


# Vandana Shiva

<b>Vandana Shiva</b>	
	
Vandana Shiva in 2007.	
<b>Born</b>	Vandana Shiva 5 November 1952 Dehra Dun, Uttarakhand, India
<b>Nationality</b>	Indian
<b>Occupation</b>	Philosopher, Environmentalist, Author, Physicist
<b>Awards</b>	Sydney Peace Prize in 2010.
<b>Website</b>	
VandanaShiva.org <sup>[1]</sup>	

**Vandana Shiva** (Hindi: वन्दना शिवि; b. November 5, 1952, Dehra Dun, Uttarakhand, India), is a philosopher, environmental activist, author and eco feminist.<sup>[2]</sup> Shiva, currently based in Delhi, has authored more than 20 books.<sup>[3]</sup> She was trained as a physicist and received her Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Western Ontario, Canada, in 1978 with the doctoral dissertation "Hidden variables and locality in quantum theory."<sup>[4][5]</sup>

She is one of the leaders and board members of the International Forum on Globalization, (along with Jerry Mander, Edward Goldsmith, Ralph Nader, Jeremy Rifkin, et al.), and a figure of the global solidarity movement known as the alter-globalization movement. She has argued for the wisdom of many traditional practices, as is evident from her interview in the book *Vedic Ecology* (by Ranchor Prime) that draws upon India's Vedic heritage. She is a member of the scientific committee of the Fundacion IDEAS <sup>[6]</sup>, Spain's Socialist Party's think tank. She is also a member of the International Organization for a Participatory Society.<sup>[7]</sup>

She was awarded the Right Livelihood Award in 1993.

## Early life and education

Vandana Shiva was born in the valley of Dehradun, to a father who was the conservator of forests and a farmer mother with a love for nature. She was educated at St Mary's School in Nainital, and at the Convent of Jesus and Mary, Dehradun.<sup>[8]</sup> After receiving her bachelors degree in physics, she pursued a M.A. in the philosophy of science at the University of Guelph (Ontario, Canada) in 1977, with a thesis entitled "Changes in the concept of periodicity of light".<sup>[9]</sup> In 1978, she completed and received her Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Western Ontario. Her thesis, titled "Hidden variables and locality in quantum theory,"<sup>[5]</sup> was about the philosophical underpinnings of quantum mechanics. She later went on to interdisciplinary research in science, technology, and environmental policy at the Indian Institute of Science and the Indian Institute of Management in Bangalore.



Vandana Shiva 2007 in Cologne, Germany

## Career

Dr. Vandana Shiva has fought for changes in the practice and paradigms of agriculture and food. Intellectual property rights, biodiversity, biotechnology, bioethics, genetic engineering are among the fields where Shiva has contributed intellectually and through activist campaigns. She has assisted grassroots organizations of the Green movement in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Ireland, Switzerland, and Austria with campaigns against genetic engineering.

In 1982, she founded the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology, which led to the creation of Navdanya in 1991, a national movement to protect the diversity and integrity of living resources, especially native seed, the promotion of organic farming and fair trade. For last two decades Navdanya has worked with local communities and organizations serving many men and women farmers. Navdanya's efforts have resulted in conservation of more than 2000 rice varieties from all over the country and have established 34 seed banks in 13 states across the country. More than 70,000 farmers are primary members of Navdanya. In 2004 Dr Shiva started Bija Vidyapeeth, an international college for sustainable living in Doon Valley, in collaboration with Schumacher College, U.K.

In the area of IPRs (Intellectual Property Rights) and Biodiversity, Dr. Shiva and her team at the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology successfully challenged the biopiracy of Neem, Basmati and Wheat. Besides her activism, she has also served on expert groups of government on Biodiversity and IPR legislation.<sup>[10]</sup>

Her first book, *Staying Alive* (1988) helped redefine perceptions of third world women. In 1990, she wrote a report for the FAO on Women and Agriculture entitled, "Most Farmers in India are Women". She founded the gender unit at the International Centre for Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Kathmandu and was a founding Board Member of the Women's Environment & Development Organization (WEDO)

Shiva has also served as an adviser to governments in India and abroad as well as non governmental organisations, including the International Forum on Globalization, the Women's Environment & Development Organization and the Third World Network. Dr. Shiva chairs the Commission on the Future of Food set up by the Region of Tuscany in Italy and is a member of the Scientific Committee which advised former prime minister Zapatero of Spain. Shiva is a member of the Steering Committee of the Indian People's Campaign against WTO. She is a councillor of the World Future Council. Dr Shiva serves on Government of India Committees on Organic Farming. Vandana Shiva participated in the Stock Exchange of Visions project in 2007.

Time Magazine identified Dr. Shiva as an environmental “hero” in 2003, and Asia Week has called her one of the five most powerful communicators of Asia.

Vandana Shiva is working on a 3 year project with the Government of Bhutan, at the invitation of the Prime Minister Jigme Thinley, advising the government on how to achieve their objective of becoming an organic sovereign country (the first fully 100% organic country).<sup>[11]</sup>

## Film

Vandana Shiva has been interviewed for a number of documentary films including the *One Water*, *Deconstructing Supper: Is Your Food Safe?*, *The Corporation*, *Dirt! The Movie*, and *This is What Democracy Looks Like* (a documentary about the Seattle WTO protests of 1999).<sup>[12]</sup>

Shiva's focus on water has seen her appear in a number of related films: "Ganga from the ground up" a documentary on water issues in the river Ganges,<sup>[13]</sup> *Blue Gold: World Water Wars* by Sam Bozzo, Irena Salina's documentary *Flow: For Love of Water* (in competition at the 2008 Sundance Film Festival) and the PBS NOW documentary *On Thin Ice*.<sup>[14]</sup>

On the topic of genetically modified crops, she was featured in the documentary "Fed up!: Genetic Engineering, Industrial Agriculture and Sustainable Alternatives" and the documentary *The World According to Monsanto*, a film made by a French independent journalist Marie-Monique Robin.

Vandana Shiva appeared in a documentary film about the Dalai Lama, entitled *Dalai Lama Renaissance*.<sup>[15]</sup>

In 2010, Vandana was interviewed in the feature documentary about honeybees and colony collapse disorder entitled, "Queen of the Sun".<sup>[16]</sup>

## Recognition

In 1993, Vandana received the Right Livelihood Award (also known as the 'Alternative Nobel Prize') "...For placing women and ecology at the heart of modern development discourse."<sup>[17]</sup> Other awards she has received include the Global 500 Award of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1993,<sup>[18]</sup> and the Earth Day International Award of the United Nations (UN) for her dedicated commitment to the preservation of the planet as demonstrated by her actions, leadership and by setting an example for the rest of the world.

Additional awards include:

- 1993: Order of the Golden Ark, by his Royal Highness Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands for outstanding services to conservation and ecology;
- 1993: "Global 500 Roll of Honour", by UNEP for outstanding environmental work.
- 1993: "Earth Day International Award" by Earth Day International for her dedicated commitment to the preservation of the planet as demonstrated by her actions, leadership and the setting of examples for the rest of the world.
- 1993: "Right Livelihood Award" (Alternative Nobel Prize) for pioneering insights into the social and environmental costs of the dominant development process, and her ability to work with and for local people and communities in the articulation and implementation of alternatives.
- 1993: "VIDA SANA International Award," Spain for her contribution to Ecology and Food Security.
- 1995: "Pride of the Doon" Award from Doon Citizen Council, Dehra Dun, India, in recognition of distinguished contributions to the region
- 1997: The Golden Plant Award (International Award of Ecology), Denmark, for the remarkable contribution for Ecology and Environment;



Vandana Shiva in Johannesburg, 2002

- 1997: Alfonso Comin Award, Barcelona, Spain, for important contribution both scientifically and personally to the ecologist and feminist movement in India.
- 1998: Commemorative Medal by Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of Thailand on the occasion of the Celebration of the 18th World Food Day, organised by FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok;
- 1998: Medal of the Presidency of the Italian Republic from the International Scientific Committee of the Pio Manzu Centre at Rimini, Italy during the XXIV Pio Manzu International Conference on "The Horizons of Hermes"
- 2000: Pellegrino Artusi Award, Italy for original contribution to reflections on relations between humans and food
- 2001: HORIZON 3000 Award of Austria in recognition to rendering useful service for defending Human Rights and Preservation of Peace and for the vision of a world wide fair development in the third millennium
- 2009: received the Save The World Award
- 2010: received the Sydney Peace Prize<sup>[19]</sup>
- 2011: "Calgary Peace Prize" from the Consortium for Peace Studies at the University of Calgary<sup>[20]</sup>
- 2011: Doshi Family Bridgebuilder Award, for cultivating mutual understanding between cultures<sup>[21][22]</sup>
- 2011: Thomas Merton Award
- 2012: portrait and quotes on EarthE Award<sup>[23]</sup>

Also awarded the "John M. Berry Sr. Leadership Award" for dedicated vision and commitment to family farm agriculture; the Special International Literary Prize "Ken Saro Wiwa" awarded by Acquiambiente, Italy for her book *Water Wars*; the "Reading for the Environment Book Prize" by the German Foundation for the Environment for her book *Tomorrow's Biodiversity*

Awarded the Lennon ONO grant for peace by Yoko Ono and Honourable Mayor of Reykjavik. Awarded the Yo Dona Award by Yo Dona Magazine, Spain

## Ecofeminism

Vandana Shiva plays a major role in the global Ecofeminist movement. According to her article *Empowering Women*, Shiva suggests that a more sustainable and productive approach to agriculture can be achieved through reinstating a system of farming in India that is more centered on engaging women. She advocates against the prevalent "patriarchal logic of exclusion," claiming that a woman-focused system would change the current system in an extremely positive manner.<sup>[24]</sup>

Some of the viewpoints held by Vandana Shiva have been criticised as being essentialist by C. Jackson.<sup>[25]</sup>

## Publications

- 1981, *Social Economic and Ecological Impact of Social Forestry in Kolar*, Vandana Shiva, H.C. Sharatchandra, J. Banyopadhyay, Indian Institute of Management Bangalore
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- 1991, *Ecology and the Politics of Survival: Conflicts Over Natural Resources in India*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California, ISBN 0-8039-9672-1
- 1992, *The Violence of the Green Revolution: Ecological degradation and political conflict in Punjab*, Zed Press, New Delhi
- 1992, *Biodiversity: Social and Ecological Perspectives* (editor); Zed Press, United Kingdom
- 1993, *Women, Ecology and Health: Rebuilding Connections*<sup>[26]</sup> (editor), Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation and Kali for Women, New Delhi
- 1993, *Monocultures of the Mind: Biodiversity, Biotechnology and Agriculture*, Zed Press, New Delhi
- 1993, *Ecofeminism*, Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, Fernwood Publications, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, ISBN 1-895686-28-8

- 1994, *Close to Home: Women Reconnect Ecology, Health and Development Worldwide*, Earthscan, London, ISBN 0-86571-264-6
- 1995, *Biopolitics* (with Ingunn Moser), Zed Books, United Kingdom
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- 2008, *Soil Not Oil*, South End Press ISBN 978-0-89608-782-8
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## External links

- Official website (<http://www.vandanashiva.org/>)
- Vandana Shiva (<http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0794476/>) at the Internet Movie Database

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