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Point for discussion this month

**Ecology Day 11th Aug. – Shall be possible to
make it International?**

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Dear Readers,

It's beautiful earth with its naturalness – ample of energy, freshness of air, purity of water, strength of rocks and liveliness due to living things which are synchronised to play a role with rising sun every day. This is what cycle of life is, which revolves around the sun and moves into the vastness of milky way in the search of considerate neighbour.

SERInews is completing one year. We are thankful to our esteemed readers for their support, suggestions, strength and synergy.

It's delighting news for the reader of SERInews that in July 2007, Planning Commission of India invited SERI to present the application of ecotechnology for the control of urban pollution. Now, it's a need of the time to develop some institutional mechanism to control the pollution of rivers and lakes due to city wastewaters.

SERI in association with Indian Environment Association, Institution of Engineers of India (PLC), Department of Environmental Sciences (UOP), Indian Water Works Association (IWWA) and Jal Dindi Pratishthan organized first ever “Workshop on Potential of Ecotechnology in Water Supply and Sanitation” on 11th Aug. 2007. It was grand success with supportive delegates and participants.

In this workshop, Sandeep Joshi, Environment Technologist, requested to celebrate 11th August every year as an “Ecology Day” to understand the natural forces, ecosystems and their contribution to human development.

Thanking you,

Chief Editor

Workshop on Potential of Ecotechnology in Water Supply and Sanitation

Dr. M. S. Kodarkar observed that this was the first of its kind workshop on Ecotechnology in South Asia. He also quoted Sandeep Joshi as one of the most versatile person in South Asia in the field of application of ecotechnology for purification of freshwater bodies. Sandeep Joshi suggested to celebrate Ecology Day on 11th of August.

We are glad to inform the readers of SERInews that Workshop of Ecotechnology was a great success as the attendance was double than expectation including ex-Principle Secretaries of Water Resources Ministry, Government of Maharashtra, industrial employees, MJP engineers, government's public health lab officials, lecturers, professors, students of masters in environmental sciences and engineering, environment professionals, Pollution Control Board's officials etc.

This programme was organized on Aug. 11, 2007 in Pune, jointly by Indian Environment Association – Pune Chapter, The Institution of Engineers (India)PLC, Department of Environmental Sciences (UOP), Indian Water Works Association, Jal Dindi Pratishthan, and Shrishti Eco-Research Institute.

The crux of the workshop was the application of ecotechnological treatment units for city wastewaters is possible when there is inadequacy of electricity, man-power and investment. The papers were presented by Dr. A. D. Patwardhan, Eminent Engineer, Er. R. G. Holani, Chief Engineer – MJP, Dr. Amar Supate, Project Leader – Zoning Atlas, Dr. Parag Sadgir - Lecturer, Vinod Bodhankar - NGO and Probir Sinha - NGO. The group of speakers was well versed with the technologies being applied in the water pollution control. So, lot of interest was created by their presentations. The question – answer session became very live with active participation of audience.

Dr. A. D. Patwardhan's presentation was a feast for the students of environmental sciences and engineering. His well – articulated talk was seeded with the experience of 30 years in the field of water supply and wastewater treatment.

Er. R. G. Holani gave an account on practical experiences and prerequisites for the designing of water supply and sanitation schemes for the community. He expressed that the ecotechnological treatment can be integrated with conventional systems to reduce the cost of installation and operation and maintenance.

Dr. Amar Supate presented a number of technologies and their comparative statement elaborately. He marked that ecotechnology is the promising concept to treat the pollution.

Dr. Parag Sadgir worked on traditional knowledge reserve of India about the use of plant extracts to purify the drinking water. His work on a number of plants and finally on drumstick created a lot of interest among the students.

Vinod Bodhankar talked about the public participation in the water supply and sanitation schemes and stated that Jal Dindi could a platform for the better interaction of scientists, engineers, government officials with the users, victims of the schemes. Jal Dindi had tradition of 700 years which was weaving the culture with river and riverine ecosystems. He wished outcomes of the workshop would be practically implemented in the stretch of Jal Dindi path.

Mr. Probir Sinha's film on the efforts of Clean River Committee to remove water hyacinth from the river, their experiences was an eye-opener for the city dwellers who are careless about their waste throwing habits and freshwater resources.

Chief Guest was Er. Chetan Pandit, Chief Engineer, National Water Academy. He is prolific speaker with good command on words and in – depth knowledge of technicalities and management of water resources. He gave different perspectives and views about the pollution of rivers. He insisted on systemized approach identifying and defining the issues of river pollution linked with the water usage and discharges from the cities.

Dr. M. S. Kodarkar, internationally famous limnologist gave thought provoking key note address on ecotechnology. He told that the various ecological processes were already there to care of wastes from human activities. The carrying capacity of the ecosystem should be the major concern while discharging wastes into the environment.

Er. S. K. Gajendragadkar, Veteran

Environment Engineer and Dr. V. S. Ghole, Head, Department of Environmental Sciences, (UOP) chaired the technical sessions and shared their experiences with the audience.

Sandeep Joshi, Ecotechnologist, requested to include ecotechnology as one of subjects in masters of environmental sciences and engineering courses. Secondly, he asked everybody to celebrate the 11th Aug. every year as ECOLOGY DAY to create awareness about the nature, and its powers to control pollution world wide.

The logistics at the workshop venue was fully supported by the staff of The Institution of Engineers of India (Pune Local Centre) under the guidance of Secretary and Executive Members. Mrs. Sayali Joshi, CEO of SERI with her staff Mrs. Priya Kapole, Shri. Prashant Dhotekar, Shri. Vimal Suhag managed the Secretariat of Workshop very efficiently and handled the critical situation due to overwhelming response.

There were more than 45 participants from the university. Many thanks to Dr. V. S. Ghole, Head, Department of Environmental Sciences. There were 15 students from VSI and 13 from Bharati Vidyapeeth. Many thanks to Ms. Deepali Nimbalkar and Er. M. R. Gidde. Prof. Gidde's paper was included in the souvenir. Mr. R. V. Saraf was also permitted to present his work briefly.

Among the participants Brig. V. K. Bhat, Commandant (BEG, Pune), Col. Manoj Mehta, Col. Bhasin, Dr. Uday Bhawalkar, Dr. S. N. Karkhanis, Er. Karmarkar, Shri. R. S. Waghmare, Dty. Director, PHL, Shri. V. Rakh, SSO, PHL etc. were present for the workshop.

With a great success of workshop, SERI announces a short course of 2 -5 days on Applications of Ecotechnology in Control of City Wastewaters for the various stakeholders such as Government Agencies, Pollution Monitoring and Control Agencies, Lecturers and Students, Industries and interested organizations. For more details please contact: Course Co-ordinator, Shrishti Eco-Research Institute, B106, Devgiri, Opp. P. L. Deshpande Garden, Near Ganesh Mala, Sinhagad Road, Pune - 411 030. Phone - 91-020 - 65702809 / 66206539 / 24321773.

-Priya Kapole

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Newsdigest

Ramnadi under stress of urban pressure

Pune is bestowed with Mula, Mutha and Pavana rivers rising from Sahyadri ranges. There are many more streams in the urban catchment of Pune city like Ram river, Ambil Odha and Nagzari drain. (Earlier the Nagzari was known as Nag River due to its meandering nature).

The Pune city is expanding with unprecedented speed and many projects like auto - hub, IT-BT and educational projects are promising continued growth by occupying all natural habitats including hills and flood plains of rivers. It's a voracious pattern of ruthless construction industry driven by market demand for houses, flats, roads and other amenities. The watershed of the City is being totally neglected.

The approach of the authorities towards the issue of Ramnadi is more of ignorance as somebody issues permissions and the other person sitting in that chair comes under fire from NGOs. National Environment Policy 2006 talks about system failure. This might be the best example of SYSTEM FAILURE. When discussed with local pollution control authorities, even they were ignorant of the Ramnadi issue.

It's a need of the hour that all government departments, agencies and boards work together for sustainable development of the region with clear definitions and demarcations of the water bodies in the cities. Conducting public hearings and issuing clearances to construction giants will not serve the purpose.

Zoning atlas is an integration of physical knowledge of the region including its geography, geology, topography, forests, water bodies, agriculture, settlements, industries etc. It's an image of the true face of the region. Such atlases will be guidelines not only for decision makers sitting at higher levels, but for the staff at the lower levels who issue the permissions or clearances at local offices. It will integrate the activities of central, state governments and urban local bodies and will establish a system which will help in the achievement of sustainable growth of the region.

Poisoning of trees

It was surprising news in the media in last month that trees were being poisoned in the premises of some temple on one of the busiest road of Pune – Jangali Maharaj Road. It is one of the highly precious areas as far as the property rates are concerned,

It is one of the worst hit areas also as far as vehicular pollution concerned. As per the survey of SERI's teams in Pune city, more than 15,000 vehicles per hour ply on this road at peak hours. The emission levels are very high though there is no industrial activity in vicinity which spews out smoke and gases. The concentration of SPM and RSPM (PM₁₀) in the ambience of Jangali Maharaj Road are always more than the prescribed limits. The health of the citizens staying on this road or having offices, works on this road are at stake.

So, its surprising news that the Green Angels are being poisoned may be for reclamation of a piece of land for construction activity which itself emits various types of pollutions. The promoters of development or revenue minded authorities overlook the ecological price of the trees. For them, the tree means the market value of wood which is less than 0.1% of the annual ecological value.

With the bad experiences of high rise buildings which accumulate and pile up the wastes creating problems of proper treatment and disposal. The waste piles at the every nook and corner is the ugly footprints of modernization and urbanisation. Trees not only beautify the region but provide vital OXYGEN for other living organisms including humans.

It's essential to look into the environmental aspects of the city for sustainable development in all respects. Killing or felling of the trees may give enormous profits by selling pieces of land for short term but in the long run, the treatment and disposal of wastes from high rise buildings will be unmanageable task ahead for local urban bodies. It's need of the hour that officials and corporators think about it and take right steps to maintain cities clean and beautiful for their own next generations..

- Sandeep Joshi

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Announcements

1. SERI's Pollution Clinic announces a Free Scheme of the assessment of ETP reports, designs and evaluation of present status of ETP / STP / C-ETP starting from May 1, 2007. The scheme is free for first 200 registrations only.

The only requirement is to give all the details of existing facility or planned pollution control facility and register as early as possible.

The brief study report will be inclusive of with cost – effective suggestions with environment management guidelines to achieve the norms set by pollution control authority.

For more details, please contact –
Priya Kapole, Environment Officer,
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2. SERI's website is www.seriecotech.com. Some articles are posted on website. Earlier issues of SERInews are also available on website.
3. Mr. Amit Naregalkar is now not working with SERI. He has taken decision to work independently to assist in the consent management activities. So, for your any difficulties, queries and clarifications, you can directly contact SERI's office.
4. SERI has planned to register 5 – 6 more students of environmental sciences or engineering for their in-plant training as earlier batch has successfully completed the tenure.

Contact:

For Pollution Clinic: Mr. Prashant Dhotekar

For Green Arch: Mrs. Sayali Joshi

For Book on Environment Management and Booklet of Ecotechnology – souvenir of Workshop: Mr. Deepak Kalyanshetti

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