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Editorial Note

We are all experiencing difficult times that can easily discourage anyone, yet as the saying goes: "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"! From the phone calls and email exchanges that we are getting we are amazed at the continued level of engagement shown by many of you in our ESD programmes: EkoSkola, LEAF and YRE. There are also schools who have integrated these programmes with GLOBE and are carrying out scientific investigations on a regular basis. We would like to heartily thank you for believing in our programmes and for choosing them to promote good quality ESD ... even during these hard times. That is why we have decided to share examples of these initiatives through our newsletter. Visit our websites and Facebook pages regularly for updates on teaching resources and opportunities for staff development. Feel free to contact our team of qualified ESD teachers if you have any queries. Take care and stay safe.

Membership form

When sending mailshots we are getting a lot of "undeliverable email" notices because of changes in your contact details. You are kindly requested to renew your membership for this scholastic year. Getting your membership sorted as early as possible ensures an update of your school's (and link persons') contact details. Make sure not to miss out on any of our ESD initiatives. We have a new updated online membership form that should facilitate registration. The application is available from:

<https://form.jotform.com/202954438929064>

Xrobb I-Għagin virtual fieldwork programme

Nature Trust-FEE Malta in collaboration with the Directorate for Learning and Assessment Programmes is providing virtual fieldwork sessions from the Xrobb I-Għagin Nature Park and Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre.

The first set of video clips for virtual fieldworks feature stunning footage of the park, landscape, wildlife, and water and electricity conservation assets on site. The video clips are suitable for students from Year 3 to 8 and are aligned mostly to the learning outcomes of Social Studies and Science learning areas as well as the cross-curricular theme Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and cross-referenced with the SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals).



The video clips are linked directly to a Social Studies fieldwork experience at Xrobb I-Għajin Park for Year 3 and 4. These year groups will be provided with fieldwork sheets and are additionally invited for synchronous learning sessions providing opportunities to make observations and measurements of real time weather parameters and recording data directly from the fieldwork site on the Xrobb I-Għajin GLOBE site. This is an opportunity to stimulate critical thinking and discussion about climate change and the urban heat island effect.

Interested schools are kindly asked to contact Ms Esther Sammut Carbone (esther.sammut.carbone@ilearn.edu.mt) for requests of the educational material on offer and/or for live sessions bookings. Live sessions are available on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. These will be hosted via Microsoft Teams and last up to 45 minutes depending on the requirements of the respective classes.

We are eating too many animals!

We are killing too many animals for food. When we do so we use too much water and too much land. With too much water and land Planet Earth becomes overtired. It causes heatwaves and wildfires in forests. In wildfires a large number of animals die because their habitat is destroyed. Last year there were more than 50,000 wildfires across the world. Imagine how many animals, birds and insects lost their lives!



Besides heatwaves and wildfires, eating too much meat causes droughts as well. Droughts come from deforestation when trees are cut to make space for agriculture land where food for cattle is grown. What must we do? Simple! Don't eat too much meat during the week.

This article was sent by the students in Year 6.2, St Benedict College, Qrendi Primary

Learning from Trees

Year 6 EkoSkola students attending St Nicholas College, Dingli Primary are busy observing their almond tree as it prepares for winter sleep. These young students are participating in the Autumn Phenology Campaign (of the GLOBE Programme) as part of their LEAF project. Students are observing leaf colour change, uploading their measurements into the GLOBE database and comparing their data with schools across Europe. The educational outcomes are multiple. Through this initiative, students learn to:

- observe when leaves change colour at the end of the growing season;
- compare leaf colour with colours in the GLOBE Plant Colour Guide;
- identify tree species native to their area;
- examine relationships between green-down and climate factors;
- predict when the end of the growing season will occur for upcoming seasons;
- compare colour changes of different plant species;



- communicate project results with other GLOBE schools;
- collaborate with other GLOBE schools (locally and internationally) and
- share observations by submitting data to the GLOBE science database.



Lija-Balzan-Iklin EkoSkola during the COVID 19 pandemic

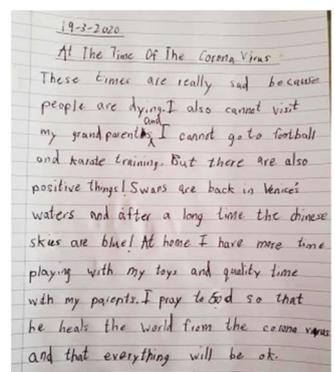
During the pandemic school lock down our EkoSkola committee decided to keep active from home by continuing with our weekly meetings online. We discovered that even though we were facing a challenging time, our meetings were still very enriching and even more focused than ever before. Normally we would meet during break time and time was always very limited. This time round we dedicated a whole hour where everyone was very focused and generated so many new ideas.



We decided to set up a Safeguard the Environment Campaign where students wrote articles about the positive effects on the environment during this very particular time. Students, together with their families, produced videos to promote eco-friendly practices done at home. We also encouraged the school community to set up DIY eco-friendly projects at home and many families participated enthusiastically. We made it a point to continue promoting eco-friendly measures from home particularly during COVID19. Students did crafts from recycled materials, grew their own plants, created awareness posters, did mini beach clean-ups and kept active among other eco-friendly ideas.



When this current scholastic year started, we as an EkoSkola committee, decided to focus on two main themes: **Wash, sanitation and hygiene** as well as **Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing**. The EkoSkola committee members came up with a school mascot – a frog who we decided we should call Lily. Lily has been displayed around the school to remind us to wash our hands, wear the mask and keep at a safe distance from each other. We also came up with a slogan for Lily the frog: Do not burst the bubble. This poster is displayed in our school foyer entrance. Our EkoSkola ommittee also came up with some interesting slogans which we printed



on stickers with Lily and we displayed them all around the classrooms and corridors.



As part of the Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing theme, we are promoting home-grown food by encouraging the children of the school community to grow their food in small pots, in home backyards and also community spaces. We are engaging in this theme as part of Eco-Home Stays Active to foster an appreciation for food and hence also reduce food waste. We are also committed to this theme at school by encouraging the children to grow food at school as well. We are in the process of establishing garden patches for every class to start growing their own fruit and/or vegetables. We are currently installing new timber planters for the Kindergarten area so that our little ones also can grow their own food.



All this is being done to provide the children with the skills to grow their own food, forge a deeper understanding of the impact their consumption of food has on the environment and what steps they can take to reduce this impact. We will soon be starting our yearly Earth Christmas Wish activity where we will have a competition for children and their parents who need to wrap their Christmas gifts in an eco-friendly manner! Last year this was a success and we managed to reduce so much waste generated from wrapping papers. We shall be repeating it this year yet again seeing it was liked so much. As an extension, we shall also be having our first ever EkoSkola Christmas e-book about a friendly fish who has to fight against all the waste placed in her home – the ocean! This e-book will be shared with all our school community as a Christmas gift.

Good Practice



We decorated our house with air purifying plants, such as the spider plant. For my mum's birthday, I reused a glass jar, decorated it and used it as a vase.

We also made a natural soap. I melted castille soap. Then, I added some olive oil and rose petals. I put the mixture in a form and added some essential oils. Finally, I just let it cool down. The soap contains no parabens, no chemicals and is microplastic free.



I also had another idea of how to use cardboard boxes. Rather than throwing away large cardboard boxes, I turned them into a mobile relax corner where I can use my toys and enjoy my free-time.

This article was prepared by Maite, Year 4, St.Benedict College, Qrendi Primary

HAVE YOU SET UP YOUR SCHOOL'S GREEN MOBILITY ROAD MAP YET?
JOIN THE ECO-SCHOOLS GREEN MOBILITY MOVEMENT
 WE CAN HELP YOU PLAN YOUR MOBILITY AUDIT AND REACH ACHIEVABLE TARGETS



AWARDS FOR BEST PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS
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The following entities support EkoSkola



If you would like to contribute to this newsletter please contact Prof Paul Pace, National Eco-Schools Coordinator, on paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt.

Visit our website on <http://ekoskola.org.mt/> or facebook on www.facebook.com/ekoskola.