

# *Living in Harmony*

## **Biodiversity Consciousness**

**Brahma Kumaris**

**Participation and Activities**

**in COP-MOP6 and COP11**

**the Convention on Biological Diversity**

**Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, India, October 2012**

### **Awakening Biodiversity Consciousness**

Real change in any social or environmental systems must begin - and be sustained - in the minds and hearts of human beings. Awakening biodiversity consciousness means reminding ourselves that the loss of biodiversity is not a problem external to us that can be changed unless we change our awareness and so our entire thinking around the issue. To heal the living system of nature, we must first bring a change in our awareness and heal the living system of our thinking.

There has been a tendency to create policy on the basis of quantitative data without looking more deeply at the qualitative attitudes that drive our policy and lie at the heart of human behavior. Identifying and understanding changes in human habits, preferences, feelings and behavior requires an approach grounded in spiritual and holistic values.

At the core of the Brahma Kumaris' work is the understanding of the connection among awareness, attitude, vision, action and the world. All real change – big changes in the world and small changes in a single life – occurs as a sequence of subtle shifts, beginning with a change in awareness.

This booklet, along with the side events, exhibitions, and field trips held during this conference give some examples of how the Brahma Kumaris have applied concrete change based on spiritual awareness and values.

### **Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University**

The Brahma Kumaris practices and teaches a form of meditation that relaxes the mind and nurtures a healthy balance between the inner and outer worlds. Through numerous service activities and partnerships, the organization promotes spiritual understanding and elevated actions towards a better world.

With over 8,500 centers in local communities, of both urban and rural areas, we are able to offer courses and events free of charge in over 110 countries. All our activities are staffed by dedicated volunteers.

## ACTIVITIES DURING COP-MOP6 AND COP11

### EXHIBITIONS

**Booth no. 123** in the Interactive Fair for Biodiversity, Hall-2 HITEX  
(open to the public)

**Kiosk 15** at the CEPA Fair, ground floor in HICC  
(open to those with UN accreditation)

Booth at Shilparamam Fair (Hi-tech City, adjacent to main lawn)  
(open to the public)

### SPECIAL SIDE EVENT & FIELD VISIT FOR COP-MOP6

Shanti Sarovar Meditation Retreat Centre

#### Living in Harmony

Thursday 4th October 18.30

Shanti Sarovar Campus, Hyderabad

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

ISB road, Gachibowli, Hyderabad, shantisarovar@bkivv.org

To heal the living system of nature, we must first bring a change in our awareness and heal the living system of our thinking.

- Welcome note: **G.B.K. Rao**, Pragati Green Meadows & Resorts Ltd & Rural Development Wing Representative
- **Ranjana Kumar**, former Chairperson of NABARD, National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development, India.
- **Anthony Strano**, author and expert on the topic of consciousness and meditation, Greece.

Buses leave from HICC. No registration needed.

### Shanti Sarovar Meditation Retreat Centre



Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board is promoting this campus to all delegates as an example of positive environmental change based on the application of spiritual values.

In 2002 after more than 25 years of heavy granite quarrying the land was barren. Trees were scarce, there was little greenery and the soil quality was poor. Ten years later there are over 6000 trees, both herbal and fruit bearing. After low impact water harvesting, bore wells, and low use sprinkler systems there is an expanding and diversifying wildlife population.

Buses will be arranged for field visits from HICC.

### SPECIAL SIDE EVENT & FIELD VISIT FOR COP11

#### Interfaith for Biodiversity

Including spiritual leaders, senior authorities of Government of Andhra Pradesh and Brahma Kumaris representatives.  
Arranged by Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board.

Sunday 14th October 10.30 -13.00

Global Peace Auditorium,

Brahma Kumaris Shanti Sarovar Campus

ISB road, Gachibowli, Hyderabad, shantisarovar@bkivv.org

No registration needed.

## SIDE EVENTS DURING COP11 at HICC

### The Power of Human Awareness in Safeguarding Biodiversity & Sustainable Development

Wednesday 17th October 18.15-19.45 Room 1.10 (Level 1)

In the lives of our ancestors, there was a natural awareness of the deep connection between two living systems: the living system of human thought and the living system of the natural world. Over time however, the awareness of this connection has become critically fragile. We will discuss ways to restore and strengthen the natural harmony between humanity and the environment. Our panel will discuss the convergence of the two living systems as the foundation of a harmonious world. Our speakers offer perspectives from the fields of business, agriculture, politics and spirituality. *This side event is organized by Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board and Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.*

- Welcome note **G.B.K. Rao**, Chairman, Pragati Green Resorts Ltd.
- **Maureen Goodman**, Spiritual Teacher and Main Representative of the Brahma Kumaris to the UN, Vienna.
- **R. Hampaiiah**, Ph.D. Chairman, Andhra Pradesh State Biodiversity Board.
- **Sunita T. Panday**, Ph.D. Professor in Agronomy, G.B. Pant University, Sustainable Yogic Agriculture, India.

### Applied Biodiversity Consciousness: Sustainable Yogic Agriculture and Solar Thermal Power Plant

Wednesday 17th October 10-13.00 CEPA Fair Venue

To bring about sustained change in any social or environmental system, awareness grounded in self-reflection, universal values, and personal transformation is essential. Sustainable Yogic Agriculture and Solar Energy are examples of such applied concrete change, based on spiritual values.

**10.00-11.30** • **Rajesh Dave**, Agricultural Engineer, Executive Member of the Brahma Kumaris Rural Development Wing.

• **Maureen Goodman**, Spiritual Teacher and Main Representative of the Brahma Kumaris to the UN, Vienna.

**11.30 -13.00** "India One" a 1 MW solar thermal power plant generating enough heat and power for 20,000 people. • **Joachim Golo Pilz** - Director, Solar Research Institute, World Renewal Spiritual Trust.

## ONGOING EXPERIMENTS IN ALIGNING AWARENESS WITH ACTION

### Sustainable Yogic Agriculture (SYA)

a pioneering initiative of the Rural Development Wing of Brahma Kumaris

Sustainable Yogic Agriculture farmers are integrating traditional knowledge and organic agriculture with modern methods of farming in ways that protect local culture, and promote the resilience and wellbeing of village communities. This unique initiative has brought together more than 400 farmers in India with scientists from India's leading agricultural universities, G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and S.D. Agricultural University.

Biodiversity is complex and dynamic. It is a central support of our environmental system, and makes it possible for millions of species, including people, to exist. At the same time, it is human activity that has dramatically reduced biodiversity, to the detriment of humans and of every other living creature. Through the initiative of SYA, farmers are witnessing a return of biodiversity by increased friendly insects and soil microbes along with other native plants and animals. As well as these immeasurable benefits, cost benefits include greater crop yield for farmers as well as a higher return on sale because of the quality of the goods.

Preliminary findings indicate that SYA (organic farming plus meditation) has the greatest soil microbial population and that seeds germinate up to a week earlier. Crops also reveal higher amounts of iron, energy, protein and vitamins compared to organic and chemical farming, offering low-cost high-benefit methods for local communities. Furthermore, farmers are free from the heavy cost of fertilisers and pesticides. Along with the earth, plants and animals, the human side of the ecosystem is also benefitting: Meditative practices designed for each phase of the agrarian cycle, from seed to harvest, are positively affecting farmers and, by association, their families and villages.



### India One - Solar Power Plant

conducting research and development in renewable energy technologies

“India One” a 1 MW solar thermal power plant is presently under construction near the Brahma Kumaris Headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan, India.

This innovative project uses 770 newly developed 6m<sup>2</sup> 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.

The World Renewal Spiritual Trust (WRST), a daughter organization of the Brahma Kumaris is executing the “India One” project. The project is receiving partial funding from the Indian Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Sources (MNRE) and the German Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). [www.india-one.net](http://www.india-one.net).

### BRAHMA KUMARIS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

The Brahma Kumaris is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) of the United Nations, in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). It is also affiliated to the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) and is an accredited observer organization to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The organization’s work in human and social values allows the Brahma Kumaris to contribute an ethical and spiritual approach to global concerns.

### CONTACT US:

BRAHMA KUMARIS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

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<http://un.brahmakumaris.org>

### International

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, [www.bkwsu.org](http://www.bkwsu.org)

Environmental profile: <http://environment.brahmakumaris.org>

Brahma Kumaris Spiritual Headquarters,  
Pandav Bhawan, Mount Abu, Rajasthan, India  
Rural Development Wing, [ruralwing@bkivv.org](mailto:ruralwing@bkivv.org)

International Coordinating Office, Global Co-operation House  
65-69 Pound Lane, London NW10 2HH, UK, [london@bkwsu.org](mailto:london@bkwsu.org)

### Local Centre

Shanti Sarovar - Academy for a Better World

Brahma Kumaris Ishwariya Vishwa Vidyalaya

SB road, Gachibowli, Hyderabad, Tel: (040) -23001234, 32418199

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XI Conference of Parties  
HYDRABAD INDIA 2011