

CMS VATAVARAN 2013 NOMINATION JURY PANEL REPORT

Nomination Jury, August 27 – 30, 2013, New Delhi

A 31 member Nomination Jury headed by Mr Srinivasan Iyer, Assistant Country Director and Head, Energy and Environment Unit, UNDP India met from Tuesday – Friday, August 27 – 30, 2013 at New Delhi.

The selection process began with an inaugural and briefing session about the selection process, judging criteria and guidelines. There are a total of 11 categories in the 7th CMS VATAVARAN 2013 (Indian and International).

The 31 member Nomination Jury from diverse sectors and streams was divided into 7 committees with each committee having 4-5 members (2 representatives each from technical, subject & media background).

Nomination Jury's comments on the process

Nomination Criteria

Entries submitted in CMS VATAVARAN 2013 were judged on five criteria i.e. Content (Clarity of Idea, message and authenticity of facts and figures); Visual Composition or Cinematography; Sound and Music; Editing and Composition; Presentation, Finish and Overall Impression.

Peer Review

Through peer review it was checked whether the films adhere to the themes, eligibility criteria and guidelines. Those films which did not fulfil the submission criteria were not taken forward in the selection process. The nomination jury called for very strict peer review.

Nomination Process

The nomination jury members felt that the selection process was very stringent, transparent and very democratic. According to them the criticism was fairly discussed and analysed. Experts from diverse backgrounds watched and debated each film for its merit and assigned scores independently. Finally, the tallies were matched with the consensual unanimity about the films that were finally selected for nominations.

Jury Composition

The members agreed that it was an interesting experience to view films with diverse committee who were all knowledgeable and carried rich experience which gave them many new insights.

Comments on Film Categories

With more than 500 entries, the members were exposed to a wide range of subjects and issues to evaluate. Their valuable feedback and comments on the categories are:

- **Animation**

The jury members found that the short animation films were impact-making and at the same time funny and effectively portrayed the conservation messages. Some were crisp, thought provoking, well crafted film and encompassed the theme of conserving nature. Most of the films were highly imaginative, well conceptualised and incisive. Some of the animation films according to the jury were a fine blend of reality and dream like sequences.

- **Biodiversity**

The films seen by the Nomination Jury in the biodiversity conservation were very creative in their presentation. Some of the films were technically sound, had good narration, were hard hitting and topical with a high emotional appeal. In some films very rare footage was shown, some had excellent cinematography. The biodiversity related issues such as natural history, status, livelihood, outreach action and awareness policy were also nicely covered in most of the films. While some films had a bit of humour and also excellent music coinciding action. The threats, actions and conservation messages in some films were depicted well. Some of the films had excellent graphics and gave useful insights. Some films hit the bull's eye with enough reasons through powerful images. Some films provided reasons for detailed cumulative assessments before planning any infrastructure/power projects.

- **Climate Change and Sustainable Technologies**

The films received in this category highlighted issues like low carbon economy, climate-friendly building technologies, global warming, organic farming, etc. According to the jury some of the productions were a treat to watch. Some of the films were very informative, engaging and sensitively explored the highlighted issues while some depicted clear linkage between socio-economic situations, governance and environment

- **Environmental Conservation**

The films focussed on issues like nuclear radiation, natural resource exploitation, forest ecosystem, etc. The jury members found very good camera work in some of the films. According to them some of the stories were beautifully depicted and created the necessary impact. Some were very captivating and sustained interest throughout the film while some were based on case studies, very inspirational and relevant to the current scenario. Some films had excellent camera work.

- **Feature Film**

The films submitted in the feature film category according to the jury expressed human connect with environment using amazing visuals and background music. Some films had excellent commentary and had appropriate editing keeping the overall pace of the film intact.

- **Films for Children**

The members were of the opinion that some of the films were educative and inspiring and could be used as an advocacy tool. The jury shared that through these films they could learn so many aspects of environment, ecology, life & living. Some films connected life and nature very beautifully.

- **Livelihoods**

Films in this category highlighted unsustainable fisheries, struggle of women in the Gulf of Mannar to collect seaweed, etc. The films entered in the Livelihoods category this year according to the jury were well told and had striking visuals. Some films highlighted unusual livelihoods and what economic necessity compel women into what may be usually a male preserve.

- **Newcomer**

The jury members after viewing the films in this category segregated the category between those made by grownups and another made by students. The films seen by the jury members were original and had a creative treatment. Some of the films effectively conveyed the conservation messages. Some films according to the jury were very inspiring and focussed. In spite of being newcomers, the jury felt that the films were well scripted and highlighted stories of relevance. The jury were amazed by the quality of some of the films which were technically very sound with good editing, good shots and

sound mixing. The jury members highly appreciated the efforts of the rural children who had conveyed the conservation message in their film in a nice and simple manner. Some of these films were packed with lots of information and communicated very well.

- **Public Service Announcements (PSA)**

PSAs were short promotional films that highlighted a conservation message. The Nomination Jury members felt that some of the PSAs were professionally produced with great storyline. Some films were simple yet effectively conveyed the conservation message while some had excellent imagery camera work.

- **Series (Based on Environment and Wildlife)**

The series category films viewed by the jury members depicted a nice cinematic journey. Some of the films were well narrated, well crafted with good background music which blended very well with the theme. In some films the jury had a treat to watch rare night photography. Some films were humorous in nature but at the same time made us realise our duty to protect the nature. Some films had stunning visuals with strong presentation while some successfully motivated the audience into taking necessary action. Some films also highlighted the hardships as well as agonies and ecstasies of the filmmaking crew while filming the series.

- **Water for All**

The films entered in the water for all category highlighted issues of displacement, water pollution, water harvesting, etc. The jury found that some of the films were technically sound in terms of aesthetic value. Some of the films used popular folklore and human stories which lent the film a strong narrative. Some films highlighted honest, credible, well researched documentation of people's struggles and predicament of displaced people.

Overall suggestions and comments from the 2013 Nomination Jury Members

Film's Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The films are selected/ nominated for its good content, technical superiority and innovative approach along with hard hitting and emotionally charged message. • The time spent with the jury was educative and inspiring. Could know so many aspects of environment, ecology, life & living. • There are some films which can be used as advocacy tools. • Some films lacked clarity on the subject matter and technically amateur. A few however were professionally produced with great storyline. • There were couple of very good and outstanding films. There were some outstanding films that made the viewing experience worthwhile. • Few films are mediocre ones. A few were class room lectures monotonous and boring. • Some of the international films from the western countries are very self absorbed and some do not explore the context and relate to global relevance. • Had an opportunity to watch good movies on environment issues. Some of the productions were a treat to watch. • Coverage of issues pertaining to biodiversity has a narrow focus. However, there were certain important and global issues that were presented in films such as marine areas, impact of climate change on Arctic ecosystems, fisheries and insight of the behaviour plants and animals. • An overwhelming number of films don't score on thematic technique, narrative quality and sometimes also on content accuracy. • Great experience as a professional to be exposed to a wide range of issues related to the environment international & national and other experts from their fields.
Process (Judging Criteria Guidelines, Process, Members)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts from diverse backgrounds watched and debated each film for its merit and assigned scores independently. Finally, the tallies were matched with the consensual unanimity about the films that were finally selected. • There was unanimity of opinion among the jury members about the films which were selected for final nomination for each category. • The jury members were knowledgeable, diversified and rich in experience. The choice of members was excellent. But some individuals not having affiliation to any organisation should be included. • Need more filtration within the categories and stricter peer. • The diversity of the topics makes it even more difficult to judge. • The process was little elaborate and tedious. • Fair enough, very democratic, criticism was fairly discussed and analysed. • It was an interesting experience to view films as a diverse committee. It gave many new insights.
Suggestions for 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be interesting if CMS VATAVARAN could start an online community of schools, teachers, students and environmental activists who could qualify for being invited for the event from different parts of India by doing something significant for environment.

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short/ very short film category may be introduced.• Short films and long films must have separate categories. Perhaps it may be specified that short movies must be of minimum 5 minutes length and longer versions limited to 1 hour.• Judging criteria should be separate for various categories.• More time should be given to 'good' films. This would be possible only if 'lesser' number of films are viewed by the Jury.• There should be a separate Children's Newcomer category.• More innovation in themes & in filmmaking needs to be encouraged (somehow)!• Peer group must screen out the grain from the chuff. |
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