**Press release**

**CLIMATE LITERACY CONFERENCE 2024**

*‘Climate Literacy for All - Bridging Knowledge and Action’*

**Date: 17th December 2024**

**CHIEF GUESTS**

**Mr. Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi**,

Hon’ble Minister for School Education

**Dr. P. Senthil Kumar**, IAS., Principal Secretary to Government, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forests, Government of Tamil Nadu

**For immediate release:** In India, climate change is not an abstract future threat but a daily reality. For instance, out of 365 days in the year, India suffered an extreme weather event on 318 days as per State of India’s Environment 2024. In Tamil Nadu, extreme heat waves have intensified, with temperatures exceeding 40°C in many districts. The state has declared heatwaves a specific disaster, enabling better preparedness and quicker relief​. Additionally, flash floods have increased, with the state facing more frequent rainfall events, disrupting communities and infrastructure​. Thiru. Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, Hon’ble Minister for School Education, speaking at the Climate Literacy Conference 2024, organised by Citizen consumer and civic Action Group (CAG) in Chennai, emphasised that these trends are expected to worsen, underlining the need for climate resilience strategies. He also added that our metropolitan cities are especially at risk, while giving the keynote address. The conference with the theme ‘Climate Literacy for All - Bridging Knowledge and Action’ underscores the necessity for a community of climate literate stakeholders who can champion climate actions. Climate literacy is based on the principle that arming the common man with knowledge, and concern, can lead to more responsible lifestyles, and informed advocacy for sustainable policies and practices. More importantly, climate literacy will help people adapt to climate changes that are already occurring. **Department of Environment,**

Dr. P. Senthil Kumar, IAS., Principal Secretary to Government, Department of Environment, Climate Change, and Forests, Government of Tamil Nadu, also speaking at the event emphasised that the state was committed to climate action, with policies such as Green Tamil Nadu Mission which plans to increase green spaces from 24 to 33% by 2030. He acknowledged that wetlands play a crucial role in protecting us from climate hazards, especially floods, and announced that the Tamil Nadu government has identified 100 water bodies that will be developed along with 1000 km of coastline for restoration.

The conference brought together policymakers, academia, the general public, students and other key stakeholders to explore the critical importance of climate literacy in addressing the challenges of climate change. S Saroja, Executive Director of CAG, described the event as a ‘coming together of like minds; all of us recognise that climate literacy must cut across socioeconomic status, education levels, and age groups. Climate action can no longer be the remit of scientists or policy makers. It is time for knowledge and action to come together in meaningful ways, underpinning our very lifestyles’.

Mr.Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi also released CAG’s climate literacy textbook FOCUS (Facts on Climate Change Unravelled for Students) for Beginners. This textbook (which follows FOCUS for middle grade students) is written for grades 3 to 5. It aims to introduce young learners to the concepts of climate change, its impacts and actionable solutions in an engaging and age-appropriate manner. Through interactive lessons and interesting activities, the textbook seeks to foster climate awareness and empower the next generation to become responsible stewards of the environment.

The event saw a series of panelists discuss topics spanning the breadth of climate literacy's role in combating climate change – from its integration into policymaking and education to strategies for empowering citizens and building resilient communities.

Modern challenges require innovative and sustainable solutions, supported by a commitment to inclusive education and policy action. The proceedings of the Climate Literacy for All - Bridging Knowledge and Action - Conference 2024 mark an essential step toward creating a robust framework for fostering climate resilience and informed action.

**For further information, contact: Mala Balaji – 9884316639, mala.balaji@cag.org.in**

**About CAG**

Citizen consumer & civic Action Group (CAG) is a thirty nine year old non-profit, non-political and professional organisation that works towards protecting citizens' rights in consumer and environmental issues and promoting good governance processes including transparency, accountability and participatory decision-making.It has worked primarily to protect the interests of consumers and citizens of Chennai though its efforts have had state level and even national level impacts.