

A Green Movement to
Impact Perception, Policy and Practice

CMS vatavaran

Environment & Wildlife Film Festival and Forum



SINCE 2002

INITIATIVE OF

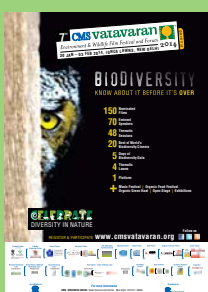
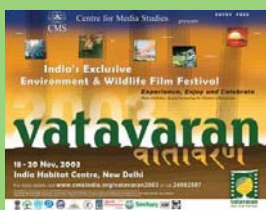
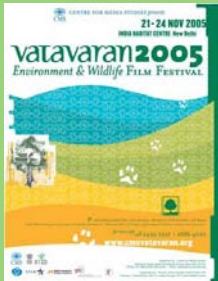
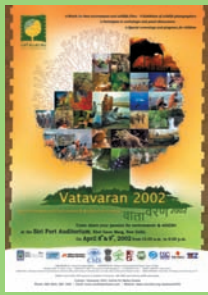


ORGANISED BY



PRINCIPAL PARTNER (2002-15)





CMS VATAVARAN is a pioneering international festival of films on environment and wildlife

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

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, 7 competitive and 41 travelling festivals in 36 cities of 25 Indian states have been organised. It has reached to more than 500000 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

“Norway Embassy, 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, 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 a thematic focus for further deliberations and a range of activities, including seminars, debates, lectures, exhibitions, etc are organized around the same. The thematic focuses have been:

Mainstreaming Biodiversity at Different Levels to Promote Living in Harmony with Nature; Biodiversity Conservation; Climate Change & Sustainable Technologies and Natural Heritage Conservation; Climate Change; Forest for Life; Floral and Faunal Diversity of India; Water for Life; 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 11 categories – Indian and International. International bodies such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the Embassy of Norway, 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 226 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 and Sanjay Barnela.

Young Environment Journalist Award: 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, Kolkata), Manu C Kumar (Manorama News, Mumbai), Juhi Chaudhury (CNN IBN) and Chandan Haygunde (Indian Express, Pune) 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).



“I find the 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 Dadasaheb Phalke Award

Milestones

2014-15: The sixth 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 seventh edition of the CMS VATAVARAN competitive Film Festival 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 film maker, 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 sixth edition of the CMS VATAVARAN competitive Film Festival 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 fourth travelling film festival visited 8 cities across India, with film screenings at more than 70 venues and participation of more than 95000 people. For the first time 'green heroes' were also felicitated.

2009: The fifth 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 third travelling film festival screened 304 films over a span of 24 days in 8 cities. Six national and 51 state partners lent support and approx. 80000 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 second 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, GoI.





Impact and Legacy

Films and Environment Forums

Stimulated High Quality Productions - CMS VATAVARAN Awards in successive years have inspired better and higher quality productions. In each festival, capacity strengthening workshops by renowned specialist of production and film making techniques 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 - Newcomers are encouraged by instating a separate category for first-time enthusiasts and students. From 16% film makers who entered for the first time in 2007, in the 2014 competition there were 87% new film entrants.

Policy Discourse and Impact

Initiated Thematic Discourses - More than 158 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 & livelihoods, climate change, state of rivers in India, carbon neutral cities, natural heritage, ecotourism. 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 - Nearly 50000 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 30000 Government Schools across all districts of India.

Capacity Building of Teachers - More than 200 educators from 142 Schools have been engaged in 14 primer workshops.

Sustained Media Engagement

Media Forums - More than 1000 environment Journalists from 134 media organizations (national and international) have been engaged 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 1500 stories across various media have appeared on the various activities and initiatives of CMS VATAVARAN.

Young Environment Journalist Awards - Fellowships and awards to various Journalist has inspired many more to take up issues on environment and wildlife. Around 8 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 celebrated film personalities, eminent celebrities and head of the states (governors, chief ministers and ministers) like Shri Mahesh Bhatt, Ms Shabana Azmi, Ms Nandita Das, Ms Revati Menon, Governor of Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Chief Minister of Delhi, Rajasthan and others. Shri Shyam Benegal, Dr Karan Singh, Shri Adoor Gopalakrishnan and Shri 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 Javdekar, Hon'ble Minister of Environment, Forests and Climate Change

Global Network & Outreach

Network of Filmmakers Across the Globe: CMS VATAVARAN has been instrumental in enhancing network within filmmakers' fraternity, enriching their expertise and broadening their horizon. Filmmakers from 53 countries have participated in CMS VATAVARAN. More than 5000 filmmakers have sent their films in CMS VATAVARAN competitions and also participated in several forums and programmes.

Asian Filmmakers' Forum: CMS VATAVARAN has initiated a forum for Asian filmmakers, broadcasters, commissioners and distributors for networking, funding and exchanging ideas. The Asian Filmmakers Summit is an important platform for conservation film makers from Asian countries seeking international production assignments, as well as a market for their film and creative skills.

Film Festivals, Clubs and Societies: CMS VATAVARAN over the years has extended film content and expertise to other film festivals, film clubs and film societies across the country. This festival has participated in over 12 international film festivals across the globe including in China, Korea and Abu Dhabi. CMS VATAVARAN is a member of the Green Film Network, a network that brings together film festivals that happen around the globe on environment issues.

Consortium of Think Tanks: CMS VATAVARAN workshops, symposiums, conferences, expert talks and panel discussions have brought together 468 think tanks including Research Institutions, Scientists, Environmentalists and Conservationist for deliberation on the contemporary environmental issues and its policy relevance.

Civil Society's Network: Facilitated by CMS VATAVARAN, more than 500 organisations are connected today and collaborating across India. The network from Leh to Port Blair, Kerala to Meghalaya, has been building and drawing on each other for strength and expertise on environment issues. International networks like the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) are also associated with this festival.

Corporates/ PSUs Engagement: Around 176 corporates have been engaged proactively in the films selection process, employe engagements, corporate screenings and deliberations through partnerships.

Defence and Paramilitary Forces Involvement: More than 5000 officers and Jawans of Indian paramilitary forces have been engaged in the discourse on green concerns through various film screenings and forums.

Outreach: More than 5800 convicted and undertrials inmates in various Jails have been involved in deliberations on regional and local environmental issues through films.

Reaching Out to Special Audiences: Exclusive screenings in villages and hard to reach areas have been organized to take films to all communities. Under privileged and special children have been involved with film screenings and specially designed sessions and activities.

Key Features of the Forthcoming Festival



The theme of the 8th Competitive Film Festival is 'WATER FOR LIFE' with special focus on 'Conserving Our Water Bodies'. The highlights of the festival will be: gala award ceremony for felicitation of coveted CMS VATAVARAN Awards; film screenings of all nominated films along with open forum discussions; technical workshops; sessions and exhibitions to showcase green initiatives of Corporates; seminars to share best practices and new initiatives of State Governments in greening their States and harvesting water sources; photo exhibitions; green haats; cultural evenings; and much more.

for more information

www.cmsvatavarán.org

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