

UN Convention on Biological Diversity COP11, Hyderabad, India

Report from 3rd week, 16th-17th October 2012

The last part of the delegation arrived on the 15th October – Maureen Goodman, UK, Golo Pilz, India, Sonja Ohlsson Denmark and Sunita Panday, India. A few days with many programmes were in front of them.



Side Event at the CEPA Fair

In a location close to the main entrance, the CEPA had their hub – CEPA means Communication, Education and Public Awareness. The CEPA Fair provided a unique opportunity for Parties and organizations to highlight their work, best practices and their contribution to the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity to:

- Review the progress which had been made in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

- Examine the progress in developing and updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national target setting as well as early indications regarding the fulfillment of selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
- Review the progress in providing support to Parties for the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

On Wednesday 17th the morning was dedicated to the three-fold best practices in Brahma Kumaris: **Applied Biodiversity Consciousness, Sustainable Yogic Agriculture, and Solar Thermal Power.**

Rajesh Dave, Agricultural Engineer, Executive Member of the Brahma Kumaris Rural Development Wing, welcomed the audience, which kept growing in number. By the end of the morning session there were about 60 people.



Maureen Goodman, Programme Director for the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University in London and Main Representative of the Brahma Kumaris to the UN, Vienna, started the session by explaining the values that support biodiversity consciousness. These can be recalled as RICE! RICE stands for:
R- Respect. Without respect everything we do leads to exploitation and suffering.

I – Integration, understanding and experiencing that we all are part of the whole.

C – Complementarity. Biodiversity is about complementing rather than competing so that all living beings can nurture each other and co-exist. One organism must complement the other with support and co-operation for a better life.

E - Exchange between the seen and unseen – the awareness that whatever is happening inside us does have a direct effect on the world around us.

Afterwards Rajesh Dave and Sunita T. Panday Ph.D., Professor in Agronomy, shared about the best practice of Sustainable Yogic Agriculture based on traditional wisdom in ancient Indian culture.

Rajesh Dave highlighted the role of **Sustainable Yogic Agriculture in safeguarding agro biodiversity**. Agriculture has been a prime mover of biodiversity preservation in India since 70% of the people are involved in agriculture. The integrated lifestyle of rural India already reflects a close association with nature. Coexistence is mooted through awareness of ancient methods of agriculture, which extend respect, love and security to all living beings and organisms existing in the farming system.



The second half of the CEPA Fair morning was dedicated to the aspect of renewable energies and climate change in the work of safeguarding biodiversity. Principal Secretary of the government of Andhra Pradesh, Mr. M. Sahoo, emphasized this importance in his introduction of the main presenter **Joachim Golo Pilz**, Director of Solar Research Institute, World Renewal Trust (WRST), who shared about the **work in renewable energies of the Brahma Kumaris**.



Golo spoke of how for more than fifteen years, the Brahma Kumaris and its daughter organization, the WRST, a recognized solar research centre, have been conducting research and development in renewable energy with the aim of developing clean technologies for sustainable societies.

He also spoke of the most recent and ambitious project, “India One”, which is a 1 MW solar thermal power plant under construction near the Brahma Kumaris Spiritual Headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan, India. This innovative project uses 770 newly developed 60m² parabolic dishes and features thermal storage for continuous operation. The plant will generate enough heat and power for the campus of 20,000 people and will be a milestone for decentralized and clean power generation in India.



Gathering of Mayors at Pragati Resort

G.B.K. Rao, Chairman of Pragati Green Resorts Ltd generously provided the Pragati Resort for an **international mayors gathering as part of the COP11 Biodiversity Convention**. As mentioned in our second week's report, Pragati Resort is about 60 minutes' drive out of Hyderabad, and it was well worth the journey. The huge park of herbs, plants and flowers welcomed the gathering of around 50 people from across the globe. After a guided tour of the amazing resort and its different medicinal herbs, the gathering was invited to a presentation about Pragati and its services. Pragati Green Meadows received first prize for its garden maintenance from the Andhra Pradesh Government in 2012. G.B.K. Rao highlighted the importance of creating places that can give an experience of living in harmony with nature. He described herb-healing models - a new dimension in the journey to biodiversity.



Maureen Goodman was invited to share about the importance of values, and also guided a very powerful meditation with the gathering. The afternoon finished with a happy and powerful tree planting ceremony.



Side Event at the COP11

On Wednesday 17th October, the first evening of the three day high-level segment, where high ranking international government officials, at the level of minister and above, speak together. The Brahma Kumaris in partnership with the Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board hosted a side event called: **“The Power of Human Awareness in Safeguarding Biodiversity & Sustainable Development”**. Most of the delegates had taken up the invitation to a grand reception in honour of the high-level segment, so our audience was small, but very attentive.

The Moderator of the event was Sonja Ohlsson from Denmark, who is the international coordinator of the Brahma Kumaris Environmental Initiative. She warmly welcomed everyone thanked the Andhra Pradesh state government for being generous hosts of the UN Conference, and also specifically for co-hosting this side-event with the Brahma Kumaris.



The welcome note was given by **G.B.K. Rao**, Chairman of Pragati Green Resorts Ltd. He touched upon the sacred aspects of nature, and the 5 elements being our protectors.

The first speaker was **Sunita T. Panday**, Ph.D., Professor in Agronomy at G.B. Pant University, India. G.B. Pant University was the first university in India to focus their research on environmental aspects. **Sunita T. Panday** has 21 years of experience of teaching, research and extension in the area of agriculture, and is an executive member of the Brahma Kumaris Rural Development Wing. She went through a very convincing PowerPoint presentation on sustainable yogic agriculture - how thoughts are vibrations, and vibration is energy and energy has an effect upon water and therefore upon plants. A positive intent can create a significant change in the energy in water and plants. Sunita T. Panday finished by asking the audience whose responsibility it is for a positive or negative intention.

Next, **Maureen Goodman** from London followed up on the theme of responsibility. She spoke on how when anyone who is part of the whole doesn't live up to her/his responsibility, the whole system suffers. What is happening upstream has an influence on what happens downstream. Nature serves us with abundance, so what has caused us to become disconnected from nature? Ego in humans is one reason that there is disconnection because ego disconnects us with our goodness. Maureen Goodman described what biodiversity consciousness means – how weak thoughts will weaken the environment and strong thoughts will strengthen the environment. She shared about the

main values of respect, honesty, compassion and patience. We can learn about patience from nature. Impatience can create resistance and therefore slows down the process; the result is then contradictory to the fast result impatience is looking for. To suppress our inner goodness and values is a kind of violence to the self and it has an effect upon others and the world. When we take time and contemplate upon our inner goodness and values, both our positive thoughts and our ability to take responsibility are then sustained.



The evening finished with comments and many questions from the audience.

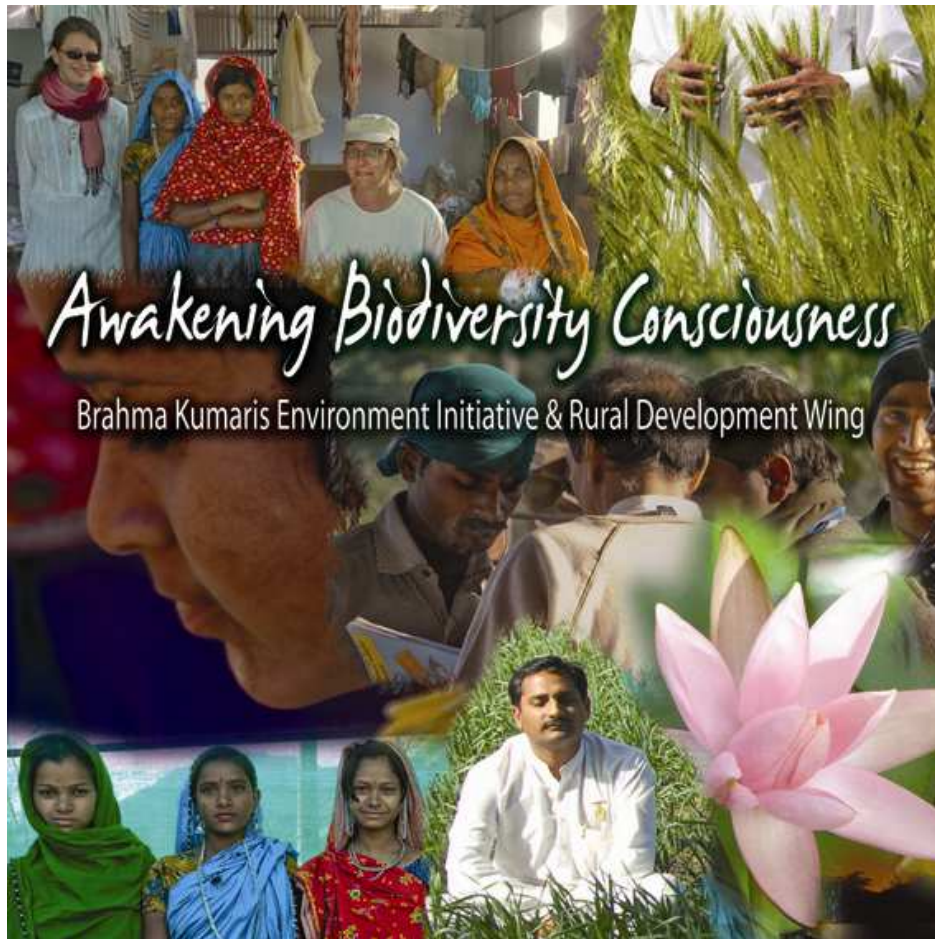
The last of the BK international delegation left Hyderabad on the Wednesday evening, leaving the local team of the Rural Development wing and Shanti Sarovar to take care of the final two days of the conference.





It was a great experience of cooperation, exchange of ideas and learning, working together as a team, 'east' and 'west', and we give heartfelt thanks to all who participated and made everything possible.

The statement on Awakening Biodiversity Consciousness, the program and reports from the first two weeks can be viewed at: www.environment.brahmakumaris.org



Below is a table summary of the BK activities during the 3 weeks.

Events associated with BK's at the convention			
Event	Venue	Date/Time	Theme
Interactive Fair and Exhibition Stall	Booth No. 123, Hall-2 HITEX	1st – 19th Oct 10.00 am – 5.00 pm	Yogic Farming Sustainable Energy Spiritual Empowerment
Kiosk	No.5, Ground Floor HICC, HITEX premises	1st – 19th Oct	Environment activities
Exhibition Stall	Shilparamam Near Main Lawn	1st – 19th Oct 11.00 am – 8.00 pm	Environ - Consciousness Yogic Farming Meditation
Special Side Event	Shanti Sarovar Global Peace Auditorium	4th Oct 6.30 pm – 8.00 pm	Living in Harmony with Nature
Special Side Event	Shanti Sarovar Global Peace Auditorium	14th Oct 10.30 am – 1.00 pm	Inter-Faith Meet
Parallel Side Event	CEPA Fair, HICC	17th Oct 10.00 am – 11.30 am	Sustainable Yogic Farming & Awakening Biodiversity Consciousness
Parallel Side Event	CEPA Fair, HICC	17th Oct 11.30 am – 1.00 pm	Solar Energy - Alternative energy for Sustainable Development
Parallel Side Event	HITEX Room 1.10 (level 1)	17th Oct 6.15 pm – 7.45 pm	The Power of Human Awareness & Thinking in Safeguarding Biodiversity and Sustainable Development
Presentation at Mayors Conference	Pragati Herbal Resorts	17th Oct 1.00 pm	Values & Environment
+ Participation in several UN official events and Side events of other international NGOs			
+ Field visits of interested delegates to Shanti Sarovar campus to view Yogic Farming, Tree Plantations, Water Harvesting, Cow Farm, Museum, Meditation rooms etc.			

Participants on behalf of Rural Development Wing: Bro. BK Raju (HQ. Co-ordinator), Sis. BK Sarla (National Co-ordinator), Sis. BK Sunita (State Co-ordinator, AP), Sis. BK Arundhati (Executive Member), Bro. BK Rajesh Dave (Executive Member), Bro. BK Balasaheb (Executive Member), Bro. BK Rajender (Executive Member), Bro. BK Sumanth, Sis. BK Harsha, Sis. BK Janki, Sis. BK Swati, , Bro. BK Ganesh, Sis. BK Pratibha Patil, Bro. BK Jaikishan, Bro. BK Vineet and Bro. BK Khodabhai.