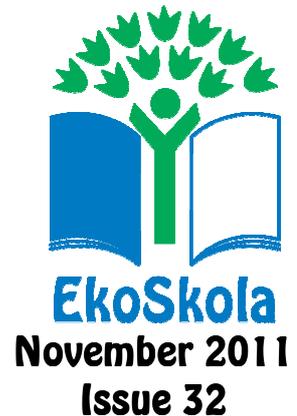


If you need to print this newsletter, please use both sides of recycled paper

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## Editorial Note

Welcome to another edition of our newsletter ... the first for the 2011-2012 scholastic year. This is a very special year for EkoSkola for several reasons. Nature Trust Malta will be celebrating the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of the EkoSkola programme as well as its own 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In June 2012 the UN will organise its third Conference on Sustainable Development, also called Rio +20 ... a very important event during which world leaders (and other concerned citizens) review the way we treat the planet's resources.

As from this year, based on the feedback we got during our school visits and emails received, we will be introducing some changes to our newsletter as well as the way we operate in schools. So I would like to urge you to look into the starred items in this newsletter for more information.

## HSBC-ES Climate Initiative: 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle

We are happy to announce that Malta's application for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle of the HSBC-ES Climate Initiative has been approved. Once again Malta will be joining other countries in mobilising students for action against Climate Change in their school and the community.



As in previous years schools will be invited to participate in the project. Participation will again involve different levels: following the EkoSkola 7-steps with an emphasis on Climate Change issues; participation in the Eco-Code Competition; and the organisation of school led climate change related projects in the community. So, if you're interested in participating, start thinking about how you intend to take part and make the necessary preparation to avoid disappointment.

Part of last year's project involved a poster competition of the various



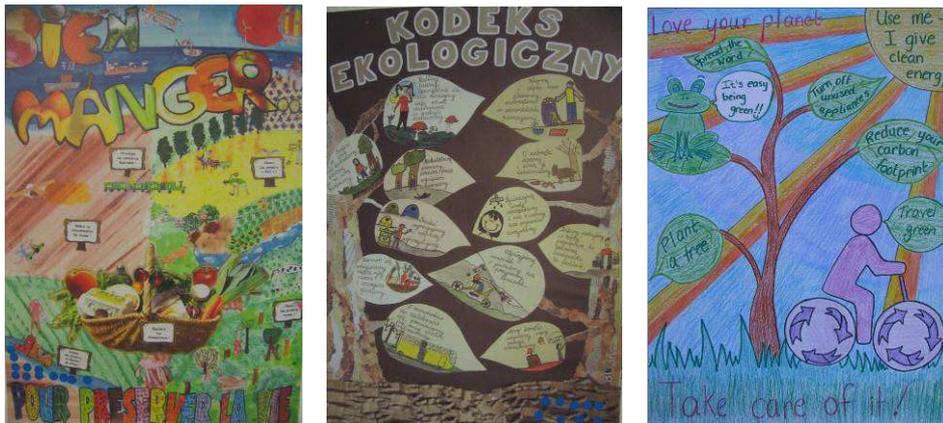
Nature Trust (Malta)  
PO Box 9  
Valletta VLT1000  
<http://www.naturetrustmalta.org/>



Eco-Code posters produced in the different schools. Only 6 entries made it on time for the judging and from these two posters were declared winners:

- **Children's Section:** Sharona Debono; Martina Demicoli; Michela Farrugia; Mariana Mifsud and Nikki Ann Zammit from San Gwann Primary B.
- **Youth's Section:** Jonathan Richard Young from Sacred Heart Minor Seminary – Gozo.

These two posters represented Malta in the international competition held during the National Operators Meeting in Krakow, Poland (26<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> October, 2011) ... and managed to get the third and first prize in the respective categories. This means that the winning schools will get \$500 and \$1000 prize money respectively. Congratulations!



Winning posters of the Children's Category: 1<sup>st</sup> – France; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Poland; 3<sup>rd</sup> – Malta



Winning posters of the Youth's Category: 1<sup>st</sup> – Malta; 2<sup>nd</sup> – Russia; 3<sup>rd</sup> – Poland

## ESD in the NCF

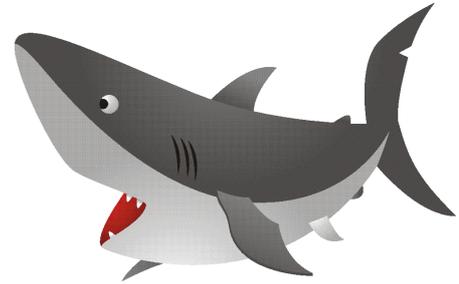
The local educational community is currently undergoing a wide consultation exercise of the National Curriculum Framework document published by the Directorate for Quality and Standards. Various stakeholders are being involved in the process at various levels and through various media ... the aim is to ensure ownership of the document that should help Malta embark on an educational process that is in tune with the current and future needs of our society.

While supporting the initiative to the full, Nature Trust (Malta) would like to particularly highlight and commend the proposed introduction of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) as a cross-curriculum theme. This innovation puts Malta on the same level as other countries and gives schools the opportunity to further integrate what they do in the EkoSkola programme with their school policy. Now, more than ever, NTM feels committed – through the provision of educational resources and training opportunities –

to continue with its support towards the promotion of ESD through a whole school approach. ESD is not a subject, but a way of life. It is a journey through which learners translate what they learned at school into day-to-day living. The award of the Green Flag is an important milestone in this journey.

## Shark Talk

Nature Trust (Malta) is offering schools participating in the EkoSkola and YRE programmes talks on the world of sharks. This is a campaign NTM is running to create awareness on this animal and how it is today in danger of extinction. Being on the top of the food chain the extinction of the shark may have negative impacts on marine ecology in general. Anyone wanting to book is to write to [info@naturetrustmalta.org](mailto:info@naturetrustmalta.org).



## NTM Outdoor Provision Program 2011-2012



As in other years, Nature Trust (Malta) is providing various opportunities for schools to experience our surroundings, their biodiversity and the environmental issues related to them. Besides providing students with physical exercise and fresh air, these activities use the countryside as an outdoor classroom encouraging the exploration of new places, new experiences and different landscapes. This is the programme for this scholastic year (fee covers the guide service and a nature booklet):

- **Site 1: Wied Għolliġa Nature Reserve** (near the University of Malta): Activity Fee: €2
- **Site 2: Xrobb I-Għagin Park and Sustainable Development Centre:** Activity Fee: €2
- **Site 3: Buskett Woodland:** Activity Fee: € 3
- **Site 4: Comino:** Activity Fee: €8 (includes boat ticket + donation to the Tower)

Other guided walks are available and schools can tailor the walks for different age groups and subject requirements through early arrangements with the NTM guide. Interested schools are invited to contact Ms Annalise Falzon on [annalise.falzon@gmail.com](mailto:annalise.falzon@gmail.com) for more information.



## Minn Qalbi ... b'Impenn



*EkoSkola Committee members from Marsascala Primary explaining the initiative to Mrs Margaret Abela*

The Piggy Bank campaign in aid of the Malta Community Chest Fund is now in full swing. This year, EkoSkola students wanted to add a personal touch to this commendable initiative. EkoSkola students are renowned for taking a personal commitment towards improving the quality of life in their community. So besides making their annual donation, they decided to do something more tangible towards helping those who are in need and improving the environment.

For this purpose a pledge sheet was prepared inviting students to take specific actions. Schools wanting to participate in this initiative

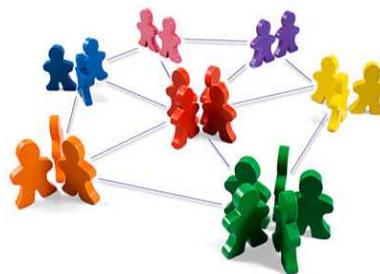
are invited to (i) make and distribute copies of the pledge sheet (available from <http://www.ekoskola.org.mt/uploads/custom/pdf/EkoSkola-Strina-Pledges.pdf>) to each

student, (ii) urge students to tick those actions they promise to do and to hand in the pledge sheet together with their donation, (iii) prepare the pledge sheets for collection by putting them in an envelope. All the pledge sheets will be collected by the personnel collecting the Piggy Banks. A summary of all the actions taken will be presented to the President of Malta, H.E. Dr George Abela.

## Linking with Foreign Eco-Schools

We frequently receive requests for linking with Maltese schools from foreign schools - from Kindergarten to Post Secondary. We currently have requests from Secondary and Post Secondary schools from Denmark, Turkey and Brazil for schools to work together on Eco-School projects, about various topics including waste, energy/electricity, climate change, transport and culture.

A Turkish school in particular wants to work on a project for Children's Day next April. If your school is interested in linking up kindly contact Marvic Refalo ([marvicekoskola@naturetrustmalta.org](mailto:marvicekoskola@naturetrustmalta.org)) who is co-ordinating this initiative.



## Important announcements

(a) **Important dates:** keep the following dates free:

**15<sup>th</sup> November 2011** – EkoSkola, YRE and LEAF annual seminar for schools in Malta

**23<sup>rd</sup> November 2011** – EkoSkola, YRE and LEAF annual seminar and award ceremony for schools in Gozo

*During these seminars, participants will explore issues related to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and will be given training on the way to conduct Environmental Audits and compile appropriate Action Plans.*

**24<sup>th</sup> November 2011** – Award Ceremony. This event will include the presentation of Green Flags, Silver and Bronze Awards for schools in the EkoSkola programme; Awards for winners in the YRE Article, Photograph and video Competitions; and the prizes for the winners of the HSBC-ES Climate Initiative Eco-Code Competition. The refurbished EkoSkola and YRE websites will be officially launched during this event.

## (b) New procedures re Green Flag Evaluation Visits

Till now schools applying for or renewing their Green Flag status had till the end of September to hand in their application and report. This meant that most of the evaluation visits had to be scheduled during October. This has created two problems that will be compounded by the ever increasing number of schools applying for the award. The first major problem is trying to find a mutually convenient time to visit the school at a time when the schools are still settling in. Also students, who were active in the ES Committee, would have moved on to another school and asking them to be present for the visit is not always possible. Consequently newly elected committee members would not be able to give a detailed description of how things were run in the previous year.



To avoid these problems the EkoSkola Steering Committee decided to revise the procedure. **Schools wishing to apply for the Green Flag in a particular scholastic year are asked to submit their application and report by the last day of April of that same scholastic year.** Although possibly creating some inconvenience, this new

procedure will improve the quality of the visits. Kindly note that the report portfolio (that schools have to submit) can be filled in throughout the year ... not necessarily a couple of days before its submission.

### **(c) Flag your Flag!**



Based on our experiences of school visits abroad, we feel the need to urge local Green Flag schools to flag their flags! It seems that unlike their international counterparts, local schools are too obsessed with keeping their Green Flag spotlessly clean and crease free! The Green Flag is an international mark of quality and schools are presented this award only if they satisfy internationally approved criteria. So Green Flag schools should be proud of this award and strive to display the flag in their locality as a symbol of environmental quality. Nature Trust would like to remind schools that flags damaged by wear and tear will be replaced when the Green Flag status is renewed.

### **(d) YRE Newsletter**

As from this year the YRE programme will have its own independent newsletter ... rather than being an addendum to this newsletter. This decision comes as a direct effect of the increasing number of schools joining this programme. YRE (Young Reporters for the Environment) is an international network of teachers and secondary school pupils who produce articles, photos and videos about environmental issues for the local population.



**Young Reporters**  
*for the environment*

## **Environmental Initiatives**

Being the main school ESD network in Malta, EkoSkola receives a lot of requests from local and foreign organisations to circulate among our member schools information about environmental initiatives that they are organising. We have decided to dedicate part of our newsletter specifically for this purpose. Feel free to participate in any of these activities. However, kindly keep in mind that participation in these activities is not compulsory nor is it a requirement for your efforts to achieve the Green Flag. **You** decide whether you want to participate or not. If you intend to present any of the activities listed, you should ensure that it is included in your Action Plan as part of your strategy to address the issues identified in your Environmental Review ... not as a stand alone.

### **(a) School projects involving Maltese Indigenous trees**

The **Arbor Committee** would like to invite EkoSkola School Committees to take the opportunity and get support about information dissemination, tree growing, indigenous tree habitat visits and other initiatives they would like to promote as school/class projects for the next scholastic year.

ARBOR Committee is offering the services of professional staff –Agricultural/ Education officers and others, for whatever it takes to discuss, project and plan projects for the dissemination of information on Maltese trees, flora and habitats and the organisation of field visits and/or hands on sessions.

The ARBOR Committee offers the support and material for whatever it takes to set a nursery – class/school precincts/locality or larger sized – to have Maltese Indigenous trees grown or whatever other project which results in the growing and planting of trees. The Committee offers its support for such initiatives throughout the whole year or the duration of the project. If you're interested contact Mr John Neville Ebejer, the Arbor Committee representative, on: 233398115 / 79000966 – P.A.R.K. Unit, Ta' Qali National Park, l/o H'Attard.

## (b) Thinking of what to buy? Think green!



Decisions about what to buy may affect the environment. As a result, consumers are choosing products not only on the basis of price or personal preferences, but also because they have a low impact on the environment. The government is the largest purchaser in our economy. And therefore whatever the government chooses to buy, affects the environment in a significant way. It is for this reason that the government decided to ensure that whatever it buys does not harm the environment. In government jargon this is called "green public procurement", which means that all products or services purchased (procured) by government must be environmentally friendly.



To ensure this happens, the government intends to shortly publish a national action plan for green public procurement. The plan will require all public organisations (including public schools) to follow some simple criteria when deciding what to buy. These criteria help to select products that are made with environmentally-friendly materials, using production processes that consume less energy and resources, and that result in less waste. Naturally, every type of product has its own environmental criteria. These criteria may be accessed from the following web link: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/gpp\\_criteria\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/gpp/gpp_criteria_en.htm)

By following these criteria and starting to buy only environmentally-friendly products, Eco Schools can make a great contribution to our environment. More information about green public procurement can be obtained by emailing to [gpp@gov.mt](mailto:gpp@gov.mt).

## (c) Catch the Drop Campaign 2011/2012



The Ministry of Resources and Rural Affairs is again holding the Catch the Drop campaign which focuses on encouraging students, teachers and the community to conserve water. Raising awareness about water conservation, the activity involves a Moving Drop container that travels from one school to another along a set route. The Moving Drop receives water conservation messages from students and will be hosted at the school where it stays for a day or two depending on the school population. During this time, the school is encouraged to hold water conservation activities.

Last year the route taken by the Moving Drop container was the Aqueduct Route and it visited schools along the route from Rabat to Valletta. This year the Route taken will be the Pembroke Reverse Osmosis route which starts at Pembroke where the Reverse Osmosis plant is. Underground pipes lead from Pembroke to St Julian's, San Gwann, Sliema, Msida, Naxxar and Mosta finishing at Ta' Qali. If your school is interested in this initiative you are kindly asked to contact Glenn Bugeja ([glenn.bugeja@gov.mt](mailto:glenn.bugeja@gov.mt)).

## (d) Volvo Adventure



**VOLVO ADVENTURE - YOUNG PEOPLE BRINGING THE ENVIRONMENT TO LIFE**

[WWW.VOLVOADVENTURE.ORG](http://WWW.VOLVOADVENTURE.ORG)

[LINEP](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms & Conditions](#)

This is an environmental action competition that gives young people (aged 13-16) the chance to gain international recognition for their efforts. They could win an outstanding achievement commendation or an invite to the final in Goteborg Sweden in June 2012 as well as cash prizes. See what this year's finalists got up to on

<http://www.youtube.com/thevolvoadventure#p/u/0/csUkyiZDLnI>. All participants benefit from free education materials that share 10 years experience. If interested just go to [www.volvoadventure.org](http://www.volvoadventure.org), read the requirements, fill in the registration form and send it by the end of January 2012.

### (e) Energy Saving Competition for European Schools



September 2010 saw the launch of U4energy – the first pan-European competition on energy education organised by the European Commission. Based on last year's great success, the EC has launched

the second round. Primary and secondary schools across Europe are invited to participate in this exciting competition. Schools can win prizes for their achievements in saving energy. The Commissioner for Energy, Mr. Günther Oettinger, will personally welcome the winners at the European award ceremony in Brussels.

There are three competition categories: **Category A:** Energy efficiency measures at school; **Category B:** Best pedagogical actions to raise awareness on efficient energy use; and **Category C:** Best awareness raising campaign on energy efficiency. Closing date is May 2012. You can get further information as well as view examples of excellent practice from last years' entries on the competition's website: <http://www.u4energy.eu/web/guest/home>.

### Teaching Resources

Continuing with our list of useful websites ideal for lesson planning and project work related to environmental education.

#### (a) The Encyclopedia of Earth



This site is a free expert-reviewed electronic reference about the Earth, its natural environments, and their interaction with society. The Encyclopedia is a series of articles written by scholars,

professionals, educators, and experts. The articles are written in non-technical language and are useful to students, educators, scholars, professionals, as well as to the general public. It can be used as an excellent research base during lessons. Besides presenting the user with a set of featured articles about recent news ... it has archived topics about: biodiversity, climate change, energy, people, food, forests, health and water ... to mention a few. It is available at <http://www.eoearth.org/>.

#### (b) Miracle Miracle



This is a very interesting and interactive site for students. Besides providing opportunities for networking with other students, this site allows students to

air their views and concerns about specific environmental issues. It also provides information about the Earth and its systems. The website is action-oriented, urging students to be responsible for what is happening around them and to take action to ensure a better future. The site can be accessed at <http://miracle-kids.net/en/>.



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If you would like to contribute to this newsletter please contact Prof Paul Pace, National EkoSkola Co-ordinator, on [paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt](mailto:paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt)

Visit our website on [www.ekoskolamalta.com](http://www.ekoskolamalta.com)