

Enter a Hindu temple and you'll be greeted by the smell of incense, beautiful colours, puja, and prasad. We want our offerings to be Sattvic (in purity and goodness) and made with love and devotion. How can we make our puja as Sattvic, and thus as green as possible? Are we doing everything we can easily do? Many Hindu households also have shrines and altars - why not aim to do the same at home? As this pamphlet will show, making our Puja and Mandir green is easy and all about Dharma, the right thing to do.



## STEP 01 Greener Puja

In making our offering to the Lord we want the best, to be as devotional as possible. Organic and locally grown fruit and flowers are readily available in most shops. Such produce has less impact upon Bhumi – Mother Earth – with lower carbon emissions and less pesticides polluting the local environment - a more devotional option. By offering filtered tap water rather than bottled brands, we can save money and unnecessary plastic. The more thought and effort we put into our offerings, the more of ourselves we are giving.

## STEP 02 Home Grown Garden

Gandhi often quoted the Isa Upanishad, which describes the natural world as belonging to the supreme Lord - making this world God's garden. By being mindful of this, we can make our home and temple gardens greener. Just by growing our own produce we can reduce carbon emissions - and it's easier than it seems, as fruit and vegetables can be successfully grown in window boxes, allowing us to use the garden God has given us in our spiritual lives. Even if you don't have a garden you can still benefit the planet by buying organic produce which supports farmers committed to preserving the countryside and its plant and animal life.

## STEP 03 Greener Festivals

Hindu festivals are huge, joyous occasions, with devotees coming together to worship. Festivals are also a great opportunity to offer our new home-grown produce at the temple. The amount of plastic plates, cups and spoons used at Hindu family and temple festivals can be embarrassing, but we can all help to reduce this by bringing our own plates to temple gatherings. Better still, we could promote the use of biodegradable plates, cups, and spoons to our families and local temple community. We have a responsibility to provide an example of good practice in our religious observance.

## STEP 04 Pilgrimage

Journeys to the Mandir can also be a part of a greener, Dharma-centered life. Public transport saves a huge amount of energy. Chances are there are plenty of travel links in our towns to local temples and gatherings. Or, if it's more convenient to drive, why not try car-sharing? By bringing along as many people as we can and making sure we never drive alone, it's easily done. If our Mandirs are local, we can walk. It's a great way of lowering our carbon footprint, and increasing our Bhumi footprint.

## STEP 05 Sacred Waste

We happily receive wedding invitations, Diwali cards and other spiritual publications every year. With their sacred imagery, rarely do we want to throw them in the bin. Yet, there are traditional recommendations of how to dispose of sacred waste - usually burying and burning, but also immersion in running water, provided we have permission from local authorities. We can also recycle the paper and card left behind. Ask your local temple if they have suggestions.

## About Bhumi

The Bhumi Project is an international Hindu response to the environmental challenges facing our planet. The initiative is facilitated by the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS), in partnership with the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), with backing from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Using Hindu perspectives, teachings, and ancient culture, we are working with temples and organisations to help encourage the Hindu community to take a more active role in the care and protection of the planet.

## Join us

The Bhumi Project is primarily run by concerned citizens who freely give their time and energy. There are numerous individuals and teams who are working with us to help Hindu communities take better care of the environment. They work in various capacities, from research, teaching, advocacy, and fund development.

If your family, temple, community or organisation would like to join us, then please contact us.

## Become a Friend of Bhumi

By becoming a Friend of Bhumi, you ensure that the work we do continues to grow, reaches new people, and encourages Hindu communities to play a positive role in the future of our environment.

Benefits of becoming a Friend of Bhumi include being mentioned on our website, receiving regular news and updates via our e-newsletter, and invitations to Bhumi events.

To become a Friend of Bhumi, please visit:  
[www.bhumiproject.org/donate](http://www.bhumiproject.org/donate)



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OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD



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The Bhumi Project is one of the long term  
faith commitments of the ARC / UNDP partnership.

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# The Green Temple

*Simple steps to green  
your worksip at home  
and in the temple.*



THE  
**BHUMI**  
PROJECT