

# National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) 2014-2015

## ‘Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought’



**N**ational Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) is a flagship campaign of the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change (MoEF), Government of India. This campaign was first organised in 1986 with the objective of creating environment awareness at the national level and, since then it has become a regular feature. It is one of the major programmes of the Ministry that involves public participation in conservation and management of the environment.

The main objective of the programme is to create awareness among the public and make environmental protection a people's movement. Every year, the Ministry selects NEAC activities with a fresh agenda and a new theme. The NEAC is a widespread outreach programme reaching out to several sections of the society cascading down to the grassroots. The campaign follows a decentralised approach that has resulted in its wide outreach and public participation at all levels. The Regional Resource Agencies (RRAs) work with many of the non-government organisations (NGOs) on environmental protection.

The MoEF, Government of India has appointed Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS), Jaipur as the RRA for Rajasthan since 2006-07. CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART) is entrusted with the responsibility to performing as the RRA. CUTS is implementing the NEAC in Rajasthan by assisting the Ministry in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the Campaign.

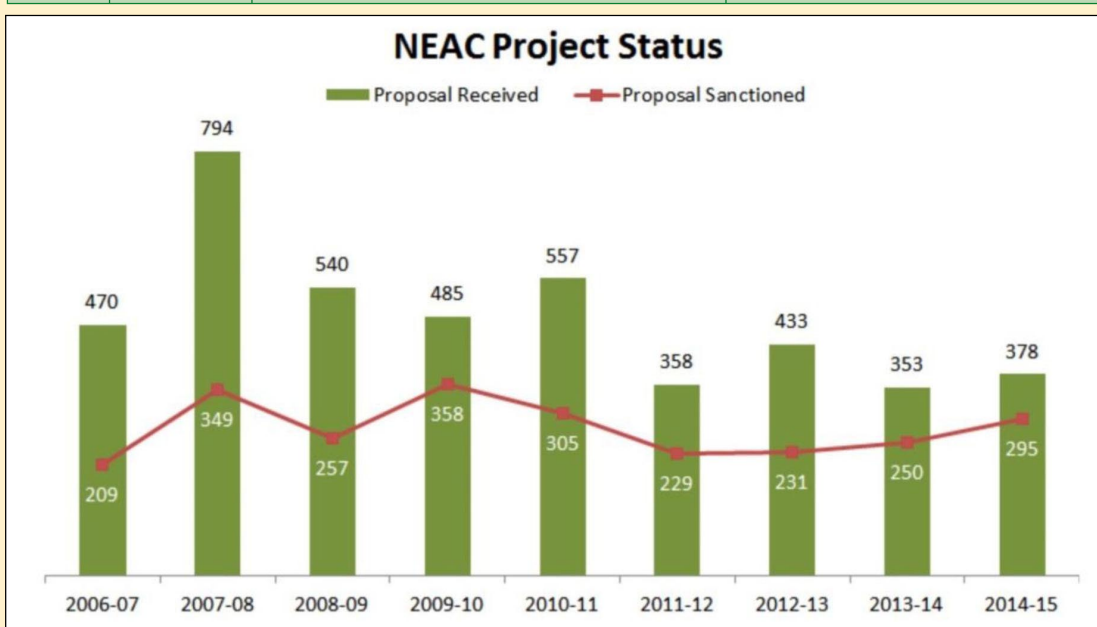
Several NGOs, educational and training institutions, professional associations, scientific bodies, community organisations and a whole range of other agencies participated in the campaign. These bodies singularly or in partnership with other organisations, organise programmes for creating environmental awareness followed by field action.

CUTS is implementing the NEAC in Rajasthan state since the year 2006 as the RRA appointed by the MoEF. CUTS is assisting the MoEF in planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating the campaign in Rajasthan, based on the theme of the concerned campaign. **Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought** was the theme for the campaign for the year 2014-15.

In view of the wide range of inter-related environmental problems facing the country, activities of the campaign is focussing on environmental issues and problems relating to the theme. Emphasis is laid on devising concrete, action-oriented activities on the issue/problem identified at the local level. The campaign is being planned and overseen by the MoEF. The decentralised mechanism adopted for conducting this campaign, since 1993 is being continued this year too.



Year-wise Theme of the Campaign			
S. No.	Year	Theme	Total Amount Sanctioned by Ministry (INR)
1.	2006-07	Solid Waste Management	11,50,000.00
2.	2007-08	Bio-diversity Conservation	19,28,000.00
3.	2008-09	Climate Change	17,42,000.00
4.	2009-10	Climate Change	22,01,000.00
5.	2010-11	Bio-diversity Conservation	30,44,000.00
6.	2011-12	Forests For Sustainable Livelihood	21,48,000.00
7.	2012-13	Bio-diversity Conservation	25,12,100.00
8.	2013-14	Bio-diversity Conservation	27,39,000.00
9.	2014-15	Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought	29,50,000.00



### Pre Proposal Workshops

CUTS organised five '**Pre Proposal Workshop**' at various places of Rajasthan from August 05-12, 2014. The theme for NEAC 2014-15 campaign was 'Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought.' The objective of the workshop was to increase awareness on combating desertification, land degradation and drought in Rajasthan; create a cadre of community-level leaders, who will take forward the cause of environment conservation and protection by local communities; and demonstrate to the conservation leaders on how to hold mass campaigns etc.



## Post Proposal State Level Workshop

CUTS organised '**State Level Post Proposal Workshop**' at Jaipur on August 18, 2015. More than 200 participants, including government officials from the State Biodiversity Board, representatives from civil society organisations and development institutes, media persons participated in the meeting and shared their valuable experiences at the grassroots. A documentary series '**Bhoomi**' on environment issues was screened for participants.

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS in his address said that this campaign is very beneficial in bringing all organisations together on a common platform to provide their contribution in making communities aware of the importance of conserving environment.

Further, he added that the theme of the year 2014-15 organised by MoEF was 'Combating Desertification,



Land Degradation and Drought'. The Ministry has identified sub-theme for conducting the campaign. Awareness and actions taken up under NEAC will contribute towards building the aspirational goal of making India land-degradation neutral by 2030.

### Case Study 1



#### Propagating the Concept of Planting Trees

A one day workshop was organised by Anubhuti 'CIRA' Sansthan, Chittorgarh at Gopalpura Panchayat in Chittorgarh on September 27, 2015. The interactive sessions were followed by distribution of plants to villagers and participants. Distribution of plants was a symbolic of the initiation of the sacred theme. Each participant was given plants with the approach of propagating the concept of plantation in urban and semi-urban areas. Resource material was also distributed to participants.

##### Focus points

Propagating this concept among masses and sharing it with the new generation specifically so that land degradation and drought preservation can be done at various levels. There were some measures suggested which are as follows:

- Utilisation of public stages for the discussion of issue regarding plantation and greenery
- Including activity-based approach and clubbing the Biodiversity programme with regular study schedule
- Sharing experiences for the betterment of ideas
- Planting at least one plant in their surroundings
- Focussing on the importance of forests for proper rains
- Preventing soil erosion and promoting plantation in urban areas

### Case Study 2

#### Restoration of Degraded Land

A one day workshop was organised at Churiya Muriya Shiksha Paryavaran Evum Swasthya Sewa Samiti, Bhilwara on September 03, 2015. The theme was **Restoration of Degraded Land**. The objectives of this workshop were to raise awareness and educate students and the general public towards the main theme. Churiya Muriya Shiksha Paryavaran Evum Swasthya Sewa Samiti organised Yatra and Plantation (establishment of green belt of traditional plants) activity under NEAC 2014-2015.

The target group was students and teachers, especially from Government Adarsh Senior Secondary School IRANS, Asind Panchayat Samiti, Bhilwara District, Rajasthan.





## Case Study 3

### Grow Trees to Help Environment

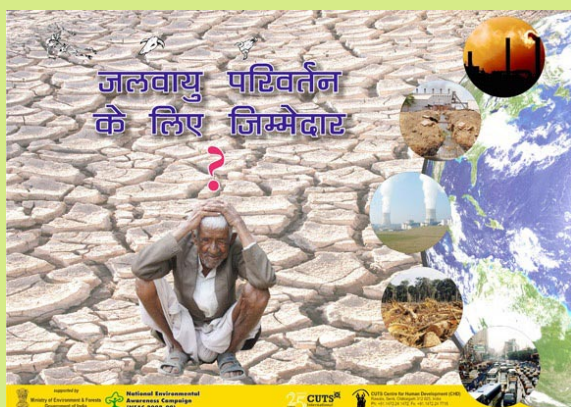
Another workshop was organised by *Kaushal Seva Sansthan*, Dungarpur on October 21, 2015. Around 344 participants attended the workshop. Interactive sessions were followed by the plant distribution to students and participants. Distribution of plant was a symbolic of the initiation of the sacred theme. Each participant was given plants with the approach of propagating the concept of plantation in urban and semi urban areas. Resource material was also distributed.



### Combating Desertification

CUTS participated in the workshop on Combating Desertification, Land Degradation and Drought organised by the Department of Botany, University of Rajasthan supported under NEAC, MoEF, Government of India on September 16, 2015. Cheriyan explained the meaning and usage of desertification and land degradation and delivered the presentation on the theme.

100 students actively participated in discussions on the theme of combating desertification, land degradation and drought. The workshop was coordinated by Soumna Dutta, Professor and the session was chaired by K P Sharma, Head of the Department.



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