

**Report on ENVIS Workshop on  
Web Design and E-Governance Application  
21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2002, Chennai**

**Sponsored by  
The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India  
(A World Bank assisted Environment Management Capacity Building  
Technical Assistance Project (EMCBTAP))**

Preface

ENVIS Secretariat sponsored the second workshop on “Web Design and E-Governance Application” under the EMCBTAP – World Bank project at Chennai in between 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2002. The workshop was organized by the National Ship Design and Research Centre, Vishakhapatnam, at National Institute of Port Management, Chennai. Six technical sessions were part of the workshop. A summarized report of the workshop is given below.

Day 1 (Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> December, 2002)

The workshop started with a welcome address by Mr. T.S. Ashok Kumar, Director, National Institute of Port Management (NIPM), Chennai. The workshop was inaugurated by Ms. Sushma Choudhary, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests. During her inaugural address Ms. Choudhary stressed on the need of quality and reliable information base as a potent tool for decision making process. She underscored the impediments of socio-economic aspects in the overall context of environmental information system. She emphasized on the need to integrate different databases by the ENVIS network and its nodes. She informed the participants about the establishment of nodes by involving the state governments in almost all the states of India. Keynote address was delivered by Mr. Harjit Singh, Senior Advisor, Ministry of Environment and Forests. Mr. Singh described the diverse characteristics of the ENVIS network. He asked all the ENVIS Centers and Nodes to host their websites by 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2003. His audio-visual presentation on the ENVIS Network, its goals, objectives and approaches was followed by the release ceremony of the documentation prepared by the National Ship Design and Research Centre (NSDRC). Prof. R. V. Rama Rao of NSDRC described the design and mechanics of the workshop. The inaugural session ended with the vote of thanks by Dr. Indrani Chandrasekharan, Director, Ministry of Environment and Forests.

Technical Session 1 – Environmental Planning

e-Governance applications for environmental concerns and web based GIS integrated software – e G ENPLAN, Prof. R. V. Rama Rao

Prof. R. V. Rama Rao of NSDRC made an audiovisual presentation on the various issues involved in the design and implementation of e-Governance application for environmental concerns. His presentation included eG –ENPLAN, a webbased GIS integrated software developed by NSDRC for the ENVIS network.

#### Legal Issues in Environment – Mr. P. Niroop

Mr. Niroop, advocate, Supreme Court, spoke on the various legal aspects involved with projects that has some bearing on environment such as common effluent treatment plant etc. He discussed certain court cases with environmental components in order to make the participants understand the various legal issues attached to environment. He mentioned that information technology could help in taking appropriate legal decisions.

#### Socio-cultural interface in environmental concerns – Prof. U Tataji

Prof. U Tataji of Andhra University made a presentation on coastal communities and urban slum populations. During his presentation, he mentioned that sociological issues are generally not being considered while planning for the location of industries in the coastal areas. He also mentioned that environmental degradation mostly affects urban and rural poor. He urged to strengthen socio-cultural interface in order to locate various industrial projects in appropriate locations having minimum impact on environment and people belonging to lower economic strata of the society.

#### Tribal cultures and Eco-tourism projects – Prof. K Thimma Reddy

Prof. Thimma Reddy of Andhra University in his presentation focussed on tribal cultures and eco-tourism components. He stressed the need to understand the age-old customs of the tribal areas and its relevance in protecting the environment. He cited a number of examples to foster the theme of cultural aspects moulding the development of the tribal communities. He mentioned the need to take into account the tribal people's sensibilities before launching various projects including eco-tourism in the tribal areas.

#### GIS software for e-Governance applications – A. R. Rao

Mr. A. R. Rao of Spatial Technologies made a brief presentation on the spatial GIS software and its applications in e-Governance. He described on the usage of the said software and how it could help in decision support system.

#### Technical Session II – Theme Presentation

Site location of municipal solid waste landfill sites, biomedical and hazardous waste, sewage treatment plants – G. V. Raghava Rao

Mr. G. V. Raghava Rao gave an overview on the waste treatment plants and covered the various specificities and requirements involved in locating the treatment plants for municipal solid wastes, industrial effluents, hazardous wastes and biomedical wastes. He

mentioned about the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for the location of said treatment plants and the need to adhere to these guidelines. He presented a case study on the first and only functioning hazardous waste treatment facility in the country located at Hyderabad.

Environmental concerns of ports, harbours and offshore installations – Aditya Mukherjee

Dr. Mukherjee in his presentation dealt at length on the impacts of dredging a shore facility for ship discharges, detection and cleaning of oil spills, water front drainages and handling and disposal of shore generated wastes and hazardous wastes on the offshore platforms.

Pollution in Chennai Port – Capt. Mande

Capten Mande of NIPM mentioned about the pollution in Channai port and its impact on the local population. He also described different measures taken to tackle this problem.

The discussion session on the conclusion of the first day noted that various elements and components as highlighted by the expert members be incorporated in the reporting and evaluation methods.

Day 2 (Sunday, 22<sup>nd</sup> December, 2002)

Technical Session III – Hands on Training on Web Designing

Participants were exposed to the web-based software to facilitate designing of their own websites. A demonstrative tutorial on web designing was conducted during this session.

Technical Session IV – Web Based GIS Systems

A detailed presentation and demonstration was made on how to use the spatial GIS software to develop general as well as environmental databases.

Technical Session V – Hands on Training on e-Governance Solution for Environmental Planning

Prof. R. V. Rama Rao made a presentation on ENVIRONS Ver 1.0 software developed by NSDRC, and the coding procedures to be adopted for spatial application of environmental data utilizing the said software. He made another presentation on a newly developed software called eG-ENPLAN Ver 1.0, that can be used for e-Governance applications regarding environmental concerns.

Day 3 (Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2002)

Technical Session VI – Round Table Discussion

In this interactive session, participants discussed some issues regarding environmental databases and ENVIS family and came out with some suggestions. A brief of the session is given below.

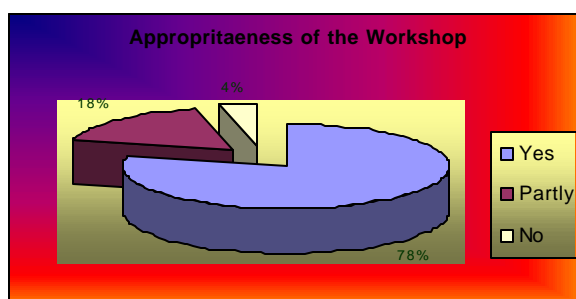
- Database on biodiversity, available with the Forest department could be included in the ENVIS database.
- Urban system specific parameters need to be included in the State Environment Report.
- Environmental issues in tea gardens should be given importance.
- Documentation done on eco-labeling and hazardous waste should be included in the ENVIS database.
- Local language translation for disseminating information under the ENVIS network was discussed.
- An expert committee should be formed to guide the ENVIS Nodes.
- Good linkage between the ENVIS nodes for exchange of information is required.
- Platform for presenting and sharing the work of various ENVIS Nodes should be provided.
- ENVIS Network should be advertised on FM (radio network), Doordarshan (television network) etc.

#### Concluding Session

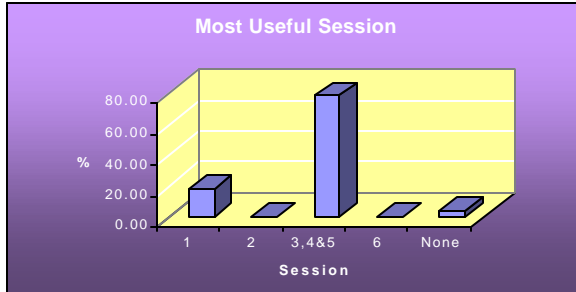
The workshop ended with Mr. Harjit Singh and Dr. Indrani Chandrasekharan's note. Mr. Harjit Singh informed the participants about an announcement to be made on 26<sup>th</sup> January, 2003 on an initiative taken by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for the ENVIS Network. Dr. Chandrasekharan mentioned about the need to look at the ENVIS network as an integrating force with a large amount of database, which could contribute to the well being of the country.

At the end of the workshop a survey was done among the participants to understand the shortfalls and gaps that need to be bridged for better performance of the ENVIS network. The ENVIS Secretariat developed a questionnaire for this purpose which is attached herewith as Annex 1. The followings give an analysis of the survey done. The analysis is in graphical form that is mostly self-explanatory.

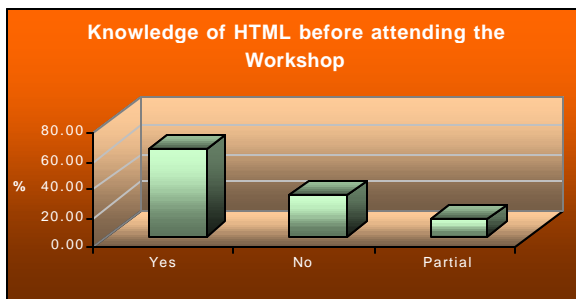
Fig. 1 describes the appropriateness of the workshop



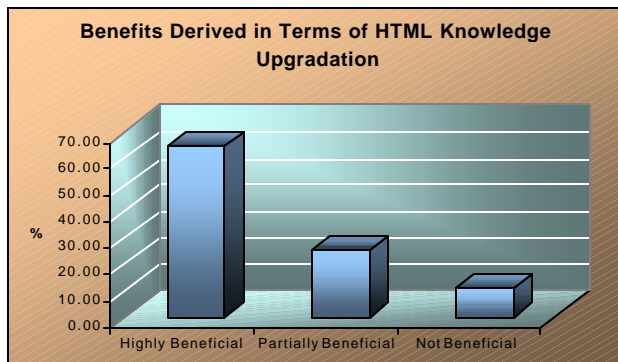
The workshop had six sessions and participants were asked to rate these sessions. Session three, four and five were rated the most useful session. All these three sessions were on hands on training and most of the participants rated all the three as most useful.



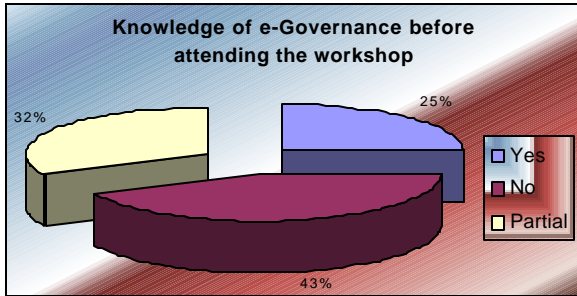
Although a majority of the participants had some idea about HTML before attending the workshop, most of the participants found the hands on training on HTML and



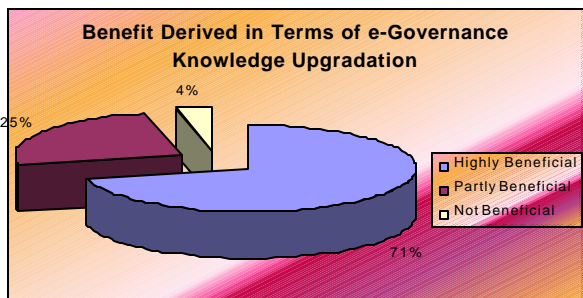
web designing highly beneficial.



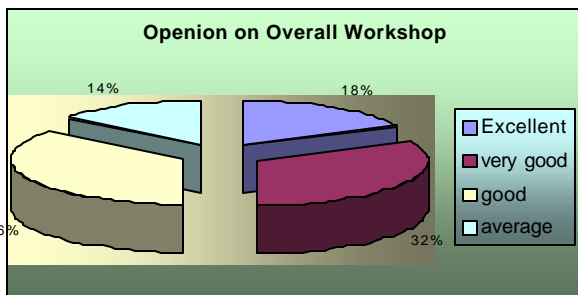
In case of e-governance, majority of the participants expressed their ignorance towards the said topic. Through interaction with participants it was found that, their knowledge



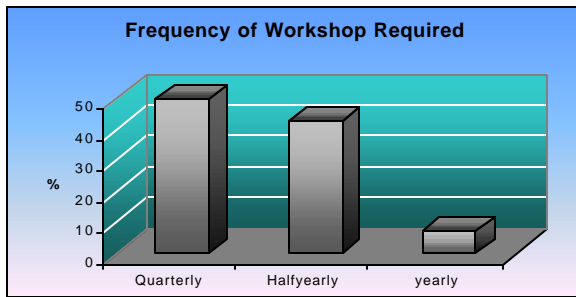
on e-governance increased a little bit after attending the sessions on e-Governance, although some participants (25%) felt that the contents of the e-Governance sessions need to be improved.



The workshop was rated on a four-scale rating.



Participants were asked about the frequency of such kind of workshops. Most of the participants felt that a workshop per quarter would be beneficial.



The suggestions made by the participants are given in brief:

Topics suggested for the next workshop:

- Web designing, Web technology, HTML, DHTML etc.
- Database creation using SQL, Java and Java Scripting language, database manipulation and report generation.
- ASP, database management, uses of macro-media products.
- Technologies for language interface in the website.
- GPS (Global Positioning System)
- Guidelines for data collection (minimum set of data required for a subject area)
- Data analysis and prevention aspects
- Poverty and related environmental problems in urban and rural areas and the civic aspect of life, like hospital waste management etc.
- Green audits
- Environment and occupational health
- Natural disaster management
- Pollution
- Infrastructure development and its environmental impacts
- Inter-linkages of Indian rivers and cleaning of rivers
- e-Governance

Other important suggestions made to make the workshops more effective:

- Workshops should be lengthier with more hands on training.
- Workshops should have a session to discuss the problems faced by the ENVIS Nodes.
- Focused separate workshops for programme officers and IT technicians should be organized.

Suggestions for improving the performance of the ENVIS family

- Newsletters published by the various ENVIS Nodes should be mailed regularly to all the ENVIS nodes.
- Interactive chat-room should be created for the ENVIS Nodes to share and discuss ideas and problems.
- ENVIS Secretariat should publish a half-yearly newsletter.

- ENVIS nodes working on the same kind of topic should have a better co-ordination.
- More hands on training for each ENVIS nodes is required.
- Training on database management is required.
- A platform needs to be created by the ENVIS Secretariat, where all the ENVIS Nodes could share their work.
- Frequent interaction with the ENVIS Secretariat is needed.
- ENVIS Secretariat should constitute an expert committee to guide the ENVIS Nodes
- ENVIS network should be widely advertised
- ENVIS Secretariat should organize a workshop to discuss the sustenance of the ENVIS Nodes after the withdrawal of fund.