

The Sambodh Centre for Living Values
In Doddaballapur (northern outskirts of Bangalore)

A project of Sambodh Foundation, Bangalore

Proposal for
"Green the Ashram: Save the Village" project



The best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago.

The second best time is now.

An old proverb



Background

Sambodh Foundation Trust is a non-profit organization in Bangalore dedicated for creating and recreating living values for a growing society. Sambodh is founded by the disciples of HH Swami Bodhananda and has its vision and mission inspired by the teachings of Swamiji, and the Advaita Vedanta tradition.

The profile of Sambodh in Bangalore focuses on *Sambodh Centre for Living Values* with its office in 8.5 acres of land, in Sunkatanahalli village in Doddaballapur, in the outskirts of Bangalore. The Centre anchors a variety of village uplift and socio-spiritual programs with focus on poor children's education, food for children and destitute women, health awareness, ecological and spiritual values, and a living that is close to Nature. For details see www.sambodh.org and www.sambodh.com



Why Green the Ashram: Save the Village project

Sambodh Centre for Living Values was founded on its vision: "A group of women and men dedicated to an integrated holistic life style incorporating social commitment and ecological living bringing modernity and tradition into a healthy sustainable harmony". A major guideline for the Centre's philosophy is to live and work close to Nature and establish relevant ties between the village community and the environment. Owing to the burgeoning interests in textile and technological enterprises the neighbourhood of Doddaballapur is likely to come under the "yellow belt" from the present "green belt" in the forthcoming years. It is increasingly important to foresee this, perhaps, unavoidable move of a developing economy and pro-act to save the village from losing its pristine soil and natural ecosystem. Oblivious of the importance of the stability and connectedness to a natural ecosystem, villagers also are seen to practice monoculture of trees such as eucalyptus plantation in massive scales, which also

contributes to the gradual depletion of soil bed fertility. Compounding to this attitude is the apathy towards rainwater harvesting and eco-friendly agricultural methods.

The other side of the picture is that this patch of land is home to many indigenous herbs and shrubs with various healing functions. A walk in the Centre's eight acres of land with a Herb specialist will show you the many untouched and unknown herbs and shrubs that are source to potent medicines in the international Ayurvedic market.

Green the Ashram: Save the village project has been conceived taking into account the following reasons:

- i. Demonstrate the importance of preserving and maintaining of a natural ecology and its connectedness to the local village community.
- ii. Demonstrate the importance of planting as many as 100 trees for every single tree felled.
- iii. Orient the village community with the natural ecology that is replete with herbs and shrubs that contribute to health and healing.
- iv. Orient the village community with the awareness of indigenous trees and their interventions in the lives of the village community.
- v. Develop a living that is centered on cultivation of indigenous fruit and flowering trees.
- vi. To foster a herbal garden that would identify and protect the local herbs along with other indigenous herbs, shrubs and trees that are of medicinal value.
- vii. To foster a natural ecology in the form of a 'sacred-grove' (kavu) that would facilitate the preservation of birds and animals (including snakes) whose life cycles are connected with the indigenous creepers, shrubs, flowering and fruit trees.
- viii. To demonstrate the possibility of a moderate means of livelihood with the help of the produce from the trees
- ix. To explore the possibility of a small-scale industry for villagers using the byproducts of trees, such as weaving of baskets using the twigs of certain indigenous shrubs.
- x. To develop pedagogic programmes that contribute to the health and holistic living of the villagers (and other communities) based on traditional knowledge systems.



Support

The project is entirely dependent on charity contributions from people and organizations. Hence the progress and timeline for achieving the goals best rest in the hands of the conscientious minds of all of us.

The immediate phase of the already initiated project has two goals: (i) to plant about 1000 indigenous fruit and flowering trees; (ii) to initiate the herbal garden and identify and enlist the local herbs with the help of a NGO in Bangalore with expertise on the indigenous herbs and shrubs. The total costs for this phase will be around 3 lakhs. The subsequent phases are also being budgeted and involve a total of about 10-15 lakhs. The costs are based on expenses for labour, saplings, water and irrigation, power, maintenance etc. Being a charity and non-profit organization costs contribute to actual expenses and continuity of the project. The Trustees and friends of the Centre devote their time and energy out of love for a noble cause.



How you can contribute

You can contribute by your time, suggestions, moral and financial support. You can pledge for planting 20 trees with a contribution of Rs.6000/-; a 100 trees with a contribution of Rs.30,000/-; or a multiple thereof. You could also inform us if you wish a tree or a herb of a specific species is to be planted.

Do remember greening our neighbourhood is not an option but an unavoidable must for us today. When we tear off a page from our note book or scribble pad, let us remember that we are tearing a bit of Nature, and we are being indebted to Nature.

Plant Trees. Plant a Tree today.

Send in your contributions to the address below as an A/c Payee cheque or Demand Draft in the name of "Sambodh Foundation" payable in Bangalore. For details on electronic transfers or to wire your contribution please write to prajnana@yahoo.com.

All contributions towards this project will be exempt from income tax under the 80-G Income Tax act of Govt of India.

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