

# TIDING OVER THE CLIMATE CRISIS: INITIATIVES AT WOMEN'S CHRISTIAN COLLEGE, CHENNAI

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To address the climate crisis, achievable solutions have to be undertaken at individual, institutional and global levels creating resilient ways to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Women's Christian College (WCC), Chennai has always been an exemplary model of a community that believes in being responsible for and conscious of its environment. The green campus concept is aimed at enabling the college to redefine its environmental culture and developing new paradigms by creating sustainable solutions to the environmental, social and economic needs of mankind.

As an Institution that believes in the motto 'Lighted to Lighten', at an institutional level, WCC has adopted climate friendly initiatives through the past decade to make its mark on the community and the environment by playing the role of a corporate body that is conscious of adopting cost effective methods of meeting requirements wherever possible. This report highlights a few of these initiatives.

## I. ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

### • Enhancing Arboreal diversity on campus

WCC displays an astonishing diversity of trees that maintains carbon dioxide neutrality. Tree planting is an on-going process on campus to enhance greenery. Campus trees are tagged with QR-code tree boards in an effort to foster an awareness of conserving trees.

### • Butterfly Garden to increase Pollinator Diversity

The butterfly garden project was envisioned as a means of drawing attention to butterflies that function as pollinators and are important indicators of the biodiversity of a given area and also in the sustainable production of food.

### • Community Garden & Mushroom Cultivation

With the aim of encouraging organic gardening as well as highlighting the importance of healthy and sustainable food production and consumption habits among students in an urban set up.

### • Herbal Garden & Orchard

To sensitize the students about the effects of climate change on medicinal plants and fruit trees, and to instill an interest in conservation, particularly in communities where traditional system of medicine is accepted.

### • Reducing Emissions

Energy Efficient Lighting Systems, Energy Efficient BLDC Fans, and Energy Efficient Air Conditioning System (VRV) are used in newly constructed buildings and replaced in older ones. Solar energy is harvested through solar panels installed.

### • Water conservation Measures

The rainwater run-off collection system is well in place. The roof water and storm water is allowed to percolate into open wells. Over thirty percolation pits have been laid to enhance ground water recharge.

## II. WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

- Recycling a part of solid waste generated in the form of vermicomposting and mulching
- Use of single use plastic bottles to construct benches
- Practise of Upcycling

The use of salvaged timber from fallen trees and steel from renovated buildings on campus have been used to furnish the academic/ residential/ administrative blocks.

Besides, it is a practice that is restorative and regenerative and can lead to the fostering of an environment conscious community that works towards sustainability and development in a disturbing global scenario where wasting resources has become a reality, and reversing the effects of global warming, climate change, deforestation, etc. has become important and indispensable. Wood from fallen Rain Trees on campus were used to make student chairs with writing pads, chairs and tables for teachers, platforms in classrooms, wooden almirahs, teapoy to name a few.

MS (Mild Steel) flats recovered from the Science Block ceiling have been used for making grills in the hostel and the framework required for the Shade House. This practise has led to the fostering of an environment conscious community that works towards sustainability and development in a disturbing global scenario where wasting resources has become a reality.

