



5th International Conference on Sustainability Education (ICSE), 2023

DAY-1: Special Thematic Session 6

September 19, 2023 (Tuesday); Time: 14:00-15:30 hrs (GMT +5:30)

Theme: Women writers in Sustainability: Old Dilemmas, New Realities

Venue: India Habitat Centre, Maple

Background: Research from the CARE-WWF Alliance shows that empowering women can reduce environmental damage, especially when they are engaged in natural resource management and conservation leadership positions. While the U.N. estimates a staggering 80% of people displaced by climate-related impacts are women, they are least represented in leading our research. A woman on the field can empathise better with the issues being faced by the community at large, leading to a greater understanding of issues. However, in conservation and natural resource management, as in many business and academic endeavours, men are often elevated in areas like fieldwork and leadership, while women are often assumed to be better fits for support roles and “softer” jobs like communications and administration. It is imperative to emphasise the vital contribution of women in the research and field work in sustainability, particularly while examining the role of education in driving climate action and sustainability through behavioural change in communities. In this session, Greenlitfest attempts to bring forth the challenges and opportunities faced by women, who have varied and extensive experience on the field.

Greenlitfest (GLF) was launched in June 2021, by a team of writers and green enthusiasts, with the purpose of mainstreaming knowledge and dialogues on environment, climate change and India’s preparedness for them. It is India’s first platform dedicated exclusively to identifying, celebrating, and promoting books, writing, conversations, and various other cultural expressions on the environment for people of all ages.

About the Session: This thought-provoking session asks prominent women working across various areas in sustainability, how gender plays out in their careers and what are their observations about the lives of people on the field, as viewed from their own unique lens. From psychological to physical challenges, does gender have a bearing on their work? If it does, how do they deal with it? Are they able to impact and impart information to communities more easily, because they may have greater access to women who could enable and sustain changes in a household, as compared to their male counterparts?

This unique session will surely leave the audience with some much-needed food for thought, and sensitise them to the reality of working on the field, and the role they can play to turn things around.



Session Objectives:

- To look at the role of gender within careers in sustainability
- To understand real-time challenges and opportunities for women in this field
- To understand how women researchers can leverage the advantage of having the confidence of communities for educating for climate action and sustainability

Outcomes

Even though we live in a time when many people are aware of the dire need for sustainability and interested in pursuing it professionally, realities on the ground remain unfamiliar. This session intends to achieve the following outcomes:

Knowledge Sharing: Audience will gain insights on what it means to be a woman working in sustainability - challenges, best practices and breakthroughs in building a more inclusive space

Best Practice Identification: How education plays a role both as an enabler and as a tool to make a success of their chosen path.

Awareness and Advocacy: The session will foster a collective understanding of the significance of education in bringing about a shift in the attitude, both of organisations and of people on the ground for supporting more women to participate in fieldwork, research and educating for climate action and sustainability.

Key Speakers

1. Ms Megha Gupta, Head, Youth programme at the Green Literature Festival
2. Ms Donna Goodman- Founder Earth Child Institute, USA
3. Ms Meena Raghunathan- Environment Educator, Author
4. Ms Neha Sinha, Conservation Biologist, Author and Columnist
5. Ms Neha Dara, Head Round Glass Sustain
6. Ms Kavitha Iyer, Journalist & Editor
7. Ms Aparna Karthikeyan, Journalist and Senior Fellow, People's Archive of Rural India

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