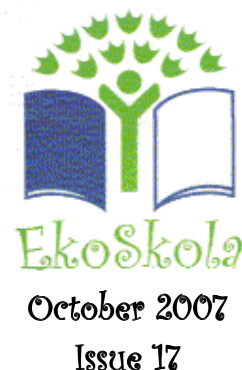


Contents:

- Editorial Note
- EkoSkola Parliament follow up
- Tree planting activity at Mellieħa
- An invitation from Japan
- Tunza 2008
- The Volvo Adventure
- Ekofest 2007
- Letter from a parent
- Wara L-Ħajt Tas-Sejjieġh
- Teaching Resources



Editorial Note

Another scholastic year has started bringing with it new challenges and opportunities. For us, at the National EkoSkola Co-ordination, this year promises to be a great year. In fact, at the start of this year the Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment provided us with five EkoSkola teachers who will be working alongside the National Co-ordinator in order to promote and support the EkoSkola programme in our schools. Nature Trust would like to thank the Minister, the Hon. Louis Galea, for believing in the programme and for providing it with the support needed to continue in its development.



The five EkoSkola Teachers (from left to right): Marvic Refalo; Mario Camenzuli; Johann Gatt; Audrey Gauci and Rita Buhagiar.

Contacts with schools have shown that some schools are finding problems with running the programme. The EkoSkola teachers will be visiting schools to support them in their journey through the seven steps of the EkoSkola process. They are NOT expected to run the programme in the various schools, but to offer the help required for the schools to address the difficulties they encounter throughout the process.

The presence of these extra five pairs of hands has already been felt. School visits have already started and we have also stepped up the production of educational material for schools. We are sure that this year we stand a better chance of reaching the targets set.



Nature Trust (Malta)
PO Box 9
Valletta CMR 01
<http://www.naturetrustmalta.org>



EkoSkola Parliament follow up

As you might recall, as part of the preparation for the 3rd edition of the EkoSkola Parliament we had distributed a questionnaire to about 19,000 families. We have processed all the questionnaires collected and we are now compiling a report that will shed light upon what Maltese households think about the environment. Besides presenting a look at national environmental issues, the report will also organise the results by locality thus providing valuable data for local councils.

We are now preparing for a special event during which children from the Green Flag Schools (representing all the EkoSkola students) will be presenting copies of the report the EkoSkola programme sponsors: the Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment, the Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment, HSBC Bank and WasteServ during a press release. After the press release the students will be presenting a memorandum for the elections based on the findings of this questionnaire to the leaders of the political parties.

Tree planting activity at Mellieħa

Sadly we all remember the cowardly act made last May that destroyed 3,000 trees at the Foresta 2000 site at Mellieħa. On the other hand we are very proud that several of our EkoSkola schools responded to this by sponsoring new trees so that the afforestation project could continue. The Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment together with Din l-Art Helwa and BirdLife (Malta) will be organizing a National Weekend from the 26th – 28th October during which a total of 9,000 new trees will be planted.

The activity will be officially launched by H.E. President Fenech Adami on Friday morning and will continue through till Sunday evening. Besides the tree planting activities and live entertainment, all those attending this special event can take part in guided tours to the Red Tower and the Ġhadira Nature Reserve as well as the EU LIFE Yelkouan Shearwater Project (Proġett Garnija) site at l-Aħrax tal-Mellieħa. Everyone is invited to attend. Let this a clear message to the vandals that we do not tolerate their actions. To pre-book your tour please call 2134 7644/5 or send an email to marija.schranz@birdlifemalta.org. More information can be obtained from Glenn Bugeja on glenn.bugeja@gov.mt.



If your school will be attending this tree planting event why not combine the activity with the annual international tree planting campaign organised by ENO?

All you need to do is to make your pledges at <http://eno.joensuu.fi/campaign2007>. You will receive the login and password via email needed in order to put the information about your tree planting event in the ENO Tree Database at <http://eno.joensuu.fi/treedatabase.htm>.

Last year Malta was involved in this project, but to date there are no schools in Malta included in the tree planting database. Shouldn't we show the world that children in Malta are doing their bit to fight Global Warming by planting more trees?

An invitation from Japan



Hiroshima-Koku is a children's newspaper written by junior writers – 19 Japanese students (ages 12 to 18) who are very interested in social and environmental issues. The web version of the newspaper is available on <http://www.chugoku-np.co.jp/hiroshima-koku/en/index.html>

For their next issue, these students are going to report on global environmental problems, such as global warming. They would like to include an international aspect in the issue, and they are looking for students from around the world so that that can interview them (via e-mail) about these environmental issues. Malta was one of the countries that were earmarked by these young journalists. Mr Toshiko Bajo (the Editor of the newspaper) contacted us requesting support for this initiative.

EkoSkola schools – **particularly secondary and the Junior College** – who are interested in participating are urged to contact Mr Toshiko Bajo by email: t_bajo@chugoku-np.co.jp for more details. Kindly inform Dr Paul Pace (paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt) about any developments.

Tunza meeting



United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in collaboration with the Young Agenda 21 Foundation of Norway will host the 2008 Tunza International Children's Conference on the Environment which will bring together 1,000 people (700 children and 300 chaperones), between 10 and 14 years, from over 100 countries. The conference will be held from 17 to 21 June 2008 in Stavanger, Norway.

The word "TUNZA" means "to treat with care or affection" in Kiswahili (a sub-regional language of Eastern Africa). The conference's vision is to "foster a generation of environmentally conscious citizens who will better influence decision-making processes and act responsibly to create a sustainable world".

The Conference, whose theme is "**Creating Change**", will increase the children's understanding of environmental issues by providing them with a forum to share experiences and opinions and to collectively voice their concerns for the environment. It will also inspire them to initiate and implement community environmental projects in their school and community.

This is an unforgettable experience for students who are active in the environment and schools should not miss the opportunity to send a delegation for this event. Hurry up and register for the conference at http://www.unep.org/tunza/children/events/icc_2008/

The Volvo Adventure

You might recall that last year one of our Green Flag Schools – St Joseph, Mater Boni



Consillii School, Paola – were among the 15 finalists whose project was presented at a conference in Gothenburg, Sweden. Their project was entitled **Biodiversity-Conserve today for tomorrow**. Our students joined students from 14 other countries in the production of the Conference Report that brought together ideas about climate change and what we should be doing. The whole report can be downloaded from http://www.volvoadventure.org/Resources/va_statement2007.pdf. Malta's contribution is quite prominent in this report!

The Volvo Adventure is an educational programme that rewards environmental projects carried out by young people to improve their local environment. It is open for teams of young people (aged between 13 and 16 years) from around the world. Teams must be between 2 to 5 young people with one adult as a supervisor. The best projects of each year are invited to the final conference in Gothenburg, Sweden and the best three projects will be awarded 10,000 USD, 6,000 USD and 4,000 USD respectively.

Your school can also participate in this adventure. All you have to do is to access the official website on http://www.volvoadventure.org/int_homepage.aspx and follow the step by step instructions ... you simply cannot go wrong. The deadline for submitting projects is midnight on the **31st of January** so hurry up.



And for the young children? If your pupils are not old enough to enter the Volvo Adventure Award this year they can enter the **Great Big Bob the Bunny Cartoon Competition**. Get your students to click on the official website and press the Start button at the Environmental Journey window to start the Bob the Bunny's environmental journey.

This journey allows users to explore environmental issues before beginning the competition to find activities that help them start an environmental project. At the end of the journey users can find details about the competition.

Cartoon entries are visible in the 'Photo and film library' below. Teachers can read about the environmental journey by clicking the Briefing link. Winners of the competition win a trip to a UNEP Tunza conference (see above).

Ekofest 2007

On Tuesday, 5th June the girls at St. Joseph Junior School Sliema celebrated a year's efforts on environmental education. It was a *fun* event in which all the girls from Pre Grade to Grade 6 participated. Parents were invited, as was the Mayor of the Sliema Local Council, Mrs. Marina Arrigo and the President of Nature Trust, Mr. Vince Attard.



The Ekoskola Committee felt very proud of their fellow pupils and this showed when they introduced themselves and the event to the audience. The audience was treated to fourteen presentations which had a common theme – the environment. As Public Relations Officer

of the committee, I do not find it hard to publicize all the work that my friends put into this event. We covered a wide range of topics. These included Healthy Eating vividly presented by the Pre-Graders in their item *Teddy Bear's Picnic* and Animals' Rights, as shown in the Grade 5 presentation *The World is a Jigsaw Puzzle*.

Towards the end of this successful event, the committee presented the President of Nature Trust with a cheque for FORESTA 2000. As the Grade Sixes showed in their story of the juniper tree, we need trees to survive and the girls of our school were shocked about the destruction of the trees in Mellieha.

Perhaps, the lesson to be learnt from this event can best be summed up in the words of the Mayor of the Sliema Local Council who said, *'I am used to telling children what to do. It was wonderful to hear just how much these children know about the environment. They are telling us what to do.'* This Ekofest showed that the Ekoskola programme has, once again, been a success, as it is the children who become the agents of change.

(Written by Suzi Warrington, P.R.O, Ekoskola Committee)

Letter from a parent

We do not normally reproduce letters that appear in the newspapers ... but we couldn't resist sharing with you this letter from the Sunday Times of Malta (21.10.07). It shows the impact the programme is having not just on children ... but also on their parents.

My child is making me eco-friendly

I was recently listening to my eight-year-old daughter, Nicole, speaking about how concerned she is about the environment. She spoke so emphatically, it took me by surprise. I dared not turn my head.

Walking along the streets she pointed to all the fumes coming from cars and people smoking. She is also aware of a lot of children with asthma. There are so many things that we adults take for granted, but with the help of our children we can achieve a lot together.

Nicole has also been telling me all that she is doing through EkoSkola, this special programme at her school, St Bernadette Primary School B, San Gwann. The teachers are doing wonders. The pupils are being taught very well and it reflects on their determination.

It is unbelievable how fast children learn and how aware they are of their surroundings. I am also amazed at how children can make us adults change our old habits. It is difficult but it's happening, thanks to their persistence and encouragement.

At home now, we do our best to separate waste, re-use wrapping papers, and recycle paper for notes or drawings. Anything made of cardboard or paper, like rolls and cereal boxes for crafts, and anything else that I think it is worth keeping for later use, I keep, and it is surprising how handy these things come.

This is just a small beginning, but if everyone does his or her little bit, the difference will be huge! Nowadays, children are alert and bright. They watch us adults like a hawk. Let us not kill their enthusiasm. We can help them contribute to a better future. How can we not help them achieve their dream of a cleaner world?

Tania Spiteri

Wara l-Hajt tas-Sejjiagh

The Ministry for Rural Affairs and the Environment is inviting school children from Year 4 – Year 6 for an exciting musical filled with action, music, fabulous costumes, circus skills and (most importantly) environmental information. Performances are scheduled for Monday, 5th November and Tuesday, 6th November at the MFCC, Ta' Qali with two daily shows at 9.30am and 11am. Places are limited so interested schools are urged to book their attendance on 2295 2333 as soon as possible.



This original Maltese musical, produced by Curtain Raiser, shows how Maltese animals and plants react to the negative impact of human activities on the environment. Patrick Vella is responsible for the idea, production design and direction. The script was written by Tyone Grima and the music was composed by Abigail Brown.

Teaching Resources

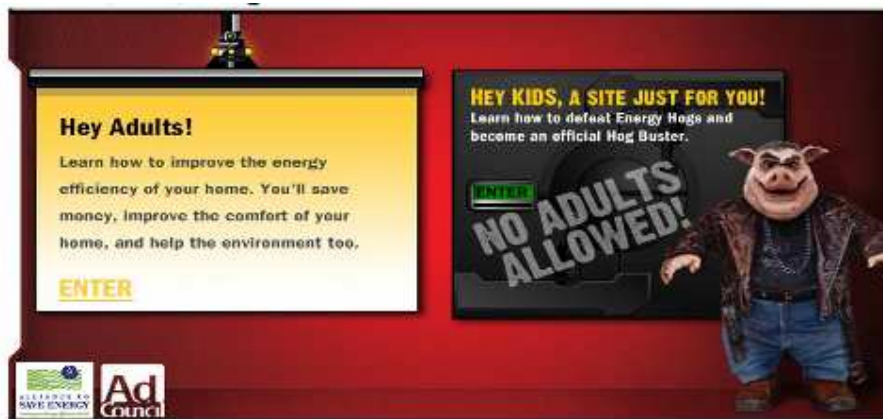
Continuing with our list of useful websites ideal for lesson planning and research work related to environmental education.

(a) Discovering Malta's Flora and Fauna



This site is a bank of superb photos taken by Mr Aron Tanti aimed at fostering a love towards the Maltese natural environment. The photos are organised in four folders: Birds; Flora; Other Creatures; and Panoramic Islands. The site can be accessed on: <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/tanti/>

(b) Energy Hog



The site is an online game about energy conservation. The game takes children from one room to another in an adventure trip to discover sites through which energy is lost. At each level children can play fun games with an energy theme. The site has also a section aimed at helping adults (parents) to make their homes more energy efficient. The site can be accessed on: <http://www.energyhog.org/>

If you would like to contribute to this newsletter please contact Dr Paul Pace, National EkoSkola Co-ordinator, on paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt

Visit our website on www.ekoskolamalta.com