

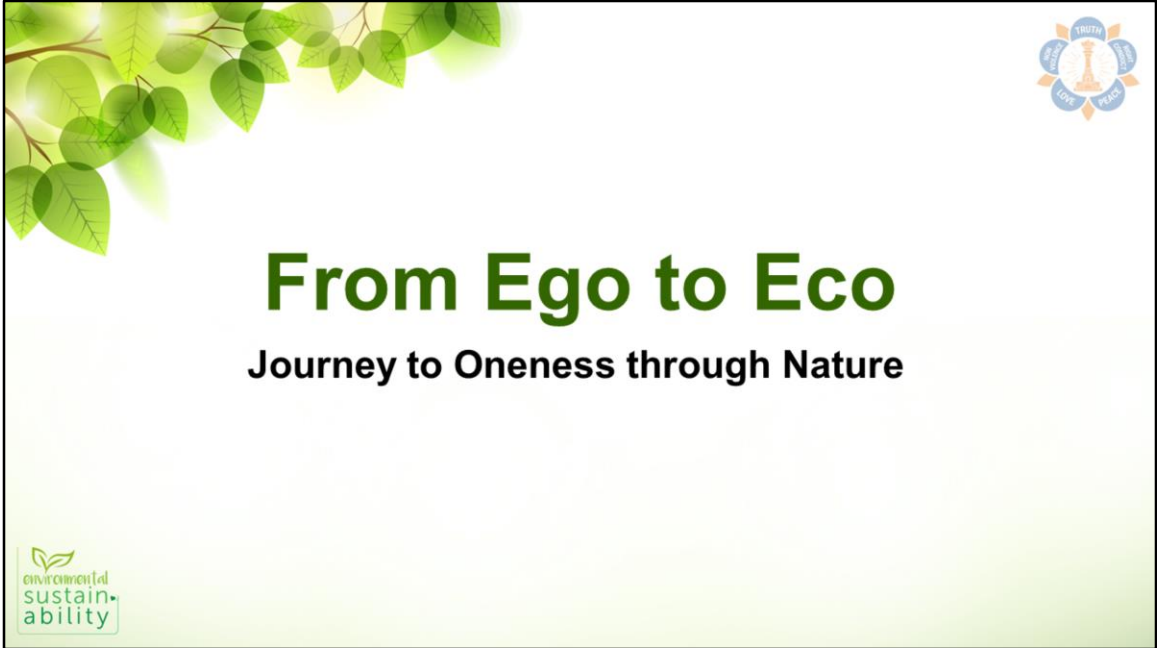


Dear facilitator,

These slides were first prepared for a workshop in Prasanthi Nilayam by the Environmental Sustainability Committee. They have been formatted such that you can use them for your own workshops anywhere in the world. We have left ideas and suggestions in the speaker notes section below the slides. Feel free to customise these slides for your purposes. If you have any questions, suggestions or experiences to share you can reach us at [gogreen@sathyasai.org](mailto:gogreen@sathyasai.org).

With love and best wishes,  
SSIO Environmental Sustainability Committee





Open workshop with 3 Oms and prayer to Sathya Sai Baba



## Mother & Child Icebreaker

Introduce yourself and discuss the ideal relationship between mother and child.

What is the mother's duty?

What is the child's duty?



We recommend having the audience seated in small groups of 6-8 people.

At this stage you can lay down some guidelines for groups such as :

- Can nominate a facilitator and a scribe
- Give everyone a chance to speak, facilitator to watch for dominant voices and to invite quieter voices to speak up

Allow 10-20 minutes

After the discussion invite representatives of a few groups to share key points



## Sathya Sai Baba speaks of five mothers:

1. **Deha-mata** (physical mother)
2. **Go-mata** (cow that gives sustaining milk)
3. **Bhoo-mata** (the land which grows the crops which feed the body)
4. **Dhesa-mata** (one's native country)
5. **Veda-mata** (spiritual knowledge and wisdom)



**Two of these mothers directly pertain to Nature, Earth**

Can make reference to how Nature, or Earth is considered as a mother by many indigenous cultures and treated in this way



## Play Video: The Land Owns Us

<https://youtu.be/w0sWIVR1hXw?t=210>

(From 3:30)



The video features Bob Randall, an aboriginal elder who speaks of his peoples relationship with land and creation. You can play video and welcome audience to share reflections / thoughts for a short discussion on how we relate to Nature. We found the video most pertinent from 3.30 onward however feel free to play a longer segment as you find helpful.



## Nature, all of creation, is our family

### *Discussion:*

How do you relate to and treat Nature?

How is your relationship with Mother Earth similar and different from how you relate to and treat your physical mother?



Invite groups to discuss their relationship with Nature.

Allow 15-20 minutes for discussion and invite few groups to share their responses and insights

Emphasise that we're very conscious to love and care for our physical mothers yet often unconsciously we're hurting and abusing Mother Earth – through taking flights, through the chemicals in our cleaning and personal care products, through the material of the clothes we wear, the plastic we use etc. We cannot see the impact directly and must take efforts to learn and understand.



## Like a physical mother, Nature gives many gifts that allow us to live and thrive

Draw parallels between mother nature and physical mother – teacher, sustainer, giver of life and love, without her we can't exist.

She, like our physical mother is also a manifestation of God.

Some of these gifts are obvious (others like clothes too come from nature's resources although may seem less obvious)



## Sathya Sai Baba's teachings

Nature is the **manifestation of God** – Nature is the effect and God is the cause. (SSS, 1996)

Recognise the **immanence of the Divine** in the entire cosmos. (SSS, 1996)

Nature is the panorama of God's manifold majesty – it is the **gateway to liberation**. (SSS, 1970)

God is to be worshipped by man, **to be realised by man through Nature**. (SSS, 1967)







Facilitator to share a personal experience of how they experience God in Nature. Feel free to replace this image with your own.



# How do you experience Mother Nature as God?

*Share your experiences in pairs*



In pairs



## As a society we view man as superior to Nature



Man thinks he has dominion over Nature, that he can exploit the Earth's resources.



Despite having some awareness of the importance of Mother Nature, the need to respect and care for her, as a society we ourselves as superior to Her.



## Our ego-centric relationship with Nature is destroying ourselves and the planet

12.6 million deaths globally to environment related reasons

Global temperatures set to increase by 4 degrees by 2100

1 million poisoned yearly from pesticides used to grow food

Up to 13 million tonnes of plastic waste enter ocean every year

1 in 9 deaths caused by air pollution

2 billion people drink water contaminated by faeces

Humans have wiped out 60% of animals since 1970, says WWF



1. WHO report in 2016: [12.6 million deaths globally](#), or 23%, due to the environment.
2. 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: [Degradation of land due to human activities negatively impacts well-being of at least 3.2 billion people](#). Including loss of forest cover.
3. UN Environment Programme 2017 report: [About 19 million premature deaths occur annually](#) because of the way we extract natural resources and harm the environment to support production and consumption.
4. The WHO's 2016 report: [Air pollution – ambient and indoor – responsible for 1 in every 9 deaths annually](#). 2017 UNEP report: main sources of outdoor pollution are fossil fuel emissions from burning coal, oil and natural gas. Heavy metals pollution impairs neurological development and harms the nervous, digestive and immune systems, lungs and kidneys.
5. UNEP 2013 report: [1 million people globally poisoned yearly by pesticides used to grow foods](#). Land pollution also has profound impact on wildlife due to loss of natural habitats and food supplies. Pharmaceutical pollution gives rise to antimicrobial resistance in humans.
6. Water pollution: [Between 4.8 million tonnes and 12.7 million tonnes of plastic waste enter the ocean very year](#). Globally, at least 2 billion people due drinking water contaminated with faeces.
7. Climate change: If greenhouse gas emissions continue, [by 2100 the global average air temperature will warm by 4C](#), impacting human health, food production, low lying communities, cause loss of many species, and increase extreme weather events, including heat waves.
8. Melting ice sheets and glaciers, and thermal expansion of seawater [as oceans warm, will cause sea levels to rise](#), risk submerging coastal communities. Will contaminate coastal fresh water sources. Over 275 million people will be affected.
9. [Economic costs](#) from impact on human health, productivity losses, health-care costs and ecosystem damage [will be in the hundreds of billions in US\\$, even in trillions](#).

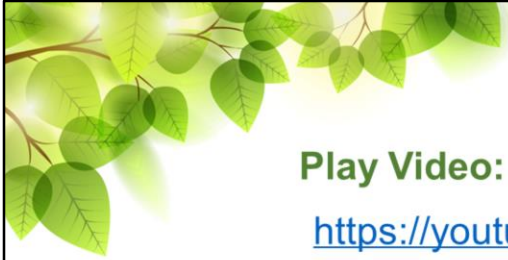


## Sathya Sai Baba's teachings

From birth to death, man pursues fleeting pleasures by exploiting, despoiling, desecrating Nature, forgetting that it is the property of God. (SSS, 1985)

Natural calamities like earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, droughts and floods result from disturbances in the balance of Nature caused by reckless exploitation of natural resources. (SSS, 1997)





## Play Video: Nature is Speaking

<https://youtu.be/WmVLcj-XKnM>





## Open sharing

How did you feel watching the video?

What struck you?

What are your reflections?



Allow 5-10 mins for discussion / reflection on video



**We need a collective shift from Ego to Eco – where man realises he is interconnected and interdependent with Nature**

**EGO**



**ECO**








## The motivation in our actions have to shift from Ego to Eco

**EGO**

**ECO**

Current Behaviour	Human Centric Reason for Change	Non-Human Centric Reason for Change
Eat meat for its taste	Eat less meat because it is fatty	Eat no meat because animals are inherently divine like us
Use plastic for its convenience	Reduce plastic usage because it is expensive / we have problems disposing it	Reduce plastic usage because It is polluting our land, water, and suffocating our fellow living creatures.
Consume high energy to satisfy all perceived needs	'Dirty energy' production causes climate change and pollution, which in turn causes diseases which harm me, therefore save energy	We are a part of Mother Earth, which is inhabited by many interconnected beings. We should consume less energy to save all fellow beings that inhabit our shared home



One way to achieve a more eco-centric relationship with nature is to question the motive of our actions and shift these from more selfish to selfless reasons.



## Divine guidance from Sathya Sai Baba

Since the five elements are saturated with divinity, use them **reverentially and with humility and gratefulness.** (SSS, 1996)

Do not pollute God's creation. (SSS, 1996) **Man's health and man's mind is being affected by the pollution.** (SSS, 1994)

The world is not created for mere enjoyment. Abusing Nature and forgetting his basic nature, man is going against the purpose of creation. Man has not recognised **the integral relationship between humanity and Nature.** (SSS, 1992)





## Divine guidance from Sathya Sai Baba

There should be **no excessive indulgence in any desire**, whether it be food or other necessities. (SSS, 1997) Man should put a ceiling on his desires. (SSS, 2001)

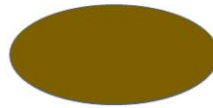
Purify the environment, which is affected by pollution of air, water and food. **Reduce the use of automobiles** and control the emission of harmful industrial effluents. (SSS, 1993) **Grow trees** to control atmospheric pollution. (SSS, 1993)

**Avoidance of pollution** of the atmosphere or natural resources like rivers is one way an enterprise practices non-violence (SSS, 1990)





## The Human Values Tree



*Sathya* (truth) is the seed, this world of matter and energy results from the germination of the seed. The fostering of *Sathya* by *Prema* results in this creation.



Human Values is one core teaching from Sathya Sai Baba that relates directly to care for environment



## The Human Values Tree

As the seed becomes a tree, it follows a set of laws and principles, which is *Dharma*. Practical non-violence (*Ahimsa*) is the non-violation of natural laws.



Human Values is one core teaching from Sathya Sai Baba that relates directly to care for environment

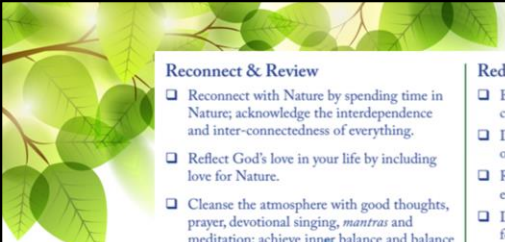


## The Human Values Tree


*Shānti* or Peace is the fruit of the Human Value Tree.



Human Values is one core teaching from Sathya Sai Baba that relates directly to care for environment



## Envirocare Sadhanas & Practices



### Reconnect & Review

- Reconnect with Nature by spending time in Nature; acknowledge the interdependence and inter-connectedness of everything.
- Reflect God's love in your life by including love for Nature.
- Cleanse the atmosphere with good thoughts, prayer, devotional singing, *mantras* and meditation; achieve inner balance and balance with Nature.
- Create inner peace and outer cleanliness by practising the five universal human values, unity in thought, word and deed, and selfless service.
- Live a simple, eco-friendly life as a spiritual practice.
- Evaluate the environmental impact of your habits and desires.
- Seek happiness that does not come from material wealth, comfort and excessive consumption.
- Avoid animal products that involve killing or inhumane treatment.
- Respect the Divine spark in everything and practice compassion towards Nature and all beings.

### Reduce & Refuse


- Everything you need is a gift from God; consume responsibly and in moderation.
- Do not waste natural resources - place a Ceiling on Desires and be content.
- Refuse gratefully when you are offered less environmentally friendly choices.
- Do not waste energy. To reduce your carbon footprint –
  - a. switch off lights and devices when not in use;
  - b. reduce your use of cars and flights;
  - c. use renewable energy sources;
  - d. minimise your use of fossil fuels;
  - e. plant more trees;
  - f. be vegetarian, and consume locally grown, organic food or grow your own.
- Do not waste food: reduce your consumption and share any extras with others.
- Do not waste your money: purchase only what you 'need' and not what you 'want'.
- Do not waste your time: undertake green service projects, attend eco-friendly events and outreach projects, and do things that help environmental sustainability.
- Do not waste water: use the minimum you require every time and reuse where possible.
- Reduce or eliminate your use of plastic items; discover alternatives and use them.
- Use whatever you save to serve others and Mother Earth.

### Reuse & Recycle

- Accept recycled items and purchase second hand items; share what you do not need.
- Donate your used quality clothes and household items to charity or opportunity shops or give them to friends.
- Compost your waste food and yard clippings.
- Recycle packaging, such as cans, glass bottles, plastic containers, paper, etc.
- Sort and reuse/recycle your other suitable waste.
- Recycle useful items such as your mobile phones, reading glasses and printer cartridges.
- Responsibly dispose of your hazardous waste, such as automotive liquids, paint products, batteries, light bulbs, household/garden chemicals, etc.
- Repair items you use instead of replacing them, whenever possible.
- Learn from Nature, where nothing is wasted.

Refer to SSIO –  
<http://www.sathyasai.org/ya/serve-the-planet>

Environmental Sustainability – Practical Tips for Daily Use:  
<http://sathyasai.org/environmental-sustainability>



Can be accessed here:

<http://sathyasai.org/sites/default/files/pages/ssio/esc/docs/ssio-esc-checklist-personal-practice.pdf>

Further checklists and useful materials available at

<http://sathyasai.org/environmental-sustainability>



## How can each of us cultivate the feeling of oneness with Nature?

*Discussion:*

Which of your daily *sadhanas* (spiritual practices) relate to the care for the environment?

What impact have they had on you? What transformation have you experienced?

How might you intensify or grow your *sadhana*?



Allow 5-10 mins for discussion





## Self reflect: How environmentally conscious are you?

- How often do you use public transport vs. a private car?
- How often do you take a plane (a huge carbon footprint)?
- How much do you buy because you are self-conscious about your appearance / to please others – luxuries, clothes, bags, accessories?
- How often do you upgrade your phone / car / computer? The batteries are a real problem.
- Do you refuse, reuse, recycle?
- Do you consume animal products, especially from animals that have been ill-treated?
- How much waste do you produce? Do you compost?
- Which of the Earth's resources can you consume less of each day?



Participants can reflect silently or in small groups



## A few facts...

- A four hour round plane trip produces 2 to 3 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide, the average individual carbon budget is 1.2 tonnes
- 1 kg of cheese produces 13.5kg of Carbon Dioxide, one kilogram of lentils produces 0.9 kg of Carbon Dioxide
- 2,000 to 3,000 cocoons are required to make a pound of silk, billions of cocoons are destroyed each year. Most materials contain some petroleum based synthetic material. Cotton is best!
- Our use of diesel vehicles and energy from non renewable sources is driving temperature increases. Cities including Dhaka, Jakarta, Mumbai, New York, Rio will be among the first to drown

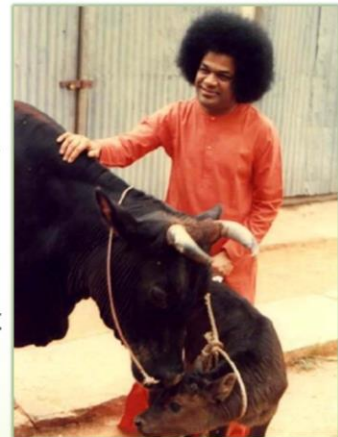


Feel free to replace with facts more relevant to your country / region



## A few more facts ...

- Globally, we use 1 million new plastic bags per minute, which uses 2.2 billion gallons of oil each year. Plastic debris kills an estimated 100,000 marine mammals annually, as well as millions of birds and fishes.
- Cows are artificially inseminated to produce calves and aggressively milked as soon as their calves are born, to meet the demand for milk and dairy products.



Feel free to replace with facts more relevant to your country / region



## An interconnected world: How can each of us be a “wolf” and change the world around us?

Play video: How Wolves Change Rivers:

<https://youtu.be/ysa5OBhXz-Q>



Play video and welcome audience to share reflections / thoughts for a short discussion



## Further resources

[sathyasai.org/environmental-sustainability](http://sathyasai.org/environmental-sustainability)

Many resources available including:

- Nature Book – teachings of Sathya Sai Baba
- Talks from Go Green Conference
- Study Circle Material
- Short Videos
- Informative booklets
- Checklists to help you take action



**Sathya Sai International Organisation**

Sathya Sai Home Us Events and Activities Resources Global Initiatives

**Visit Nature and the World's Environmental Problems**

Download this video | Download the PDF "Go God, Nature and Man"

The Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSIO) has established an Environmental Sustainability Committee (ESC) to promote spiritual solutions to our present day environmental crisis. The ESC implements a wide range of initiatives around the world to protect the planet, including education programmes, a Young Adults led initiative called Serve the Planet, youth group engagement projects etc. There are several SSIO publications that explain the spiritual basis for addressing the environmental crisis in a sustainable and practical manner.

**Go Green Conference**

In July 2016, the SSIO hosted its 5th Go Green Conference in Prasanna Nilagam for over 1,200 delegates from 70 countries. The conference highlighted Sathya Sai Baba's teachings on the unity of God, Nature and Man. Drawing from both scientific facts and Sathya Sai Baba's spiritual lessons, an impressive array of speakers gave delegates a deep understanding of the issues at the heart of this crisis, and discussed practical steps in which men can live in harmony with Nature at the personal, home and societal levels. Highlights from each conference day can be accessed here: Day One and Day Two.

**Conference Materials**

**Nature: The Vesture of God (Go Green Conference Book)** - An important book highlighting Sathya Sai Baba's teachings and solutions to our environmental crisis, as well as the work and vision of the Sathya Sai International Organisation.

**Spoken talks and videos from the Conferences**

- YouTube playlist with all spoken talks

Allow 5-10 mins for discussion

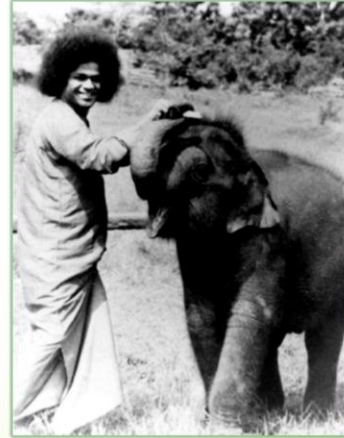


## Getting involved

Become an Envirocare Coordinator and ambassador for the Earth in your centre / region / country / home / workplace.

Get in touch with the Environmental Sustainability Committee:

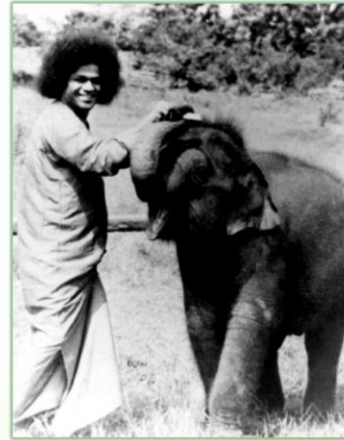
[gogreen@sathyasai.org](mailto:gogreen@sathyasai.org)





## Closing reflections

Sharing of insights, learnings  
Expression of gratitude to Mother  
Earth





# Appendix





## Greed is destroying Nature's balance and Man himself – some facts

1. WHO report in 2016: 12.6 million deaths globally, or 23%, due to the environment.
2. 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services: Degradation of land due to human activities negatively impacts well-being of at least 3.2 billion people. Including loss of forest cover.
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8. Melting ice sheets and glaciers, and thermal expansion of seawater as oceans warm, will cause sea levels to rise, risk submerging coastal communities. Will contaminate coastal fresh water sources. Over 275 million people will be affected.
9. Economic costs from impact on human health, productivity losses, health-care costs and ecosystem damage will be in the hundreds of billions in US\$.

Communicate enormity of problem

## Role of Human Values to Protect the Planet

### Human Values inspired Individual Transformation

1. The fundamentals of creation are the five elements (*pancha mahābhūta*) and three attributes (*trigunas*). These arise from Consciousness. Mankind is intricately connected with the entire creation.

### THE HUMAN VALUE TREE

2. *Sathya* (truth) is the seed, this experiential world of matter and energy is the germination of the seed. The fostering of *Sathya* by *Prema* results in this creation. As the seed becomes a tree, it follows a set of laws and principles, which is *Dharma*. *Dharma* is how this materialisation is arranged.
3. Practical non-violence (*Ahimsa*) is the non-violation of natural laws – non-violation of *Dharma*. *Shānti* or Peace is the fruit of the Human Value Tree.

### Sathya Sai Education in Human Values

4. The first layer of *Educare* is creation as a manifestation of divinity. Creation commences with the sound “Om” and divinity manifests as the five elements of Space, Fire, Air, Water and Earth. Strong attachments to the material world distort thinking and so humans engage in activities that pollute the elements and creation.
5. The second layer of *Educare* is to bring out the latent divinity in man through appropriate enquiry and practice. Management of the senses and the mind to discern the sacred basis of creation. *Educare* supports the development of *buddhi* (intellect, discriminative faculty) and the drawing out of human values from within.
6. Conscious living and commitment to living mindfully and consuming the Earth’s natural resources moderately reduces pollution and waste and protects the planet as a spiritual practice. Sathya Sai Baba called this Ceiling on Desires.
7. The third layer of *Educare* is a pedagogic tool which utilises the above two concepts to underpin the approach in Sathya Sai Education.

## Teachings of the Saints and Sages – some illustrations

*"The Earth is our mother, nourishing and protecting us in every moment – giving us air to breathe, fresh water to drink, food to eat and healing herbs to cure us when we are sick. When we breathe with mindfulness ... With every breath we can experience communion." – Thich Nhat Hanh*

*"As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the Earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling." – Pope Francis*

*"The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air and in all forms of life. This is why the earth herself, burdened and laid waste, is among the most abandoned and maltreated of our poor; she 'groans in travail'." – Rom 8:22*

*"We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters."*

*"The purpose of life is to be part of all that there is. ... we are connected to everything else, and the proof is being alive. You're one with everything there is." - Bob Randall, Yankunytjatjara Aboriginal Elder, Australia*

*"Our species, though selected to be a caretaker or steward (khalifah) on the earth, has been the cause of such corruption and devastation on it that we are in danger [of] ending life as we know it on our planet. How will we face our Lord and Creator?" – The Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences, 2015.*

*"Only through love and compassion is the protection and preservation of Nature possible. But both these qualities are fast diminishing in human beings. In order to feel real love and compassion, one must realise the oneness of the life force that sustains and is the substratum of the entire universe." – Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi*



## Moving forward – focus of SSIO

1. Communication of the environmental visions at grass roots level.
2. Study Circles – the foundations of change in every Sathya Sai Centre/Group must come from source. The Study Circle can be a spiritual self-audit.
3. Go Green activities in Sathya Sai Centres – reassessing practices and activities in every Sathya Sai Centre/Group. Incorporate 'green' practices into SSIO activities.
4. Education and Human Values – SSE and Young Adults programme take up the study and participate in 'green' practices at home and in the Sathya Sai Centre/Group.
5. Public Outreach – emphasising the practical application of EnviroCare.

