

Cuban schools enter the UNESCO Community Sandwatch Competition



Four primary schools and nine secondary schools entered the competition, and some schools submitted several entries, making a total of sixteen entries. A combined entry from Escuela Especial Dora Alonso, Vocacional de Arte Dominica del Amo, and Secundaria Básica Jose Antonio Echeverría won a special effort award. This entry was especially interesting because it had involved students with special needs including some with autism; the Escuela Primaria Seguidores de Camilo y Che won third prize in the primary school section; and the IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Cuba won an award for originality. A summary of all the Cuban entries is included below:

School: Escuela Primaria Urbana 'Angela Landa', Old Havana, Havana City

Title of Project: **Huellas en la arena** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish

Description: Students and their teacher, **Carmela Martínez Hechavarría**, carried out a project at Playa Guanabo. Their practical work on the beach was reinforced in the classroom. They conducted a survey of the community to find out the type of changes people would like to see at the beach. While individuals were critical of persons who polluted the beach, they were unwilling to do anything about it. However, the students' work in cleaning the beach stimulated the inhabitants to promise to continue the work.

School: Don Mariano Marti Navarro, Old Havana, Havana City

Title of Project: **Protección de las arenas** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish

Description: Students and their teacher, **Loyda Rafaela Vargas Portes**, selected Guanabo beach for their measurements. They researched the past history of the beach and measured many different parameters of the beach, which is one that is impacted by the Rio Guanabo. The students wrote poems, word puzzles, and stories, and made art work about the beach and the environment. They also prepared a bulletin about caring for the environment. They [interviewed members of the community](#) about their ideas for the beach and took part in radio interviews to raise

awareness.

School: Escuela Primaria Seguidores de Camilo y Che, Matanzas

Title of Project: **Protección de la arenas** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish

Description: Students, assisted by their teacher, **Raudel Cuba Jiménez**, selected the El Judío beach in the city of Matanzas for their project. They measured different aspects of the beach from water quality to the number of beach users and focused on public awareness through radio programmes, brochures and participation in festivals.

School: Escuela Vocacional de Arte, Alfonso Pérez Isaac, Matanzas

Title of Project: **Proyecto arenas: Protegemos lo que amamos y disfrutamos** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish

Description: Students, led by their teacher, **Mariela Luisa Herrera Cruz**, selected a small beach, Buey-Vaca, in Mantanzas Bay for their project. Their measurements, which were integrated into classroom activities, indicated that pollution was a major problem. They created murals, held meetings, wrote poetry and sent messages to everyone in the community about the need to care for the beach and to keep it clean. They also involved younger students and organised a major beach clean up.

School: Escuela Secundaria Básica Rubén Bravo Álvarez, Havana City

Title of Project: **Sandwatch Project** - read the [REPORT](#) and view a [MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION](#)

Description: Students, led by their teacher, worked at El Cachón beach in Cojímar village in the Municipality of East Havana, Havana City. After measuring various beach parameters, they worked with their community to [clean the beach](#). They also publicized their activities on TV and created a cleaner crab mascot.

School: IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Santa Clara

Title of Project: **Proyecto Las Arenas** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish

Description: Students, led by their teacher, **Daniel Bulgado Benavides**, carried out detailed measurements, in an inter-disciplinary manner, at Playa Pública de Caibarién. They focused on the health on the beach and worked with the community, and formed an interest group to raise the community's level of awareness about caring for the beach. They found that more time was needed to maximise the results and benefits of their project.

School: IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Santa Clara

Title of Project: **Con alma de arena blanca para salvarte grano a grano**

Description: Students, guided by their teacher, **Daniel Bulgado Benavides**, carried out their project at Caibarién Beach where they joined with primary and secondary schools in the area to work with the local government agencies to keep the beach clean and to make a coastal mural to encourage citizens to keep the beach clean. They also publicised their activities through local media and overall their project represents a comprehensive approach towards influencing peoples views.

School: IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Santa Clara

Title of Project: **El cuidado de las arenas** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish

Description: Students, led by their teacher, **Idania Moreno Gutierrez**, worked at Caibarién Beach and carried out several measurements comparing the beach before and after the summer. They also worked to educate the community about the need to care and conserve the beach zone.

School: IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Santa Clara

Title of Project: **Proyecto de protección de las arenas: Isarena**

Description: Students, assisted by their teacher, **Daniel Bulgado Benavides**, worked at Isarena on the coast of Isabela de Sagua. They developed and implemented a strategy together with local organizations and the municipal government to keep the beach clean during the summer.

School: IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Santa Clara

Title of Project: **Preservemos la belleza de la Costa Norte**

Description: Students, helped by their teacher, **Daniel Bulgado Benavides**, completed a study on ways of caring and preserving the beaches of the northern coast and cays, particularly taking into account the natural processes and the entire coastal ecosystem.

School: IPVCE Comandante Ernesto Ché Guevara, Santa Clara

Title of Project: **Primero ama después crea** - view the [PRESENTATION](#) in Spanish

Description: Students, guided by their teacher, **Daniel Bulgado Benavides**, concentrated their project on Los Ensenachos, a large cay where a major hotel was under construction. The students made an inventory of the local flora and fauna and worked with local construction workers to raise their awareness and understanding of the natural ecosystem and the need for environmental conservation.

School: Escuela Martínez de Familia Romero, Sancti Spiritus

Title of Project: **Las arenas: Un patrimonio natural que debemos salvar**

Description: Students, assisted by their teacher, **José González Sáez**, carried out their project at La Boca Beach in the municipality of Trinidad. This is a beach where pollution is a serious problem and the students worked with the community to raise awareness about the need for a clean and healthy environment

School: IPVCE Frederico Engels, Pinar del Rio

Title of Project: **Rescate de nuestras playas: A partir del estudio de las arenas**

Description: Students, guided by their teacher, **Pedro Hiram Sánchez Castro**, worked at Playa Bailen to measure various beach characteristics and then worked with the community to raise awareness and keep the beach clean. They made several recommendations including re-vegetation and the implementation of development guidelines to conserve the beach. They also made a mascot for their project "Arenito"

School: Secundaria Básica Camilo Torres Restrepo, Havana City

Title of Project: **La ola estudiantil que ocasionó cambios favorables** - view the [PRESENTATION](#) in Spanish

Description: Students, led by their teacher, **Orlando Gámez Ramírez**, selected Playa Baracoa for their project. This beach displayed a high level of pollution and the students worked with the community to clean the beach, put in place garbage containers, and raise the level of awareness about the need to care for the beach. Some tourists, visiting Havana, were motivated by the students' activities, and helped them in their beach clean-up. Subsequently the tourists donated 20 computers and

computer-accessories to the school.

School: IPVCE José Martí Pérez, Holguin
Title of Project: **Por las limpias arenas que amo** - read the [REPORT](#) and view the [POWER POINT PRESENTATION](#) in Spanish
Description: Students, with the help of their teacher, **Diego Fernández Fernández**, assessed several beaches in the Bay of Gibaro and identified various issues at the different beaches. They then worked on raising the level of environmental awareness with other schools and members of the community. They also identified other areas where work was needed, such as the implementation of existing conservation laws and further scientific investigations.

School: Escuela Especial Dora Alonso, Vocacional de Arte Dominica del Amo, Secundaria Básica Jose Antonio Echeverría
Title of Project: **Protección de las arenas** - read the [REPORT](#) in Spanish
Description: Students of age ranging from 7-17 years, and including those with special needs - such as young people with autism - from three different schools, with the guidance of their teachers, **Meyver Vigil Pérez, Marisol Fleites Fernández, Rubén Bacallao Lima**, worked to educate the community and clean the beach. They also publicised their activities by participating in an arts festival.