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# ECOTRAIL

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## BE THE CHANGE

*FINDING INDIVIDUAL SOLUTIONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE*

### ON THE BRINK

*AMBOLI BUSH FROG*

### OUTDOOR THERAPY

*HOW NATURE CAN RELIEVE  
STRESS*

### BRIGHTER SMILES

*FROM TRAILBLAZERS  
FOUNDATION*



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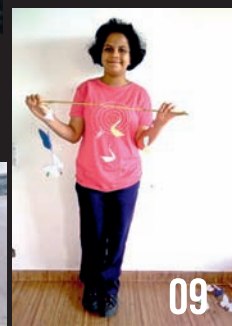
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# A CLARION CALL TO BECOME THE CHANGE

To be or not to be is the eternal question.

Sadly, in the context of impending climate change occurring across the globe, we do not have the luxury of a Shakespearian choice. The only choice is to be the change you want to see. Although we have been hearing a lot of voices from world leaders, the action seems to be too little too late. As I write this editorial, leaders from across the world are meeting in Poland to see what can be done further to alter the climate's behaviour.

Do climates behave, are they humans? The answer may be a NO with a definite 'but' attached. The climate acts the way it does because of many factors. It mostly behaves in a known and predictable manner, thus we have the winters followed by summers, which are then followed by the monsoons. Sometimes the moods vary and the weather can play truant. That is the norm. But as human population increases, their needs are to be met and the fragile Earth seems to be struggling. The Earth has enough to meet our needs, though it is painfully true that it does not have enough to meet our incessant greed as so aptly put by the Father of our Nation Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

The weather patterns are changing slowly but surely. Europe as a continent is already seeing this; islands are submerging below the sea, an increasing number of uncontrolled forest fires releasing more CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere, and increasing trends in

industrialisation are just some of the reasons. Added with rapid extinction of species and a loss of forest cover, increased acres going under the desert, the loss of mangroves and coral reefs, pollution in the physical space of all kinds is making the survival of humankind itself difficult.

The beauty is if we left our rivers seas, air and forests alone they would regain their original purity and beauty, but the human race is in a hurry to go towards self-annihilation. So what am I to do?

The eternal arguments continue. I am not responsible; it's the industrialists, the politicians, the developed countries, the government, my neighbours.... Not Me. If the state of planet Earth is bad, it is our collective responsibility to make the planet more secure. After all, it is our trust and as trustees we all have to work to perpetuate this beautiful planet; though it is a selfish desire.

We need to make a small shift in how are we using the resources given to us. I have shared here a small set of pointers. Let's begin small, then we may make a transformational shift.

Let's learn and understand about our planet. Let's read more about it. Let's visit some sites that are interesting, unique and beautiful once every month.

Let's list out things that we do every single day and see how if at all impacts our resource use- like our use of water whilst brushing our teeth in the morning, perhaps using a

bucketful of water instead of bathing in the shower or ensuring that we use a refillable water bottle and ensuring that we drink every drop of water.

Can we use our feet to reach destinations, thereby avoiding the use of vehicles of any kind? That way we exercise, save money and save fuel and don't add to pollution. Can we use mass transport and cycles whenever possible or pool vehicles? Sharing is both caring for your friends and the planet. Can we help green our homes and office, can we consume less electricity, can we ensure our taps are closed before we leave home? Can we reduce the creation of garbage? Can we separate garbage before disposing, can we avoid the use of thermocol and thermocol products. Should we not reduce, reuse and recycle where we can?

Is there need to buy a new pair of clothes every fortnight, is it possible to wear the same clothes for a longer time, maybe for a couple of years and make it a fashion statement? (Just ensure they are fresh every time you wear them). Can we volunteer our time to create more awareness or plant trees or water plants with Trailblazers Foundation or WWF -India or BNHS or the Friends of Trees etc?

The moral and message of this editorial is simple. Be the change you want to see. Easy, isn't it?

**Ranjan Biswas**

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## AMBOLI BUSH FROG



Amboli Bush Frog- *Pseudophilautus Amboli*

The Amboli Bush Frog is an interesting creature and very important to the ecosystem. It has been classified as a critically endangered species by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature). This is because it is endemic to the Western Ghats and can be found only in a range of 100 km<sup>2</sup> in the Northern Western Ghats. Discovered in 2009, this frog is found at elevations ranging from 550m to 940m above sea level.

It is a small frog with an average size of 34mm. As in all frog species, the males vocalize to attract females and ward off other males. It was found that the frogs typically begin calling at dusk. The habitat mostly consists of primary evergreen forests. Though primarily arboreal the juveniles can also be found on the ground.

Apart from threats of habitat loss and climate change, recently a new threat that is looming over this species is a beetle larva that feeds on it. Canadian entomologists identified the larvae as that of the *Epomis* beetle, which is known to feed exclusively on amphibians. More research is needed to understand the dynamics of this relationship.

Habitat protection is an urgent priority. Herpatologists are trying their best to raise awareness for the species and its unique habitat.

## FALLING INTO NATURE'S ARMS

Counselling Psychologist **Simran K. Sharma** explains how nature can be a great healer, refreshing the body, spirit and mind, leading to an heightened sense of wellbeing

Work-life balance is something we all dream of. However with increasing workloads and the ever-increasing costs associated with living; this is often a goal that is not always achieved. Not having 'enough time or money' is also seen as a barrier. Our lives are more complex and less healthy than those of our parents. Many of us are finding the side effects of work (and life) related stress impacting our lives both physically and mentally.

Let's start out with making a list of people we wish to live for and the things we enjoyed most as children and the things we miss out on today. Many of us would think first about family or friends or even the time we spent by ourselves as children. Or perhaps the space or freedom from fear or being beyond walls. Let us not add that as another stressor, with a slight twist in our 'weekend management,' we can easily detox and retrieve our energy and overcome mourning Mondays. All we need to do is welcome the missing elements back into our lives.

I would like to reintroduce the concept of exposing ourselves to nature to improve wellbeing. Spending time outdoors in nature offers the perfect excuse to put down your laptop, turn off your mobile phone and get away from the stresses of life. Being outdoors helps concentrate on survival and the need to cooperate with others in order to do so, the absence of now common modern methods for self-stimulation, such as the internet are believed to help reducing established bad patterns.

There is also the stillness of the outdoors, with no traffic, alarm clocks, and no daily commute to the office or need to rush. Instead you hear sounds from nature, insects and birds, the waves of the ocean which do not intrude and instead offers a sense of

calmness. The outdoors provide you with the opportunity to get away and experience life at a different speed that will help you restore your mood and recharge yourself.

Nature offers a different civilization from that of present human culture. The awareness of something much bigger than yourself, whether it be mountains, wide open plains or miles of sea shore makes one more appreciative and less pressured as we appear so tiny just being there. Nature also allows us to access 'the inner child' and allows us to let loose, be free from any mental/physical restrictions.

The fundamental causes of emotional distress are psychosocial. However, it is also true that we are twice as likely to be emotionally distressed if we are urban dwellers rather than rural inhabitants because of the lack of exposure to natural sights, sounds, smells, natural rhythm of night and day and seasons.

Camping and getting back to nature provides an environment full of fun, a great place to unwind with friends and family -be it -setting up the campsite, sharing a meal or exploring nature together. The forest relieves stress, it has been discovered that spending 30 minutes a day in nature can reduce blood pressure.

Just imagining yourself walking through a forest makes you feel calm, so actually doing it will definitely have a refreshing effect on you. There isn't any doubt that being outdoors will help you to feel happier and have a more positive approach towards life.

# OUR WORLD OCEAN provides

## THE AIR WE BREATHE

**>50%** The ocean produces over half of the world's oxygen and stores 50 times more carbon dioxide than our atmosphere.

## CLIMATE REGULATION

**70%** Covering 70% of the Earth's surface, the ocean transports heat from the equator to the poles, regulating our climate and weather patterns.



## TRANSPORTATION



**76%** Percent of all U.S. trade involving some form of marine transportation.

## RECREATION



From fishing to boating to kayaking and whale watching, the ocean provides us with so many unique activities.

## ECONOMY



**\$282 billion** Amount the U.S. ocean economy produces in goods and services. Ocean-dependent businesses employ almost 3 million people.

## FOOD

The ocean provides much more than just seafood. Ingredients from the sea are found in surprising foods such as peanut butter and soy milk.



## MEDICINE

Many medicinal products come from the ocean, including ingredients that help fight cancer, arthritis, Alzheimer's disease, and heart disease.



<https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/infographics/>



# THREATS TO CORAL REEFS CLIMATE CHANGE

Increased greenhouse gases from human activities result in climate change and ocean acidification.

CLIMATE CHANGE = OCEAN CHANGE



CO<sub>2</sub>

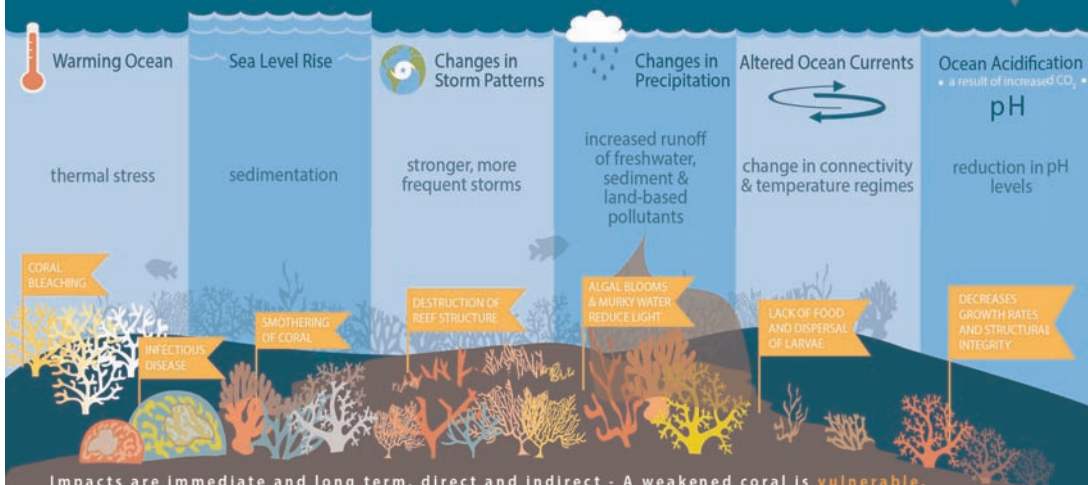
The world's ocean is a massive sink that absorbs carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). Although this has slowed global warming, it is also changing ocean chemistry.

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Shrink your carbon footprint to reduce greenhouse gases.

- Drive less.
- Reduce, reuse or recycle.
- Purchase energy-efficient appliances and lightbulbs.
- Print less. Download more. Use less water.

## CLIMATE CHANGE dramatically affects CORAL REEF ECOSYSTEMS



Impacts are immediate and long term, direct and indirect - A weakened coral is vulnerable.

Do your part to help improve overall coral reef condition.

- Reduce the use of lawn and garden chemicals.
- DO NOT dump household chemicals in storm drains.
- Choose sustainable seafood. [www.FishWatch.com](http://www.FishWatch.com)
- Learn about good reef etiquette and practice it when in the water.
- Volunteer for beach and waterway clean ups.

## CONTRIBUTE TO BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY

**Mrs. Geetha Kandaraji**, Vice-Principal, DPS Bangalore North writes to ECOTRAIL about how her school has set a precedent by becoming the change in their neighbourhood

To bring about the sense of responsibility and contribution in a collective way, we believe in the saying "If you can't be a highway, be just a trail. If you can't be the sun, be the star. It isn't by size that you win or you fail – be the best of whatever you are."

DPS Bangalore North believes in engraving values into children by being a role model in every way. We all live an era of infinite information, endless possibilities, immeasurable opportunities, never ending discoveries and explorations, everlasting innovations and inventions. The responsibilities and roles teachers ought to play are numerous yet vital.

Apart from transacting the academic curriculum, DPS BN extends its wings in conducting co-curricular activities that contributes in community building. Green initiatives taken by the school is worth sharing. The children enjoy themselves in the school in spaces with titles such as "Sugar Free Zone" and "No Cavity Zone". Instead of distributing sugary chocolates on their birthdays, they get Tulsi, Ajwain & Aloe vera plants and plant them in the school garden and nurture them. They join hands with "I & You" foundation and "Tree for Free" to carry out "tree plantations" on campus. This is also taken up in a few government schools in our neighborhood.

Saving our water bodies in Bangalore is a huge task as Bangalore is battling a severe water shortage. Our students form NCC, CMCA, Scouts-Guides and teacher volunteers along with some parents had joined a group name Jalposhan to save Jakkur Lake and maintain its eco system. Jakkur Lake is in the northern part of Bangalore along with lakes like Puttenahalli Lake and Rachenahalli Lake.

It had to be revived to safeguard the flora and fauna within, and for the biodiversity to thrive. Many activities are conducted to give the lake a face-lift such as cleaning and de-weeding the lake bund and the lake, digging pits for tree plantation, watering the planted trees, naming and tagging the trees with common names, botanical names and its uses. In addition, ongoing work includes collecting data of the species of trees, shrubs and herbs along with other plants which is used to study the pattern of animals and birds living in the eco system. Water quality is tested to know

what kind of fauna inhabit the lake. The types of seasonal migrating birds visiting lake are closely observed and photographs of all the trees, plants, insects, reptiles and birds are maintained by the Jalposhan members. Many community stakeholders are involved in reviving Jakkur Lake. It all starts from the local villagers, fishermen, social workers, school students; corporates from many MNC companies come in big numbers on Saturday and Sundays and carry out *shramdaan* (community service) to save this water body. This is a big learning for our students.

The Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) here is a study unit for many people who want to set up their STPs in organisations and localities. Special days are allocated for celebrations to bring the community together.

The Lake's pond area is used to conduct Morning and Evening Raga – a cultural programme conducted twice a month that acts as an incentive to the community around to enjoy the spoils of nature.

Cycling and walking tracks have been made along with a permaculture area which is the latest addition in the lake. The weather station in the lake is an interesting factor that attracts many students to study about the weather conditions prevailing in Jakkur lake that matches with the observations made for the migratory birds or spotting some type of insects, animals etc.

As a school and as volunteers we take great pride in contributing immensely without fail on all Saturdays and Sundays to save Jakkur Lake which is a model lake across Bangalore city. It is spoken of at the country level and we DPSites are proud to contribute towards saving it. This means we are saving our future. The local governing body supports and contributes in all the activities of saving Jakkur Lake.

"Great teachers are great leaders who re masters of translating mission, vision and strategy into action," said education innovator Deborah Chang.

I take great pride in leading my team of students, teachers and parent volunteers in reviving Jakkur lake which is one of the finest lakes in Bangalore. Thanks to Dr. Annapurna Kamath from Satya Foundation who leads this entire programme.



**Champion of Green Learning:** Mrs. Geetha Kandaraji, Vice-Principal, DPS Bangalore North. (Below): Students clean Jakkur lake and the surrounding spaces.



## BEING WITH NATURE, LEARNING FROM NATURE

**Dr. Smitha S. Thankappan** (Senior Scientist and Communication Strategist, M S Swaminathan Botanical Garden) and **Mr. Girigan Gopi** (Principal Scientist, M S Swaminathan Research Foundation Community Agrobiodiversity Centre) share the importance of reducing our collective and individual carbon footprints

Nature is a great teacher, particularly where it concerns the equilibrium of existence. It is an amalgamation of living and non-living forms, forces and elements. Nature is engineered to fit the life in a cyclic process with its precision in balancing micro to macro environment through the food chain and other associations. From the symbiotic to the parasitic the complicated mechanism of nature has played a fundamental role for the all existence. Most of our innovations are the optimization of careful observation of nature's mechanism.

The evolution of nature was gradual, yet perfectly timed with increasing progression. All living forms are growing along with nature; the selection process creates an optimal support system and enables the environment to sustain life.

Rapid and continuous urbanization, coupled with industrialisation and environmentally harmful technological innovations lead to the sudden changes affecting the balance of ecosystem and it resulted in changing climate patterns, erratic weather, ultimately threatening the subsistence of life. The cyclical process of life should not be drawn in a straight line to define the control over the biosphere that

has been evolved through millions of years. Human intervention and the exploitation of resources has affected nature's resilient capacity and has led to dangerous consequences. Changing societal perceptions towards adopting environmental friendly practices to secure the environment for future generations is a significant matter to be addressed with immediate concern.

Individual efforts to mitigate our carbon footprint will ultimately reduce the per capita emission and this may contribute to neutralizing the effect to a significant extent. Most important is the intentional effort to increase the carbon sequestration through planting trees to augment the vegetation cover and adopting eco-friendly agricultural practices to increase organic carbon are a few ways to consider.

The student community can increase carbon sequestration by converting their campus to a green campus through adopting green protocols as solar energy, waste management, plastic free campus, and rainwater harvesting. Being torchbearers of the same concept in home and school, they can persuade the society to follow the protocols eventually. It revolutionises positive change and inspires the whole

community with a model system. Environmental friendly practices should be widely accepted and followed as a responsibility towards the citizens than mere individual benefit. M. S. Swaminathan Botanical Garden, Wayanad has scientific, educational and recreational programmes that focus on this aspect. 'Every Child A Scientist' has been formulated by Professor Swaminathan specifically for students to create awareness on biodiversity conservation, on climate resilience, towards being responsible citizens and to encourage the youth to reduce carbon footprints.

Youth are the guardians of nature and they are the ones who will face the steepest consequences of climate change. The commercial feasibility and the market value of the environmental friendly technological innovations are a concern but it can be addressed with the right frame of mind of the young generation to follow the environmental friendly practices since the 'need is the market'.

Nature teaches the way to maintain sustainability and we should perceive and learn from her the right system to reduce, recycle and reuse to preserve the environment for all mankind.



School students enjoy an educational walk through the M. S. Swaminathan Botanical Garden where they learn about endemic flora and fauna and the importance of conserving our environment for the future

# WHEN YOUR FAVOURITE STORIES COME TO LIFE

We all have our favourite fictional characters. What would be better than going on an outbound trip with them? Trailblazers had organised special theme outbound trips for a renowned school.

Excited little grade three students accompanied Alice into Wonderland, starting with a magic potion, and while wandering around in search of the White Rabbit, Alice and the students fell down the rabbit hole. They crossed the valleys through zip lines, walked on the Burma Bridge to cross the river, and climbed up the misty mountains on a trek. While exploring Wonderland, they came across the Mad Hatter and joined him for his Tea Party, and as night began to fall, they continued their party over a bonfire, over which they were introduced to the Queen of Hearts and started preparing their strategies against her. In the face off with Queen of Hearts, Alice and her companions learned more about working as a team, playing fair in the spirit of competition, and made their way

back by defeating the Queen of Hearts. Finally, the students received a souvenir as token of love from Alice, delivered of course, by Team Trailblazers.

Next, the grade four Narnians could not believe themselves when they walked through the wardrobe in the world of Narnia. Eager and excited for battle, they all underwent a training session which included zip line, rock climbing, commando net, team games, and strategic planning meetings in their respective teams. In the march for the battle against the White Witch, they learned about the local flora and fauna, and also exhibited their creativity by making a nature collage. Motivated by the Narnian flag flying high, they decided to have their final strategy discussion by working in teams to create a special formation. Each soldier was awarded a badge for their victorious win on the battle. The Narnians celebrated over the renowned feast along with the bonfire, which was thrown in their honour by Team

Trailblazers.

Finally, news of the missing "Hope Diamond" spread like a wildfire among grade five, and Team Trailblazers decided to work along with the students to solve the mystery and help Sherlock Holmes. Before that they had to undergo the training sessions which consisted of commando net, team games and team building activities so they could utilise their skills optimally. They investigated the crime scene and got a chance to interrogate the suspects; Irene Adler, Jim Moriarty and Mr. Smith. After being keen on every clue, they finally found a lead to the real culprit and were successful in solving the unsolved puzzles. They celebrated together and had a gala night with Sherlock Holmes over a bonfire. For their incredible efforts to stretch their grey cells, they all were rewarded with a badge each to encourage them to sharpen their little detective minds.

# DISCOVERING THE WONDERS OF A VILLAGE TRAIL

Students of an international school from Mumbai were thrilled to go for a village trail in Vajreshwari. The students explored the rural life and the history of Portuguese rule over India through the course of this camp. Students visited Vajreshwari temple which was rebuilt by Chimaji Appa- the younger brother and military commander of Peshwa Bajirao I, to celebrate the defeat of Portuguese in the region of Vasai. Vajreshwari is also known for the hot water springs. There are around 21 hot water springs in 5 km radius of the main temple. Students were keen to learn more about the sulphur springs and the science behind it as they visited 4 of these springs.

Students also visited a village that is inhabited by Katkari community, which is a tribal community in Maharashtra. They got an opportunity to interact with the locals and children of their age who live in

the village itself. The students had a great time performing for the local school children when they visited the village. This village is known for its cleanliness and has won many awards from the government for the same.

It has implemented many sustainable systems to use the resources efficiently and effectively. After the students were done with the performances, the local school students returned the favor by performing folk music for all of us. After this enchanting experience the Sarpanch (head of the village) addressed the students and told them about the journey the village has had, to be where it is now. The students after this experience learnt a very important quality everyone should possess which is being grateful for what you already have. Students were touched as they wrote a letter to their parents thanking them for providing them with all the comforts and

quality education.

Later, they visited an organisation actively working for tribals and sustainable energy. Students with the help of local experts tried their hands on Warli Painting which is one of the most prominent tribal art form. They were fascinated as they saw and learned more about vermicompost units, Biogas plants and Solar energy plants. The camp came to a conclusion after the visit to the historically Bassein Fort also known as the Vasai fort.

This is a fort of national importance and is taken care of by the archaeological survey of India. The students were thrilled when they understood the rich history of this fort and the Portuguese rule over India. From various medieval dynasties to Portuguese, Mughals, British rulers, Marathas, and later Indian government, this region and the fort has witnessed a lot of historic landmarks.





# FROM OUR TRAILBLAZING CAMPERS TO YOU

## AMANI KALKAR

Hello everybody!

Today I will share with you my experience of a Backyard Trail with Trailblazers. It was on 15th July 2018 and it was a beautiful trek. Sir was giving us instructions and we happily climbed up. When we were trekking up the mountain, and there was a lot of muddy water and *spirogyra*. We were clicking pictures of our group on the way up.

Finally, we were at the top of the mountain where we played a lot of games. We were divided into two teams; 1) France, 2) Croatia. One was a team game and other was a group game called 'Fire on the mountain.' Then we rested for some time and began our descent. We clicked some more pictures on the way down!



Happy camper **Amani Kalkar** (front row, centre)

We reached the base and the trek was over. My parents had come to receive me. I liked the trek very much because when we reached on the top it was raining!

## SOUKHYA DAMLE



I am writing about my first experience with Trailblazers. I had a lot of fun. On our first day we first made rules. One of them was that we had to listen while someone else was talking. After that we had ice breakers which were basically games. This made sure that all kids mixed well and everyone was friends. We had a blast on the first day. One thing I like about Trailblazers is that they have kid friendly meals, so you don't have any problems.

The second day was even better; in fact the best of all. We conducted an experiment called elephant's toothpaste (if I remember the name correctly). In that experiment we mixed hydrogen peroxide into water. Then we added normal liquid dishwasher. As soon as we added yeast mixed with water, it got foamy and bubbled over. We even tried the slime making experiment. We then did a game of survival skills. We even had a chef's challenge. Not to forget the mini-holi in which we played with the water. We also started a windchime -making activity.

The third day we had a nature trail which included a birdwalk and finished the windchime activity started on the second day. It was the most awesome camp!

## JAHNAVI NAIR



Ever since my brother Rishab and I got to know about Trailblazers from our cousin Nayantara, we were looking forward to an adventure vacation with other kids of our age group. We felt really sad when some of the dates on which camps were scheduled conflicted with our school schedule. The Uttarakhand camp in May this year seemed perfect; it was during our school holidays and the trip brochure mentioned biking, adventure and a lot of fun. This was the first time we were travelling on a week-long trip without our parents accompanying us, so we were super excited :)

A week ahead of the trip, we were provided guidance on things we should carry, and some general do's and don'ts. We met Pratham sir, one of the camp facilitators at Delhi airport, and waited for the other three kids joining us from Hyderabad, namely Lavya, Dhruv and Naman. With the group together, Pratham Sir went on the hunt for healthy food at Delhi airport, desperately seeking a Subway outlet. However, Kid Power prevailed, and we finally ate at McDonalds. The flight to Dehradun was a little over an hour, and by the time we landed we had gotten to know each other well.

We met Krusha didi, another Trailblazers facilitator at Dehradun. Didi had travelled early to do a recce of the place and confirm arrangements for the camp. It was a wonderful experience to be out in the hills, experiencing nature at its best. The air felt fresh and clean, and the mountains warm and welcoming. The food was fantastic and Pratham Sir and Krusha Didi were generous enough to squeeze in some surprise treats as well. The clear and broad sky was nothing like we had seen in the city, and it was a wonderful experience to just sit and gaze at the stars.

We spent the night in a tent which were also quite spacious for up to five people, having lots of fun chatting and cracking jokes.

Daytime activities included mountain biking, trekking, white water rafting and rappelling. The mountain biking seemed hardcore, considering the lack of experience of biking over steep inclines. We camped out on a starry night on the day we biked up the mountain (much to our pleasure). The people helping were also careful about instructions and were also quite kind.

Trekking was an activity I actually quite enjoyed. We explored a local village, met the locals, trekked up small climbs and also had a small walk to the rappelling area, and sure, thorns and bruises are just a small price considering the fun we had. Moving on, rappelling as I said, was held in an area a little far away, and I did enjoy the walk. It was interesting, I had done rappelling on cliffs before, but this cliff, but not on one so high, but still worth the challenge.

River rafting in the mighty Ganges was one of the most engaging activities we did during the camp. This one required a 20 minute car ride to Rishikesh. It felt much longer than that. But rafting was amazing, the water was cold and just right to dip in. We spent about half an hour in the raft until finally reaching the end point. I was a bit disappointed when it ended.

A dip in the freezing waters of the Ganges relaxed our tired muscles. On the final day, we had a talent show where we all showcased our talents. It was good fun being among friends our age (Pratham Sir and Krusha Didi included!) and it ended with some music and dancing. We were given certificates along with feedback to the facilitators.

The next day, after breakfast at the resort, all bags packed, we left for the airport a little earlier than usual. We landed at Delhi, and as a thanksgiving gesture to Pratham Sir for all their efforts, ate at a Subway sandwich!

Overall the trip was great fun, adventure, bonding and learning, and I really look forward to attending more such camps in future.

# HOW LARGE IS YOUR WATER FOOTPRINT?

Trailblazers explores the concept of the Water Footprint, its implications, and how each person can make a difference

## What is a water footprint?

Carbon footprint is a fairly well known concept and increasingly more and more people are aware about the importance of bringing down their carbon footprint to zero to be truly sustainable.

However, little has been spoken or written about the water footprint. A water footprint is the amount of fresh water used directly or indirectly by an individual or an organisation. This would also include water consumed in the production of goods and services used by an individual or an organisation.

Everything we do, from the showers we take, the food we eat, the smartphones we use to the clothes we wear consumes water. Soon, fresh water will be one of the scarcest resources on our planet. The water crisis has been identified as one of the highest impact global risks by the World Economic Forum's Global Risk Report. Already, 4 billion people in the world live in water scarcity. Hence, it is absolutely critical that we start assessing our individual impact on the water crisis and take definite steps to reduce it.

## Is carbon footprint similar to water footprint?

Both the concepts touch different aspects of the same larger issue of sustainability. Carbon footprint relates to climate change, while water print relates to water scarcity. The concept of water footprint was conceived by Water Management Professor Arjen Hoekstra from Twente University, Netherlands in 2002. The average water footprint of an individual across the world is 3,800 litres/day. The average for countries like USA are as high as 7800 litres/day, Germany is 3900 litres/day and China is 2900 litres/day. India averages at 3000 litres/day.

## How should I begin to offset my water footprint?

Unlike in the case of carbon footprint, where offset can be done by proper carbon sequestration somewhere else, such a case is not possible for water footprint. Hence the emphasis has to be on reduction of the water footprint to become as low as possible. Individuals can reduce their direct water footprint by small daily

actions like closing the tap while brushing, installing water-saving toilets and showers. However, an individual's indirect water footprint is much larger than the direct one. This can be reduced by choosing lower water footprint lifestyle choices, like choosing vegetarianism over meat, or choosing tea over coffee. For those who feel these are difficult choices, they could choose brands which promote sustainability and have a lower water footprint. The catch-22 here is that in order to take action and practise the choices given above, the products must contain information about water footprint for the consumer to compare and make a conscious choice.

Water shortage is arguably the number one threat to human survival. Already there are wars and conflicts between states and countries over the issue of water. The only solution is we consciously and proactively reduce our water usage. And every single individual and every single litre saved makes an positive impact in the big picture.

## SENTINELS OF THE SEA

Through the art of visual storytelling, two ocean conservationists teach us that the effects of climate change can be fought with awareness, a determination to take action and a strong and abiding compassion for the environment.

With a mission to "create healthy and abundant oceans, for us and for the planet," photographers and ocean conservationists Cristina Mittermeier and Paul Nicklen have brought together a passionate team from across the world to help protect one of mother nature's finest gifts – the ocean.

Built on years of expertise in photographing and documenting some of the most profound moments in the natural world, Mittermeier and Nicklen's SeaLegacy programme is a campaign to raise awareness about the health of our oceans and the impact that they have on flora, fauna and the human race, all through one of history's greatest teachers- the art of storytelling.

With the rise of pollutants in oceans, and with overfishing causing harm to marine life, global warming in the oceans is rising at alarming speeds and it is up to us to take action to preserve these mighty bodies of life. SeaLegacy uses the art of visual storytelling to bring alive the beauty, majesty and diversity of marine life, in a way that Nicklen says is "bringing the ocean to you." The photographs inspire in viewers a sense

of wonder at the mysteries of life under the ocean. Through SeaLegacy, however, Mittermeier and Nicklen are determined to bring out more than the beauty of the ocean- they are compelling the world to see how each individual's choices are affecting the ocean.

**"WITHOUT HEALTHY OCEANS, WE CANNOT SURVIVE. FROM THE AIR WE BREATHE, TO THE FOOD WE EAT, TO THE CLIMATE WE LIVE IN, WE ALL DEPEND ON OUR OCEANS. TODAY, THEY ARE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER. HEALTHY OCEANS ABSORB CARBON FROM THE ATMOSPHERE AND HELP REDUCE THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE."**

— [www.sealegacy.org](http://www.sealegacy.org)

Alarming photographs of micro-plastics and plastic flotsam greet the viewer- the carcass of a dead whale caught in a fisherman's net, an emaciated polar bear in his last days, an iconic and award-winning picture of a seahorse sailing across the ocean on an earbud. These telling images are an eerie indicator of what is set to follow.

The SeaLegacy couple are now building an army of communications experts who travel on expeditions to document the health of the oceans. Next comes a campaign which makes use of the media eye to reach the world, allowing them to see and experience through visuals the conflict between man and the ocean.

The team is also committed to helping communities that make their livelihoods from the oceans. By engaging local fishing groups or indigenous populations that live and work around oceans, they are empowered and made aware of the implications of their actions on the oceans. The team also showcases the stories of indigenous communities who are protecting their oceans against the exploits of larger industries and government factions.

As cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Visit [www.sealegacy.org](http://www.sealegacy.org) for more spectacular visual tales of how this group of people is changing the world, an ocean at a time.

# BRINGING IN BRIGHTER SMILES

*Trailblazers Foundation conducted a dental check-up camp, helping brighten the smiles of school children from Pawar Nagar TMC School*

Trailblazers Foundation organised a dental check-up camp with Contemporary Dentists at Pawar Nagar TMC School, for students from the first to the fifth standard. The dental check-up camp was inaugurated by Dr. Sudiksha Puranik and Dr. Uday Puranik and 35 children attended the inauguration ceremony along with their Principal and their teachers.

The inauguration was anchored by Trailblazers Foundation. The Principal welcomed doctors on behalf of Pawar Nagar TMC School and the Trailblazers Foundation. Trailblazers Foundation introduced Dentists to gathering and requested principal and doctors to light the lamp and initiate the dental checkup camp after which the Ravindranath Tagore poem was read out to recognize the social contribution of doctors.

An oral hygiene awareness session was also conducted by Dr. Puranik to prevent cavities and other dental issues that regularly crop up with children. Post the dental camp, Dr Uday and Dr. Sudiksha Puranik presented the finding of the camp which highlighted that 76% of children

from Pawar Nagar TMC school need major dental treatment. Trailblazers Foundation is planning to share the findings of dental camp with the education officer of Thane Municipal Corporation (TMC) in order to be able to take appropriate action to prevent dental problems and promote dental hygiene among school children. The school principal was highly appreciative of the efforts taken by Trailblazers Foundation to conduct a successful dental check-up camp for children from low income communities in her school. She further said, "We are glad that our children got such good treatment from doctors which we have not experienced in past, we would like to facilitate such kind of activities in collaboration of Trailblazers Foundation in our school."

Trailblazers Foundation is also looking for corporate partners to take this project at a large scale in Thane, Navi Mumbai and Mumbai for Municipal Corporation Schools. If you or your organization would like to be a part of this cause please contact us on [contact@trailblazersfoundation.org.in](mailto:contact@trailblazersfoundation.org.in)



Monitoring a school student's dental hygiene at the dental camp



Principal inaugurating the Trailblazers Foundation dental camp



Happy students after the informative dental camp

## BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: BANGALORE

*A glimpse into Trailblazers Foundation's unique workshops on the benefits of learning in the outdoors*



Esteemed Principals and Trailblazers at the Trailblazers Foundation's Principals' Summit

After the successful completion of the Hyderabad Beyond the Classroom workshops, it was Bengaluru's turn. Trailblazers were excited to welcome the teachers and Principals of premier schools in Bengaluru. Trailblazers Foundation conducted a one-day teachers workshop highlighting the benefits of the interdisciplinary approach and collaborative learning using the outdoors as a laboratory followed by Principals' Summit.

Teachers participated wholeheartedly and enjoyed the activities conducted by Trailblazers experts who had as much fun as the teachers and interacted

with them productively. It was truly a teaching-learning process. Following the teachers' workshop, the Principals' summit saw participation from a select group of principals. Some were from schools whose teachers had participated in the workshop. With the great feedback from teachers who had attended the workshop, Principals lauded the endeavors of Trailblazers Team in organizing the Beyond the Classroom workshop.

Principals engaged in discussion on importance and processes of organizing outbound school programmes. The topics ranged from content, safety, schools

responsibility, planning, role of accompanying teachers etc. The keynote speech was delivered by Founder Principal of Greenwood High Bannerghatta, Mr. Louis Dias.

His speech was inspiring and covered his experience in the outdoors during his student and professional life. Mr. Dias shared that he studied in a school which was in the midst of a jungle where bears and leopards occasionally visited the school campus and that it was a peaceful coexistence of wildlife and humans, barring the dogs which sometimes were devoured by the leopards! He reminisced about how they walked through the forest and climbed the mountains to be close with flora and fauna to learn the difference between endemic and exotic species and the importance of keystone species.

As the founding principal of Greenwood High, he was a part of the first outdoor camp organized for school by Trailblazers. He applauded the well-organized trip by the Trailblazers. At the end of his speech, he emphasized to all his peers to take initiative and encourage students to spend time in outdoors, especially in light of the sedentary lifestyle led by the youngsters glued to electronic gadgets.

## UPCOMING CAMPS

# WHAT ARE YOU DOING THIS SUMMER?

## CAMP FOOTLOOSE

29th April to 1st May 2019

Age Group: 8- 12 Years

From outdoor survival to little chef, crafts station to exciting games, bonfires to dance sessions we have it all plus more!



SAHYADRI, MAHARASHTRA



SAHYADRI, MAHARASHTRA

## CAMP PATHFINDER

29th April to 1st May 2019

Age Group: 13- 16 Years

Build new skills and challenge yourself to do more this vacation! From trekking and kayaking, to rifle shooting and archery, we have it all!

## CAMP DISCOVERER

19th to 23rd May 2019

Age Group: 14- 18 Years

Become an outdoor expert by camping in the wilderness, discover Uttarakhand by trekking, cycling and white water rafting!



UTTARAKHAND



BALI, INDONESIA

## SCUBA DIVING CERTIFICATE CAMP

2nd to 8th April 2019

21st to 27th May 2019


11th to 17th June 2019


Age Group: 13- 18 Years


Dive among corals and turtles, explore an underwater World War 2 ship wreck, while getting your PADI scuba diving certification.

Visit [www.trailblazersindia.com](http://www.trailblazersindia.com) for more details

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