

Enviro News

Seychelles' Environmental Education Newsletter

Environmental Education Coordinating Committee? Ministry of Education and Youth ? February 2003

Dear Readers,

Welcome to our first issue of EnviroNews for 2003.

Last year was packed with environmental education activities and projects. Some schools participated actively in activities organised locally. Some very interesting projects were also initiated by both primary and secondary schools. Keep up the hard work this year!

In this issue you will

have the chance to read about some activities, which have taken place since the beginning of the term. You will also learn about the 2002 Eco-School Competition.

Learn about the upcoming

theme days and see what you can organise at school level.

I encourage all schools to send articles regarding environmental education programmes/ projects, which are being organised/ undertaken in your respective schools, so that we can share them with others. You can also send in a poem for publication.

Happy Reading!

Miss Larue.



Wetlands field trip to La Plaine Hollandaise

Environmental Education Material Development WORKSHOP

A two-week workshop based on Material Development was held at the end of last year at the SADC Regional Center, South Africa, (SA). The workshop was attended by Mrs. Mariette Esparon, Geography Teacher at Anse Royale Secondary and Mrs. Lyn Bastienne, Project Officer from E.I.C of the Division of Environment.

The course involved presentations and discussions around the following topics:

- * environment
- * environmental problems, risks, causes and effects
- * EE processes as a response

to environmental problems

* theories of teaching influencing EE process today and EE methods, aims and objective

* development and adaptation of EE resources

Participants also worked on their project and that was the production of an EE booklet based on the 10th EMPS theme, *Commerce, Industry and Production*. The booklet will soon be sent to schools for trial and a workshop will be organised whereby views and comments will be incorporated during the

re-financing process.

They also managed to participate partially in another workshop based on the production of a booklet for SADC countries. The booklet will assist in guiding people in the production of EE learning support materials. The workshop was attended by Miss. J. Larue from MoEY. Apart from the class sessions, they also had the chance to visit different places in SA, such as the famous aquarium, *Sea-world*.

EIC Section (MoE)

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Thought of the Month

Man is capable of care as much as he is of destruction.... If we can make conservation a national cause, we can raise generations who will learn that the earth is sacred.

W. Douglas, 1961

Write to:

Enviro News
ECA/PE Unit
Ministry of Education and Youth
Mont Fleuri

Schools celebrate environmental theme days

Like last year, the Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY) is working closely with the Ministry of Environment (MOE), other ministries and organisations to organise activities to commemorate environmental theme days. This is important as it sensitises people on a variety of environmental issues.

The first activity on our calendar was **Protected Area Day**. To commemorate this special day, the Forestry Section targeted the eradication of invasive species. Students from Plaisance and Pointe Larue Secondary schools, together with staff of MoE removed *Clidemia hirta* (*faux watouk*) plants, which are threatening the biodiversity of Mont Sebert reserve. They were briefed on the danger of invasive species and received information leaflets. After removing the invasive plants, they planted endemic palms, mainly '*latanier fey*', '*latanier milpat*' and '*latanier lat*' at the cleared site. The

activity sensitised the participants on the importance of not introducing new species in



Protected Area Day (Tree planting at Mt Sebert)

our local environment and to value our beautiful endemic plants.

The other theme day that was celebrated was **World Wetlands Day**. This special day recognises the value of

wetlands in maintaining environmental health and biodiversity. This year the main activity was held on Praslin. Talks

and presentations were organised for the two primary schools on the islands. Students participated actively and presenters clarified a variety of issues, especially the invasive species threatening wetlands, such as water-lettuce. A field trip was organised to La Plaine Hollandaise, for students from Praslin and La Digue schools. Mr. Laboudallon shared his knowledge and experiences about this wonderful and important wetland area. Poster, crossword and quiz competitions were also organised.

Activities are now being planned to celebrate *World Water Day* and *Meteorological Day*, both to be celebrated in March. There will be a quiz competition for S1-S3 students. Schools wishing to visit Met Office should contact Tel. No. 384066. Those who wish to visit the water treatment stations should telephone PUC on 322444.

News from the schools

Members from *Colibri Wildlife Club* and *Geography Club* of Plaisance Secondary school went on an educational trip to Silhouette at the beginning of this year. The main aim was to beautify the school compound. The Ministry of Environment provided a variety of plants, including native species, flowering shrubs such as *allamanda*, *bison* and *hibiscus*, and other ornamental palms and shrubs. Participants also studied the rich biodiversity of the island and some historical sites.

They learnt about the tortoises and '*torti soupap*' of Seychelles in an interesting presentation by Mr Ron Gerlach, from *Nature Protection Trust of Seychelles*.

Participants from the *Banyan Tree Wild-*



Plaisance Secondary students beautifying Silhouette school

life Club of Anse Etoile, went to the Botanical Garden and Vacoa Nature Trail at Barbarons with Miss C. Jacques, their new Wildlife Club leader. They learnt about the wetlands biodiversity of these two areas.

Members of the same club also went for a bird watching activity at Le Marinier where they learnt about birds and their feeding habitats.

At the end of last year members of *Casuarina Wildlife Club* of Plaisance Primary school visited the wonderful Aride reserve. Participants learnt about species of birds, insects and plants. They managed to observe the endemic *bois citron* which grows naturally only on that Special Reserve. They were amazed to see the lizards and millipedes which live on such islands as they are different from those of Mahe.

Send us environmental news from your school for publication in *Enviro News*.

Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles Activities

A group of eight Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles (WCS) leaders spent the weekend of 24th -26th January 2002 on Cousin Island Special Reserve to find more about invasive plants species, especially the ones that are becoming problematic on the reserve. They attended a two-day workshop held on Saturday and Sunday, led by two plant specialists who are heading an FAO regional project to study alien invasive species (AIS).

During the workshop, the leaders and the island wardens, learnt about the trees, shrubs and creepers that are classified as invasive species in Seychelles and the factors that influence the spread of those.

Case studies were used to highlight problems in Seychelles and on other islands states such as Hawaii and Mauritius. Lively discussions arose around reasons for the invasion and proposals for control. The WCS leaders were given guidelines on how to identify the main invasive species, who to contact should they identify new invasive plant species, and shared ideas about what could they do with their clubs and in the community.

The participants also carried out fieldwork to first identify the invasive species on Cousin. This was followed by weeding mainly of seedlings of papaya (*carica papaya*) and creepers such as wild pea (*canavalia cathartica*) and

herbs like *zepi ble* and *lerb serzan*, which had proliferated and were threatening native species such as the pisonia (*mapou*) that was attempting to regenerate.

The exercise has benefited the Wildlife Club leaders who obtained knowledge whilst undertaking practical conservation work, has also fostered teamwork and involved the island's wardens. As one leader commented "we worked hard and had fun whilst learning new things; we hope to be back to give a helping hand". This educational visit was sponsored by LEAP (Local Environment Action Programme), a special funding mechanism put in place by Nature Seychelles.

Eco-School Competition 2002

Plaisance, Bel Eau and La Digue schools won this year's Eco-School Competition, which is organised every year by the Ministry of Education and Youth (MOEY) to reward the most environmentally friendly schools.

Representatives of the winning institutions collected their awards at the Botanical Garden on Friday 13th December, during the National Environment Awards Day.



Minister Faure and Cable & Wireless Representative presenting prizes to Star Prize Winners

The competition is divided into three categories: - secondary, primary, and crèche, with three prizes in each category; Star Prize, First Prize and Special Mention.

Plaisance Secondary School gathered 637 points to win the Star Prize. Their prize comprises of a shared trip to Aldabra sponsored by President France Albert Rene, R2000 sponsored by Cable and Wireless and a Coco de mer trophy sponsored by Ministry of Environment (MOE).

The school has continuously shown improvement in promoting environmental education at school level. This year for example, apart from the wildlife club, other clubs at school such as the Geography and Book clubs have made great effort in initiating environmental projects and activities for their members. Teachers have also tried to incorporate environmental issues in their subjects areas and even parents have, during the year, participated in environment-related activities organised by the school.

The first prize for secondary category went to La Digue School with 412 points and they have won a shared trip to any inner island sponsored by Seychelles People's Defence Forces (SPDF) and a cash prize of R800.00 sponsored by Environment Trust Fund (ETF).

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La Digue School has this year showed great improvement and according to their Headteacher, Mrs Lauria Joseph, this prize is an incentive and welcome recognition for the special effort they have made to improve the school environmental education programme. She stated that there is still a lot of room

for improvement and that she and her staff would continue to work harder next year for more improvement. The Special Mention title went to Anse Royale, which scored 308 points, thereby also winning a cash prize of R500.00, also sponsored by ETF.

In the primary category, the Star Prize this year went to Bel Eau main school

with 596 points. The prize has in the past years gone to La Retraite School and according to the judges, this has shown great effort on the part of this year's new winner. Apart from the shared trip to Aldabra, the school has also won a cash prize of R1200.00 sponsored by ETF and a Coco-de-mer trophy sponsored by MOE.

The school has this year worked harder to encourage its students to participate in as many environmental education activities organised at national level and participants have embellished their school compound and classes to make them more environmentally friendly.

The first prize went to their sister school, Bel Eau Annex, with 533 points. The school has been awarded a shared boat trip sponsored by SPDF, a cash prize of R700.00 sponsored by ETF and a Saving Prize Bond sponsored by Seychelles Saving Bank.

The Special Mention prize went to La Retraite School with 530 points, who has also won a cash prize of R300.00. La Retraite has held the Star Prize title for several years in the past. A prize for special effort went to School for the Exceptional Child and their reward was R200.00 and a Savings Prize Bond.

In the crèche categories, the Star Prize went to La Digue and the prize is

R800.00 sponsored by ETF. The crèche has made tremendous effort to beautify their compound and classes. Teachers have also tried to encourage students at an early age to start to reuse and recycle.

The First Prize went to Les Mamelles Crèche who also won a cash prize of R500.00 sponsored by Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS) and a Saving Prize Bond. Plaisance Crèche grabbed the Special Mention prize, winning also a cash prize of R200.00 sponsored by ETF and a Saving Prize Bond.

The MOEY is very pleased with the special efforts made and commitment some schools had made not only to win the prizes in the competition, but also to promote environmental education in their schools. The Ministry expressed great satisfaction that this year private sector players like Cable and Wireless, SPDF, Development Bank of Seychelles and Seychelles Saving Bank had supported EE efforts, by sponsoring interesting prizes for the competition. ETF has also contributed generously for this competition.

Another constant supporter has been President France Albert Rene who has been sponsoring the Aldabra trip for four consecutive years now. This trip is



PS Mondon presenting prizes to winners of the Primary Category

highly coveted and obviously very costly, and has helped quite a number of young nature lovers to enjoy and appreciate this far away and fragile World Heritage Site.

MOEY has expressed gratitude to all the sponsors and all the judges of this competition.

The competition has already been launched for this year and in December the schools will once again be awarded. We look forward to even greater school participation this year.

Latest Results

Eco-School 2002

Crèche Level

Star Prize: La Digue crèche

1st : Les Mamelles crèche

Special Mention: Plaisance crèche

Primary Level

Star Prize: Bel Eau Main

1st : Bel Eau Annex

Special Mention: La Retraite

Best Effort: School for the Exceptional Child

Secondary Level

Star Prize: Plaisance

First Prize: La Digue

Special Mention: Anse Royale

Up Coming EE Programme

- UNEP writing/drawing Project-theme– Water, 2 billion people are dying for it! Deadline: 28th March 2003
- Art competition- ‘Conserving our Reefs’ Deadline –15th May 2003
- Quiz Competition S1-S3 Water and Meteorological Day
- SMB Cleaner School Competition, on going -Prize Giving, 5th June, World Environment Day.
- Eco-School, on going - Prize Giving-December.

POET'S CORNER

Save the Sharks

How many sharks were there?
‘Million,’ said grandpa,
How many sharks were killed?
‘Thousands,’ said grandma,
How many sharks are left today?
‘Hundreds,’ said dad,
How many sharks will be left tomorrow?
‘Few,’ said mum,
How many how many sharks will be left in a years time?
‘None,’ said uncle
“Oh!” we all said
So let start protecting them today

By Marcus Mondon
Takamaka school

Environmental Theme Days 2003

The importance of environmental issues has led to the development of special environmental days and weeks on the Seychelles calendar. Some of these special days have been designated by international bodies or organisation such as UN, FAO and are celebrated internationally, for example World Wetlands Day, Earth Day, Biodiversity Day, Ozone Day, while others are specifically Seychellois, Tree Planting Day and SUBIOS. Schools are encouraged to include these special days on their annual calendar so as to raise awareness and sensitise their students on specific environmental issues. They could also take part in activities being organised locally or internationally to commemorate these days. Subject teachers could also work on special projects during that week/day. Language teachers can develop story and poetry writing skills for SUBIOS week. Science teachers can work on water or biodiversity project for Water Day or Biodiversity Day, Geography class can research the issue of desertification and ozone for Desertification Day and Ozone Day, whereas art teachers can work on a poster competi-

tion for Environment Day. Teachers can discuss and choose one or two theme days they could work on in their subject area so that most of the theme days could be covered. That can involve the whole school in the school environment programme.

Below is a simple guideline:

-During the school Head of Subject (HOS) meeting, HOS can be presented with all theme days.

-Discuss and choose a theme, which can best be developed in their respective subject.

-Design an activity/project based on that theme, which is appropriate for their particular class. For example, a language teacher could set a comprehension exercise on a magazine article based that particular theme.

-Try the activity out and display the students' work.

Below are the theme days:

- 31st January – **Protected Area Day**
- 2nd February – **World Wetlands Day**, 2003 theme “No Wetlands No Water”
- 22nd March – **World Day For Water**, 2003 theme is “Water for Future”
- 23rd March – **World Meteorological Day**, 2003 theme is “Our Future Climate”
- 22nd April – **Earth Day**

- 22nd May – **Biodiversity Day**
- 5th June – **World Environment Day**, 2003 theme “ Water – Two Billion People are Dying for It!”
- 8th June– **Ocean Day**
- 17th June – **Day to Combat Desertification and Drought**
- 10th July– **Sustainable Development Day**
- 11th July– **World Population Day**
- 16th September – **Ozone Day**
- Mid September – **Clean Up the World Campaign**
- 27th September – **Tree Planting Day**
- Week 1, October – **World Birdwatch Day**
- 16th October– **World Food Day**
- 11th-18th October – **SUBIOS Underwater Festival**, 2003 theme is “Our friends, the Dolphins and Whales
- 4th October – **World Habitat Day**
- December– **Environment Awards Day**

EECC MEMBERS

Ministry of Education and Youth
Ministry of Environment
Ministry of Tourism
Ministry of Local Government, Sports and Culture
SWAC
Nature Seychelles
Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles
Public Utilities Cooperation
Marine Parks Authority