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December 2011

In this Eco-Schools Newsletter...

The Eco-Schools World Days of Action is being planned for 7th November while Capacity Building in potential FEE member countries continues with the support of National Operators and Coordination.

Lastly, articles and photos from across the world populate this newsletter and assist you appreciate the great work of National Operators and their school networks.

We hope to change this newsletter format soon so it is also easier to find what you want to read.



LIKE **FEE Eco-Schools** and for National Operators only, join the **Eco-Schools Coordinator** page

Take Care and Kindest Regards,

Bernard Holland and Anna Normann
International Eco-Schools Team



Eco-Schools Newsletter



ECO-SCHOOLS WORLD DAY OF ACTION

Eco-Schools World Days of Action is focused on November 7th with action recorded from anytime in that week (Days of action refers to the many participating schools...the many days of Action)

Thanks to the Staples Foundation, we had the funds to develop this coordinated action day.

Development of a Web site is well underway and we anticipate school registration this northern spring (May-June) ready for recording activities and promotion of the day in the northern autumn

New thematic images have been created for use within this event. National Operators who want to adopt these theme icons will have them made available within the month after some further adaption based on country feedback. Below is the draft still being slightly modified.

More information about the World Days of Action will be communicated in the coming month



Water



Energy



Waste



Litter



Biodiversity



Transport



Healthy Eating



School Grounds



Climate Change



Sustaining our world



CAPACITY BUILDING IN AFRICA

Danida funding from Denmark and management by the Danish Outdoor Council has supported capacity building programmes in both Malawi by Eigil Larsen and Tanzania by Bernard Holland

The Eco-Schools seven steps has supported the change process as evidenced through this picture of one schools eco-committee

Challenging teachers to cater for different learning styles through tools such as Gardner's Multiple Intelligences has also sparked innovation in delivery of the school curriculum.

Funded micro-projects have supported schools to develop meaningful projects that create economic change and learning opportunities.

Andrew Suter (KBT) is also helping with capacity building with recent trip to support initiatives in Brunei. We hope to see all these countries join FEE in the coming years.



Nature Smart
(Naturalist)



People Smart
(Interpersonal)



Number Smart
(Logical/Mathematical)



Picture Smart
(Spatial/Visual)



Self Smart
(Intrapersonal)



Body Smart
(Bodily-Kinesthetic)



Music Smart
(Musical)



Word Smart
(Linguistic)

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ECO-SCHOOLS BAHAMAS' AUDIENCE WITH PRINCE HARRY



On March 5th, 2012, students from 6 schools participating in the Eco-Schools Bahamas programme met Prince Harry at a Youth Leaders Luncheon, held on the occasion of the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II.

The students felt honoured to have the opportunity to meet and greet Prince Harry and also talk about the Eco-Schools Bahamas Programme.

Lilly Higgs and Samantha Cash, Eco-School Committee members of Hope Town Primary School in Abaco, attended the special luncheon. The girls were anxious however they quickly realized how interested the Prince was to hear about their projects that their school had recently been awarded the Green Flag!

Alysia Boyce from Forest Heights Academy, also in Abaco, described her conversation with the Prince "Prince Harry asked us about all the initiatives that we do and he seemed really interested. He said that he also does his part to help the environment which I thought was really cool!" Moesha Leary from Deep Creek Middle School in Eleuthera, the first Eco-School of the English-speaking countries in the western hemisphere commented "It was fun and he was very comfortable to talk to."

The National Operator, BREEF is very proud of the hard work and dedication of the schools that have taken the challenge to act for their environment. (Photo Courtesy of Kristaan Ingraham)



WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL CONGRESS: MARRAKECH JUNE 9-14, 2013

This proposal is to host for the first time a world congress in a country of Arab and Muslim culture with the theme: [The rural-urban relationship](#)

Morocco, among other things, is in a state of flux. A new constitution bringing political change has been in force since the end of 2011. A country with a long history and great artistic and natural assets, Morocco has in Marrakech a pearl of international fame.

Another interesting aspect is the theme chosen by the Local Organising Committee: the rural-urban relationship is a particularly sensitive issue in Morocco where, like many other countries, an exodus from the countryside and a strong process of urban migration is being witnessed.

In addition, climate change is bound to make the water shortage problem worse in Morocco as in many other countries. National Operators should priorities this event as a conference not to miss.



RECYCLE RUNWAY for UAE ECO-SCHOOLS

In order to educate and raise awareness among students about the various uses of recyclable materials, the Home Science department of the English High School in Sharjah, came up with a fashion show titled 'Recycle Runway'.

The students worked hard to showcase their creativity using various materials like unwound wires from tapes, denim, magazines, old school uniforms, soft drink cans, etc. to design stylish hand bags.

Some of the names given to these limited edition bags were Pygmalion, Rodeo, Silhouette, Hot Wheels, etc. were

ENCOURAGING EFFICIENT ENERGY USE: SLOVENIAN ECO-SCHOOLS

Slovenian Eco-Schools were very successful in reducing the consumption of energy in 2010 and proved that even up to 15 % of spending could be saved with awareness raising activities as being the first step in achieving efficient energy use.

To continue and achieve effective long-term results, Eco-Schools Slovenia is upgrading projects and activities on national level with a particular focus on the launch of the international project *We are energy!* This is in addition to the U4Energy, project *Who is saving, is winning* and *Youngsters in the World of Energy*.



All projects have been designed not only to actively involve children, students and their mentors but also experts, partners from business sector, local communities, parents and others.

To support these launches an interactive workshop for Slovenian eco-coordinators was conducted in February to present and encourage schools to participate and learn how to get involved.

Eco-Schools Slovenia is very active on other fields as well. In the field of waste project *Eco-package* (collection of packaging waste in Eco-Schools, with focus on used beverage cartons) will finish this month and in the field of water the project *Eco-regatta* is being upgraded due to very successful project from last year, working hand in hand with organization WWF - Austria.



PORTUGUESE ECO-SCHOOLS NATIONAL SEMINAR

Celebrating the Eco-schools 15th anniversary, the district of Beja received the 290 participants in the national meeting that took place between the 3rd and 5th February.

Teachers and political members had the opportunity to learn with experts through themes and methodologies such as the sea, energy, biological agriculture,

biodiversity and forests.

Almost one hundred and fifty schools' representatives had also the opportunity to participate in thirteen different workshops that allowed for practical experiences and ideas to be shared. The fifty municipalities present had also the opportunity to see how others get involved in their schools environmental activities.

Because learning doesn't result from work sessions alone, the organization promoted also relaxing moments, such as the dinner at a nice restaurant, a pedestrian visit to the historical streets of the city and an eco-sale with environmentally sustainable regional products.



As part of new initiatives Eco-Schools has introduced the 7 Commandments for Beaches in collaboration with Blue Flag

It is acknowledged that ABAE Eco-schools can't pass by beaches without recognizing that their behavior and actions at school affect water quality, beach cleanliness and bio-diversity.

So a competition was created to increase the involvement of the students with all the aspects related to the sea and the beaches.

In the 7 wonder competition, the beaches are divided in 7 categories and the students defining 7 commandments that can be applied each a category. In the end, seven works will be awarded, one per category: river beach, lake and pond beach, urban beach, cliff beach, dune beach, wild beach, sports use beach.

Like all the projects presented to the Eco-schools, the main objective is to stimulate students and teachers to work together. If they can discuss together, they can involve the community in their concerns, helping to change attitudes and behaviors and, of course, present to the judges original and quality works.



CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOPS AROUND LATVIA

Since November 1st, 2010 the Climate Campaign Team have visited Eco-schools around Latvia twice a week. These visits have helped students better understand climate issues and it impact and find out how individuals can help to reduce their own impact on the planet.

The picture shows children making animations about Climate Change. It is one of the ways the workshops make it attractive to introduce students and teachers to climate issues. Other workshop activities included using games, video materials and working with energy effective gadgets.

Pupils played "Prediction game" what helps to understand what future scenarios could be like if man made CO2 emissions are not reduced and a globe continues to warm up and ways to address climate change in their schools and homes

The Climate campaign includes four bigger events which are organized with other organizations. These events were organised for weekends so visitors from all over the region could attend.

Within these special campaign days, participants have been introduced to the hydrogen car, wind generator prototypes, information about climate change and smart ways on how to reduce energy consumption in their everyday life etc. Even the smallest child has had a possibility to make cartoons by their own using recycling materials.

In the end of the campaigns "video story" will be set up on Youtube channel for sharing across our network.



Photo Courtesy of WWF Malaysia / Rahana Husin

WWF MALAYSIA TRAIN UP THEIR DEVELOPING ECO-SCHOOLS NETWORK

One of our newest FEE Member Organizations is implementing their strategic growth strategy through workshops and training programmes so that the principles of the eco-schools programme are well understood and implemented in schools.

Their workshops have focused on the seven steps, promoting discussion and leadership opportunities for students and 'how to' areas such as auditing and action plans. A new animation of the seven steps is also available on you tube and is an inspiration to all new schools wanting to join their network. See <http://youtu.be/NYnTmgnUmmo>



THE STUDENTS VOICE BEING HEARD IN WALES

As part of a series of initiatives to extend the Eco-Schools programme outside the school gates, pupils from Green Flag Schools across Wales are asking for public support in a Wales-Wide Campaign to safeguard our wildlife and reduce litter across our country, beaches and seas.

They are focussing on one type of litter; balloons and lanterns that are often released as part of a celebration or a fundraiser.

Pupils from some Eco-Schools in Wales are pushing for a change to the law by submitting a petition to the National Assembly.

All schools have also been invited to sign up to an online pledge not to undertake organised balloon or air lantern releases. Sign the pledge: www.keepwalestidy.org/campaigns/balloons



Pupils from long-established Eco-Schools are working on reducing the amount of plastic used by schools.

Data shows that in one of Wales' 22 local authorities, schools are potentially using over 1,300,000 plastic milk bottles a year! Students are therefore encouraging local councils to allow individual schools to distribute free school milk from larger containers rather than the individual 25litre bottles that are currently used.

Facilitating students voices outside of the school fence is something Wales Eco-Schools does with a sense of pride. The empowerment of students and democratic principles is preparing the leaders of tomorrow through solving problems today.

To assist further with this strategy, a large number of schools are making links with businesses and communities around their schools so they can spread their excellent work into homes, local shops, hotels, offices and food outlets.

Pictured is compost recycling that can feed worms or improve soil. These lessons from school will also go home to help reduce waste and support herb and vegetable growing at home and on allotments.



BUTTERFLY FARM TEACHES THE ECOLOGICAL BASICS

The Alejandro Cruz Jr. Elementary School in Toa Alta is the first Eco School in Puerto Rico to inaugurate a butterfly farm on school grounds.

Teachers and students worked very hard to make this a reality reusing materials and even dressing up as butterflies for the occasion.

Rosarito Gonzalez, School Coordinator expressed: "I am extremely happy with the construction of our butterfly garden from which we will provide the students a real scenario for environmental education and an opportunity to develop appreciation and respect for life.

All participating Eco-Schools in Puerto Rico have the opportunity to use the butterfly garden as an environmental educational tool thanks to the School Butterfly Garden Guide. This has been developed specially for Eco-schools in Puerto Rico by a Graduate student from the Environmental School of the Metropolitan University as part of their collaboration with OPAS.

Maylene Pérez, OPAS Executive Director also expressed: "It's a great satisfaction to see how the schools take ownership of the Eco-School program and achieve its main objective, to integrate the school community through environmental education.

FRENCH ECO-SCHOOLS KEEP BIODIVERSITY UNDER SERVEILLANCE



Thanks to the help of the school's parents association, children and teachers took part in an event called "a night with butterflies".

Attendees closely observe butterflies, which they attracted by pointing a strong light at a white sheet. The evening included an explanation of insects' life cycles.

New resource books enabled teachers to create a book collection related to the theme of biodiversity. Children then took ownership of their readings, by designing and looking after a medicinal plants garden as well as a flower and vegetable garden.

A laboratory was installed in the school and children can now use it during their playtime. Whenever a child finds an insect to observe, all pupils join up to search in the bush, a magnifying glass in their hand, to then run to the laboratory and examine it in greater depths!

Other actions and school outings have been planned: growing a floral meadow, having bird troughs and observing the wildlife of local riverbanks.

Parents have also expressed having improved their knowledge thanks to the children who are sharing their experience at home.



IRISH GRANDPARENTS HELP ECO-SCHOOLS FOCUS ON WATER

Knockanillo NS Grandparents Day celebrated Grandparents Day through the water theme.

On February 2nd Knockanillo NS celebrated Grandparents Day. The pupils had prepared a list of questions focussed on WATER to ask their grandparents.

Questions included where their water came from, how far they had to walk to get water, was it clean, did they have hand basins, toilets and baths in the house and did they collect rainwater.

The pupils learned a lot about water in Ireland in their grandparent's time. They were surprised to learn that a lot of homes didn't have running water or toilets and that some grandparents had their bath in a big basin. An old bucket and a metal bath were brought in for the children to see.

The grandparents enjoyed talking about the past, the refreshments and the social aspect of the day.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT IN NORTHERN IRELAND ECO-SCHOOLS

With 800 reasons to celebrate, NI Eco-Schools gathered together in February 2012 to celebrate their achievements and the 800th school to join the programme.



The event was a special occasion to recognise and celebrate all the fantastic environmental projects that schools in Northern Ireland are working on and was attended by the Minister for the Environment, Mr Alex Attwood, President of FEE Mr Jan Eriksen and the International Coordinator for Eco-Schools, Bernard Holland

At a similar event in 2008 NI Eco-Schools celebrated their 400th school. National Operator Carmel Fyfe said that it was wonderful to see so many of our young people doing their bit to help reduce environmental impact.

The positive impacts and important life skills that pupils gain from participating in the programme can be carried on throughout their lives and we look forward to seeing more of our young people leading the way in helping their schools and wider communities to become more eco-friendly".



SOUTH AFRICA DEVELOPS A NEW SUPPORT PACK FOR PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS



A wise mom once said: “So how do we “save our planet” yes we need to protest and argue against companies destroying the air, land and water but shouldn’t the same amount of money and energy be invested in training our future?

Shouldn’t we be in the pre-schools regularly reminding and encouraging the little people as to what is the right way to live?

Scilla Edmonds, author of 3 popular educational children’s books shares this passion for training the „little people” and is determined to provide pre-school teachers with effective tools to nurture agents of change.

Suzie Hilliar, set about to develop an Eco-Schools Toolkit custom-made for Pre-Primary to Grade R. Her impressive track record as Eco-Schools facilitator at The Birches Pre-Primary is widely known and applauded.

Her introductory words in the Support Pack reflects Scilla’s sense of urgency, humility and passion beautifully: *“We do not have time to waste! Every effort to prevent Climate Change is a step in the right direction and together we can make a difference. What we do not know—we can find out together!”*



Thank you to all who contributed to this Newsletter.

We are redesigning the delivery in the coming months to make information delivery smarter and easier for the end user.