



GreenFriends Australia Living Consciously Project

“Nature is a huge flower garden. The animals, birds, trees, plants and people are the gardens fully blossomed flowers of diverse colours. The beauty of the garden is complete only when all of these exist as a unity, thereby spreading the vibrations of love and oneness. May all of our minds become one in love.” **Amma**

Step 1: Practise Water Conservation and Preservation

Water is the life blood for all living things and sustains life on this planet. Our oceans and all our water systems around the world are under threat due to human exploitation and pollution. We are taking from the oceans at a faster rate than they can rejuvenate; fisheries are on the verge of collapse. As a matter of survival for us and all the world's wild inhabitants we must develop cleaner ways of living on the earth. The way we grow our food, our energy choices, and almost everything we do impacts eventually on the world's water ways.

Communities around the world need to be alerted to this fundamental issue, including the protection of endangered marine life and on the consequences of continued mass pillaging from our Oceans. We can reduce chemical spills from deep sea drilling by choosing renewable energy technologies. We can take the pressure off marine ecosystems by reducing our intake of seafood, supporting sustainable fisheries or by choosing a vegetarian diet.

The earth's natural eco systems have been altered to such an extent that many fresh water supplies are drying up. Drinking water in many areas is becoming scarce. We can address this by collecting our own rainwater, reducing our water usage and recycling grey water. Through tree planting we can help prevent erosion and salinity and help improve water quality in lakes, rivers and creeks. We can choose foods that are grown without the use of chemicals and use household products that are gentle on the environment.

This is a Global problem that needs attention on a Global level; however, we can individually act upon this in all aspects of our lives. This Issue demonstrates how intricately connected we all are, how dependant we are and how respectful we need to be of the earth's natural cycles and ecological systems.

For more details: http://www.ammaaustralia.org.au/Humanitarian/amma_greenfriends.htm#step2

Environmental news from India...

Let us make India Beautiful

31st Oct 2010

Students of Amrita University take up the call of Amma to “Amala Bharatam” – Clean India Beautiful India”. Felt inspired and spreading the awareness to clean the whole country. Come join us. Let us keep the country clean....

Check out the amazing work Amma is doing in India!!

<http://e.amritapuri.org/abc/>

Of all our natural resources, water has become the most precious...In an age when man has forgotten his origins and is blind even to his most essential needs for survival, water along with other resources has become the victim of his indifference.

Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*

Across continents, the network of waterways resembles the circulatory system of the body. And in fact, that is the role that lake and river systems perform. Water that runs off after rain or from melting snow or from plant roots accumulates in ditches and creeks, which carry it to the rivers draining into lakes or the oceans, where it evaporates back into the atmosphere. Patterns of rootlets, roots and branches; rivulets, creeks and rivers; veins and capillaries in living tissue—they all reflect the same physical realities and bind us all together in the Earth's vital processes. **David Suzuki (*The Sacred Balance*, 2007: 88)**

'Water, of course, is everyone's business. Hardly a day goes by when we do not hear of another flood, another drought or another pollution spill into surface waters or groundwaters. Each of these issues has a direct or indirect impact not only on human security but also on livelihoods and development. The issues involved range from those of basic human well-being (food security and health), to those of economic development (industry and energy), to essential questions about the preservation of natural ecosystems on which ultimately we all depend. These issues are inter-related and have to be considered together in a holistic manner.'

**Koïchiro Matsuura, UNESCO
Director General**

Water and Religion.... Water plays a key role in the beliefs of many of the world's religions. Its two main symbolic qualities - rebirth and purification - have given the liquid a sacred role in many religious ceremonies and rights.

Christianity: The ritual of baptism, in which a person is welcomed into the church, centres on water. During the ceremony a person may be immersed in water or have a few drops sprinkled on them to symbolize the rejection of sin. Water also plays a key role in the New Testament of the Bible, in which it represents the spirit of God.

Buddhism: Buddhists use water during funeral services. Monks fill a bowl to overflowing while reciting, 'As the rains fill the rivers and overflow into the ocean, so likewise may what is given here reach the departed'.

Hinduism: Hindus believe water has the power to purify the spirit and they must bathe before entering a temple. All Hindu temples are situated near water sources and many pilgrimage sites are on river banks.

Islam: Muslims use water for purification and perform three sorts of ablutions: washing the whole body, washing their heads, hands, forearms and feet before prayers, and cleansing with sand if water is scarce.

From ABC Water Resources:

<http://www.abc.net.au/water/stories/s1598082.htm>

Taken from Man and Nature, I thought this passage holds a strong message about over consumption of natural resources that is pertinent in practicing water conservation and preservation.

Question: Is it necessary to give more importance to human needs than to Nature?

Amma: Nature gives her wealth to human beings. Just as Nature is dedicated to helping us, we too should be dedicated to helping Nature. Only then can the harmony between Nature and human beings be preserved. To pluck ten leaves, when only five leaves are sufficient, is a sin. Suppose two potatoes are enough to cook a dish. If you take a third potato, you are acting indiscriminately—you are committing an *adharmic* (unrighteous) act.

Using Nature for our needs cannot be considered wrong. But exploitation changes the whole set of circumstances. This makes our action an unrighteous one. First of all, we are unnecessarily destroying the life of an extra plant, animal or whatever it is that we exploit. Secondly, we deny it for someone else's use. Someone else could have used it, perhaps our neighbour who does not have anything to eat. Thus, when we exploit Nature, we are exploiting others. It is certainly a necessity to have a house to protect us from the rain and the sun. But we should not build a house in order to make a show of our wealth and luxurious life style. Cutting down enough trees to build a house cannot be considered to be unrighteous. An act becomes unrighteous or sinful when we perform it indiscriminately, without any alertness. Spending lavishly without thinking of God, the Great Giver, or the others who would be benefited by the extra money—that is unrighteousness.

World Water

'Water is one of our most critical resources, but around the world it is under threat. Worldwater.org is dedicated to providing information and resources to help protect and preserve fresh water around the globe.'

World water has some interesting resources such as the Conflict Map which tracks and describes water associated conflicts across the globe, highlighting the importance of this resource and its wise and compassionate use by humans:

<http://www.worldwater.org/conflict/map/>

GRID: Environmental Knowledge for Change

For a thorough yet easy to follow overview regarding the state of the world's water, including detailed illustrations, you might want to have a look at:

<http://www.grida.no/publications/vg/water2/page/3214.aspx>

'This chapter addresses a few preconceived ideas on the availability and use of water worldwide. There is no 'creation' of 'new' water on the planet. The available volume of water is recycled through a well coordinated system between the earth and the atmosphere, 'the hydrologic cycle'. This means that despite a rapidly growing population, the volume of available and accessible freshwater is roughly the same. Supplying this growing population therefore depends on the capacity (and the will) to manage the resource differently (i.e. ensuring its quality, quantity and access) so that it can reach more people.....'

National Geographic Images- 'Water is Life'



The National Geographic website has some breathtaking, inspiring images as well as compelling blogs and other content:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2010/04/water-is-life/kingsolver-text>



Get involved!! Red Rock Gorge Clean-Up!

'Waterwatch is helping to clean up, fix up and conserve the Murrumbidgee River by participating in the 2011 Clean Up Australia Day. You can help. Upper Murrumbidgee is inviting able and self equipped paddlers to join us on a journey through Red Rock Gorge to clean up trash that has accumulated along the river in recent floods. Take this opportunity to see the amazing gorge while assisting our guided raft (equipped to carry the trash collected) to tidy up a beautiful stretch of our river.' Learn more about WaterWatch ACT or become involved in the Australia Day Clean-Up, visit:

<http://www.act.waterwatch.org.au/> OR
<http://www.cleanupaustaliaday.org.au/waterwatch>

