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Christmas Greetings

On behalf of Nature Trust (Malta) and the EkoSkola Steering Committee I would like to wish you and your loved ones all the peace and joy that Christmas brings along.



As for the New Year ... 2005 marks the start of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Besides the usual wishes for a happy and prosperous New Year, I would like to share a dream with you: that environmental education becomes a mandatory area of concern in our curriculum and that this year will see the hoisting of the Green Flag for the first time in a Maltese School.

NT Annual EkoSkola Seminar

The annual Nature Trust (Malta) one-day EkoSkola seminar was organised at Porziuncola Retreat House, Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq on 25th November 2004. The event was attended by head teachers and teachers from 77 different primary and secondary schools.

The aim of such an event is two-fold: providing information about the programme and attracting new memberships. Like all the other past



*Mr Vince Attard,
NT (Malta) president*

editions of the seminar, this year's event was well attended and the enthusiasm schools are showing for EkoSkola is constantly increasing. The number of participating schools has now gone up to 21 and this scholastic year has already signalled the entry of other new schools. The seminar also provided an opportunity for NT to present some of the society's books as tokens of participation to all the schools that took part in the EcoCode Poster competition held in during the 2003-2004 scholastic year.

In his welcoming address, Mr Vince Attard, NT President, reiterated NT's commitment towards the promotion of environmental education, the



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management of areas of natural and scientific interest, and the lobbying for effective environmental legislation. While encouraging schools to put in the extra effort required in order to get the Green Flag, Mr Attard reminded them about NT's support for participants in EkoSkola.



Dr Joseph Mangani, ADE Curriculum Implementation

Dr Joseph Mangani officially opened the Seminar. In his presentation he proposed an attempt to visualise progress in environmental education. *Being essentially a value oriented process, environmental education occurs in two stages: (a) the Internalising Stage (that occurs in the cognitive and the affective areas of human development), and (b) the Externalising Stage (that builds upon the former stage and covers the social and the physical areas of human development).*

Examining what we have achieved in local environmental education, Dr Mangani pointed out that *we have reached a level of environmental awareness and ownership but we are still not attained empowerment. If the whole person is imbued with environmental education, then that person is in a position*

to initiate a circular and spiral process of implementing, or at least participate actively within a group in drafting, launching and implementing an environmental policy, that is dynamic, cumulative and incremental and addresses Economic, Scientific, Socio-political and Spiritual concerns. The process is an open-ended one that invites the learner to Think Globally (not just in a 'whole world' sense, but also in the sense of the whole society vrs self), Act Locally and Perceive Newly.



Head teachers and teachers participating in the Seminar

Dr Mangani presented this view keeping in mind two major commitments: *our commitment to achieve sustainability in all areas of our life to ensure real progress in all sectors and the reinforcement of Knowledge, Understanding, Skills and Values to form and re-form the Citizen of the 21st Century.* After reviewing the basic knowledge, skills, experiences and attitudes necessary for the development of the global citizen, Dr Mangani concluded by highlighting that *environmental education can be viewed as a fundamental universal attitude (an intrinsic value) OR as a good but essentially material investment (an instrumental value).*



Dr Paul Pace, National EkoSkola Co-ordinator



Ms Alexandra Mifsud, Education Officer, Wasteserv

Later on, Dr Paul Pace, National EkoSkola Co-ordinator, explained the seven major steps of the EkoSkola process and gave a summary of the EkoSkola annual report. He also explained in detail the support services available for schools participating in the programme. Waste management is one of the major environmental education themes explored by schools participating in the EkoSkola process. Consequently NT invited Ms Alexandra Mifsud, education officer at Wasteserv to explain the logistics of Progett Skart. The seminar was concluded with an open-floor discussion with the participants.

The International Eco-Code Competition Prize Winners Announced

The International Eco-Code poster competition promoted by the Eco-Schools programme network, which was open to participation to thousands of schools from many different countries, is complete and the winning school contributions have been determined. This was the first such competition within the Eco-Schools international network. National Eco-Code competitions have been held in some countries (such as Portugal, Cyprus and Turkey), but never before an international "super-final" competition between national finalists.

Schools, both primary and secondary, from 20 countries throughout Europe (including Malta), as well as South Africa, participated in national Eco-Code competitions in their countries, organised by the respective FEE Member organisations, submitting their own school's Eco-Code poster. 37 schools, in the "Youth" and "Children" categories, had their posters recognised as the national award-winners in their respective countries. Of these, an International Jury, consisting of Eco-Schools national programme managers and representatives of the project's supporting institutions, voted on all the 37 national winning posters to select the top 3 international posters for each of the two categories.

The overall prize winners are:

Youth category:

- 1st place: School N^o 14 - Romania
- 2nd place: Escola EB2,3 de S. Roque – Portugal
- 3rd place: Scoil Aireagail – Ireland

Children's category:

- 1st place: Escola EB1/JI de Covoada - Portugal
- 2nd place: Michail Lakatnick Primary School - Bulgaria
- 3rd place: Mossbank Primary School – Scotland, UK

All national award-winning submissions to the international-level competition were interesting expressions of the schools' efforts, and can be viewed on the project's website, accessible at: www.eco-schools.org/projects/ecocode.htm. All of the posters have been reproduced in postcard packs which have been distributed in all the participating countries (available on request from NT). The two first place posters will also be reproduced into full-sized posters. The three top posters for each category will receive prizes including electronic multimedia equipment and gift vouchers for books and resources produced by UNEP. The prizes will be awarded at an international Eco-Schools conference to be organised in 2005 in Madrid, Spain.

The 2004 Eco-Schools International Eco-Code competition has been made possible through the kind support of the Portuguese Institute for the Environment, UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) in association with Earthprint.com, the British Council national delegations and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe



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International Conference on the Environment for Children

The Young Agenda 21 Foundation would like to announce the environmental conference, Young Agenda 2005 for children which will be held in Stavanger, Norway from 23 to 27 May 2005. The theme of the conference is "An Environment for the Environment of the Future".

This is an opportunity to explore Norway and Norwegian Eco Schools with about 500 children from 20 other different countries. The event will hold environmental workshops and drop-in activities; project presentations and exhibitions; talks and discussions; hikes and

fieldtrips; cultural activities and activities for the public.

Delegates should be between 11 and 13 years old at the time of the conference and each international group may total a number of 2-10 children plus an adult chaperon. The closing date for registration is 10th January 2005. For more information and the registration form you can refer to the attached files or contact Sharmistha Kar Ray, the Project Assistant on:

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Evaluating environmental education initiatives



Socrates
Comenius

As announced in other editions of this newsletter, the TEPEE Comenius 3 Network project has started its evaluation phase – the testing of a draft European Portfolio for Environmental Education (EPEE). EPEE is an evaluation tool aimed at helping teachers in the evaluation of environmental education activities that they organise in their schools.

Copies of EPEE have already been distributed during the NT EkoSkola seminar. Other schools/teachers who wish to participate in this evaluation exercise are kindly asked to contact Dr Paul Pace, on paul.j.pace@um.edu.mt. Schools participating in this evaluation exercise will be offered the opportunity to form part of the Maltese delegation that will participate in the project's 3rd and final Transnational Thematic Conference and Contact Seminar to be held in Italy later on this year.

The latest issue of the **Eco-Schools international newsletter** is now available to be downloaded from www.eco-schools.org/new/newsletters.htm

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