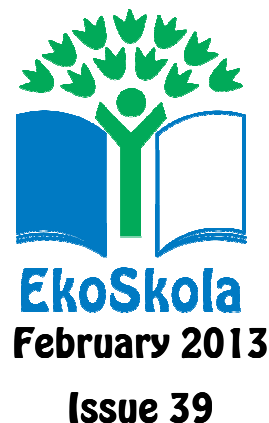


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## Editorial Note

Welcome again to another edition of our eNewsletter. This edition is once again packed with reports of activities organised by some of our member schools and information about various environmental initiatives. Moreover, true to EkoSkola's mission of fostering Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in schools, the newsletter is offering once again more resources and ideas related to the integration of ESD into the curriculum.

YOU COULD LIGHT UP ALL THE STREET LIGHTS IN MALTA AND GOZO WITH THE ENERGY SAVED IF YOU JUST SWITCH OFF THE STANDBY MODE.

## Support from University Students

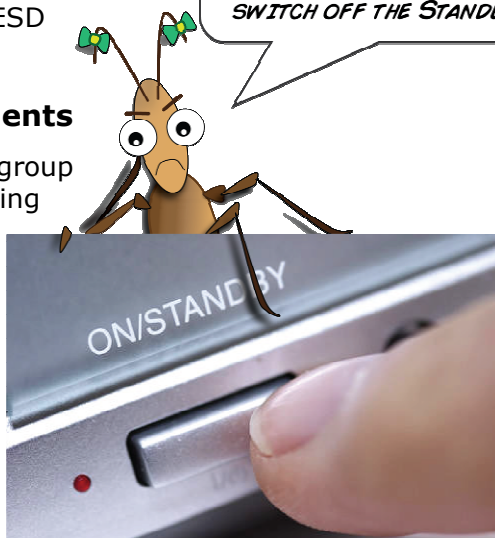
As announced in Newsletter 38, a group of foreign students will be visiting Malta to help schools in their ongoing environmental projects related to EkoSkola, LEAF and YRE environmental projects. This initiative is part of AIESEC's C3 project - 'Clean x Conserve x Contribute'.

Moreover, as part of their study unit *Whole school approaches to environmental education*, a group of BEd. (Hons) students will also be available to offer their support to schools in matters related to the EkoSkola programme.

Schools wanting to avail themselves of this service are requested to contact their respective EkoSkola teacher indicating what sort of support they would like to receive from the visiting students.

## The 2<sup>nd</sup> Young People's Environmental Summit

Following last year's success, Nature Trust will be hosting the second edition of the Young People's Environmental Summit with the theme *We care about our future*. Originally scheduled for April, the organisers felt it



best to anticipate the date of the summit to provide students with an opportunity to talk to the political parties in preparation for the coming General Elections. The event will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at Xrobb l-Għagin – Marsaxlokk. The leaders of the main political parties have already confirmed their attendance. Schools wanting to participate in the Summit are requested to contact Prof Paul Pace on [paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt](mailto:paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt).

### **Speak up for the Environment**

On Friday 16<sup>th</sup> November, at St Monica School, B’Kara, an event entitled Speak up for the Environment was held to reach out to the school and local community through the presentations given by students about several issues related to the conservation of the



environment. The aim of the event was twofold: to provide an innovative way of creating environmental awareness, and also to educate the participants in research and public speaking skills. Furthermore, some students chose to showcase their artistic talents by singing, dancing and playing music in relation to the theme of the environment. An interesting song was “Wake up America”, which the comperes said could easily be changed to “Wake up Malta” to environmental needs! The girls’ presentations covered a wide array of subjects, ranging from topics such as the traditional gruesome killing of whales in Denmark to tips related to minimising harm to the environment by using environmentally friendly products and practices.

The audience was captivated and applauded the girls for their effort. All the speakers were awarded certificates for their sterling work. The certificates were distributed by Mr. Vince Attard, Executive President of Nature Trust. Special thanks go to the three judges: Mr. Keith Buhagiar, Head of Department of Environmental Studies; Ms Audrey Gauci, Ekoskola Co-ordinator and Ms. Yvette Micallef from the English Speaking Union, who will now decide which students should be awarded prizes for their contributions.

### **Bag it don’t wrap it**



This campaign, carried out at St Benedict College - Safi Primary School, aimed at sensitizing students and the larger community on the need to reduce the use of wrapping paper by proposing the alternative use of decorated fabric gift bags. Bags were beautifully decorated and creatively embellished and distributed by a group of parents. The project’s action plan was devised in line with the EkoSkola seven steps.

They started off by informing and involving parents, teachers and students. During a special assembly students were made aware of the link between deforestation and climate change and thus the importance to reduce paper. As part of their Maths lessons students were able to carry out an environmental review of the amount of wrapping paper that is sold during the Christmas period by local community shops. During a Science and Technology day, students explored materials and learnt about how fabric can be used to design and create bags that can be REUSED. As part of their ICT lessons, students were encouraged to create and send creative emails as Christmas greetings rather than the usual paper ... in line with the school’s ‘No Cards Please’ campaign. During craft lessons students were able to expand on the idea of re-



using by decorating used shop paper bags, wrapping presents in magazine paper and making Christmas tree centrepieces from magazines. Finally during literacy, students engaged in creative writing projects on the theme "I am a fabric Christmas gift bag! This is my story!"

This project would not have been possible without the dedication and enthusiasm of all – students, teachers, Learning Support Assistants and parents! What started as a little dream, ended as a successful ecological project towards a better environment.

### **An Early Christmas Gift**

It was Friday 14th December, 8 o'clock in the morning, we, a group of children at Siggiewi primary, did not go to our classrooms for lessons. We left our satchels on the side, forgot all about our lessons and started to prepare for a party. There were sandwiches to butter, bread rolls to fill, cakes to cut up and so many more things. By 9 o'clock we were ready to meet the elderly. A group of about 50 elderly came to our school.



When they arrived, our head Mr Patrick Decelis took them round the museum of education. They could see lots of things that they themselves used when they were children. The EkoSkola committee then led them to the school hall to watch a mini Christmas concert. They had lots of fun seeing us dance, act and sing. Later, all of the elderly were invited for a party that we prepared. Together we shared some snacks and had a little chat. We all enjoyed it so much! We hope to invite them again next year, especially since the EKOskola committee is working on voluntary work.

*Written by Desiree Camilleri, Francesca Mallia and  
Nathan Borg - EkoSkola Committee members*

### **Animal awareness talks**



Why are most children so attracted to animals? Where do animals live? Should animals be made available against payment? Is captivity cruel? Should animals be made to perform in shows? Where can we observe animals in Malta? Animals are always a popular topic with students. A group of speakers are available to give a one hour visual talk in schools to encourage a discussion about animal awareness. Schools can book a visit by contacting the speakers, suggesting a suitable date, on [green.uom@gmail.com](mailto:green.uom@gmail.com). Schools have to provide a data projector, laptop, large screen and whiteboard. Each class will be given a poster to be able to continue the discussion in class.

### **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) 2013 International Schools Essay Competition and Debate**

Students are invited to write an essay in English, entitled '*Who is responsible ... are we ready to take responsibility for the future of our planet?*'. A panel of judges will select the winning essays (three for each age category) on the basis of comprehensiveness and clarity, innovative and creative thinking and the potential to contribute to a broad-ranging and constructive international debate. The winning students will be awarded trophies at the International Schools Debates and their essays will be published on the competition website.



There are two age category: (a) Primary students (ages 7-11) – max. 400 words; and (b) Secondary students (ages 11-17) - max. 600 words. For each age category, schools can submit up to 30 essays. Essays can be submitted till 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2013. For more information, the judging criteria and details about registration visit <http://www.livingrainforest.org/explore/schools-debate/>.

### **(b) The Sant' Antnin Family Park open week**



The Sant' Antnin Family Park will be opening its doors to the general public on Sunday the 24th of February! The park is located in Marsaskala and is set over an area of 80 tumoli of land. The area was previously used as a dump site, but in the past few years it has been rehabilitated by WasteServ into a recreational area for the whole family. In fact the park offers a vast array of recreational facilities, including rock-climbing, picnic areas, outdoor gym equipment, an olive garden, an amphitheatre with

a seating capacity of 450 people, a dog park, agro tourism area and much more! The park also includes walking/cycling routes; two mazes designed for children; a water park, a cafeteria/tea room and ample parking space.



So join the fun and visit the park during the Open Week being organised between the 24th February and 3rd March. Special activities for the whole family as well as tours of the Park will be taking place all day long from 10am till 8pm.

### **(c) EU Sustainable Energy Week**

You are invited to join hundreds of organisations across Europe to organise an Energy Day in your own city or region during the EU Sustainable Energy Week 2013



**SUSTAINABLE ENERGY  
WEEK 24 - 28 JUNE 2013**

**ONE SMALL STEP FROM YOU  
ONE GIANT LEAP FOR EUROPE**



(EUSEW 2013) from 24-28 June (week-ends before and after are accepted). An Energy Day is any not for profit initiative that promotes energy efficiency or renewable energy. How about teaming up with your local

council and organise such an activity? If you decide to participate, create an account on the EUSEW website ([www.eusew.eu](http://www.eusew.eu)) and fill in the Energy Day registration form. The website also provides support for media coverage and event organisation from the EUSEW Secretariat, an opportunity to showcase your initiative through social media channels, and join the online EUSEW community. For more details visit the EUSEW website or contact Pierre-Loïc Nihoul ([energydays@eusew.eu](mailto:energydays@eusew.eu)).

#### (d) Educational game from the Kummissjoni Interdjoċesana Ambjent



This is an educational dice aimed at developing Christian environmental responsibility. The theme of the game is "Nemmen f'Alla u nħobbu fil-Ħolqien" (I believe in God and love Him in his Creation). The game targets children in primary and early secondary schools, but it can be easily adapted to higher ages (including parents, teachers and catechists). The dice helps children to identify and adopt simple actions that promote sustainable habits. The dice comes with a resource sheet that provides ideas on how it can be used. EkoSkola teachers will soon be contacting head teachers and link teachers to distribute copies of the game.

#### (e) Remember Earth Hour

Earth Hour is a worldwide event organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and held towards the end of March annually, encouraging households and businesses to turn off their non-essential lights for one hour to raise awareness about the need to take action



on climate change. For more information on how to join this worldwide event and related education resources visit: <http://www.earthhour.org/>.

#### Teaching Resources

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

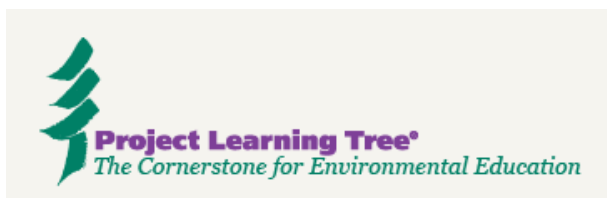
##### (a) The National Wildlife Federation – Kid's page



This website provides lots of fun activities (like recipes, stories, games and outdoor activities) and interesting things to do about wild animals. Although the site focuses on animals mainly found in North America, it still

provides young children with a wealth of information about various animals. Visit the site on: <http://www.nwf.org/Kids.aspx>.

##### (b) Project Learning Tree



The Project Learning Tree is a programme of the American Forest Foundation that uses forests as a teaching resource about the world. The website is a great ESD resource providing teachers with peer-reviewed, award-winning environmental education curriculum resources that can be

integrated into lesson plans for all grades and subject areas. Everyone can benefit from this site ... particularly schools participating in the LEAF programme. The site can be found here: <http://www.plt.org/>.

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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 <http://ekoskola.org.mt/> or facebook on [www.facebook.com/ekoskola](http://www.facebook.com/ekoskola).*



# The environmental effects of Smoking

**Decide for yourself**



Learn more about cigarette ingredients from <http://quitsmoking.about.com/cs/nicotineinhaler/a/cigingredients.htm>

## Cigarette filters – silent killers

During their long life in the environment, cigarette filters continue to leach the toxic chemicals into the surrounding environment. A large proportion of the filters are carried out by the rain and eventually end up polluting water courses. Studies show that substances, such as nicotine, pesticide residues, and metal, seep out of the filters and become acutely toxic to fish and micro-organisms. Visit <http://www.longwood.edu/cleanva/cigarettelitterhome.html> for the latest research, related links and more information about Cigarette Butt Litter.



Learn more about the health hazards of smoking, visit <http://pbskids.org/itsmylife/body/smoking/article2.htm>

**What are cigarettes made up from?** A cigarette is mainly made up of finely cut tobacco leaves wrapped in paper. However, about 1,400 other ingredients are added to give and enhance flavours, as preservatives, to improve burning speed and to make nicotine more readily available. Tobacco companies are not required to specify these ingredients because they are approved as additives for foods. However, the combination of the ingredients and their burning changes their properties making them toxic and/or carcinogenic (i.e. tend to induce cancer). A considerable amount of these hazardous chemicals is trapped in cigarette filters (also known as cigarette butts).

**Air pollution from cigarette smoke.** Besides being a major health risk to non-smokers, the smoke given off by a burning cigarette releases harmful chemicals into the air such as nicotine, carbon monoxide, vaporised tobacco tars and glycerin. According to an Italian study, published in 2004, smoking three cigarettes produced 10 times the particulate matter of a 2003 diesel engine.

**Cigarette related littering.** After smoking a cigarette, most smokers have the bad habit of throwing away the remains of smoked cigarettes on the ground or out the car window. Studies show that cigarettes, their filters and their wrappers/boxes are the most prominent litter item. Cigarette filters are made from cellulose acetate, a plastic which is theoretically biodegradable. However, tests have shown that cigarette filters take at least 9 months to degrade under "severe biological circumstances". The sun may break them down into smaller pieces of waste which become diluted in water and/or soil.

**Tobacco hurts people and their environment.** Prime agricultural land is diverted away from food production to tobacco cultivation. Land, usually covered by forests, is cleared to make way for tobacco plantations. This exposes the soil that is more likely to be washed away in heavy rains leading to loss of soil and failing yields. This affects the lives of countless farmers who are forced into poverty and famine. Moreover, tobacco farms use a lot of water and pesticides.

Both these practices reduce the quantity and quality of drinking water. Deforestation is also promoted as a lot of wood is needed to cure tobacco leaves. Trees are then replaced by quick growing, but water-thirsty eucalyptus trees which further increase water depletion.

Tobacco companies do their very best to paint a rosy of their industry. They have the money to do it and they stop at nothing to achieve their goals. Visit:

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/533/tobacco> to learn more about the dark side of tobacco.



Child labour is often very common in tobacco farms.