

Global Encounter-India

Environment- Making a Difference

Group Report Out

Procedure used to generate this document:

This document represents the summary of group discussions related to their self-selected area or interest/expertise in one of six topic areas (Education; Environment; Food Systems and Agribusiness; Gender, Poverty, and Social Inequalities; Health; and Technology and Economic Development.). Individuals first wrote responses to these specific questions related to the topic to be considered:

What are **your** *current or future focused areas of teaching, research and/or outreach (engagement)* related to India?

What *resources* (existing at MSU or working in collaboration with MSU) should be considered as the University moves forward on any and all work related to India?

What are the top three to five things that MSU should be doing in regards to this theme/area of concern in India over the next five to ten years? How would we know that we had been successful?

After the pre-writing period, the group discussed both questions within the last item. These report-out notes are taken from the presentation the group facilitator made to the plenary session.

Background: Some members of the core group participating in the discussion are in process of extending MSU work on biofuels to the Indian context. However, energy and environmental issues are broader than biofuels. There is need to consider energy needs from an environmental perspective.

- How does India move away from its current emphasis on coal?
- On a community level, how can villages reliant on biomass sustainably meet their biomass needs?

Hot Areas:

- **Biofuels/materials**

- Education, research, joint conferences needed. These should have an Indian component; intellectual resources are present in both MSU and India.
- Need monetary resources to facilitate student/faculty initiatives
- Look beyond Michigan funding sources; consider international sources

- **Bioremediation**

- This area highlights the connection between the environment and health. We need to detect and reduce pollution (e.g. from cane sugar, pulp and paper, pesticides, etc.)

- **What should MSU do?**

- Education in India in engineering, business, and agriculture is focused on productivity, not sustainability. MSU has the potential to help them to consider an environmental perspective and component.
- Need for coordination across the university to foster dialogue. This meeting is good. Need more Websites and conferences to bring MSU faculty together. CASID could host a monthly seminar/discussion on India. India Council and Asian Studies somehow are not enough to spark this dialogue.
- Need to get in line with Indian faculty to develop a good sense of gaps and needs in order to develop a joint agenda.

- **Question: We are all from somewhat different areas.* How can we contribute?**

- FIND linkages: For example, forestry provides important feedstock for biofuels. India is facing huge energy needs-currently planning on using coal. How can India manage the environment while developing? India needs to think differently-e.g. biofuels. Also, people in the villages are using biomass-how will they get it in a sustainable way. So can we frame these issues as Energy/Environmental Security and consider social and economic issues.

*Group reported areas in which members are working:
Kodardapari-Wildfires in W. Ghats with remote sensing and ecology
Smallgren: Joint forestry management
C.A. Reddy: Biofuels and bioremediation
Joshi Satish: Biofuels and corporate environmental management
Hashham: Nanotechnology to sense environmental contamination
Singh: Sustainable hospitality

This material was generated from Global Encounter-India, <<http://www.isp.msu.edu/globalencounter/india>>, held at Michigan State University on September 22, 2006. This interactive and participatory event was designed to obtain input and to elaborate in a country-specific forum on relevant themes, opportunities, issues, and opportunities affecting MSU's current and future engagement in India and to a lesser degree southeast Asia.