



Eco-Schools Connect: Lets Change the World Together

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May 2011

In this Eco-Schools Newsletter...

We show many of the great achievements of our Eco-Schools Network with contributions from member organisations including our first 'pre-school – toddler' article.

The preparation for the Poland NOM continues with attendance by 47 countries confirmed.

A recent visit to Australasia by coordination show is the 'we are not alone'. Do other large scale Eco-School networks create competition or opportunity?

Kindest Regards,

Anna Norman, Sarah Pickering and Bernard Holland
International Eco-Schools Coordination



ECO-SCHOOLS CONNECT

This 'find an Eco-School' tool has been developed within the Wrigley Litter less campaign but will be made available across our network once its trial has been completed.

Readers can click on the image and follow the link see what [Eco-School Connect](#) can do. It has been designed to profile schools within each country. Their information only becomes visible once the National Operator approves the upload.

Schools within the Wrigley Litter less campaign are trialling the connection tool before it becomes available to other corporate programmes, other Eco-Schools and even to other FEE Programmes such as YRE.

ASEAN ECO-SCHOOLS NETWORK

While attending the [6th WEEC](#) in Brisbane, International Coordinator, Bernard Holland met with representatives of the ASEAN Eco-Schools Network from Thailand and Indonesia. The ASEAN Eco-Schools Network is not affiliated with FEE but includes countries such as Burma, and Vietnam in a growing association of government driven EE Programmes.

Their vision and mission, while independently developed within each country are similar to FEE Eco-Schools. They wish to promote Environmental Education but their direction and engagement with schools is government driven, often through their Departments for the Environment.

While their schools are involved in some wonderful projects it was good to have a conversation about how FEE Eco-Schools, over time could work within their countries if their programs were to make the transition to an NGO.

The key messages Coordination has been giving to any country where well established EE and ESD Programmes are running are:

1. Eco-Schools respects and utilises locally developed resources which target pedagogical involvement.
2. Eco-Schools is an opportunity for schools to enhance their effectiveness by adopting their 7 step change framework
3. Eco-Schools is a student led change initiative. It builds leadership capacity through opportunities to implement skills and knowledge that students have gained through their eco-committee work and its actions.
4. Eco-Schools provides for an internationally recognised symbol of achievement in the Green Flag.
5. Eco-Schools has now developed an on-line tool, 'Eco-Schools Connect' that assist schools to collaborate internationally...no other organisation has this type of tool.



NATIONAL OPERATOR MEETING: KRAKOW

The final agenda is currently being finalised with inclusion of a number of guest speakers for this annual meeting.

Malgorzata and her team are busily preparing the accommodation, meals and transport arrangements. National Operators who leave later on the Sunday will also have the opportunity to go on a self-paid excursion to Auschwitz .

Please ensure registrations have been made, **visas applied for** and that attendees have communicated their travel arrangements to the NOM organisers.

In the coming weeks pre-reading material and an Eco-School 7 step survey will be distributed for completion before the NOM.

ECO-SCHOOLS GREECE AWARD CEREMONY

Fifty-one Greek schools were awarded with the Green Flag in the auditorium of the Benaki Museum before the summer vacation. Thirty-eight of the schools were awarded the Green Flag for the first time and 13 schools were re-awarded.

In the ceremony, students, representatives of the Eco-schools committees, presented their work with 'a happening' or a poster.

The Athens Vice-mayor, Mrs Papahela, the President of the Environmental Committee of the Greek Parliament, Mr. Kartalis as well as representatives from the Ministry of Education attended this ceremony, organized by HSPN.

The students participated with great excitement and wrote on long rolls of paper:- two huge letters with their wishes, but also with their "demands". One for the Prime Minister of Greece and one for the Mayor of Athens.



More than 400 students and teachers, but also parents, were there to congratulate all the awarded schools, but also to get inspired from their activities!

The ceremony ended in a very touching atmosphere, with all students singing the song that the students of the 11th High School of Piraeus wrote about the protection of the environment.



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, RUSSIA

The goal of Gazprom's environmental education program is to instill a love of nature and ensure that students are aware of how fragile and special our environment really is.

By stimulating interest in the sciences and environment, they hope to cultivate future generations of environmentally caring and responsible citizens.

The Educational Center offers a variety of ecological education activities and programmes, including:

- participating in the work of the Ecology Club;
- participating in district and local tourist competitions;
- celebrating significant dates of the Ecological Calendar, such as Earth day, Baikal Day, Forest Day, Birds Day, World Environment Day and the Day of Nature Reserves
- collecting waste paper and batteries for recycling;
- cooperation with Nature Reserves and Protected Areas;
- summer eco tours to Ugra National Park;
- walking tours during spring, summer and autumn vacations;
- international ecological cooperation with Juvanpuisto School in Finland;
- lectures concerning environmental issues given by outstanding scientists;
- bird-watching in Bitsevsky Park in Moscow; projects on ecology;
- eco-friendly crafts made from recyclable materials; and drawing contests.

They are proud of their work and the goals that have already been achieved. They are full of ideas and eager to move forward to future success.



RESOURCE IDEAS

Our friends in Japan have highlighted this web site 'Miracle Miracle' as a useful link for students and teachers. <http://miracle-kids.net/en/>

"Chuck the Eco Duck" is a new series of animated stories centered around themes of the environment, awareness of the world we live in and caring for family and friends.

Alongside each animated story, a suggested teaching plan and bespoke resources have been created, including worksheets, interactive files and colouring books. To sing along with Chuck go to: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YsWS6djFIZU More information at www.chuck-the-eco-duck.com



MALTESE STUDENTS CREATING CHANGE AND EXERCISING LEADERSHIP



Over 75 students coming from the EkoSkola Committees of 12 schools from the Gozo College met the Minister for Gozo, Hon. Giovanna Debono to report on initiatives they are taking within their school and surrounding community to promote sustainable lifestyles.

During their presentations, the students also made a number of valid suggestions about they could enhance the quality of life in their school, in their locality and in Gozo in general.

While pointing out her satisfaction for the schools' active participation in EkoSkola, Minister Debono said that the students' presentations were proof of how good environmental practices and other initiatives helped to increase one's awareness about the concept of sustainable development. "These aims are exactly in line with the work done by the Ministry for Gozo with regards to the eco-Gozo vision".

The Minister also announced a scheme through which all schools in Gozo will receive funding so that they could implement the many proposals presented during this same meeting. Highlights from the meeting can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5PxR0JiAjFY>

AN TAISCE PROVIDING ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

To assist teachers to discern the information on Climate Change and the GFC, An Taisce's Green-Schools Office has set up a course to supply them with background information and practical activities for the classroom.

Using the 5 themes of the Green-Schools Programme, teachers are given a more in depth knowledge of Waste disposal, Energy supply, Water treatment, Transport issues and Biodiversity during the five day course. Guest speakers from local authorities and other relevant organisations provide theoretical background information, while local site visits bring this information to life in a practical way.

At local recycle centres Environmental Awareness Officers explained on site what to do and not to do with your waste. This year the group in Kilkenny visited 'The Watershed', a swimming pool that most schools in the area know from their swimming lessons. It turns out they use woodchips and solar panels to heat the water in the pool.

Waste water treatment plants around the country have also been paid a visit, opening people's eyes to what actually needs to be done to clean the water we use every day. Walking around the course venues highlights the hazards and possibilities that exist in terms of sustainable transport and simply going outside the classroom looking at a square meter of lawn proves how much biodiversity is out there. During group discussions classroom activities are being explored.



Following the 7 steps of the Green-Schools Programme a practical use of each subject in the curriculum could be found. Calculating reductions brought mathematics to life and experimenting with water and energy can create an interest in Science, while Interviewing older generations proved that history can teach you a lot. Geography is the most obvious subject regarding our environment, but reusing objects for arts is fun and creating slogans or raps about our natural surroundings can help teaching languages and music.



An Taisce staff running the courses around Ireland found that the response of participating teachers is overwhelmingly positive. Some of the feedback from participating teachers, such as;

"This course has made a huge impact on my attitude to environmental issues which in turn will have the biggest impact on the children in my classroom."

"Inspiring, great facilitators, positive group dynamic, thank you."

"A thoroughly enjoyable and beneficial course!"

"Exceeded Expectations!"

THE SEVENTH EKO SKOLA PARLIAMENTARY SESSION: MALTA



The EkoSkola Parliament session is a yearly event aimed at providing students participating in the Eko Skola programme an opportunity to meet Members of Parliament and discuss with them their environmental concerns.

This year's session, held on the 8th of June, was rendered more special as this year marks the Parliament's 90th anniversary of its foundation. Ninety students from 45 different schools accompanied by 19 Members of Parliament attended this seventh edition of the EkoSkola Parliament.

During the session students shared their experience of Climate Change projects that they conducted in their community as part of the HSBC Eco-Schools Climate Initiative.



In his concluding speech, the Hon Mr Speaker, Dr Michael Frendo, commended the students for their level of preparation and the practical solutions they proposed.

Following EkoSkola's commitment to action, he also promised that he will be approaching the Clerk of the House of Representatives to reduce energy consumption by switching off the Parliamentary Chamber when not in use and to change the Chamber's lighting to energy saving lighting.



He then proposed the Motion for the approval of the House of Representatives. The Motion was unanimously adopted by all those present. Once again the event proved to be a great experience for all those who attended.

This year's session was also reported in the media. You might want to watch the TVM news item on http://wwfw.youtube.com/watch?v=S8ACD_Mvbaq&feature=related or Projectnews coverage of the event on: <http://www.facebook.com/video/video.php?v=10150249611775559>

HSBC CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION AND LEARNING, SOUTH AFRICA:



Great ideas for Sharing

Vegetable Garden

Despite incredibly poor soil quality, Kitty Primary grows a large proportion of its own vegetables to reduce their carbon footprint. This has meant some creative thinking to ensure that plants survive, like using broken desks to support shade cloth that reduces water loss.

Waste Management

Finding alternative uses for waste has always been an important part in reducing global warming. Here learners play a "plastic game" that educates learners on the importance of recycling plastic.

Community Education

Indigenous trees in the area are regularly chopped down to supply firewood for the rural communities, unfortunately whole trees are killed in the process. Kitty has attempted to educate community members on sustainable use of tree e.g. only remove dead branches, in an attempt to save trees





MAPLE HOUSE TODDLERS CAMPUS SOMERSET, WEST SOUTH AFRICA



Freya Brett has sent in this report of great interest

Although this little school has only been in the programme for 1 ½ years (2010 – 2011) they have grasped the essence of the programme and every learning activity and programme is based on sound eco-principle. They believe that no day should pass without one green act being implemented no matter how big or small!

They already have a very successful recycling programme and their recycling drive has brought in four tons of material (+/- one ton per term).

On Compost Days the little ones know to bring —green and —brown things. A remarkable aspect of this school is how young the learners are, but already they know such a lot about —green issues.

The school has started a —Learning-rich Gardens comprising of various smaller gardens with informative toddler friendly name boards and beaded artwork creating a —Wow Learning Garden. The school has a —No Television Policy, as they feel children should play in Nature, feel connected and follow a healthy lifestyle – very commendable!