



INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHAMPIONS
NATIONAL ACTION PROJECT 2012

**A SUMMARY
OF
WORLD WETLANDS DAY CELEBRATIONS, 2012 – Chennai, Tamilnadu, India**

“CLEAN SWEEP – an awareness event on Pallikaranai Marsh”

To celebrate “**World Wetlands Day**”, **CLEAN SWEEP – an awareness event on Pallikaranai Marsh**” was organized under “**Pallikaranai Marsh: Restoration and Garbage to Gold**”, **National Action Project 2012 - British Council, India** at Shri A. Ganesan Matriculation Higher Secondary School, Velachery, Chennai. The Pallikaranai marsh is a part estuarine and part fresh water swamp adjacent to the [Bay of Bengal](#) situated about 20 km south of [Chennai](#) city with a geographical area of 80 km². The swamp helps in charge the aquifers of the region and is one of the last few remaining natural wetland ecosystems in the city of Chennai. However over the years, this marshland has been put through a lot of turmoil caused by rapid urbanization and massive dumping of the city’s garbage to the tune of over 3000 tonnes a day.

On a mission to help protect this fast degrading natural ecosystem and motivate the younger generation to protect the marsh, this awareness event was organized. Targeting standard 6th – 9th students from various schools across the South Zone of Chennai, Tamilnadu, the purpose of this event was to sensitize and bring out their ideas and views of school students to help protect Pallikaranai Marsh. With a participation of over 100 students from 15 different schools, the event witnessed a variety of ideas pour forth in the form of speech and as art.

It was amazing to note the diverse ideas that were put forth on a note to conserve the Pallikaranai Marsh. More than providing an insight into wetland conservation and waste management, the event also provided a platform for the students to voice their views on impacts of climate change on wetland ecosystems. Apart from participating in competitions organized, the students also took part in discussions and interactions on varied topics of waste management and conservation with **Mr.Nityanand Jayaraman, eminent environmentalist** and **Mr.Sarath Babu, CEO Foodking** - an inspiring youth leader. Apart from prizes, the students were given a tree sapling each by **Mr.Ashok Viswanath, Advocate**, motivating them to be more responsible towards the environment.

The event was organized by **Miss. Ananya Ashok, International Climate Champion – British Council, India and Member, Pallikaranai Task Force**, who also gave a short speech on the importance of Pallikaranai Marsh and significance of **“World Wetlands Day”**. **Miss. Prajitha Thanikasalam** and **Mr. Ramesh Rajesh**, both **International Climate Champions – British Council, India** were actively involved in the event. Volunteering at the event was done by members of **Pallikaranai Task Force** and other interested individuals.

The event ended on a positive note, by a speaker who said “Restoring the Pallikaranai Marsh is most important to revive the health and wealth of wetland ecosystems of Chennai City.”