



Inauguration of the Green School Initiative at Chennai

A clean and healthy environment aids effective learning and provides a conducive learning environment. There are various efforts around the world to address environmental education issues.

Environmental Management Systems are very popular in the 'Industrial sector', but the general opinion is that EMS is 'something pertaining to industries'. In other parts of the world, they have started adopting compatible environmental management systems either voluntarily or for promoting standards by external certification. The European system of international standards (environmental) does not suit the existing Indian educational system.

C.P.R. Environmental Education Centre has devised a very simple and indigenous system for monitoring the environmental performance of schools. It comes with a series of questions to be answered on a monthly basis. Environmental conditions may be monitored from many angles that are very close to Indian requirements, without stress on legal issues or compliance. This innovative scheme for schools is user friendly and totally voluntary. The environmental monitoring system helps the school to set environmental examples for the community and to educate young learners. This is the Green School Initiative (GSI).

Benefits of the eco-auditing system:

- Environmental Education through systematic environmental management approach
- Improving environmental standards of schools
- Benchmarking for environmental protection / initiatives
- Reduction in resource use
- Financial savings through a reduction in resource use
- Curriculum enrichment through practical experiences
- Development of ownership; personal and social responsibilities for the school and its environment
- Involvement with other projects
- Enhancement of school profile
- Providing a vehicle for developing community cohesion
- Encouraging sharing of ideas and knowledge between schools
- Promoting links and support to other schemes

The Green School Initiative is being launched in about 25 schools in each of the four cities of Chennai, Hyderabad, Bangalore and Ooty. A monitoring committee will make voluntary visits to the schools on a regular but surprise basis.

The areas of eco auditing to be followed / practiced by member schools:

- A. Waste Minimisation and Recycling
- B. Green Cover / Plants
- C. Energy Conservation
- D. Water Conservation
- E. Animal Welfare