

Visit Report

Strategic Planning Meeting of SSNC

Stockholm, October 05-09, 2015

George Cheriyan visited Stockholm during October 05-09, 2015 for the strategic planning meeting of Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC). The meeting was attended by about 40 participants, 20 representatives of partner organisations and 20 staff members of SSNC. Staff from SIDA also attended the meeting in between. The meetings commenced with a 'Fika' (It is a Swedish word, which means an informal meeting or break with coffee or tea) on October 05, 2015 with 'Sustainable Consumption Group', where there were informal discussions on the agenda of the meeting.

Objective

The meeting formed the basis of the strategic planning of SSNC for the Global Programme 2017-2020. The global cooperation of SSNC is as in the present phase, 2013-2015, is defined by thematic areas with their respective prioritized areas and goals. The thematic areas are agriculture, chemicals, climate, marine ecosystems and fisheries and forest. Sustainable consumption has been a



cross-cutting issue and it has been decided to include as a new thematic area. The purpose of the meeting was to map out most important environmental issues during the coming four-five years; define prioritised areas and strategic issues for the SSNC global programme; set goals for prioritised areas within the global programme; and identify issues for joint campaigns. Together with the environmental issues SSNC prioritised the following perspectives:

- **Poverty perspective:** SSNC work within environmental issues should have relevance for men and women living in absolute poverty
- **Rights based approach:** How to make sure that the global programme works within the framework of the rights-based approach and how this perspective can be further strengthened in the global programmes
- **Gender perspective:** How can SSNC strengthen the gender perspective in the work to protect the environment? How can the global programme contribute to gender equality? During 2014-2015 SSNC, in collaboration with International Collective in Support of Fishworkers (ICSF); Movimento dos Atingidos por Barragens (MAB); Brazil; Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM), Uganda; and Asia Indigenous Peoples Pact (AIPP) has been working

with a report that shows linkages between environment and gender. During this fall SSNC is developing methods on how to work with gender issue with this report as a base.

Proceedings

The meeting commenced with an opening address by Svante Axelsson, Secretary, SSNC, which was followed by briefing about the purpose of the meeting by Sandra Hallström Lempert, Head, Global Department, SSNC. Johanna Sandahl, President, SSNC and Board members were present in the inaugural session.



In the following session on *'Around the world in one hour'*, five people from five regions were asked to speak about the state of the society, environment and politics. Representing Asia/India, Cheriyan was one of the speakers and he spoke about *'Two India's'* and also about the environmental challenges in the region, climate change, loss of bio-

diversity and desertification. The speech was well appreciated.

Followed by the opening session, there breakout session were held, on *'Shirking Space for Civil Society across the world'*, in which Cheriyan spoke about the recent developments in India, *'Opportunities and threats for environmental movements'* and *'Sharing of achievements from present phase (2013-15)'*.

The Sustainable Consumption group comprised of the following persons:

- George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS, India
- Teresa Donato Liporace, Project Manager, Brazilian Institute for Consumers Rights (IDEC), Brazil
- Samuel Ochieng, Chief Executive Director, Consumer Information Network (CIN), Kenya
- Marta Ruda, Coordinator, Greening Policy and Practice Programme, Mama -86, Ukraine
- Sara Nilsson, Policy & Project Officer, Green Consumerism, SSNC
- Ulrika Hjertstrand, Project Officer, Green Consumerism, SSNC
- Annelie Andersson, Project Coordinator, Green Action Week, SSNC
- Eva Eiderström, Head of Department, Green Consumerism, SSNC

The group discussed the Vision, Mission and Programme Objectives and a draft was prepared. OThe other groups were having the advantage of building on existing programmes, since Sustainable Consumption being a new programmatic area, started from the scratch and having the mandate of developing the complete framework as a thematic group and direction for interventions.

After a morning session on *'Protecting the environment: Why a gender perspective matters'*, the second day, thematic groups were formed. The Sustainable Consumption group had detailed discussion about sectors, strategies, sector-specific objectives etc. In the evening a visit was made to Willy's Super Market, which is accredited by SSNC as an eco-friendly super market.

The day three started with an opening address by Johanna Sandahl, President, SSNC on 'Democracy and People's Movement'. She said that SSNC is having a population of 600,000 and membership of 230,000. The membership of SSNC is more than the membership of all political parties in Sweden put together, so it influence the government's decisions. Delegates raised the point about converting SSNC into a green political party.

The Sustainable Consumption thematic group continued discussions and a draft framework was finalised. The last session was about building synergy between various thematic areas. The following are some of the outcomes of the meeting:



- Sustainable Consumption is recognised as a separate programmatic area with the vision of *'Healthy Environment within the Planetary Boundaries'* and it is approved to be included in the next phase of SSNC application to SIDA, after the in-principle approval from SIDA
- Draft framework for the programmatic area is ready
- Out of the four partners, CUTS is the key partner in this programmatic area.
- Sustainable Energy, Transportation and Agriculture are few of the sectors agreed to be part of this programmatic area
- The next phase of intervention will be for four years – 2017-2020
- The management of the Global Green Action Week (GAW) will remain with this programmatic area. CUTS hope to get a role in the GAW campaign and fund management in the next phase (2017-20).

Discussions were held on theme of the GAW for next phase. It was decided to take a final decision in the Brasilia. The Sustainable Consumption group will meet again in Brasilia on November 15-17, 2015.



On the sidelines of the meeting, Cheriyan also met Johanna Sandahl, President, SSNC, and Isabella Eriksson, Programme Manager, SIDA unit for support to civil society.