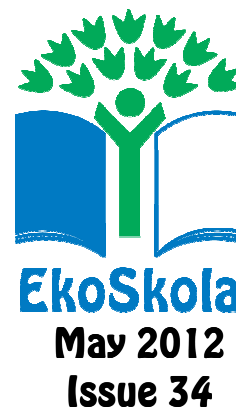


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Editorial Note

It is with great pleasure that we bring you our third newsletter for this scholastic year. As usual it is jam-packed with initiatives that are showing how Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can feature in school life ... and beyond. Currently we are very busy visiting 24 schools for their Green Flag evaluation; preparing for the 8th EkoSkola Parliament Session (scheduled for the 12th June) and finalising preparations for the National Operators Meeting during which Eco-School delegates will be visiting our islands to discuss the programme.

Environmental Audit at the President's Palace

EkoSkola Committee members from six nearby schools (Birkirkara Primary, Lija-Iklin-Balzan Primary and Birkirkara Boys' Secondary from St Theresa College, together with students from St Monica B'Kara, Stella Maris Balzan and St Francis B'Kara) conducted an environmental review which took place at San Anton Palace and San Anton Kitchen Garden on the 21st of March.

The students and their link teachers were first shown the *Piano Nobile* of the Palace, under the expert guidance of the Palace Attendant Mr John Mifsud. This was followed by an environmental audit, by six groups of students, of the Palace halls and dining room, pantry, kitchen, offices, bathrooms, roof, 2 private gardens and the newly opened Kitchen Garden. A plenary session, held in the Russian Chapel, saw the student rapporteurs giving their first impressions



of the audit. A group photo and a short break at the Kitchen Garden concluded this activity.

As a follow-up, the respective schools formulated an action plan, just as they do in the EkoSkola Process they follow at school. On the 21st March, they were kindly granted an audience with His Excellency Dr. George Abela during which they read their observations and proposed actions that would make the Palace more sustainable. This was followed by comments from His Excellency and a discussion about environmental matters ensued. During this meeting, the students' high level of environmental awareness emerged, together with the kindness and willingness of His Excellency to engage with students and act upon their observations.



His Excellency Dr. George Abela receiving a copy of the Action Plan and a group photo to commemorate this great experience.

However, the highlight of the event was when His Excellency communicated that he has graciously accepted to act as patron of the EkoSkola programme. Besides thanking His Excellency for this honour, the EkoSkola team would like to heartily thank the professional staff at the President's office, namely Mr Richard England, Ms Marica Mizzi and Mr John Mifsud who supported us throughout our two appointments at the Palace.

HSBC-ES Climate Initiative - Progress Report

The 3rd cycle of the HSBC-ES Climate Initiative is nearing its completion. Schools have been busy developing activities that enhance the students' awareness of Climate Change.



Distinguished guests accompanied by last year's winners of the Eco-Code Competition

In particular, twelve schools have taken this initiative further by engaging in projects that saw the school working with the surrounding community on projects aimed at familiarising their locality with climate change issues. Most of these projects are now being concluded. To celebrate these achievements Nature Trust and HSBC Malta Foundation organised a project information meeting at Xrobb l-Ghagin Nature Park and Sustainable Development Centre during which highlights of the projects were presented to the attendees.

Mr Francis Sullivan, HSBC's Advisor on the Environment, Mr Mark Watkinson, HSBC Malta's CEO and the Hon. George Pullicino, Minister for Resources and Rural Affairs attended the meeting and addressed the audience. They all commended the schools' commitment towards sustainable development and recommended EkoSkola as a project that tangibly integrates sustainable development issues into students' lives. During the event Mr Watkinson presented the prizes for last year's Eco-Code Competition.

We are also happy to announce that for this year's Eco-Code Competition we had 18 entries (13 for the Juniors Section and 5 for the Seniors Section). The quality of the

entries was rather high and the judges had quite a hard task to determine the winners. The final decision was: Jade and Julia Bonello from Maria Regina College, Naxxar Primary won the Juniors Section, while Daena Marie Constantine from St Benedict College, Tarxien Girls' Secondary won the Seniors Section. Congratulations!



From left to right: winning poster in the Juniors Section and the Seniors Section

Tree planting at Mater Dei Hospital



On 14th March, thanks to Nature Trust, EkoSkola continued its outreach into the community. This time the focus was "A Healthy Environment leads to a Healthy Lifestyle".

A degraded piece of land forming part of Wied Ghollieqa, next to the Mater Dei Mortuary, has been restored and converted into Mediterranean woodland through a joint project between Nature Trust, GO and Mater Dei Hospital. The woodland is expected to provide a quiet educational area in the grounds surrounding the hospital for inmates and staff.

The Parks Department helped in the restoration of the low rubble walls. A total of 2,000 indigenous trees and shrubs sponsored by GO were planted over the last two years. The woodland was inaugurated by Hon Dr Joe Cassar, Minister for Health, the Elderly and Community Care. Students, from St Francis School - Sliema and St Joseph - Blata l-Bajda, gave the Minister stickers about energy saving designed by EkoSkola. These stickers will be placed next to switches in various places in the hospital to remind people to switch off the lights when they leave a room.

Young People's Summit

This year is a very special year as, besides being EkoSkola Malta's 10th birthday, it is also the year when the 3rd UN Conference on Sustainable Development, known as Rio +20, will be organised in Rio de Janeiro on the 20th – 22nd June. Malta will also be present for this very important meeting. About 20 years ago, a 12 year old girl from Canada, by the name of Severn Suzuki, addressed the UN Assembly and amazed the country delegates with her plea to renew efforts to ensure a safer, cleaner and beautiful Earth.



On May 10th, Maltese students from 15 schools were given the opportunity to meet and discuss their environmental concerns and their future at Xrobb l-Għagin Nature Park and Sustainable Development Centre. After various presentations from the attendees, two workshops – one for primary and one for secondary students – were set up. Conclusions from each workshop were collated to form a declaration that will be presented to the MPs attending the EkoSkola Parliament and to the Maltese delegation attending the Rio +20 summit. The schools represented during the summit were:

San Anton School

St Benedict College, Mqabba Primary

St Benedict College, Safi Primary

St Benedict College, Tarxien Girls' Sec.

St Benedict College, Zurrieq Primary

St Clare College, San Gwann Primary B

St Edward's College

St Francis School, Cospicua

St Ignatius College, Luqa Primary

St Michael School

St Therese College, B'Kara Boys' Secondary

St Thomas More College, Fgura Primary B

St Thomas More College, Paola Boys' Sec.

St Thomas More College, Zejtun Primary A

St Patrick's Salesian School

The video clip of Severn Suzuki's speech can be viewed on the following URL: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ywAzaMWhjM&feature=related>.

School activities

(a) **Maria Regina College, Mosta Primary B** organises an annual Eko-week where speakers are invited to give talks about the environment and organise games about wise electricity use. This year they organised talks from WasteServ personnel for students and their parents. A bazaar was set up during the week and proceeds were used to buy energy saving lights for the school corridors. Students from Year 5.2 prepared a special assembly



about paper wastage, air pollution and how we can do our part for a better future. They finished off by singing Mother Nature Needs Us. As a follow up of the Eko-Week, the art teacher prepared a drawing about different energy sources that will be fixed in the corridors forming part of the school's Eco-Code.

(b) In our school, **St Benedict College - Qrendi Primary**, we practise EkoSkola values because our students want to embellish the school environment by making crafts from used material. Various crafts are made from used material like toilet paper rolls, used paper for free drawing, pots and bowls. We made puppets from used paper, envelopes and toilet paper rolls. Our students picked up some branches that they have found scattered in the countryside and turned them into beautiful ornaments.



(c) The **St Clare College, Gzira Boys' Secondary School** has been working on a project, Pictures at an Exhibition by the composer Mussorgky, throughout this scholastic year as part of the Kreattiv project. All the students together with their teachers have been working with recycled carton, wood and foam to make props, huge puppets and scenes which depict each picture. We are very grateful to Mr Steve Barbara who provided us with wood and carton. We have also made use of the cardboard packaging of the interactive whiteboards which were installed in our classrooms.



To make this possible, all the staff has worked hard during the last two lessons every Wednesday, as well as during breaks and all the boys have had turns in the craft, fret work (*arkett*) and art groups. This project has helped a lot in increasing team-work, boosting self esteem and confidence in the students, as well as helping in discovering many talents and different skills in them. The school worked in collaboration with the National Philharmonic Orchestra that played live during the performances on the 19th, 20th and 21st April at the Mediterranean Conference Centre.



Congrats

This year all the teachers from Gzira Primary School, participated in the Embed 2012 – Best use of ICT Awards. Each teacher worked on an individual project exposing students to different means of technologies such as the use of the Interactive whiteboard, online games, songs and PowerPoint Presentations. Students also created their own Photostories, sent e-mails, created a class blog, held a video conference and made use of various kinds of digital media. In the category for Smart Learning Support, Ms Susanne Fagerbakke, won with her project entitled 'Story Time' during which children wrote their own online books, played online games, used the Easi-Speak, Easi-Scope and Easi-View. They also made use of an



Mr Caruana receiving his prize from Ms Micheline Sciberras and Prof Grace Grima, directors general in the Education Directorate

iPad to create an avatar story (Alice in Wonderland) whilst Tom the Talking Cat was used for the story 'Borma Minestra'.

Mr David Mario Caruana, an ex-EkoSkola Teacher who is now the school's Assistant Head, also managed to win in the category - Leader of the Year in a Primary School with the project 'The use of ICT to promote EkoSkola at Gzira Primary School' that included managing the school website, using the carbon footprint calculator and Blackle in all classrooms. This project also included twinning with Gozo College, Xaghra Primary that involved children communicating via email and Elluminate.

Teaching Resources

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

(a) EcoTipping Points Project



EcoTipping Points are small actions that try to introduce sustainable processes and tip the balance from decline to restoration by tapping the inborn power of nature and human societies to heal themselves. This site presents over 100 stories of such initiatives. These stories aim to help people identify concrete actions that they and their community can act upon. This is the site's URL: <http://ecotippingpoints.org/index.html>.

(b) Climate Kids



This interactive site is powered by NASA and provides several resources (e.g. games, activities, stories) and information about Climate Change for students and teachers. Amongst the interesting features found in this site is a Climate Time Machine that allows you to see past and possible future impacts of Climate Change on Earth. You can visit the site here: <http://climate.nasa.gov/kids/index.cfm>.

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

Visit our website on <http://ekoskola.org.mt/>