



PEACE INSTITUTE CHARITABLE TRUST

Promotes a peaceful world
Believes in successful nature conservation

Profile of PEACE -- A centre of excellence in a sea of NGOs

PEACE Institute Charitable Trust, founded by a group of respected wildlife and environmental experts, such as Sri Samar Singh and H.S. Panwar, and led by Manoj K. Misra describes itself as "an organisation dedicated to the promotion of nature conservation as a strategy for the establishment of a peaceful world."

This succinct but lofty objective can't be appreciated without a review of the kind of projects PEACE seeks, generates, undertakes and sees through. The words which come to mind when encountering their various endeavours are also lofty -- integrity, justice, charity, wisdom, objectivity, greater good and excellence.

PEACE Institute began as a firm in September 2002 so that it could get into action immediately, but later (May 2003) morphed into the PEACE Institute Charitable Trust with a Board of Trustees and a team of eminent conservationists as advisors. It is registered as a Trust in India and its Board and advisors are Indian.

Some of what you will read in this profile is taken from their website : www.peaceinst.org as well as from the writer's personal knowledge and experience of the projects and individuals involved.

Much of the subtle success of PEACE Institute, is due to the experience, mind and spirit of the primary instigators, Sri Samar Singh, H.S. Panwar, and Manoj Misra. Manoj is Founder and Chief Executive, and as I am editing this PEACEful issue and have known him for over two decades to keep a very low profile, some of his qualifications should be known in order to appreciate PEACE.

Also as Manoj refers to me and Zoo Outreach Organisation and ZOOS' PRINT as some of his mentors, it is a chance for us to enjoy his achievements.

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We came to be acquainted with Manoj through this magazine, ZOOS' PRINT, when Manoj was among the first foresters to contribute to the new "zoo" (and soon, wildlife) publication. On editorial request he contributed stories about nature which any level of reader could appreciate, from layperson to professional. We became involved in one another's various activities, including his participation representing the Government of M.P. at the P.H.V.A. for Asiatic Lion in 1993 which ZOO/CBSG South Asia organised, at Van Vihar Zoo where he was deputed, in training workshops, meetings, collaborations, etc.

Manoj was educated at G.B. PANT University where he majored in Science and was awarded his Degree in 1st division as a Gold Medalist. He obtained a Masters degree in Mathematics from University of Allahabad, Degree awarded in 1st Division. He went on to obtain a PG Diploma in Forestry and Indian Forest college and a P.G. Diploma in Wildlife Management from Wildlife Institute of India. He joined the Indian Forest Service very well qualified and distinguished himself with his energy, expertise and integrity, rising to the post of Chief Conservator of Forests, CCF in the newly created state of Chattisgarh before seeking voluntary retirement from government service in October 2001. He was deputed as Director, TRAFFIC India from 1996-2001 and when that term was over, retired to found and run PEACE institute.

This introductory profile will prepare our readers for four of the ongoing projects of PEACE Institute on which we will give some detail. These are:
* the setting-up of Ecological Monitoring and Research Centre at Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary, Sheopur (MP), July 2006 onwards.

* the setting up of Resource and Research Centre on CITES (RRCC) Capacity enhancement / International Conventions - September 2005 onwards

* the founding of Yamuna Jiye Abhiyaan and conducting a extensive campaign to save the River and surrounds - February 2007 onwards

* and most recently collaboration with EIA Resource and Response Centre (ERC)

There is no easier way to give a reasonable overview of the organisation and its activities than to list their various major activities since founding. Thus follows (Name of the Activity, Theme, Funding Agency, Period):

- ◆ Base lining the medicinal plants sector in Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Chattisgarh, Meghalaya, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh, Capacity Building, FRLHT, Bangalore, Sep '02 – Feb '03
- ◆ Development of Heritage Biodiversity Program for India. Nanda Devi National Park, UA and Keoladeo National Park, Bharatpur, Raj, Capacity Building WII-UNESCO, Nov '02-Mar '03
- ◆ Herbal Portal for eco labeling & sustainable utilization of medicinal plants in Uttaranchal St. Capacity Building, eLQuest / MOEF, New Delhi, Nov '02-Mar '03
- ◆ Impact of the creation of a national park on the local people. Dudhwa National Park, Policy, Winrock International India, Mar '03 – May '03
- ◆ Preparing a draft CITES legislation for India. CITES, Policy, MoEF, Aug '03-Mar '04
- ◆ Feasibility Study: Creation of viable breeding population of great Indian one-horned Rhinoceros in Dudhwa National Park. Capacity Building, SoS Rhino, Chicago, US, Aug '03-June '04
- ◆ South Asia Capacity Building Project - CITES CITES, Capacity Building, Stakeholder networking TRAFFIC International, UK, Sep '03 – Dec '04
- ◆ Final Evaluation of projects sanctioned during IXth plan under Integrated Afforestation and Eco-development Project Scheme (Corbett National Park) Evaluation NAEB / MoEF New Delhi, Nov '03 – Mar '04
- ◆ Documenting the Lessons Learned from the India Ecodevelopment Project, IEDP at 10 sites in the country. (in collaboration with Samrakshan Trust and Enviro Legal Defence Firm, ELDF). Evaluation, Policy review, PTO / MoEF New Delhi. Oct '03 – June '04
- ◆ First concurrent evaluation of projects under National Afforestation Programme (NAP) being implemented through Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at Kanchanpur and Kailashahar, Tripura Evaluation and Policy. NAEB / MoEF New Delhi. Apr '04 – Nov '04
- ◆ Monitoring the actual performance of Afforestation and tree planting activities in selected districts– Dehradun, Uttaranchal. Evaluation, NAEB / MoEF New Delhi. Apr '04-Nov '04
- ◆ Technical support to Wildlife Crime Cell (WCC).- Database-Investigation-Legal review-Case studies-Training-ID sheets. Capacity Building. MoEF New Delhi. Sep '04-Mar '05

◆ First concurrent evaluation of projects under National Afforestation Programme (NAP) being implemented through Forest Development Agencies (FDAs) at Jhalawar (Rajasthan) and Chitrakoot (Uttar Pradesh). Evaluation. NAEB / MoEF New Delhi. Dec '04 – June '05

◆ Improving Protection and Building Capacity of Staff at Keoladeo National Park, Kaziranga National Park and Royal Chitwan National Park (Nepal). Capacity Building. WII-UNESCO. Dec '04 – June '05

◆ Grass roots to Policy maker – Facilitating a user friendly regulatory regime in Uttaranchal. 2 year project (April'04 – March'06). Policy. NMPB / Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, New Delhi. Apr '04 - Mar '06

◆ Biodiversity Conservation and Livelihoods Improvement Project (BCRLIP) - project design (as a consortium in collaboration with Samrakshan Trust, Enviro-Legal Defence Firm & NR Intl) Policy & Project planning. PTO/ MoEF, N.Delhi. Nov '05 - Nov '06.

In a recent series of emails I asked Manoj if PEACE really had just one objective as listed on its website. He replied that "we have never really got around to having any well defined objectives, since our guiding principle as defined in the opening statement on our web site has been found to be more than enough." I have to say I concur -- it covers all what PEACE does and is trying to do.

Their varied activities since founding reflect the fact that they have chosen to take on not just what came our way but more what was found to be purposeful. Again, this could be an aphorism for success, or at least PEACE of mind.

As regards the Yamuna project, which will be reviewed till date in some detail in the following pages, it may be appropriate to relate here itself that PEACE filed a PIL in the High Court of Delhi in early October 2007. This step, which may seem a bit unPEACEful was the last option, after almost eight months of unrelenting effort (letters, petitions, presentations, MOUs, etc.) to make the powers that be at all levels and in all directions, see reason (but in vain). As you will see, PEACE used the best possible research, access to official information using the Right to Information Act, etc.

The hearing in the PIL went on for almost 5 months on a weekly basis (unusual in Indian courts), till 23rd February 2008 when the judgement in the matter was reserved by the court. PEACE and other Yamuna and justice lovers still await the judgement, with fingers kept crossed.

Sally Walker, Editor Emeritus, ZPM