

Education for Sustainable Development: The Krishna Valley Model

Abstract:

Krishna Valley, established in 1993 on a barren sheep run, has transformed into a vibrant educational hub promoting sustainability through a unique dual education system. This proposal explores how Krishna Valley integrates spiritual and environmental education, enhancing local biodiversity and serving as a model for global sustainable educational practices.

Introduction:

Located on 330 hectares of once intensively farmed land, Krishna Valley now boasts a thriving ecosystem with over 400,000 trees, increasing bird species from 25 to 125. As the largest employer in the region with 130 residents, it operates off the grid, attracting 25,000 tourists and 12,000 pilgrims annually. This proposal examines the Valley's educational approaches—internal education from kindergarten to high school and external programs for the public—and their impact on sustainable development and ecological education.

Internal

Education:

Krishna Valley's internal education system, Sri Prahlada Gurukula, offers a continuum from kindergarten to high school, including a robust training program for missionaries. A key feature of our curriculum is practical engagement, where children try over 30 occupations over eight years, fostering a profound appreciation of sustainable living from an early age.

External

Education:

Externally, Krishna Valley broadens its educational outreach to the public through workshops and courses in gardening, water management, and sustainable practices. This active participation educates and engages the community and visitors, illustrating the practical applications of sustainable theories in real-world settings.

Academic

and

Research

Collaborations:

Collaborations with various universities and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences enhance our educational offerings, providing research opportunities that bridge theoretical knowledge and practical implementation. Bhaktivedanta College (BC), located in Budapest, offers state-accredited education in Hindu Vaishnava theology and yoga. With 250 students, BC integrates spiritual values like simplicity, moderation, and non-violence into sustainable lifestyle education. Students specializing in "Sustainability and Resilience" gain insights into the interplay between spirituality and environmental protection, including professional internships at Krishna Valley to experience sustainability principles in action.

Impact and Future Directions:

The educational practices at Krishna Valley address both the spiritual and ecological dimensions of sustainability, serving as a replicable model for other institutions. This proposal discusses the potential of this model to influence global educational strategies in sustainability, emphasizing the harmonization of spiritual and environmental education to foster holistic sustainable development.

Conclusion:

Krishna Valley stands as a beacon of how spirituality intertwined with environmental stewardship can craft educational paradigms that significantly impact both individuals and communities. This proposal aims to share insights and stimulate broader adoption of integrated educational models in public schools and higher education institutions worldwide.

Keywords: Sustainable Education, Spiritual Sustainability, Ecological Transformation, Interdisciplinary Education, Community Engagement.

The presentation would be made by dr. Istvan Tasi, professor at Bhaktivedanta College, head of Sustainability Office of the College and Zoltan Hosszu, Chairman of Krishna Valley and advisor to the Eco Valley Foundation.