

**UNESCO Category 2 Centre on World Natural
Heritage Management and Training for the Asia-
Pacific Region at Wildlife Institute of India**

**REPORT ON CELEBRATION OF WORLD HERITAGE
DAY, 18th April, 2015**



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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

“Our cultural and natural heritages are both irreplaceable sources of life and inspiration.”

(UNESCO)

World Heritage is defined as the shared wealth of humankind. It is a wonderful reminder of our rich past. It is our duty to protect the heritage and offer it to the coming generations. Heritage sites need to be protected and preserved. They are valuable assets of human civilization.

World Heritage Sites are natural or man-made sites that define the standards in our perception of our civilization and the natural world. The institution of World Heritage aims to educate people about respectful coexistence: it promotes the appreciation of the world’s cultural and natural landscape in its diversity, importance, and beauty. By highlighting the *Outstanding Universal Value* (OUVs) of unique parts of the natural and cultural environment, the concept of World Heritage emphasizes the need for the preservation of natural and cultural heritage for future generations and its protection from physical, aesthetic and conceptual threats.

History of World Heritage Day

The genesis of World Heritage Day is traced to 18 April 1982, where on the occasion of a symposium organized by ICOMOS in Tunisia, it was suggested that the "International Day for Monuments and Sites" be celebrated simultaneously throughout the world. The idea was subsequently approved by the UNESCO General Conference who passed a resolution at its 22nd session in November 1983 recommending that Member States examine the possibility of declaring 18 April each year “International Monuments and Sites Day”. This has been traditionally called the World Heritage Day.

Heritage Day is celebrated with an aim to educate the youth about protection, preservation and propagation of World Heritage. World Heritage Day is a collective effort of the communities in the world to do the needful for these invaluable assets. The day takes an opportunity to hoist awareness about the assortment of Natural and Cultural legacy and the efforts that are required to protect and conserve them.

World Heritage Day offers us an extra opportunity to think about what Natural and cultural heritage means in our daily lives and also to reflect on what we can do to safeguard and conserve the diverse heritage surrounding us for future generations.

Importance

Few important features of this historic day are –

- It contributes to our understanding of our history by affirming the significance of past artistic, scientific, architectural and cultural achievements and sites.
- Promotes social cohesion -Heritage sites are valued by communities and many are used for schools, housing, health centers, museums, concert halls, offices or nature parks, where people meet and interact.
- Recognizes places of high conservation value - Natural Heritage sites are among the world's most bio-diverse and are important to our scientific understanding of the natural environment.
- Generates tourism revenue – Heritage Sites are the most visited tourist destinations in the World.

World Heritage Day celebration at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

Wildlife Institute of India celebrated World Heritage Day in its campus on 18th April, 2015 with great enthusiasm. It was organized by the newly established UNESCO Category 2 Centre (C2C) on World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region. The main objective of this event was to sensitize and create awareness among youth and children towards Natural World Heritage Conservation.

A total of 150 school students belonging to Class VII, IX and X were invited from three different schools in Dehradun, namely National Institute for the Visually Handicapped, The Asian School and Kasiga School.

Initially, a team from C2C approached the management of these schools, interacted with their Principals and explained to them about the importance and purpose of celebrating World

Heritage Day. Posters and maps were also distributed on World Heritage at different schools. The school authorities responded very positively to the idea and were keen to take part in programme. It was decided that each school will select six students from Class IX to participate in the Quiz Competition and 50 other students from Class VIII and IX from each school will join the programme. Each of the Principals was designated as Guest of Honour for the World Heritage Day Programme.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MAIN EVENT

1) Inaugural speech by Dr. P.K. Mathur, Dean, FWS, WII

Dr. P.K.Mathur, Dean, Faculty of Wildlife Sciences, Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun was invited to deliver the inaugural speech. He started his speech by giving a brief introduction about India's forest cover and its biodiversity. His talk mainly focused on the need for conservation of our natural assets by giving some interesting facts about Indian biodiversity and threats related to it. He also gave a brief about Wildlife Institute of India, its objectives and missions, functions in capacity building, policy making, research, management and achievements so far.

The next theme of his presentation was devoted to Natural and Cultural Heritage Sites of India and the world. He described the basic framework of UNESCO, its background, mission, objectives and functions in relation to the World Heritage Mission. He explained few key points (OUVs, authenticity, integrity, criteria for inscription, mixed sites and more) and gave introduction of World Heritage Convention, its management. Important World Heritage Sites of cultural and natural importance were depicted through photographs to the enthusiastic audience.

Lastly he emphasized on the need of natural resource conservation and the role of youth in the field of conservation.

2) Quiz Programme on World Heritage Day

A quiz programme was organized on the occasion of World Heritage Day on 18 April, 2015 by UNESCO C2C at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. Three schools were invited to participate in the quiz namely, Kasiga School, The Asian School and the National Institute for the Visually Handicapped (NIVH) from Dehradun.

There were six teams for the quiz, each with three members, hence, amounting to a total of 18 students. As regards the team composition, it was not the usual school teams competing 'against' each other. Rather, in the spirit of UNESCO and World Heritage, which also represents cooperation, collaboration, building partnerships and forging new relationships, the three members in each team represented the three different schools. In other words, each mixed team had members from Kasiga School, The Asian School and NIVH. For good measure, the six teams were named after natural World Heritage Sites in India namely, Team Great Himalayan, Team Kaziranga, Team Keoladeo, Team Manas, Team Sunderbans and Team Western Ghats.

The quiz had three rounds related to Protected Areas, Biodiversity and World Heritage Sites in India, respectively. Each round had six questions with a direct correct answer bearing 10 points and a passed response bearing 5 points. Cumulative scores were announced at the end of each round. All unanswered questions by the teams as well as new questions at the end of each round were also forwarded to the audience in order to involve them in the proceedings.

The quiz saw active participation and a close contest between the teams and the final results indicated the following score line for the teams:

Team	Score
Western Ghats	25
Sunderbans	20
Great Himalayan	20
Kaziranga	15
Manas	15
Keoladeo	10

The winning team comprised of Master Shubham Johar (The Asian School), Miss Tanuja (NIVH) and Master Palash Tyagi (Kasiga School). Each of the winners received a certificate, an audio CD of bird calls (Title – Bird songs of Uttarakhand – 200 birds species) that was kindly donated by CCF Shri Rajiv Bhartari, CCF Ecotourism, Govt of Uttarakhand. The winners also received The Book of Indian Animals by S.H.Prater (Publisher – Oxford University Press).

Participants from all other teams also received certificates and a CD of bird calls each. The prizes and certificates were given away by teacher representatives from each school.

The Principals of the schools made a mention of the quiz in their address to the audience after the programme. Shri. Kamalbir Singh from NIVH was happy for his students to participate in the programme, which he hoped would also serve to increase their awareness on natural world heritage. He suggested that there could have been more interaction between the students from the different schools which comprised each team. Shri A. K Das from The Asian School commended the mixed teams' concept as a novel idea which also reflected unity in diversity. He opined that the real winners were the heritage sites themselves on which basis the teams were named Smt. Nita Bali from Kasiga School emphasized the importance of wildlife education at school level and the role of educators for this purpose. The quiz helped to entertain the audience as well as raise awareness and capture the attention of the young scholars who are the future of the world.

3) Launch of UNESCO E-Bulletin

UNESCO Category 2 Centre for World Natural Heritage Management and Training for Asia and the Pacific Region at Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, India launched a “Natural Heritage Bulletin” on the occasion of World Heritage Day, 18 April, 2015. This is an E-Bulletin with a quarterly frequency. The Bulletin is a compilation of information on natural sites in the Asia-Pacific with a view to disseminate news and reach out to the wider natural heritage community. The information is based on free and publicly available sources. The bulletin also carries information on regional happenings from UNESCO, news briefs from the natural sites in Asia-Pacific, site profiles from IUCN’s World heritage Outlook and also a section highlighting activities of the UNESCO C2C India.

4) Nature trail

The programme concluded with a walk through the woods in the sprawling campus of WII. The main objective of this nature trail was to expose the students to natural beauty and diversity in their surroundings. It was emphasized that urban biodiversity is equally important and that one must have the natural diversity was equally important and that youngsters must be encouraged to notice the flora and fauna in their vicinity.

One group of students was guided by Dr. Geetika Mathur and Dr. Malvika Onial. Another group was guided by Dr. Bhumesh Singh, Chitiz Joshi, Amit Kumar, Urijit Bhatt, Zehidul Hussain, Shravana Goswami & Anukul Nath. On the Nature trail a brief introductory class was taken on the joy of bird/butterfly watching and their importance for the ecosystem. Amit Kumar, researcher at WII, highlighted the important plant species. Different wildlife encountered on the trail as compiled by the students is mentioned below.

	Common name	Scientific name
Birds	Rose-ringed parakeet	<i>Psittacula krameri</i>
	Jungle Babbler	<i>Turdoides striata</i>
	White-throated Kingfisher	<i>Halcyon smyrensis</i>
	Black Kite	<i>Milvus migrans</i>
	Grey Hornbill	<i>Ocyrceros birostris</i>
	Red wattled Lapwing	<i>Vanellus indicus</i>
	Pond Heron	<i>Ardeola grayii</i>
	Large billed Crow	<i>Corvus macrorhynchos</i>
	Asian Koel	<i>Eudynamys scolopaceus</i>
	Red Jungle Fowl	<i>Gallus gallus</i>
Butterflies	Common Mormon	<i>Papilio polytes</i>
	Cabbage White	<i>Pieris rapae</i>
	Psyche	<i>Leptosia nina</i>
Frogs	Cricket frog	<i>Fejervarya</i> sp.
	Common Asian Toad	<i>Duttaphrynus melanostictus</i>
Reptiles	Brahminy Blind snake	<i>Ramphotyphlops braminus</i>
	Bronze grass skink	<i>Eutropis macularia</i>

It was an exciting experience for the young students to get a feel of nature and have the opportunity of walking through a forest-like environment within the urban landscape.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

On 18th April, 2015 UNESCO Category 2 Centre, Wildlife Institute of India conducted Quiz which was participated by –

- Western Ghats Team –
 - Shubham Johar (The Asian School)
 - Tanuja (NIVH)
 - Palash Tyagi (Kasiga School)
- Kaziranga Team –
 - Prakhar Rastogi (The Asian School)
 - Swati (NIVH)
 - Neerav Sharma (Kasiga School)
- Sundarbans Team –
 - Rohith Raghunath (The Asian School)
 - Shalu (NIVH)
 - Binav Gautam (Kasiga School)
- Keoladeo team –
 - Apoorva Mishra (The Asian School)
 - Keval Krishan (NIVH)
 - Sahishnu Raj Thapa (Kasiga School)
- Manas team –
 - Khushi Malviya (The Asian School)
 - Neeraj Chouhan (NIVH)
 - Ojasvi Rawat (Kasiga School)
- Great Himalayan team –
 - Shreyashi Dahiya (The Asian School)
 - Manish Kumar (NIVH)
 - Kumaraditya Gupta (Kasiga School)

PHOTO-GALLERY



1. View of the auditorium



2. Ms. Jyoti Negi, World Heritage Assistant, UNESCO C2C anchoring the event



3. Dr. Sonali Ghosh, IFS, Scientist E, UNESCO C2C, welcoming Mr. A. K. Das, Principal of the Asian School



4. Dr. Malvika Onial, Scientist E, UNESCO C2C, welcoming Dr. Geetika Mathur, Medical officer, NIVH



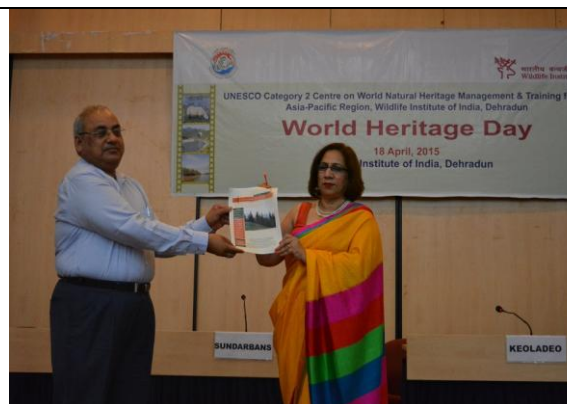
5. Students from NIVH



6. Participating teams in the Quiz



7. Distribution of Quiz prizes by Mr. Manoj Nair, IFS, Scientist E, UNESCO C2C



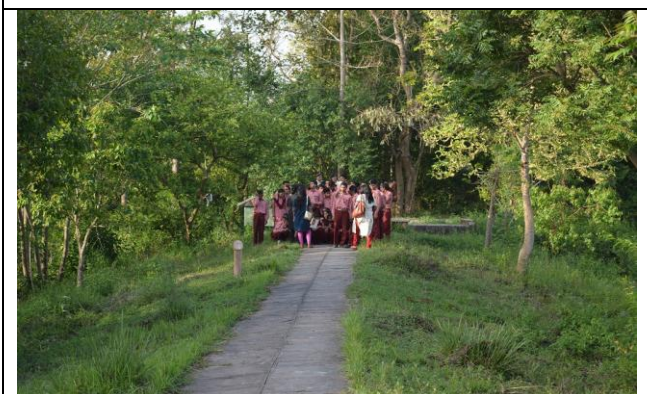
8. Launch of UNESCO E-Bulletin by DR. P.K.Mathur, Dean, FWS, WII and Smt. Neeta Bali, principal of Kasiga School



9. Vote of thanks by Ms. Persis Farooqy, World Heritage Assistant, UNESCO C2C



10. Young students learning about fauna on Natural Trail, WII Campus



11. Students of NIVH on Nature Trail, WII Campus



12. Students of The Asian School on Nature Trail, WII Campus