

# DIGBOI COLLEGE

ITAVATA, P.O. DIGBOI-786171 (ASSAM)

Third Cycle NAAC Accreditation

## CRITERIA- 7

### INSTITUTIONAL VALUES & BEST PRACTICES

#### 7.2.1. BEST PRACTICES

Submitted to



THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND  
ACCREDITATION COUNCIL



## BEST PRACTICE 1

# 1. Title: Orientation of Student towards Nature Conservation

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTICE

- To aware students about the rich biodiversity of the region;
- To orient the young learners towards nature conservation;
- To sensitize the general masses on importance of Nature conservation through awareness programmes;
- To produce a group of young learned environmentalists dedicated to nature conservation.



Pic.1. Aerial view of Digboi College Campus

## 3. THE CONTEXT:

- The rampant pressure on nature/natural resources has called for conservation of nature for sustenance as well as for future use. It is high time people dedicatedly contributed to sustain, preserve and conserve nature for the well-being of the 'the present civilization' and the upcoming times.
- Conservation of nature works the best with maximization of human support for it. Information on nature and relevant value for its conservation have a tremendous effect on it and many of these come from teaching and learning practices, experiments and activities.
- Rural people are very much used to being in the wilderness and possess a strong sense of responsibility and moral obligation to protect nature. City Teenagers do not have much contact with the wilderness or wildlife. The level of commitment to protecting the environment of this group is directly related to how much and how well they have been educated. These urban residents are important for nature conservation because they tend to have more education, more access to the media, and more knowledge of environmental degradation. They can make a big difference in the conservation of nature provided their expertise can be utilized.
- The rich bio-diversity of Digboi College provides a great advantage to orient the young minds to nature conservation.

## 4. THE PRACTICE:

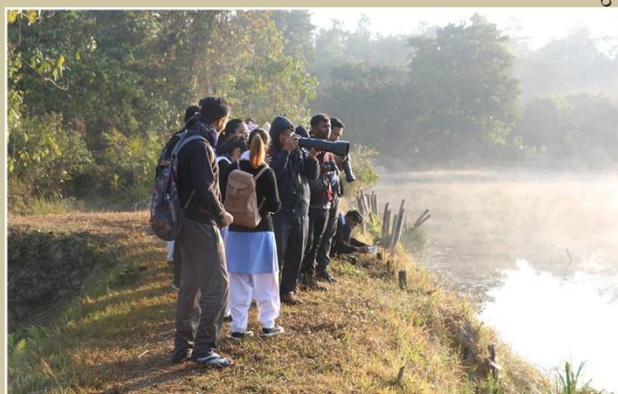
With a view to meet the objectives as stated and resourcefulness of bio-diversity, the following practices are introduced by the college to orient its students towards environment related issues:

a) Sensitizing the student about the rich bio-diversity in the Campus:

Digboi College with its campus sharing boundaries with the famous Dehing Patkai Rainforest is a safe haven for many avian, mammalian and reptilian species. Situated on a hillock, the campus is home to 177 species of birds, 100+ species of butterflies, 15+ mammals, 300+ moth species, 20+ reptiles and 234 plant species is probably one of the richest College campuses in whole of Northeast India. The young learners are made aware of this rich bio-diversity and sensitized to contribute responsibly towards environmental conservation.

b) Introduction of Field Study for Environmental Science/Life Science Subjects:

Faculty members with sufficient field expertise encourage students to undergo field study for environmental science/life science subjects. This practical approach helps them have a better understanding of the importance of environmental education.





c) Observation/Celebration of significant days associated with nature and environment:

The college celebrates important days associated with nature and environment conservation like: World Environment Day, World Wetland Day, Earth Day, World Elephant Day, Van Mahotsav, World Sparrow Day, World Biodiversity Day, etc to name a few. Students in large number actively participate in these celebrations by planting trees, organizing workshops, seminars, symposia, painting murals, displaying posters and also by social media campaigns.

d) Organization of Workshops/seminars/talk:

The College organizes workshops/seminars and popular talks with world renowned/subject experts to sensitize and motivate students about various events/issues concerning the environment; e.g. motivational talk of Forest Man of India Jadav 'Molai' Payeng during environment day celebration (2015).



Pic.4. A workshop on the topic " Biodiversity & the Role of Austen's Brown Hornbill"

## 5. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:

The success of the practice is evident from the following examples:

### a) Formation of Voluntary Association for Environmental awareness:

Motivation of the students of the institution towards nature conservation is evident from the fact of creation of voluntary associations to create environmental awareness among general masses. Two such Associations are: Art for Nature and Green Squad. Art for Nature is a voluntary association of artists who are students of Digboi College. They have chosen the medium of Art to spread environment related awareness among masses. Already they have made murals in public spaces throughout the districts of Tinsukia depicting issues like illegal tree felling, illegal coal mining, poaching, global warming, climate change that need immediate attention. The group is also educating public by painting murals depicting the rich biodiversity of the region. Green Squad, a voluntary association of commerce students are involved in educating the masses about environmental issues, initiate environmental research, promote nature based tourism through social media campaigns, and raise issues in appropriate platform threatening the environment.

### b) Safeguarding Dehing-Patkai Rainforest:

In April 2020, the students of Digboi College initiated a social media campaign to raise their voice against NBWL's decision to allow opencast mining in Saleki Proposed Reserved Forest which is part of the greater Dehing Patkai Elephant Reserve created in 2004. With the active participation of the students, the social media campaign became a global protest within weeks. The movement with the motto/slogan I am Dehing Patkai not only caught national attention but was registered in Environmental Justice Atlas (the first environmental issue from Northeast India to be featured in EJA). The protest forced the state government to halt all mining activities in the area, even closing Northeast Coal Fields for indefinite period. An enquiry committee was setup under the supervision of Justice B.P. Kotokey to look into illegal mining activities taking place in Dehing-Patkai Rainforest. The existing Dehing-Patkai Wildlife Sanctuary with an area of 111.17 sq.km was upgraded to Dehing-Patkai National Park with an expanded area of 234.37 sq.km. (<https://ejatlas.org/conflict/coal-mining-in-dehing-patkai-assam>).

#IAMDEHINGPATKAI  
#SAVEDEHINGPATKAI



### 6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required:

Creating conservation related awareness is quite difficult in an area where communities are traditionally associated with hunting and other forms of societal taboos. People living in a forest belt are directly dependent on the forest for livelihood. In this context, educating the people regarding the importance of conservation becomes futile until and unless alternate sources of income is provided to them to reduce their dependencies on the forest. However, the increase in tourist footfall in recent years has opened up avenues for the local inhabitants to venture into tourism related activities in the form of providing home stay along with food and tour guide facilities to the tourists.

### 7. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED & RESOURCES REQUIRED:

Creating conservation related awareness is quite difficult in an area where communities are traditionally associated with hunting and other forms of societal taboos. People living in a forest belt are directly dependent on the forest for livelihood. In this context, educating the people regarding the importance of conservation becomes futile until and unless alternate sources of income is provided to them to reduce their dependencies on the forest. However, the increase in tourist footfall in recent years has opened up avenues for the local inhabitants to venture into tourism related activities in the form of providing homestay along with food and tour guide facilities to the tourists.



Mural by volunteers of ART FOR NATURE



Installation of Bird's Nests by volunteers of GREEN SQUAD

7. Notes (Optional): Orientation of the young minds towards nature conservation is of utmost importance in the present times and the endeavour of the college is a great step towards nature conservation and ecological balance through dedicated participation of the young minds. For related matters, the YouTube link be visited: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDMfue24Mn4>



## BEST PRACTICE 2

### 1. Title of the Practice:

# Developing livelihood skills in the Adopted Village

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PRACTICE

- To improve the villages' ability to support themselves through vermi-composting and sericulture.
- To create an environment of socio-economic and gender equity amongst the people of the adopted village.
- To provide service to the society as institutional social responsibility.
- To reduce the direct dependency of the villagers on the forest.



## 3. THE CONTEXT:

The adopted village Saraipung is situated at the border districts of Dibrugarh and Tinsukia District of Assam and the governmental aids do not reach much due to remoteness, non-availability of proper road connectivity. Lack of mobile network connectivity, lack of health care facility, lack of veterinary care facility and other care and supports have pushed the villagers' life to unending sufferings. The concern of the College to community service and especially the dedication of NSS combined to take up this great human mission to adopt the village on 2nd October, 2016. Since then the NSS Unit of the College has been working towards development programmes in the village. Digboi College perseveres to expand services with vivid extension programs to train the villagers with the use of available resources through livelihood extension programs. This is expected to support the everyday needs and standards of the adapted village with the help of this academic institution which will later empower the beneficiaries to allow them to meet the productivity of life by transmitting local knowledge and ideas like agriculture, horticulture, sericulture etc. Adding agonies to the villagers, the recent conditions of Covid-19 pandemic brought enormous economic setbacks for the daily wage earners of the adopted village. Hence it became imperative for the college to take up certain additional measures for the villagers of the adopted village.

## 4. THE PRACTICE:

As the village was adopted in the year 2016, in the initial years socio-economic survey was conducted in the village for gathering idea about the economic status as well as earning source. After the survey, depending on the availability of resources in the village, the following programmes were taken into action:

a) Mushroom Cultivation Training Programme: During NSS special camp of 2018, for the first time Mushroom cultivation training was organized. One entrepreneur from Digboi had been invited as resource person who had provided the idea about Mushroom cultivation, the techniques and its scope as earning source.

b) Vermicomposting Training Programme: The villagers were trained about the practice of vermicomposting since 2018. By initial training of vermicompost preparation techniques, the villagers were provided with the units for vermicomposting. In recent years of 2020-2021, the villagers were provided with vermicomposting units where more than 120 women of village were involved in nine different groups. Technical experts from Assam Agriculture Department from Dibrugarh district were involved to educate the villagers on the vermicomposting utility. The programme was planned in 2 phases (Phase I and Phase II).

In Phase I, the basic training was given to the villagers on how to culture vermi-compost at zero investments. Waste of thermocol fish carrying box was used to demonstrate the basic techniques on vermiculture through Agriculture Department of Dibrugarh. About 41 villagers were provided with waste thermocol fish carrying box as a phase I. Phase II of vermicomposting, was initiated with community level involvement training on 22-08-2021 at the village. During the training of Phase II, 36 villagers were divided into 3 groups by providing a large polybag of 20 x 4 x 4 ft. to each group. Within a week all the units of the vermicomposting were established by the villagers, the construction process was monitored and the whole was process supported by the NSS volunteers. Another 6 units of large polybags of 20 x 4 x 4 ft. size were donated to another 6 community groups of the village through the deputy commissioner. The entire households of the village are covered with vermicomposting involving in 9 groups as one of the economic boosting schemes for the villagers.

c) Sericulture: During International Womens' Day celebration in the year 2020, the NSS Unit had organized a talk on livelihood skills for the women of the village. The resource person delivered a talk on sericulture practice and its scope. As result of this, some of the women showed interest and as a part of NSS special camp, a daylong sericulture training programme was arranged. The resource person, Mr. Naba Kachari, has trained the women about the handling and rearing practice of Eri silkworm which feeds on castor plants. The seeds or the eggs were distributed to the interested persons and they reared the silkworm in subsequent days. The women of the village reared the silkworm and harvested a good quantity of cocoon.



d) Cutting and Tailoring: The women of the village were trained for cutting and tailoring. Stitching of Leech guard and selling it seems to be a sound source of income for the villagers.

e) Ecotourism and Training to local youths to take Tourist Guideship: Implementation of the idea of ecotourism to the villagers was a great step for the development of the villagers. As it is a forest village, it has the scope of establishment of home stays for the tourist. Some of the villagers were trained and provided with study materials.

f) Other Programmes: Time to time different programmes are arranged for the villagers like Indigenous Fish Farming, Agriculture practices like paddy where resource persons were invited to train them about the skills.



Phase II: Success stories of the Vermicomposting end products inspected by Shri. Pallav Gopal Jha, IAS,



The finished product: Ready to be sold at the local Market



The "Patkai Vermicompost"

## 5. EVIDENCE OF SUCCESS:



Phase III: Collection of 'Vermi Wash' a supplement



Phase III: PatkaiVermi Brand was packaged by NSS Digboi College Unit for first sale



Training Programme Sericulture and handling of silkworm



Workshop on "Cost effective culture of indigenous magur to boost rural economy"

The mushroom produced by the villagers was sold to the local people and also in the local market. In case of vermicomposting programme, the villagers successfully produced and used vermi compost as organic manures and also 'vermi wash' as supplement for the plants and observed remarkable growth of the plants. The success story of the Phase I was assessed by the NSS team from the villagers in the month of April 2021 amidst outbreak of 2nd wave of Covid-19 pandemic in their routine Covid vaccination registration drive in the village. Each success stories of the villagers were interviewed and was uploaded in the YouTube Channel. In Phase II, all the 3 units of the community level vermicomposting were also documented and the same was placed to the Deputy Commissioner of Dibrugarh as the success stories. On 15/9/2021, Mr. Pallav Gopal Jha, IAS, Deputy Commissioner of Dibrugarh visited the remote village and saw the success stories of the undertaken by NSS Digboi College Unit. The brand name was also officially announced by the Deputy Commissioner as 'Patkai Vermi' with a future scope of marketing the product. Recently, the local forest department purchased all the vermicomposting products from the villagers for the forest department nurseries and each group (9 units) community were benefitted with Rs. 20,000/- from the zero investments cost.

In Ecotourism and Tourist guide training programme, five persons are trained successfully named as Mr. Bijoy Panika, Mr. Gakul Tanti, Mr. Sunu Bhumija, Mr. Dipak Das and Mr. Mintu Tanti and they are presently acting as local tourist guide for the visitors. In the village, home stays are available along with traditional food facilities. During NSS special camps, the NSS unit is served with food at reasonable rate.

## 6. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED & RESOURCES REQUIRED:

- As the village is in the remote area without proper mobile network connectivity (4 Km away from the Mobile tower), communication is a big challenge for implementation of any activity.
- Selling of their products such as Vermicompost, Vermiwash, Mushroom and Cocoons at competitive rates to outside markets is also a challenge due to lack of proper market linkages.
- Tourism is at an emergent phase in the area; as a result of which tourist footfall is quite low in comparison to others. Covid pandemic has also provided an adverse impact on the tourism sector.
- Unavailability of resources for Sericulture: Unavailability of host plant and proper facilities of rearing of silkworm is the reason for which more time is required for the continuing of practice at a pace.



## 7. NOTES (OPTIONAL):

The livelihood practices implemented in the village has rendered great service to the villagers by helping them to earn without depending on forest resources. The socio-economic equity issue is being addressed and well adapted.

Youtube link for Vermicomposting at Saraipung Village:

i) <https://youtu.be/bj1Ko4L8lCY>

ii) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kthYvW2QRQo>

iii) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ept9pz2Hg\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ept9pz2Hg_Q)

# PHOTO GALLERY

**COME AND EXPLORE THE WILDERNESS WITH US AT**  
**Dehing Patkai National Park at Saraipung Range**

**How to reach?**  
 From Dibrugarh airport (80 km) or Tinsukia town (30 km).  
 Dehing Patkai National Park can be reached via Digboi or Duliyan town.

**Local Tourist Guide**

What to observe: White winged wood duck, Hoolong tree, Asian elephant, Hoolock gibbon, Common leopard, Clouded leopard, Marbled cat, King cobra, Hornbill, +300 Birds, +24 Amphibians, +70 Reptiles, +350 Butterflies, +600 Moths, +100 Orchids.

**Nature trail, Fooding & Homestay**

Requisite permission can be obtained from Divisional Forest Officer (Digboi)/Range Officer (Saraipung) with contact guidance from the local tourist guide.  
 Promoted by NSS Digboi College Unit, IQAC Digboi College and Digboi Forest Division, Assam



Phase II: Training at Community Level



Phase II: Demonstration of installation of the Polybags for vermicomposting



Phase II: Demonstration of installation of the Polybags for vermicomposting



Phase II: Community Level collection of ingredients collection for the vermicomposting