

Youth Environment Leadership Workshop

5th October 2023

Background

The Youth Environment Leadership Workshop was hosted by Centre for Environment Education (CEE) as a lead institution of RCE Lucknow. The workshop was organized on National Ganga River Dolphin Day, is all about empowering and educating young people. We focus on developing their leadership skills with the theme of Beat Plastic Pollution. The primary focus of the workshop was centred around discussing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and their corresponding targets and how young individuals can make a difference in their local communities by working towards these SDGs. Youth students were guided to participate in global youth leadership initiatives UNEP's Tide Turners Plastic Challenge and Young Reporters for the Environment for becoming a change agent and to contribute positively to environmental conservation.

Overview of the Workshop

The workshop had 8 engaging sessions started with discussion on by 2050 what youth would like to change for planet and people. Each session is designed in a way to be engaging and effective. The sessions covered a range of topics such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), leadership, plastic pollution, and digital advocacy. The hands-on approach for each session made learning interactive and enjoyable. The workshop provided participants with a holistic understanding of sustainability, enabling them to take active roles in environmental conservation and education within their communities.

About the sessions

Ms. Preeti R. Kanaujia, Coordinator of RCE Lucknow facilitated an interactive session on understanding local environmental issues with the lens of SDGs. Ms. Kanaujia also introduced other their importance in understanding human resource consumption and the need for active conservation. This was followed by the leadership session provided students with insights into leadership styles and skills essential for addressing local environmental issues. A thorough investigation into the origins, categories, and longevity of plastic pollution was conducted, revealing the alarming existence of microplastics even within the human body.



Participation

The workshop united 56 under and post-graduate students from five different colleges and University of Lucknow, all with the aim of becoming environmental change agents. The youths participated in various sessions and activities that helped them gain practical experience and hone critical skills such as *communication, leadership, and active engagement*. The workshop used interactive games and activities to teach key concepts of environmental awareness such as waste segregation through segregation games, while role-play helped students grasp SDG targets. The teams were assigned specific goals such as goals 3, 4, 6, 11 & 12 and asked to imagine themselves as the village head, coming up with ideas on how to achieve their assigned SDG goal. This exercise helped the students understand the practical implications of the SDGs and how they can be implemented at the grassroots level.

Leadership skills were honed through an interactive session of Photo-story where youths were provided with complex pictures of environmental issues and they were asked to outline their own stories using their observational skills to identify the major gaps. While lively *street plays* by youths were used to effectively communicate plastic awareness. Overall, the workshop provided effective learning experience that equipped the students with the knowledge and skills needed to make a positive impact on the environment.

