

CSM begins climate change education work in West Bengal

In partnership with the Ministry of Environment, and Department of Forests, Government of West Bengal, CSM has started a project to bring climate change (CC) education to schools in West Bengal. We began with a series of engagements in Kolkata in the first week of May 2010.

We conducted interactive workshops at Patha Bhavan, Loreto Day School - Sealdah, St. Joseph and Mary School, St. James' School, and Chowringhee High School (all in Kolkata) for students in standards 8-10.

The response to the workshops was overwhelmingly positive.

Each interactive multi-media workshop took the students through a recap of climate concepts and terms, concepts of anthropogenic (human-caused) and natural global warming, climate change, and the impacts of these. Video clips, animations, and slides were used to illustrate the topics throughout.

Students were engaged in a dialogue to not only learn about climate change, but also to understand how everything they study at school is interconnected; and how they all connect to climate change.

Students were given informative posters on climate change, bookmarks with "Five things to remember" about climate change and related topics, and certificates of participation.

Wherever possible, we asked the groups of students to confer and tell the whole group what each person would do to help reduce their impact on the climate and what their school could realistically do to reduce impact on the climate. Most students went so far as to suggest how they would actually help the schools achieve this.

They also competed in climate change word-finding competitions, winning a rather unusual prize.

Through cheerful interaction, fun engagement, and smattering of competition, students added to whatever they knew about climate change.

We also held a briefing for school Principals and teachers at Aranya Bhaban on "**From subjects to disciplines -- climate change education as a tool**". Sixteen schools were represented at this briefing. Four of these schools signed up for student workshops to be held in the next quarter.

This is just the beginning of an ongoing and longer-term climate change education engagement among CSM, the schools, Ministry of Environment, and Department of Forests, Government of West Bengal.

If you would like to organize workshops at your school, for students and/or teachers, please get in touch with us at cced@csmworld.org