

Conservation of natural resources

[Environment](#), [Nature](#)



We should be proud of our country's natural bounty and unique bio-diversity. India is amongst the rare countries where major biomes of the world are represented. India is one among the twelve countries where 60-70% of the world's total biodiversity exists. India has two out of the 18 biodiversity hot spots in the world. India has rich traditional knowledge and wisdom in the conservation of nature and natural resources. Religious beliefs, culture and folklore have together treated nature and environment with sanctity.

Conservation and protection of environment and love for nature have always been part and parcel of Indian ethos and culture. Independent India has traveled a long way on the path of progress and industrialization in order to achieve better quality of life. We have accelerated the process of development without considering the adverse impact on nature and environment. The development without care for environment has posed threats to the very existence of life itself.

Now the realization that mere progress and economic development cannot solve all our problems has increased. Development and environment should go hand in hand. Sustainable development is the new paradigm. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has drawn many programmes and policies to combat these problems. Steps are being taken to preserve the pristine ecosystems through establishment of Wildlife Sanctuaries, National Parks and Biosphere Reserves. More and newer areas are being brought into the protected areas status.

At the same time, steps have been taken for welfare of the forest people, particularly the tribals, who have lived in the forests for centuries and who

are also repository of traditional knowledge on conservation and sustainable utilization. The National Museum of Natural History is an important institutional tool for spreading awareness on the evolution of our Universe and life on it. It has played a strong and active role in creating environmental awareness. I am happy to say that the Museum has been active in creating such awareness through a number of educational programmes, exhibitions, nature camps etc. for more than two-and-a-half decades. Today, the Museum and its Regional Centres are recognized as the centres for non-formal environmental education. It is indeed a pleasure for all of us to be celebrating the 25th Year of the Foundation of the Museum. I am happy to see that a number of children have participated in various activities of the Museum. These activities will help all of you in developing a sense of environmental responsibility, which is so essential in our every day life.

It is the absence of this responsibility which is causing problems on our streets, residential areas, market places and other public places. This leaves you all - responsible citizens of tomorrow, with a great burden to shoulder. But I am confident that you have the capacity not merely of shouldering this burden but also influencing people much older to you in following environmental discipline. I wish the officers and staff of National Museum of Natural History the very best in their future endeavour. I would like to thank and congratulate Prof. Yash Pal who has delivered his Key-note on the relevant theme.

We need such scientists who could contribute to spread scientific temper among masses which will eventually lead to betterment of their lives and

better understanding of the delicate web of life that exists on this only planet known to sustain life. I congratulate the winners of Awards for Prevention of Pollution, Rajiv Gandhi Award for Clean Technology and Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar. The awardees for the best original writings in Hindi on environmental issues also deserve my special appreciation for their efforts in popularization of environmental issues in the official languages.

There is dearth of such literature in the regional languages. The Ministry will encourage other regional languages also which will help to take the environmental message to the grass root levels, across the country. I am personally grateful to our Hon'ble Vice President, Thiru. Shekhawatji to have accepted the invitation to grace the occasion. I know that he is keenly interested in the issues related to environment. His own State of Rajasthan is an example of all climate adversities, yet you can see maximum vibrancy of all forms of life that exist there including those of fellow citizens.