

Minutes of ENVIS Advisory Committee Meeting 2005

An ENVIS advisory committee meeting was held on **October 19, 2005** in the premises of Madras School of Economics, Chennai, to review the progress of the ENVIS program of the Department of Environment (DoE). The meeting was chaired by Thiru. K. S. Neelakantan, I.F.S., Director, DoE. The Director welcomed the dignitaries and briefed them about the activities of ENVIS Centre of the DoE.

Advisory Committee Members Present:

1. Mr. D. Bandyopadhyay, Director, ENVIS, MoEF, GoI
2. Dr. P. Paul Appasamy, Member Secretary, Madras School of Economics
3. Dr. K. Venkataraman, Joint Director, ZSI and Member secretary, NBA
4. Dr. V.N. Rayadu, Deputy Director, TNPCB
5. Dr. R. Nagendran, Professor, CES, Anna University

Dr. C. Thomson Jacob, Senior Programme Officer of the ENVIS Centre, DoE made a detailed presentation on the activities carried out and the proposed activities for the year 2005-06. After the presentation the ENVIS advisory committee members made following suggestion for the improvement of the ENVIS Centre and the action plan for the year 2005-2006.

Dr. R. Nagendran, Professor, CES, Anna University:

- * Dr. R. Nagendran suggested involving some selected schools in the environmental learning programmes and also in the online chat.
- * Environmental Awareness to the public & the students should be created through the touch screen kiosk. This facility could be provided in the Birla Planetarium / TNPCB / Rain Centre.
- * Suggested to include the River basin study on irrigation carried out by CES, Anna University in the ENVIS website. This study will be of use in strategy planning for the policy planners.

Dr. Paul Appasamy, Member Secretary, MSE

- Dr. Paul P. Appasamy has suggested to include information on natural disaster and most vulnerable areas of earth quake areas in Tamil Nadu. He has also suggested to include environmental related policies, policy initiatives taken by the Tamil Nadu Government.
- Dr. Paul P. Appasamy raised question on how the environmental information is used for policy planning.
- Who are the target groups or stakeholders for disseminating environmental information through ENVIS.
- ENVIS Director replied, that Environmental information will be used by the policy planners, scientist, NGO's and Government organizations. For any important policy decision on "Environmental Issues", state level environmental information will be useful. Through environmental Information system we have to guide the policy planners for taking important environmental related policy related issues.

Dr. K. Venkataraman, Member Secretary, National Biodiversity Authority

- * Dr. K. Venkataraman, has appreciated the effort taken by the ENVIS Centre in preparing the Biodiversity profile of Tamil Nadu. He said that ENVIS Centre has prepared a voluminous data on the check list of floral, faunal and fungal species available in Tamil Nadu. He has suggested including the following information in the ENVIS website
- * Agro biodiversity related issues
- * Tsunami affected areas in T.N
- * Secondary information on mangrove, coral reefs affected due to tsunami.
- * Relevant linkages could be provided on the impact of Tsunami on “Biodiversity”.
- * Capacity building training programmes on “Biodiversity Conservation” to be organized to create awareness for the teachers.

Dr. Rayadu, Deputy Director, TNPCB

- * Dr. Rayadu suggested publishing environmental query statistics
- * Suggested to validate environmental data with the statistical department before publishing for an authenticated and reliable data
- * ENVIS Centre should organise training programmes for teachers on environmental related issues along with TNPCB and other environmental organisation

Mr. Asraf Ali, Project Manager, EMAT

- * Suggested to Popularize the ENVIS websites through audio and visual media

Mr. D. Bandyopadhyay, Director, ENVIS, MoEF has made following recommendations for the effective functioning of the ENVIS Centre:

- ENVIS Centre should follow the objectives of the Charter framed by the MoEF, GoI
- Director, ENVIS emphasized that the objective of the ENVIS Centre, DoE is to created database related to **Environment and Related Issues**. ENVIS activities should not be clubbed with the departmental activities.
- The secondary data should be collected on various environmental parameters and published in the Envis website along with the source. Adequate links should be provided to make the website more dynamic.
- Emphasized that the **State of Environment Report** should be prepared by using the I-SBEID database available with the ENVIS Centre.
- For the Preparation of I-SBEI Database (22 chapters) data should be collected from the reliable sources to develop a GIS based information system.
- Suggested to validate the data before publishing and insisted necessary analysis and interpretation should be done before publishing the data in the website.

- Data in the website should be subject specific and classified under the category air, water, waste, biodiversity, industrialization, urban and human settlement, etc.
- Director, ENVIS has supported the idea of library record database and suggested merging the library with the ENVIS Centre to develop an **Information Resource** Centre of the department with good infrastructural facilities for the visitors to access the information available with the ENVIS Centre
- Recommended to form a state level advisory committee by including experts from the State departments, CPR Environmental Education Centre, Loss of Ecology Authority, and NGOs
- Suggested to give adequate links to the state department websites, CPR Environmental Education Centre, Institute for Ocean Management information related to Environmental Education and Coastal Information
- Suggested to circulate the news letter through e-mail to all ENVIS Centres.
- Bilingual website should be created for important ENVIS pages.
- Recommended to disseminate State level environmental problems and action taken.
- ENVIS Centre should establish links with other ENVIS Centres for the exchange of environmental related information.
- Requested to add feedback services in the ENVIS query form.
- Biodiversity checklist data should be cross checked with the available information with Botanical Survey of India and Zoological Survey of India for authentication
- Web hit should be classified as national/ international/ researchers/ student/ organisation to find out the resource user.
- Provide adequate links to Loss of Ecology Authority, National Biodiversity Authority, damaged areas, degraded areas, pollution level, and water resources available in T.N.
- Recommended to include value added information on environmental hot spots, zonal atlas, sea level raise, wildlife data, wasteland map, river basin map and wet lands of Tamil Nadu in the ENVIS website.

The Director thanked all the members for their valuable suggestions and informed that the suggestions will be implemented earnestly before the next meeting. Mr. P. C. Tyagi, Additional Director, DoE proposed a vote of thanks.

Director of Environment
(**Thiru. K.S.Neelakantan, I.F.S**)