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IMM Meeting of COMPAS – Holland

Between 15th and 24th June 2003, A.V. Balasubramanian visited Holland to attend a meeting of the International Management Group of the COMPAS project. The objective of the meeting was to review the plans for the implementation of the new phase of the COMPAS programme that commenced from July 2003. During the visit he also participated in a one day symposium held at the Wageningen Agricultural University in Holland and delivered a talk on – “Building on traditional Indian knowledge systems”

COMPAS Asian Partners Meeting

On the 25th and 26th April, CIKS hosted a meeting of the Indian partners of the COMPAS project and this was followed by a meeting of the Sri Lankan partners of the COMPAS project on 28th and 29th April. Besides the respective country partners, the meeting was attended by Mr. Bertus Haverkort, International Coordinator of the COMPAS project and A.V. Balasubramanian, who is the Asian Coordinator along with various other CIKS staff members. During the course of these meetings, there were detailed discussions held on – Coordinated programmes to be undertaken by the COMPAS partners such as – Newsletters, Training programmes and exchange visits as well as the Universities Consortium programme. Besides these, individual meetings were held with each project partner to finalise the individual projects. During the new phase of the COMPAS programme that commences in July 2003, the implementation of the field projects of the Asian partners will be coordinated and monitored by CIKS in its capacity as Asian Coordinator.

News from the Field

Aphids are very tiny insects which are green or light yellow or black in colour They are found in clusters around the tips of new leaves or buds. These serious garden pests suck the sap from the tips of young leaves and buds and cause deformation of plants. Control of aphids by the conventional pesticides is extremely difficult. A pilot experiment conducted in our field station has shown promising results. The whole plant of *Sida spinosa* (known as Arivalmanai Poondu in Tamil) is taken and cut into small pieces. 1 kg of this is mixed with 4 litres of water and placed in a mud pot This is boiled and reduced to one litre. After it is cooled 500 ml of this extract is mixed with 100 ml of soap solution and 9.4 litres of water and sprayed on the crop affected by aphids. By this application the aphids were controlled within 24 hours.

“The Seed Keepers”

A Multimedia Presentation

Details on Page 4....



***Indigenous Vegetable Conservation Field in
Sukkankollai Experimental farm of CIKS***

PROJECT WATCH

A round-up of our activities this quarter

Enhancing livelihood security of farmers through organic farming

As a part of our CAPART project on enhancing livelihood security through organic farming technologies three organic farmers sangams have been formed in the villages of Anoor, Alavai and Venpakkam. A leadership training was given to the office bearers of these sangams on the 5th of April at our field office in S.P.Kovil. This programme began with an introduction to the project by K. Vijayalakshmi. She gave a detailed outline about the scope of the project. This was followed by a detailed session conducted by A.V. Balasubramanian on the qualities and mode of functioning of a leader.

On 19th and 26th April training programmes on organic farming were conducted at our S P Kovil training centre for the beneficiary farmers of this project from the villages of Anoor and Venpakkam respectively. The topics covered during the one day session included pests of paddy and non-chemical control, importance of indigenous seeds, organic farming and plants in pest control. A practical session on preparation of specific plant products was also conducted. This workshop was coordinated by

S. Arumugasamy, M. Jayashankar and K. Subramanian.

Monthly sangam meetings were conducted regularly in the three project villages. Preparations are being made to construct the community seed bank at Alavai village and the biopesticide unit at Venpakkam village. In Anoor village, work is in progress to start a rural library. We hope to have all this inaugurated in the month of August.

Compas International Coordinator visits our farm

On the 24th of April Mr. Bertus Haverkort, the International Coordinator of COMPAS, Netherlands visited our farm at Sukkankollai. He was briefed about the various activities that are being carried out in our experimental farm. After this he visited our field office in S.P. Kovil and went through the detailed documentation done by our field staff. He had a good interaction with the field staff.

Visit to Sirkazhi

On 13th May K. Vijayalakshmi visited our field station at Sirkazhi. The organic cotton project has just been launched in Sirkazhi. She visited the demonstration plot maintained by the centre and also other farmers who are part of the programme.

During her trip a visit was also made to the biopesticides experimental field at Agani. There is a proposal to set up a small biopesticide unit in Sirkazhi. The proposed site for setting up this unit was also visited by her.

Launching of organic cotton project

With the support from Department of Science and Technology we have launched a project on organic cotton cultivation in three different agroclimatic zones of Tamil Nadu. This project is routed through the Tamilnadu State Council for Science and Technology. We have identified Kancheepuram, Nagapattinam and Dindugal as the three zones for experimentation. Work is already in progress in the Nagapattinam and Dindugal districts. In Nagapattinam farmers have started experiments with cotton and in Dindugal farmers are being identified for the project. Staff have been appointed. One training has been conducted in Nagapattinam and the training in Dindigul would be conducted in August.

Organic Cotton Cultivation Training in Sirkazhi

A one day training programme was organised for the selected farmers of the cotton project at Sirkazhi field station on 12th June 2003. Subhashini Sridhar gave an introduction about the organic cotton project. She also gave a detailed lecture regarding the status of organic farming in

other parts of India. Later with illustrative slides she explained about the important pests of cotton and their management techniques. Theory and practical sessions on the preparation of plant based extracts for control of cotton pests were conducted. The participating farmers had an interactive session on their experiences. In the afternoon the participants visited the organic cotton demonstration plot at Patharakudi village.

Training of women on biopesticide preparation

CIKS has been involved in a DST project on plant based biopesticides and also increasing their shelf life for the last two years. As a part of this project women are being trained to prepare these biopesticides. On 9th June, 21 women farmers from three self help groups of Agani and Kadavasal were given training on preparation of biopesticides. A preparation unit would be inaugurated shortly in Sirkazhi.

Meeting with Expert

On 14th June, A.V. Balasubramanian had a meeting with Dr. B. V. Sathaye, a senior Ayurvedic Physician who retired recently as the Principal of the Gomanthak Ayurveda College in Goa. It was agreed that Dr. Sathaye would provide training and assistance to CIKS in our efforts relating to Vrksayurveda.

CIKS TALK

*Seminars, Discussions, Presentations,
Workshops, Fairs...*

Consultation on organic rice cultivation

At the request of EID Parry, S. Arumugasamy visited Nellikuppam on 8th April. The purpose of this visit was to mainly to explore the possibility of organic rice cultivation in Nellikuppam. S. Arumugasamy had a detailed discussion with the farmers and also visited their farms. Following this a training was conducted for these farmers on June 5th on organic rice cultivation.

Success Stories in Rural Technologies

At the invitation of CAPART and the India Habitat Centre, A.V. Balasubramanian delivered a talk on 16th April in Delhi as part of the monthly lecture series on the theme of – “Success stories in Rural technologies”. He spoke on the subject of – “Current relevance and future potential of traditional healthcare systems”.

South Asian Regional Workshop at Lucknow

H. Saraswathy attended a 10 day South Asian Regional Training Workshop for “Empowerment of Women with traditional knowledge for sustainable utilization of local biological resources”. This workshop

was held at National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow between 7th – 16th April 2003. It was sponsored by UNESCO, New Delhi and Winrock International India; This workshop extensively covered several aspects of traditional medicine, organic cultivation of medicinal plants, IPR related issues, biodiversity conservation besides visits to various scientific institutions.

Programme at Dakshinchitra

On 10th May, A.V. Balasubramanian and K. Vijayalakshmi delivered talks regarding traditional system of medicine and Yoga to a group of French doctors who were on an educational tour to India that was organised by Societe de formation Therapeutique du generaliste. The talk was held at Dakshinchitra near Madras and the programme was coordinated by Dr. Maurice Shukla, Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry.

Organic cotton cultivation meeting at Warrangal

Oxfam had organised a two day workshop on the 22nd and 23rd of May at Warrangal, A.P. on “Organic Farming : A potential solution for farmers engaged in cotton

cultivation”. Subhashini Sridhar attended this workshop as a resource person and shared the experiences of CIKS on organic cotton cultivation.

Meeting on Organic Certification

On 30th May Mr. Joseph Thomas (formerly an organic farming Inspector) was invited as a resource person by our centre to address our staff on the basics of organic certification. He explained in detail the history of organic certification, the basic principles and guidelines followed by different certification agencies. We also had a very interactive discussion session.

Meeting with Inheritance India

On 14th June, A.V. Balasubramanian had a meeting with Mr. Shahid Ali and Mr. Robain Majumdar, Directors of Inheritance India Limited based at Mumbai. It was agreed that CIKS would provide consultancy for the company which is making an effort to develop land use in a sustainable manner in three different ecosystems in Kerala.

UNDP – GEF Meeting

On 18th June a meeting was organized by CEE, Bangalore to review the performance of UNDP Small Grants Programme (SGP). This meeting was attended by

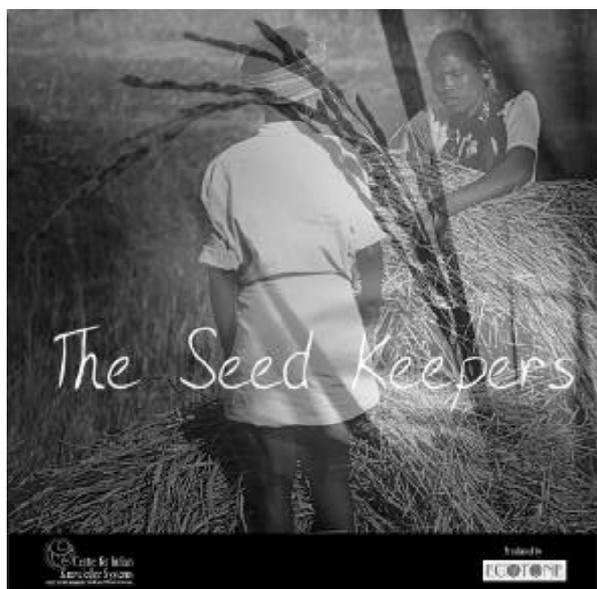
the National Coordinator of the SGP Mr. Prabhot Sodhi, the GEF Consultant Mr. Rajeev Khare, Mr. Sarabai, Director of CEE, Staff of CEE South and NGOs who are implementing small grants projects from the Southern states. This was basically a brain storming session for reviewing and improving the performance of the programme. This was attended by K. Vijayalakshmi on behalf of CIKS.

Tatwaprakashini 2003

At the invitation of the Arsha Yoga Vidya Peetham Trust, Coimbatore, A.V. Balasubramanian participated in the *Tatwaprakashini* 2003 programme held at the Karl Kubel Institute at Coimbatore. The programme is a one week orientation programme on the basic principles of Ayurveda attended by a group of five students of Ayurveda and one faculty member from ten colleges of Ayurveda from the states of Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra as well as the London school of Ayurveda. A.V. Balasubramanian gave two talks, one on Vrksayurveda and another on the social organisation of traditional Indian knowledge and the relationship between folk and classical knowledge, particularly in the context of traditional medicine.

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“The Seed Keepers” A Multimedia Presentation



The Seed keepers is a self running multimedia presentation made with still photographs and complete with commentary and sound track. This 23 minutes presentation summarises the effort of a eight year project of CIKS on biodiversity conservation. This would be a starting point for organisations involved in biodiversity conservation work. The CD is available both in English and Tamil.

Price : Rs. 250/-

How to Order?

To obtain copies please send a Money Order or Demand Draft favouring “Centre for Indian Knowledge Systems” payable at Chennai. Cheques are NOT acceptable. We also do not send books or CDs by VPP. Kindly mention the language in which you require the CD.

VISITORS BOOK

A look at who's been dropping in at CIKS

✦ On 14th April, Mr. Satyanarayana Mundaiyoor of Arunachal Pradesh who is the Coordinator of – “Herbs for better health” visited us to seek our help and inputs in their work relating to traditional medicine and agriculture.

✦ Mr. Kunal Mehta, Coordinator of Network for Indian Environment Professionals (NIEP) visited on 12th May to seek inputs and collaboration from CIKS.

✦ On 26th May, a group of school teachers and students who are participating in a Summer camp of Indian Heritage conducted by Arvind Bharti, Chennai visited our Centre. There was a presentation regarding the CIKS work on traditional agriculture followed by a lively discussion.

✦ On 29th May, Dr. Mahalingam Kolapen, Publisher and Managing Editor of the Encyclopaedia of Hinduism visited our Centre. He wanted contributions for specific sections of the Encyclopaedia dealing with some aspects of traditional sciences and technologies as well as our comments and inputs on the structure and content of the sections relating to Ayurveda.

✦ On 13th June Mr. Gomathy Nayagam the well known organic farmer from Grammiya Seva Nilayam, Puliyangudi visited us. He discussed in detail and got inputs from us for conducting training programmes on organic farming in Tirunelveli district.

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