



A Green Movement to
Impact Perception, Policy and Practice

CMS vatavaran

Environment & Wildlife International Film Festival and Forum



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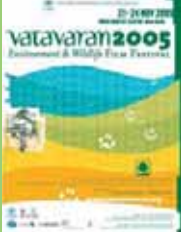
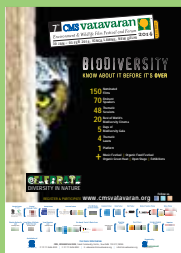
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Ministry of Environment, Forest
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CMS VATAVARAN is a pioneering international festival of films on environment and wildlife

Using films as a window to delve into nature, this festival showcases the best films and documentaries on environment and wildlife from all over the world. In addition to stories on critical ecological and development challenges, some of the most compelling practices, as well as enchanting snippets on the diversity of our planet are also projected in the festival.

Though it is aimed at sensitising people about their rich environmental heritage and the need to conserve it, **CMS VATAVARAN is not just a film festival celebrating the cinematic art of films but focuses more on using the films as a tool and catalyst for creating impact.** CMS VATAVARAN remains resolute to encourage environment films and forums resulting change in perception, practice and policy.

CMS VATAVARAN, through its festival and forum design brings together some of the best conservation experts and enthusiasts from across the globe. Along with taking world's best films on environment to the masses, it has been able to institutionalize strong specialised knowledge networking platforms, forge partnerships, and enhance capacities and expertise.

The main **Competitive Festival** happens in New Delhi every alternate year, where the best entries from all over the world are nominated and awarded. Public screenings are held and a vast range of conservation issues are deliberated among practitioners and people in interactive sessions. The **Traveling Festival** then follows, where the festival's vast panorama is shared with people in other cities of the country.

Through more than 3000 screenings across India, CMS VATAVARAN has been able to enhance understanding, appreciation and attitudes towards the natural world and increase space for environmental issues in mass media.

Since its inception in 2002, eight competitive and 52 travelling festivals in 41 cities of 25 Indian states have been organised. It has reached to more than five lakh people directly. **CMS VATAVARAN has now become a movement and inspired many organizations and individuals to use films and film festivals as a medium to catalyse change.** As a result, it has created a strong network of Indian and International filmmakers, policymakers, academicians, research think tanks, environmentalists, journalists, students, defence and paramilitary forces and nature enthusiasts.

CMS VATAVARAN was initiated in 2002 by CMS

- To encourage environment films and forums that result in perception, practice and policy change
- To enhance understanding of the natural world and its conservation.
- To increase space for environmental issues in the mass media.
- To strengthen collaboration between individuals, government, corporate, scientific and academic institutions on environment, conservation and sustainability issues.
- To nurture a new generation of 'alternate filmmakers' to widen public dialogue and debate.
- To stimulate production of high-quality films on wildlife, nature and environment.

CMS is a multi-disciplinary research based think tank in India. The rich experience of CMS in environment issues and development communication sowed the seeds of CMS VATAVARAN – India's only International Environment & Wildlife Film Festival and Forum. www.cmsindia.org



“Embassy of Norway, once again, takes pride in being the Principal Partner of CMS VATAVARAN this year. It is due to Norway's commitment to environmental conservation and sustainable development that the Norwegian Embassy in India has been partnering with CMS for the last few years with their Film Festival initiative. We see the festival growing, not only in size but also in significance.”

—Ms Ann Ollestad, Former Norwegian Ambassador

Forums

CMS VATAVARAN has built a forum for forging partnership and bringing together diverse stakeholders on one platform. Today, it has evolved as an active platform for policy discourse and agenda setting on critical contemporary issues. Each competitive festival takes on thematic focuses for further deliberations and a range of activities, including seminars, debates, lectures, exhibitions, etc are organized around the same. The thematic focuses have been:

Water for Life; Mainstreaming Biodiversity at Different Levels to Promote Living in Harmony with Nature; Biodiversity Conservation; Climate Change and Sustainable Technologies and Natural Heritage Conservation; Climate Change; Forest for Life; Floral and Faunal Diversity of India; Sustainable Environment through Films.

Policy makers, Practitioners and Communities come together at these forums to deliberate on current issues in our carefully curated Panel Discussions and have an Open Sessions. Some very significant recommendations and policy papers have evolved from the discussions on critical issues like the State of Rivers in India, green house gas emissions, increasing energy efficiency, protection of natural heritage, ecotourism, etc.

Awards

Indian and International Awards: Since 2002, hundreds of films have been awarded in 13 categories – Indian and International. International bodies such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the Embassy of Norway, The American Center, Embassy of Netherlands as well as public sector entities and prominent corporate bodies have been associated with the Awards.

The selection is done after three rounds of evaluation in which more than 30-40 eminent personalities from different sectors dedicate their valuable time and expertise to recognise high quality films. Over the years, nearly 276 eminent individuals from media, subjects, critics and cinema backgrounds have come together to select the best green films.

Prithvi Ratna Award: The Prithvi Ratna Award is conferred upon a filmmaker for exemplary work in the field of environment throughout his/ her career and being able to effect changes in perceptions and policies via their work. The Award has been conferred to eminent filmmakers like Mike Pandey, Naresh Bedi, Shekar Dattatri, Krishnendu Bose, Ashish Chandola, Sanjay Barnela and Himanshu Malhotra.

Prithvi Bhushan: Initiating the first ever lifetime achievement award in 2015, the CMS - YES Bank Prithvi Bhushan Award was conferred upon Mr Anupam Mishra. He is a journalist, environmentalist, and water conservationist who works on promoting water conservation, water management and traditional rainwater harvesting techniques.

Young Environment Journalist Award: In each competitive festival, the Young Environment Journalist Award is presented to a journalist who has done exemplary investigative and inspired reporting on environmental issues, and made a significant contribution in either the print or electronic media to an understanding of the nation's environmental problems. Environment journalists, Bahar Dutt (CNN-IBN), Amarjyoti Borah (Freelancer), Aarti Dhar (The Hindu), Pierre Fitter (NEWSX), Soma Basu (The Statesman), Manu C Kumar (Manorama News), Juhi Chaudhury (CNN IBN) and Chandan Haygunde (Indian Express), Pritha Chatterjee (Indian Express), Annirudh Ghosal (Indian Express) & Manu Moudgil (India Water Portal) were some of the winners of this Award.

Impact of Award Winning Films, few examples:

A Second Hand Life: Highlighted e-waste recycling issues in the country and triggered discourse on existing e-waste policy in the country.

Cherub of the Mist: Triggered state administrative action – The then Chief Minister Mr. Buddhadeb Bhattacharya (2009), ordered fencing of Sinaloa's Border with Nepal, located in West Bengal between Nepal and Bhutan to protect the vanishing species.

Broken Wings: Government banned the veterinary drug Diclofenac leading the farmers to adopt alternative methods. Devastating extinctions of vultures was thus halted.

Shores of Silence - Whale Sharks in India: Provoked legislation. Whale sharks brought on par with the endangered tiger and rhinoceros under the Indian Wildlife Act-1972 banning the killing of the whale sharks on Indian shores.

Mindless Mining: This film was used as court evidence to win a ban on mining in Kudremukh National Park. (SC judgment of 2005).



“Films competing in the CMS VATAVARAN are of extremely high standards and the Jury had difficulty in selecting the winners. Initiatives like CMS VATAVARAN help environmental films find a regular place in the media's agenda and does a great deal for creating environment awareness.”

–Shri Shyam Bengal, Filmmaker & Recipient of Dadasabheb Phalke Award

Milestones & Road Ahead

2017: The 9th edition will delve into the issues of climate change and water under the theme - 'Conservation 4 Water'.

2016: In 2016, the travelling edition is dedicated to seven of the large and small rivers of India- Brahmaputra (Guwahati), Mulla-Mutha (Pune), Sabarmati (Ahmedabad), Ganga (Allahabad), Nethravati (Mangalore), Cauvery (Trichchirappalli) and Musi (Hyderabad).

2015: The 8th CMS VATAVARAN was organised on the theme of water. The Prithvi Bhushan Award was introduced in this edition. Along with films and forums, tribal food festival also drew attention of the participants.

2014: The 6th travelling film festival went to Puducherry, Amritsar, Raipur, Gangtok and Agra, with film screenings, interactive sessions with youth, nature trails and felicitation of Green Ambassadors in all five cities.

2013: The theme of the 7th edition was 'Mainstreaming Biodiversity Conservation – to build a future of living in harmony with nature'. Total 86 films were nominated (52 Indian and 34 International films) in 11 categories. Eminent filmmaker, actor and producer - Shri Amol Palekar chaired the list of eminent jurists for the coveted 7th CMS VATAVARAN Indian Awards.

2012: CMS VATAVARAN travelled to Dehradun, Goa, Hyderabad, Jaipur and Kolkata with programmes built around the theme of biodiversity conservation. Hyderabad CMS VATAVARAN – Biodiversity Film Festival was organised as part of 11th Conference of the Parties (COP-11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

2011: The theme of the 6th edition was Biodiversity. The Jury consisting of 37 members selected 68 films for nominations (51 Indian films 22 states & 17 international films from 27 countries) from 317 entries for the festival.

2010: The 4th travelling film festival visited eight cities across India, with film screenings at more than 70 venues and participation of more than 95,000 people. For the first time 'green heroes' were also felicitated.

2009: The 5th competitive film festival attracted 366 entries from 20 Indian states and 23 foreign countries. Mr Jahnu Baruah, eminent director was the chairperson of the Award Jury.

2008: The 3rd travelling film festival screened 304 films over a span of 24 days in 8 cities. Six national and 51 state partners lent support and approximately 80,000 participants attended.

2007: The festival drew 275 entries from 19 countries. Awards for technical excellence and the Young Environmental Journalist Award were initiated. Noted filmmaker Mr Shyam Benegal was the Jury Chairperson.

2006: The travelling film festival went overseas to Abu Dhabi and Sao Paulo apart from visiting Bangalore, Chandigarh, Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kashmir, Kolkata, Pune, Ranchi and Sirmour.

2005: The third competitive film festival received 244 entries. The Steering Committee was chaired by Dr Karan Singh and the Award Jury was headed by Mr Shyam Benegal.

2004: The first travelling film festival went to Chennai, Coimbatore and Mumbai. People began recognising and supporting the CMS VATAVARAN environment awareness movement.

2003: The 2nd competitive film festival became biennial. CMS and UNEP instituted an award 'Prithvi Ratna' for extraordinary contribution to wildlife filmmaking and natural history.

2002: India's one and only Environment and Wildlife Film Festival – CMS VATAVARAN - began its maiden run. The initiative was supported by the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Gol.





Impact and Legacy

Films and Environment Forums

Stimulated High Quality Productions - CMS VATAVARAN Awards over the years have inspired better and higher quality productions. In each festival, capacity strengthening workshops by renowned filmmakers and editors have been organized. The Green Films Resource Centre at CMS today has a rich collection of films (national and international) on various themes and issues.

Nurtured New Generation of Filmmakers - Amateur filmmakers are encouraged to participate. There has been a steady growth in the number of films received in the amateur category, especially from student filmmakers.

Policy Discourse and Impact

Celebrated the presidency of CoP-11 - The 7th CMS VATAVARAN contributed to deliberations on India's National Biodiversity Targets in order to promote mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation through talks, discussions, interactive sessions, documentaries and films. This was one of the largest public outreach programmes targeting masses in India to celebrate the presidency of CoP-11. Over 11,000 participants attended the event, of which around 2500 participants were from schools, over 800 were from colleges, and 7500 were from the general public. There were 157 invited speakers, 52 media houses, 45 jury members, 86 nominated film-makers, 31 expert advisory board and film-maker advisory group members, 11 steering committee members and 100 partners.

Initiated Thematic Discourses - More than 175 workshops, sessions, panel discussions, seminars, conventions have been organized.

Catalyst for Policy Change - Recommendations have been made on issues such as; water for life, mainstreaming biodiversity, conservation and livelihoods, climate change, state of rivers in India, carbon neutral cities, natural heritage and eco-tourism. Films on Red Panda, E-waste, Whale Sharks, Vultures, Mining, etc have also been instruments for change in perception, practice and policy.

Knowledge Networks

Collaborations with Academic Institutions - More than 50,000 youth have been involved from various schools, colleges and universities across India.

Youth Engaging Activities - More than 1400 innovative activities have been conducted with youth.

Enriching Green Curriculum - Supporting the Indian school curriculum, thematic packages of films have been sent to 30,000 government schools across all districts of India.

Capacity Building of Teachers - More than 300 educators from 142 schools have been engaged in 14 primer workshops.

Sustained Media Engagement

Media Forums - More than 1200 environment journalists from 200 national and international media organizations have participated in various programs and activities.

Media Field Trips - Media professionals from across 40 countries of the world have participated in number of field trips and orientation workshops organized in various festivals.

Media Coverage - More than 1700 stories across various media have appeared on the various activities and initiatives of CMS VATAVARAN.

Young Environment Journalist Awards - The Award concept has inspired many young journalists to take up reporting on environment and wildlife. Around 11 environment journalists have been awarded for their excellence in reporting on environmental issues.

Credible Platform

Multi-partner Initiative - CMS VATAVARAN has been supported in various ways by 487 partners - Ministries of Government of India, State Government Departments in 28 states, corporates, multi and bi-lateral organizations, media, etc.

Eminent Personalities Associated - CMS VATAVARAN has enthused and involved India's most respected film personalities, eminent celebrities and head of the states (governors, chief ministers and ministers) like; Mr Adil Hussain, Mr Saurabh Shukla, Mr Mahesh Bhatt, Ms Shabana Azmi, Ms Nandita Das, Ms Revati Menon, Governors of Uttarakhand, Goa and Meghalaya, Chief Ministers of Delhi, Rajasthan and other states. Mr Shyam Benegal, Dr Karan Singh, Mr Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Mr Amol Palekar have been the Jury and Steering Committee Chairpersons.



“The efforts of CMS VATAVARAN are commendable. It has successfully organised this international film festival by bringing together films that talk about nature. We need to work together and take these films to the people to sensitise them for a lasting impact.”

—Shri Prakash Javadekar, Former Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
(In a video message, 2015)

Global Network and Outreach



As a member of **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)**, CMS VATAVARAN has been sharing its initiatives towards fulfilling the objectives of the Union. Over **800 civil societies** and close to **100 INGOs** from diverse backgrounds are members of IUCN. CMS VATAVARAN is organizing a special screening session at the **IUCN World Conservation Congress** at Hawaii in September 2016.



The Green Film Network (GFN) brings together 31 major film festivals that happen annually around the globe with focus on environmental issues. The network objective is to **coordinate** the events of the associated festivals, **promote and distribute films** worldwide and **encourage environment initiatives**. The network is a platform, where all the associate festivals can exchange, share information & cinematographic experiences.

- Participation of **five thousand filmmakers** from **53 countries**.
- Connection to a network of **500 civil society** organizations and **468 think tanks**.
- Collaborations with **international film festivals** to exchange quality green films.
- Global marketing and distribution of Green Films. In 2011, **Asian Filmmakers Summit** was organized to facilitate funding and project opportunities for filmmakers.
- Special screenings for corporate professionals, including at Tata Steel, Aditya Birla Group, Wipro Ltd. and ACC Ltd. Ongoing employee engagement initiatives with more than 200 **corporate professionals**.
- Special screenings and interactions with special audience groups, including close to **5000 defence personnel**, **5800 convicted** and **undertrial inmates**.
- Partner with **Film4Climate Global Video Competition 2016**, under the Connect4Climate, a global partnership initiative of World Bank and other partners.
- Regular Screenings of award winning films for general public across various cities in India, including in New Delhi in partnership with Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change and India Habitat Centre.

The **9th CMS VATAVARAN Environment & Wildlife International Film Festival and Forum** will be held from **2 - 6 November 2017** in New Delhi. This edition will delve into the complex issues of climate change and water under the **theme - Conservation 4 Water**. Films are invited for **20 National and International Awards in 13 categories**. The final deadline for film submissions is **February 2, 2017**.

Visit website to download entry form and guidelines:

www.cmsvatavarar.org   

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