



Developing Compass of Environmental Education Tourism in Community Forests (Van Panchayats): learning to sustainability

A training manual



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Training manual

on

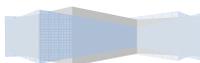
**Developing an Inventory of Van Panchayats for
Promoting Environmental Education among
Students**



This manual is an educational guide designed to familiarise school children with the forest conservation and provide information about the nature and the need for biodiversity action.

Forests are an important ecosystem and source of livelihoods and resources. This environmental education tourism programme is designed to familiarise school students with forest environments, local village livelihoods and practices used to conserve them.

The flow of ecosystem services from these forests is important for local (livelihoods and environment), regional (soil and water to the Gangetic plain) and global (carbon sequestration) use.



Why environmental education tourism?

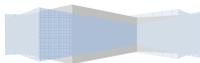
Whole life learning depends on things learnt in childhood. Children who have been taught about conservation will be more likely to want to conserve the forests when they are older. Therefore, awareness and education regarding forest conservation must be successfully implemented at child level.

The components of environmental education are:

1. Provide information regarding the forest ecology to the children and the value of biodiversity, including flora and fauna, especially those related to native species and those used for local livelihoods.
2. Awareness of environmental sensitivity and environmental challenges;
3. Understanding of the effects of human activities on species, communities, ecosystems and water sources.
4. Develop practical skills to identify and help resolve environmental challenges, and knowledge of sustainable forest use.
5. To understand how the forests of Uttarakhand can be used effectively to resolve local and global environmental challenges and to understand national and international environmental legislation.

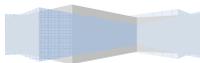
Other community members who will benefit:

1. *Teachers.* The trips to VPs will provide teachers with field examples for when they return to the classroom (i.e. experimental learning). This may then be taught to all year groups in the school.
2. *Villagers.* Villagers will see the children in the field and appreciate the value of environmental education and teach this to their own children. (a bi product, this then benefits local economies).
3. *Parents.* Children will tell their parents about learning from the trip and sustainable practices may therefore be implemented by all generations.



Choosing a VP

- Distance from school so a day visit is worthwhile
- Distance from road to VP
- Variety of things to see in VP within e.g. conservation work, culture/religion, forest flora and fauna.
- Route is suitable walking distance for the day and on a good path.
- Local lunch source available
- Willingness of villagers to participate
- Damage caused by visit e.g. new plantations/crops which may be trampled
- Safety e.g. steep, slippery paths

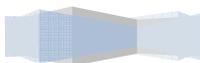


How to develop a resource inventory

- Most use things in the VP by locals
- Walk round VP and look

List all possible resources:

- Forest: flora and fauna, and their traditional local uses.
- Village life: traditional buildings and livelihoods and history
- Conservation work in sustainable forest management: plantations, conservation practices in the village, water resource management e.g. microreservoir, the VP's role in global environmental challenges e.g. carbon sequestration.
- Cultural/religious: temples, legends, local beliefs eg. devoting forest areas to deities.
- Geology
- Industrial /agricultural e.g. crop rotations, fodder growth



Planning a tour

Before

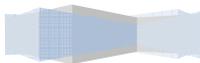
1. Create map and route around VP
2. Make sure the route isn't too far – children will get tired
3. Plan tour schedule – what will be said and when (allow some contingency time)
4. Villagers guiding and helping with the tour must be trained
5. Contact nearby urban schools to determine interest levels
6. Plan lunch – local villagers could prepare this on the day
7. Finalise arrival time with school
8. Print map and manual to email to schools beforehand.

During tour

1. Divide children into groups (10-15 per group) at start of day e.g. by date of birth
2. Village guides (2 or 3 per group) will follow the schedule to show school children around VP
3. Plan for lunch to be ready when the children arrive at designated lunch stop
4. Handout feedback forms at end of day and collect when completed
5. Be alert to safety risks

After

1. Review feedback from schools
2. Refine schedule



Costs

Lunch – provided by villagers, paid for by school children

Transport (schools may provide their own transport)

Money to SHG groups for discussion

Money per student to VP for visit – Rs 50 suggested, paid for by school children

