damaging industries in the world. Petroleum-based products release dangerous emissions that wreak havoc on our environment, and bleaching and dyeing create toxins that pollute our air and waterways.

Global awareness of the eco-friendly clothing is growing and there are increasing numbers of cases of people experiencing health problems such as rashes, allergies, respiratory and concentration problems due to chemical sensitivities. Many have found clothing with natural dyes helpful in reducing exposure to the vast amount of toxic chemicals people are unknowingly exposed to on a daily basis.

India is known globally for her rich heritage of arts and crafts. Over the past 30 years, the number of Indian artisans has decreased by 30%. This indicates that there is a need to revive the craft of artisans to safeguard history, culture and an important source of livelihood. There are several designers, NGOs and entrepreneurs who explore new avenues through design interventions and

collaborative initiatives with craftspeople. The government's 'Make in India' initiative is breathing life into some relatively unknown varieties of indigenous fabrics. Indian artisans are building sustainability through crafts and art.

A large number of social and eco-labelling systems for certifying products meet the criteria of sustainability. There are many certification schemes. It is a method of differentiating products that better meet social and ecological standards with respect to traditional products and are awarded by impartial third party - private and public organisations. These labels work as a bridge among the governments, businesses and consumers providing each with the guidance on identifying, producing and using green products.

The present issue narrates the story of organisations that empower indigenous artisans. They create a community of artisans and connect them with potential customers. They give craft skills training, organisational and design assistance to the artisans. They aimed to build capacity, share best practice and explore market opportunities for using more sustainable Indian textiles. It also illustrates how natural dyes produce rich and complex colours by using vegetation to add designs and motifs to the fabric. Information on certification, eco-labels, plays a major role in giving credible assurance to retailers and end-consumers that products comply with standards based on social, ecological & environmental criteria.

Organisations promoting sustainable textile



There are many organisations that promote handcrafted Indian textiles, bringing recognition to the practising artisans and connecting them to contemporary markets, by linking them to designers and other experts who can advise and guide them on the better production methods, sustainable options for clothing and home furnishings and make them environment-friendly. Sustainability is the way forward, which implies both survivals of crafts integrated with livelihood prospects and environmentally sound practices. The handicrafts sector has a low carbon footprint since it is essentially driven by human power. However, most of these crafts are intuitively imbibed and practised making them temporal assets, dependent on communities and future generations for survival.

Here are some organisations that are committed to promote and support sustainable development. They train local artisans in technical skills and encourage employment in rural communities and market their produce both nationally and internationally.

Anokhi

Jaipur-based Anokhi seeks to create an environment in which traditional textiles have their ANOKHI place and value and to build a



symbiotic relationship between the market and the design product - between skill and tradition. It has revitalised the craft of hand block printing and embraces a tradition of craft and finds multiple ways of making that craft available in a consumable form. The company develops designs in-house, samples them and then sends the fabric, dyes and blocks to artisans in the villages who are free to work at home. The finished, hand block-printed fabric is brought back to the company's facility where it is turned into the final product. The company has created employment options for women, particularly from rural areas and reviving the traditional textile skills.

AVANI

AVANI is a voluntary organisation working in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand.

To preserve and revive the traditional craft of weaving, spinning and natural dyeing it works with the local communities of Pithoragarh and Bageshwar districts of Kumaon. It supports product development,



quality control, provision of raw materials and marketing support. All the products are hand woven and naturally dyed. Most of the yarns are hand spun as well. The processes of production are eco-friendly and do not harm the soil and water of the area.

The range of products includes shawls, stoles, mufflers, home furnishings and tweed garments. All textiles available are exclusively dyed with natural dyes. These textiles carry a hand-made and naturally dyed certification by All India Artisans and Craftworkers Association. This activity has created a source of livelihood in some very remote villages. The artisans' collective has now been registered as a cooperative. It is called the Kumaon Earthcraft Self-Reliant Cooperative.

Crafts+ Design+ Society

CRAFT + **DESIGN+**

Ahmedabad- based the Craft+Design+Society, an organisation which promotes the **SOCIETY** handcrafted Indian textiles, bringing recognition to the

practising artisans and connecting them to contemporary markets. It links them to designers and other experts who can advise and guide them on sustainable production. The organisation empowers artisans in innovative ways, allows them to perceive their role as "design enhancers" and "entrepreneurs". Collaborative experiments with designers and artisans certainly show a way forward and could be replicated at a larger level to pave the way for a hierarchical/structural change.

Craft+Design+Society along with designer- backed artisans and their crafts and partners with institutes like National Institute of Designs facilitates the interexchange of knowledge of the skill, craft, design development and market of the final product. This is also an interesting means to define new aesthetics - integrating disciplines like fashion, design and craft is an ideal way to foster 'Craft in India' through quality innovation, adding creative value to the

contemporary design market through indigenous craft. Craft+Design+Society believes "If we lose a craft, we lose a culture."

Hansiba



Ahmedabad - based the SEWA Trade Facilitation Centre (STFC) represents a unique and innovative movement where

marginalised artisans themselves are the producers, owners, shareholders and managers of their own company. STFC works as a bridge linking these vulnerable informal workers with the global market by sustained, profitable, and efficient coordination of design, production, and marketing of traditional embroidery. Hansiba is the fashion brand of STFC which represents thousands of women with the precious skill of hand embroidery & craft. Named after Hansiba, SEWA's first and senior-most artisan and an inspiring symbol of everything the organisation stands for, showcasing some of India's timeless embroidery skills.

Mother Earth

Bangalore-based the Industree is a social enterprise that links rural producers to urban markets. It has built a retail brand called Mother Earth, which is part (14%) producer owned. "Industree/Mother Earth" is a hybrid



organisation. Under this structure, it has two organisations - Industree Crafts Pvt. Ltd & Industree Foundation (IF). Industree Crafts Pvt. Ltd. is a forprofit organisation that manufactures and sells products under brand name 'Mother Earth', while Industree Foundation (IF) is a non-profit organisation acting as a channel for capacity building, design development, skill training and infrastructure support from Government of India schemes on behalf of producers. Mother Earth believes in providing with great quality goods while nurturing the environment and building on the strengths of marginalised rural communities to create sustainable livelihoods and overall prosperity. Mother Earth has closed the gap between rural artisans and the retail market. Its mission is to enhance and create secure artisanal livelihood through socially, economically and environmentally sustainable production.

4 July-September 2016 **GREEN INSIGHTS**



Self Employed Women's Association, Lucknow

Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA-Lucknow) is an autonomous organisation of Chikan-artisans. Chikan is a type of traditional hand embroidery



style from Lucknow. It serves the marginalized women by providing them training linked with production and marketing, and by eliminating middlemen for their socio-economic empowerment and sustainable development. SEWA Lucknow is a member of Fair Trade Forum India and World Fair Trade Organisation (WFTO).

Shop for Change: Fairtrade

Shop for Change Fair Trade is a section 25 Not for Profit Company set up by the NGOs International Resources for Fairer Trade (IRFT) from India and Traidcraft Exchange



from the UK to find an innovative solution to the problems faced by of poor farmers and artisans in India. It uses certification to build the capacity of producer groups and improve their access to value-

added markets as well as protect the environment, promote social equity and raise awareness among consumers. Shop for Change has four main functions; certification, business services, producer services and awareness rising. It works to empower farmers, businesses and consumers to make shopping fairer and greener for a more sustainable future.

Vasudha

The Vasudha Project is an organic farming programme initiated and run by Pratibha Syntex to "grow clean and eco-



friendly cotton, to produce clean cotton garments, spread environmental sensibilities amongst people, generate direct and indirect employment and ensure farmers' welfare." This project runs in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Rajasthan. Pratibha has dedicated a full-time team of experts to train the farmers on farming organically, to research seed varieties and develop more effective farming techniques, and to monitor farmers to ensure that they are meeting organic certification requirements.

Source:

http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/life/2003/1 2/15/stories/2003121500020100.htm http://www.anokhi.com/anokhi/about-us.html http://avani-kumaon.org/, http://avani-kumaon.org/programmes/textiles/ Crafts+design+Society: Contributed by Ms. Gauri

Wagenaar (M.A. History of Art, University of Leiden – The Netherlands)

http://www.sewatfc.org/pages/aboutus.html, http://hansiba.in/About_hansiba.html

http://motherearth.co.in/about-us/structure/, http://www.industree.org.in/

http://www.sewalucknow.org/background.php http://www.fairtradeforum.org/shop-for-change/ http://www.sustainablecottons.com/774/, http://www.pratibhasyntex.com/vasudha.swf Pictures provided by Asif Shaikh and Gauri Wagenaar

Eco friendly Natural dyes



he art of dyeing is as old as our civilisation. Natural dyes were used for the colouring of textiles from ancient times untill the nineteenth century. Environmental awareness has revived interest in natural dyes mainly among environmentally conscious people. Natural dyes are considered eco-friendly owing to their better biodegradability and higher compatibility with the environment. They are non-toxic, skin friendly, non carcinogenic, abundant and renewable.

Three elements that play critical roles in natural dyeing are dye, mordant and type of fibre. Natural dyes are organic particles derived from animals, vegetables or minerals that can impart colour to fibre without chemical processing. Metallic agents called mordants are needed by some fibres to help the dye

adhere. They not only help fibres absorb dye more readily, they often change the colours a dye produces. The type of fibre being dyed also affects colour.

"Environment-friendly" and "sustainability" have become more than a buzz-word, for many centuries, innumerable crafts have existed in harmony with nature. "Natural" does not mean safe – they are not synonyms. Mushrooms can be poisonous. Arsenic is perfectly "natural," meaning occurring naturally in nature. Some natural dyes are almost perfectly safe; others are quite toxic. Some synthetic dyes are safe even to eat; others are too toxic to bring into the home. A few natural dyes, such as logwood, which contains haematin and haematoxylin, are themselves significantly poisonous – they're toxic

6 July-September 2016 GRE€N IN®IGHTS

whether inhaled, absorbed through the skin or ingested. Indigo is a skin, eye and respiratory system irritant. Proper health and safety equipment must be supplied when working with any dyestuffs and workers need to be trained properly so they treat the dyes and mordants with respect.

There are about 8000 colours and shades that are available as chemical. Organic and natural dyes have limitations and require some expertise in getting colours right and consistent. India was famous for its natural Indigo, a range of blues.

Some things are so subtle that they do not shine out, yet so vivid that one cannot help but appreciate the

aesthetics in their creation. One such craft is the Ajrakh. Traditionally, Ajrak is the name of a block printed cloth with



deep crimson red and indigo blue background, bearing symmetrical patterns with interspersed unprinted sparkling white motifs. An ancient craft, the history of the Ajrakh can be traced back to the civilisations of the Indus Valley that existed around 2500 BC-1500 BC.

During a discussion with Jabbarbhai (Abduljabbar M. Khatri) who is a master craftsman in Ajrakh, he was asked about his experience for dyes. What in his experience were the typical traits of working with dyes, especially natural dyes? He is already creating products with multiple colours and using all his skills to come up with one product with the maximum colours in natural dyes, he expects that, that palette is about 30 colours in all. It takes hours and hours and a lot of effort specially in Ajrakh, which is the craft that he practices. The end result is never perfect and the market is quite ruthless towards mistakes that are only visible once the final product is complete, sometimes putting all the best efforts to waste.

When he was asked if there were any adverse effects of natural dyes, he gave the example of Indigo, he explained that indigo is considered a cool colour; therefore, it is cool to wear as well. However, if one is prone to colds and works in the dyeing process of indigo, the person is likely to get pneumonia.

Indigo is a plant from which various shades of blue are produced. India was and is still well known for its indigo and indigo dyed / printed textiles.



There are also other natural ingredients that are used to dye fabric or in prints, and some of them actually have therapeutic values against one's skin; many of these have been explained in Ayurveda. Ayurveda is a traditional and the most influential form of medicine native to India originating from its Vedic traditions. Ayurvedic herbs have properties of dyeing fibres also.

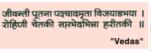
Ayurvedic Herbs

Haritaki: It is so named because it grows in the abode of Hara (the Himalayas); it is natural green (harita) in colour and cures (harayet) all diseases.



Therapeutic usage: This is known as the king

of herbs for its high medicinal properties.





Turmeric: Turmeric belongs to the same family as ginger, Sometimes known as 'Indian saffron'; It is the source of the familiar yellow colour of many Asian curry dishes. Both the culinary spice and the dye are obtained from its root. Turmeric was and is still used for textile painting and printing in India.

w de m Dor

Therapeutic usage: Cures tvagdosa (skin

diseases), meha (obstinate urinary disorders including dia-





betes), asra (vitiation of blood), sopha (oedema), pandu (anemia) and vrana (ulcer).

Indigo: Indigo's ability to produce an extensive range of beautiful blue shades has made it the most successful dye plant ever known. The commercially available indigo powder is made from the leaves of Indigofera tinctoria, which requires hot, sunny, and humid growing conditions to flourish.

Therapeutic usage: Cures moha (unconsciousness), bharma (giddiness),

udara (obstinate abdominal diseases including ascites), plihan

नीलिनी रेचनी तिक्ता केश्या मोहभ्रमापहा । उष्णा हन्त्युदरप्लीहवातरक्त कफानिलान ॥ "Vedas"

(spleen disorder) and vata rakta (gout)

Madder: Madder's leafy tops sprawl untidily over the ground and their clusters of tiny yellow flowers look insignificant. Yet to the dyer, madder is a miracle of nature because its roots contain alizarin, one of the most valuable red dye pigments ever known.

Therapeutic usage: Cures vish (poisoning), shoph (oedema), yoni sula (pain in female genital organ), aksi sul (pain in the eyes),

raktatisar(diarrhe a associated with bleeding), kusth (obstinate skin



diseases including leprosy), vitiation of blood, visarp (erysipelas), vran(ulcer) and meh (obstinate urinary diseases including diabetes).

Pomegranate: The succulent pomegranate fruit

yields an ochre-yellow dye and the skin is rich in tannin, which improves colorfastness. The pomegranate dye lacks brilliance so it is often mixed with turmeric root to make the color brighter. In India and Southeast Asia it is used as a mordant and a dye.







Specific action: Hrdya tonic (cardiac tonic), Shudhavardhak (appetizer) and constitutive.

Onion: The outer skin of this common vegetable is one of the most useful and readily available dyestuffs. It is ideal for a novice dyer's first experiments since it reliably produces rich, vibrant shades of orange, yellow, rust, and brown on all fibres,



and does not impart any odor to the dyed materials.





Therapeutic usage: Cures svas (dyspnoea), khaansee (cough), gulm (phantom tumor), Jvar (fever), aruchi (anorexia), shoph (oedema, arsas (piles), kusth (obstinate skin diseases including leprosy), sula (colic pain) and krimi (parasitic infestation).

Natural fibres are good for the skin and when it is dyed with natural medicinal rich herbs, the comfort level and soft feel to the skin further enhances. Natural Dyes in comparison to any of the synthetic dyes are considered to be an eco-friendly alternative for dyeing of textile materials.

Source:http://www.auraherbalwear.com/herbal_dy eing, http://gaatha.com/ajrak/ Contributed by Ms. Gauri Wagenaar (M.A. History of Art, University of Leiden – The Netherlands)

8 July-September 2016 GREEN IN SIGHTS

Ecolabels for Textile

In order to promote the concept of eco-friendly textiles, a comprehensive system of eco -labels is advocated by many countries. For the purpose of issuing eco- labels, certain norms/criteria are stipulated in respect of textile products, on the basis of Cradle-to-Grave approach, i.e. these criteria are developed on analysing the product's entire life cycle commencing with the extraction of raw materials, progressing through the stages of production, distribution and utilisation and disposal after use. The norms are also referred to as Eco Standards. Environmental labels can be either mandatory or voluntary. Mandatory labels are government-backed and voluntary labels may be funded and supervised by the private sector. Some, however, are government sponsored. Natural dyes per se are sustainable as they are renewable and biodegradable but they cannot fulfill the huge demand from the textile sector in view of the preferential use of land for food and feed purposes. Also, overexploitation of natural resources to obtain dyes may result in deforestation and threaten endangered species. For these reasons, the ecolabel standards permit the use of safe synthetic dyes and prohibits the use of natural dves from endangered species. Various research efforts have been undertaken all over the world to address the shortcomings of natural dyes in view of the tremendous environmental advantage they offer.

There are many organisations who assesses compliance of an entity against a standard or set of criteria, and issues a certificate if deemed successful.

Better Cotton Initiative

A voluntary organisation, the Better Cotton Initiative (BCI) helps



millions of farmer to grow cotton in a way that is good for the environment and the farmers and is more economical across the globe. It encourages farmers to adopt the better management practices in the cultivation of cotton to achieve measurable reductions in main environmental impacts, while improving social and economic benefits for all cotton farmers across the world.

BMP Certified Cotton

BMP is the Australian cotton industry's guide for growing cotton in harmony with the natural environment. The BMP program is a voluntary tool developed by the cotton industry to guide cotton



farmers in improving their environmental practices. It is comprised of seven modules each of which address an aspect of cotton production; pesticide management (five modules), petrochemicals (onemodule) and land and water management (one module). The trademark is a consumer guarantee that the branded textile product they are buying is made of Australian cotton grown under Best Management Practices by growers who care for the environment.

Craft Mark



Leveraging Craftmark as a brand, the All India

Artisans & Craftworkers Welfare Organization (AIACA), accredits genuine Indian handicrafts, encourages fair trade standards across the sector and supports new product development working with both grass root artisans and new designers, among many other activities that support traditional handloom and handicrafts from India. The AIACA provides Craftmark logo for use by craft-based businesses, cooperatives and NGOs and this certification prohibit child labour. Craftmark is endorsed as a seal of authenticity, and as a reassurance of quality and integrity. Craftmark helps consumers make informed and ethical choices. The seal is licensed to producers or retailers of Indian handicraft products. To be certified applicants

undergo a rigorous process of assessment, including onsite monitoring, and an independent, transparent review by a panel consisting of leaders from the crafts sector.

EcoMark-India

The Government of India has evolved eco standards for the eco-labelling of the textile items in consultation with the Indian Textile Trade and Industry. The eco-labelling of textiles is notified



as a voluntary scheme. The Earthen Pot is being used as the logo of this scheme. There is a general and product specific requirement for EcoMark label.

General Requirements: All the textile products manufactured shall meet relevant standards specified by Bureau of Indian Standards. The product manufacturer must produce the consent clearance as per the provisions of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act 1981, Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977 respectively, along with the authorization, if required under Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the rules made thereunder to BIS while applying for Ecomark. Additionally, the manufacturer shall produce documentary evidence in the compliance with the provisions related to noise level and occupational health under the provisions of Factories Act, 1948 and Rules made thereunder. The product packaging may display in brief the criteria based on which the product has been labelled environment-friendly. The material used for product packaging shall be reusable or made from recyclable or biodegradable materials. Fatty alcohol based non ionics as emulsifier should be used wherever required. Polyhalogenated based phenolic fire retardants shall not be used.

Product- Specific Requirements: This standard prescribes requirements for environmental -labelling of textile products made from cotton, wool, silk or man-made fibres or their blends. IS 15651 2006 Reaffirmed 2010 -Textiles - Requirements for environmental labelling

EU Ecolabel for textile

The EU Ecolabel is a voluntary scheme to encourage businesses to market products and services that are kinder to the environment. Ecolabel criteria are not



based on one single factor, but on studies which analyse the impact of the product or service on the environment throughout its life-cycle, starting from raw material extraction in the pre-production stage, through to production, distribution and disposal. With the objective of addressing the main environmental impacts, EU Ecolabel criteria for textiles aim in particular at promoting the reduction of water pollution related to the key processes throughout the textile manufacturing chain, including fibre production, spinning, weaving, knitting, bleaching, dyeing and finishing.

Global Organic Textile Standards (GOTS)

The Global Organic Standard (GOTS) is the leading standard for The STAND including ecological and social



criteria, backed by independent certification of the entire textile supply chain. The aim to develop the Standards was to combine the various existing and draft standards in the area of eco textile processing. It defines the requirements to ensure the organic status of textiles- from harvesting of the raw material through responsible manufacturing of the product environmentally and socially to the labelling of the product. To ensure a credible assurance to the end consumer. It covers the production, processing, manufacturing, packaging, labelling, exportation, importation and distribution of all natural fibres. Processors and manufacturers shall be enabled to supply their organic fabrics and garments with one certification accepted in all major selling markets.

NATURTEXTIL Best

"Naturtextil BEST" is a holistic standard. It values environmental and social criteria along the entire textile production chain. This quality seal, well known

10 July-September 2016 **GREEN** INSIGHTS within Europe, currently sets the strictest ecological standard for textile production at the highest technical level currently feasible. BEST reflects the standards for eco-friendly textiles developed by the International Association



of Natural Textile Industry (IVN) since 1990 and reviews the entire textile production chain both in terms of ecological standards and in terms of social accountability.

Oeko-Tex Standard

The standard is a globally uniform testing and certification system for textile raw materials,



intermediate and end products at all stages of production. It is applicable to textile products, including fabrics, apparel, textile products for infants, textile flooring materials, fabric wallpaper, mattresses, linens, towels and beddings. In addition to hazards posed to human health, textile products are assessed for energy consumption, resources consumption, pollution load, and workplace management in the production process. Textile products may be certified according to Oeko-Tex Standard 100 only if all components meet the required criteria without exception. It is found in millions of products around the world in almost all retail segments.

Silk Mark – A Quality Assurance label

Silk Mark is a certification mark for silk textiles in India. The mark certifies that the piece of textile is made of pure natural silk. The certification is provided by 'Silk SILK MARK Mark Organisation of



India'(SMOI), a society set up by the state-controlled Central Silk Board of India. SMOI is an initiative of Central Silk Board, Ministry of Textiles and Government of India. SMOI Corporate Office is headquartered in Bangalore and has thirteen Silk Mark offices across the country. Silk Mark protects the interests of consumers. Initially, it was a hang-on

tag on which a unique numbered hologram would be affixed.

The Bluesign

To reduce the ecological footprint of the textile industry, the bluesign®standard brings together the entire textile manufacturing chain. The bluesign® standard



analyses all input streams – from raw materials to chemical components, to resources - with a sophisticated "Input Stream Management" process rather than focusing on the finished product testing. Beginning from the production, the components are assessed based on their ecotoxicological impact. So the harmful substances can be eliminated from the start. The key aspect of the bluesign[®] standard is never to compromise on product functionality, quality or design. By using "Best Available Technology" (BAT), the whole textile manufacturing chain ensures that products would meet the environmental standards without cutting back on performance requirements.

Source:

http://bettercotton.org/,http://www.bmpcotton.co m.au/product/, http://www.craftmark.org/ http://www.cpcb.nic. in/EnvironmetalPlanning/Ecolabel/textiles.pdf, http://ec.europa.eu/ environment/ecolabel/documents/User manual te xtile.pdf, http://www.globalstandard.org/, http://www.naturtextil.com/, https://www.oekotex.com/de/business/business home/business ho me.xhtml, http://silkmarkindia.com/, http://www.bluesign.co, http://www.madeby.org/consultancy /standards/eu-ecolabel-for-textiles/

Natural Dyes: Sources, Chemistry, Application and Sustainability Issues, Sujata Saxena and A. S. M. Raja, S. S. Muthu (ed.), Roadmap to Sustainable Textiles and Clothing, Eco-friendly Raw Materials, Technologies and Processing Methods, Singapore:Springer Science+Business Media, 2014,37-80p.





CIVILIZATIONS AREN'T REMEMBERED BY THEIR BUSINESS PEOPLE, BANKERS, OR LAWYERS. THEY'RE REMEMBERED BY THEIR ARTS.

- ELI BROAD

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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