

We got a taste during Sandy, but what if our whole nation was in danger of being swallowed by the sea?

The Ramapo College Masters in Sustainability Studies

Proudly invites you to the first in the 2014 series

“Lessons of Sustainability: the Expert Practitioners Series”

RISING WATERS: RAISING CONSCIOUSNESS:

A Maldives Activist on the urgency of mobilizing global climate action

Thilmeeza Hussain, Voice of Women and Climate Wise Women

6 pm Thursday, January 30, Friends Hall

It is not surprising that some of the strongest climate voices come from points of greatest vulnerability. And Thil Hussain is one of the most eloquent of these voices. In her lecture, Ms. Hussain will weave together the issues of democracy, women’s rights and climate action. She will describe the impacts to her low lying, sea level nation and the dire threat to the Maldives from global climate inaction. You will hear how the Maldivian women and youth united to overthrow a 30 year old dictatorship when Mohamed Nasheed, a political prisoner, won the country’s first democratic election. President Nasheed then took the Maldives plight to the world stage before being toppled by the old guard. This failure of democracy makes it all the more urgent that voices such as Hussain’s are heard clearly because otherwise those most at risk from this environmental injustice will be silenced just when the world needs to hear them most urgently.

Propelled in 2008 by the young Nasheed government from a business career into public service, Hussain served as Minister of State for Home Affairs---North Province, governing 4 Atolls and 46 Islands at the highest risk from sea water inundation. There she led the decentralization program where she promoted sustainable development, enabled local action on environment, health and disaster management while empowering the role of women on local councils. She implemented resettlement of people displaced by the 2004 tsunami to Dhuvafaru, an uninhabited “safe” island.

Next posted to New York, from 2009-2012, Hussain served as Deputy of the Maldives UN Mission. Her portfolio included all climate change, environmental and sustainable development issues. During this time she co-chaired the AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) working group on “Sustainable Development” and was involved on behalf of both AOSIS and the Maldives in the RIO+20 process.

As founder of the Maldives organization Voice of Women and active member of Climate Wise Women, Hussain was selected as one of the 100 remarkable women activists showcased by the recent International Women’s Earth and Climate Summit as a “voice of a new generation of women in the developing world who see climate change as the fundamental challenge for their future as well as a key platform for leadership.” <http://wecaninternational.org/summit-delegates/179/hussain->

Those parking on campus will require a parking permit from the guard booth at the north entrance. For additional information or an advance permit, contact Professor Michael R. Edelstein at medelste@ramapo.edu.