

Greenpeace sounds 'Blue Alert' in Orissa

-Sudarshan's sand art depicts danger from global warming to iconic heritage sites

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Puri, India — Greenpeace today joined internationally acclaimed sand artist, Sudarshan Patnaik here to highlight the threat to India's cultural heritage sites along the coastline from global warming induced sea level rise. Sudarshan created the miniatures of iconic heritage monuments: the Jagannath temple and Konark Sun Temple in Orissa, the Shore temple at Mammalapuram in Tamilnadu, and the Gateway of India at Mumbai, in the tidal zone of Puri's Golden Beach. During high tide, the waves washed over the sculpture, symbolizing the vulnerability that these monuments faced from sea level rise.

Puri India © Greenpeace Internationally acclaimed sand sculptor, Sudarshan Patnaik created a sand sculpture of heritage monuments: the Jagannath temple and Konark Sun Temple in Orissa, the Shore temple at Mammalapuram in Tamilnadu, and the Gateway of India at Mumbai in the tidal zone of Puri's Golden Beach.

The 7 ft. high sand sculpture used 7 tones of sand and took 2 days to prepare. "The issue of global warming is close to my heart. I imagine the kind of ruin temperature rise would bring to the lives of millions of people. Flood, draught, water shortage, sea surge all combined would devastate everything we have," Sudarshan said. "The impact of climate change is already evident and must not be allowed to go out of control. It scares me to think that Orissa is estimated to be faced with 4 million climate migrants" in Greenpeace report," he said.

In a report released yesterday, Greenpeace alerted the Indian government and people of the subcontinent to the massive humanitarian crisis the South Asian region could face if global warming was not kept under check. "Blue Alert – Climate Migrants in South Asia: Estimates and Solutions, a paper authored by Dr Sudhir Chella Rajan, professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at IIT Madras, and a climate expert, estimates the number of people who could be displaced from their homes at 125 million in India and Bangladesh alone.

Greenpeace climate and energy campaigner, Vinuta Gopal said, "There is an enormous amount at stake if we fail to invest in fighting climate change today. From whichever angle you look at it, the cost of the climate threat is colossal. Whether it's economic investment, cultural heritage or simply the humanitarian crisis, we have everything to lose and nothing to gain if we don't start mitigating now."