

Chapter 13

NGO Roles in Promoting Climate Change Awareness Through Environmental Education: NGO on Climate Change

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ABSTRACT

As the climate continues to deteriorate, government agencies and NGOs alike try their possible best to figure out ways to turn the tables around and fight the issue. While government helps to draft policies, implement laws that help to curb it, the major strategic publications and public awareness lies on the shoulders of NGOs for proper execution of the bottom-top public awareness. This report tends to explore, discuss and pinpoint ways NGOs can play a strategic important role in the promotion of public education and awareness of the changes in the climatic conditions of our society.

INTRODUCTION

Climate change has become a global and curious issue to scientists and incidentally continues to be part and parcel of rules, regulations, and laws drafted by governments and other organisations. Climate change has been identified as “the major” environmental issue that has overridden all other environmental issues of our time, even to the extent of becoming the single greatest challenge facing environmental regulators. The scope of its critical impact extends to economy, health and safety, food production, security, etc.

The loss of ice and ice sheets from glaciers continues to have significant effects across the global. These losses has significantly contributed to the varied patterns of weather in recent times resulting in increased unpredictable precipitation which adversely poses a threat to the production of food and the increased catastrophic risk of flooding by rising sea levels caused by contaminated coastal freshwater

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-5487-5.ch013

reserves. The news keep getting worse by the day. This melting is a major contribution to the rates and a huge extent to the rise in sea-level that could outstrip by far the most recent global scientific assessment anticipations. There abounds very alarming evidences that point to important factors directed towards irreversible changes in major ecosystems and the planetary climate system. This most probably might already have been attained or passed. This goes to point the fact that as diverse as ecosystems may be, it might be getting to its threshold of dramatic change triggered by drying and warming.

Mountain glaciers are in alarming retreat and the downstream effects of reduced water supply in the driest months will have repercussions that transcend generations. Climate feedback systems and environmental cumulative effects are building across earth systems demonstrating behaviours we cannot anticipate. The potential for runaway greenhouse warming has never been more present and real. The most dangerous climate changes may still be avoided if we transform our hydrocarbon based energy systems and if we initiate rational and adequately financed adaptation programs to forestall disasters and migrations at unprecedented scales. The tools are available, but they must be applied immediately and aggressively.

EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Listed according to the seven (7) UNPFII's indigenous regions is a brief overview of the climatic climate.

Africa

One of the major areas to be affected by climate change in Africa is the Kalahari Desert. There are 2.5 million kilometres of dunes in southern Africa which are covered in vegetation and used for grazing. However, the rise in temperatures and the expected dune expansion along with increased wind speeds will result in the region losing most of its vegetation cover and hence, becoming less feasible for indigenous peoples living in the region. As their traditional resource base diminishes, the traditional practices of cattle and goat farming will no longer survive. There are already areas where indigenous peoples are forced to live around government drilled bores for water and depend on government support for their survival. Food security is a major issue for indigenous peoples residing in the deserts and they are on the frontline of global climate change.

Asia

In the tropical rainforests of Asia, temperatures are expected to rise 2-8 degree Celsius and further climatic variation will include decrease in rainfall, crop failures and forest fires. Tropical rainforests are the haven for biodiversity, as well as indigenous peoples' cultural diversity and forest fires will threaten this heritage of biodiversity. People in low lying areas of Bangladesh could be displaced by a one-meter rise in sea levels. Such a rise could also threaten the coastal zones of Japan and China. The impact will mean that salt water could intrude on inland rivers, threatening some supplies of fresh water.

In the high altitude regions of the Himalayans, there are glacial melts which affect hundreds of millions of rural dwellers who depend on the seasonal flow of water; there might be more water in the short term, but less in the long run as glaciers and snow cover shrink. The warming of the high altitude regions are likely to mean that population growth, settlement expansion and encroachment are likely to

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