

OUTGOING PRESIDENT'S REPORT ON INSEE 1998-2000

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It shall soon be two years since we met here at IIC to give a concrete shape to the idea of INSEE. The seeds of that idea already existed in the minds of many of us: in fact as Richard Norgaard, the President of the International Society then put it, we in India were ready for such a coming together of diverse strands of thinking on environmental issues.

It is with some sense of satisfaction that I report that the INSEE has taken shape during this period. However, we need to enter a period of consolidation during the next phase beginning with the election of this Executive Committee. To report activities undertaken during this period by the INSEE under the direction of the Steering Committee constituted on September 24, 1998:

ACADEMIC

- The First Biennial Conference was organised in December 1999 at Bangalore. About 180 researchers participated. Economic and Political Weekly carried a write up on the conference in its April 11, 2000 issue under the title "Of development and ecology". A post conference volume is under publication as per the decisions taken at the Steering Committee meeting held on March 29, 2000.
- An information dissemination service for all members has been started from the year 1999 itself.
- A total of ten members of the INSEE presented papers at the Sixth Biennial Conference of the International Society of Ecological Economics held in Canberra in July 2000. This was perhaps the largest number from a developing country. I am glad to report to the Committee that the Board of the International Society decided in its last meeting that members of regional societies in non-OECD countries could, if they so wish, become members of the International Society without payment of any additional membership fees. This decision needs to be operationalised in its details.

ORGANISATIONAL

Members will agree that organisational aspects of a new Society need to be placed on a firm legal footing in the initial years in order for it to continue to function in a sustainable fashion. To this end, the INSEE office has completed the following tasks

- Registration was obtained under the Indian Societies Act in January 2000 itself. A Constitution, and a memorandum of association were drawn up with legal advice for the same.
- Income tax exemption under relevant articles has been obtained
- We have applied for 100% exemption for donors under relevant article. An application for FCRA has also been filed
- A general body meeting was held in December 1999 and procedures for election of the first Executive Committee laid down. Elections as per procedures were completed and results announced on June 10, 2000.
- Auditors were appointed and audited accounts of the first two years are available.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In completing the above academic and organisational tasks, I received the full cooperation of the Steering Committee and I wish to thank every member of the erstwhile steering committee for the same.

A degree of financial stability was ensured by grants received from the following sources:

- the Ford Foundation (India Office, New Delhi), first for the Inaugural meeting and then for the First Conference and day to day running of the office.
- the International Society of Ecological Economics: seed money
- Hivos India Office, Bangalore for the INSEE Conference
- Ministry of Finance, Government of India(in April 2000).

The Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi provided office space for the registered office and secretarial assistance for carrying out all the above mentioned organisational tasks.

The Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore organised the First Biennial Conference of the Society.

The Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad provided secretarial support for conducting the Elections to the Executive Committee.

I wish to put on record my thanks to the Directors of the Institutes mentioned above.

LOOKING AHEAD: TASKS FOR INSEE

What kind of future agenda do we envisage for INSEE?

Some Suggestions and Possible Directions

A workshop on "Interdisciplinary Research in Environmental Issues: Methodology and Operationalisation" could be held. In order to do this effectively, we need more active association of academics from different disciplines.

Should the Society try to obtain funding for projects in Environment?

Or should it remain a networking organisation for existing research? We may keep in mind that other organisations such as SANDEE are supporting research. We need to bring together the results of such research.

A Policy Workshop as a possible beginning of a dialogue with policy-makers? This has been built into the proposal given to the Ministry of Finance: which has been funded partly for 2000-2001.

Event specific Committees may be formed to be supported by the Executive Committee

Kanchan Chopra

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF INDIAN SOCIETY
FOR ECOLOGICAL ECONOMICS (INSEE) PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL
GENERAL BODY MEETING (23RD MARCH, 2001)**

Annual Report of the Executive Committee of Indian Society for Ecological Economics (INSEE)

Presented to the Annual General Body Meeting (23rd March, 2001)

At the outset, the E.C. records its profound sense of grief at the sad and untimely demise of Prof. Praveen Visaria, the former Director of the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi. Prof. Visaria, an eminent social scientist with great vision and perspective provided tremendous help and support to the Indian Society for Ecological Economics. It was because of him that we could hold the first meeting for the formation of the society, and locate the registered office at the Institute of Economic Growth. We gratefully remember his contribution in this institutional endeavor and we pray for the peace of his departed soul.

This report cover the major developments relating to our Society from the holding of the first Annual General Meeting of the Society on 21st December, 1999 at the Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore. These developments mostly relate to organizational activities and planning.

1. First election of the President and the Executive Committee

The first Annual General Meeting of the Society held on 21st December, 1999 on the recommendation of the Steering Committee appointed Prof. Sudarshan Iyengar, Director Gujarat Institute of Development Research, Ahmedabad as the Returning Officer for the first election of the Society. Prof. Iyengar conducted the election process which started on 20th March, 2000 inviting the nominations for the President and the Executive Committee from the INSEE members. Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao was declared elected unopposed, when Prof. Jyoti Parikh, the other candidate withdrew from the contest. The next of the voting for Executive Committee was concluded on 10th June, 2000 when Prof. Iyengar submitted his report announcing the final result of the election of the President and the 10 other elected members. The Executive Committee had the first meeting on 28th July, 2000 at New Delhi. The Committee agreed that two more members from the General Body may be co-opted by the President in the EC on the basis of the criteria of interdisciplinary research and actual policy experiences. These co-opted members Shri V.B. Eswaran and Prof. P.S. Ramakrishnan gave their consent. The

first meeting of the EC also elected the other office bearers * i.e. Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer and Joint Secretary. The Secretary informed all the members of the General Body by a letter about the constitution of the new EC and the office-bearers. The following is the list of EC members:

1. Prof. C.H. Hanumantha Rao * President
2. Prof. Jyoti Parikh * Vice President
3. Prof. Ramprasad Sengupta * Secretary
4. Shri V.B. Eswaran * Treasurer (Co-opted)
5. Dr. Sharatchandra Lele * Joint Secretary
6. Prof. Bina Agarwal * Member
7. Prof. Kanchan Chopra * Member
8. Prof. Anil K. Gupta * Member
9. Prof. Gopal Kadekodi * Member
10. Prof. M.V. Nadkarni * Member
11. Prof. Katar Singh * Member
12. Prof. A. Vaidyanathan * Member
13. Prof. P.S. Ramakrishnan * Member (Co-opted)

The Executive Committee in its first meeting further decided to nominate Dr. Pushpam Kumar as Faculty-in charge of INSEE at its registered office at the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi. He is also a special invitee in that capacity. The Committee is grateful to him for his able assistance in the conduct of the work at the INSEE office and for all the meetings of EC. Three EC meetings have been held in 2000-01.

2. Planning for the inter-disciplinary workshop/round table

With reference to the planning and organization of academic events for the Society, the EC decided to hold workshop/round table on the themes of inter-disciplinary interest centering on ecological economics every year in addition to the Biennial Conference. The first workshop of this kind on methodological issues relating to interdisciplinarity in ecological economics has been planned by a committee convened by Dr. Sharatchandra Lele for being held in July 2001. Dr. Lele along with Prof. Gopal Kadekodi and Prof. Bina Agarwal have organized a round table on interdisciplinary methods in ecological economics on 23rd March, 2001, and it is felt that the discussions at this round table will give helpful inputs for the workshop of July 2001 as well.

3. **The Second Biennial Conference of the Society**

The EC decided at its meeting held on 24th November, 2000 that the theme of the Second Biennial Conference would be “Water Resources, Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystem Services”. The Conference would be organized at Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal on 19-21 December 2001.

The Advertisement calling for papers along with various sub-themes of the conference has been sent to Economic and Political Weekly, The Indian Journal of Agricultural Economics, Down to Earth and Journal of Indian Water Resources Society (WRDTC at the University of Roorkee). We look forward to a wide participation by the members of INSEE and also other resource persons in the subject who may not be currently members of our society. This conference should be an opportunity of not only greater interdisciplinary interaction among ourselves but also one of embracing more of scholars in the fields of scientific knowledge of our concern and widening the definition and scope of ecological economics. The EC hopes that the members of the General Body take initiative and participate in such events like the biennial conference, workshops or round tables.

4. **Other activities**

- a) The work of publication of the proceedings of the first biennial conference held at ISEC Bangalore has made considerable progress. This volume has been compiled and edited by Prof. Kanchan Chopra and sent to the press in its final form. We are thankful to her for this kind support.
- b) Among various suggestions which have reached the Society, the EC has considered it important to prepare an inventory of names of resource persons and titles of research works of different disciplines of natural and social sciences which would have relevance in the context of interdisciplinarity of ecological economics. The development of such a database is important for the efficient organization of activities of our society. The EC will need the cooperation of all the members of INSEE in obtaining informational inputs for this purpose.

5. **Financial Matters**

The Ministry of Finance were good enough to accede to our request for a grant last year. The grant of Rs.12 lakhs sanctioned at the end of March 2000. The grant was meant to cover office expenses of the Society, publications, our Committee meetings and Policy Round Tables. We are grateful to the Ministry for this support, and hope that the Ministry will continue to help us. In the current year, it has been possible to organize only one Round Table, the first four months having been taken up in the election process. We have a substantial balance of the Ministry grant carried over to next year.

6. **Membership**

The number of members of the Society, in different categories, is as follows:

All the ordinary members of the Society are requested to kindly renew their membership every year regularly without delay. The cooperation and active involvement of the members of the General Body will add value to the professional academic activities of the Society.

Ramprasad Sengupta
Secretary, INSEE
For the Executive Committee

