

## Seychelles' Environmental Education Newsletter

Environmental Education Coordinating Committee • Ministry of Education and Youth • June 2003

Dear Readers,  
Welcome to our third edition of *EnviroNews* for this year. In this issue you will again be informed of the latest events which have taken place to celebrate environmental theme days. You will also learn about the new Eco-Tourism Strategy which the Ministry of Tourism is developing. La Digue students who went to Aldabra during the last school holidays have briefly described

their adventure to this World Heritage Site. You will also be informed about this year's SUBIOS competitions which have already been launched. A brief report on the SMB



'Save the Turtle' march.

Waste Disposal Competition has also been included in this issue. Special attention has been given to Glacis school where you will learn what the school is doing to improve its environmental education programme. I hope you will enjoy this edition and I urge you all to keep sending in articles for future publications. Happy Reading!  
Miss Larue

### Glacis School deals with waste management

During the SMB Proper Waste Disposal Competition, judges were impressed with effort of Glacis School in classifying their waste. In fact, it was the only school visited which at present is classifying their-waste. Bins at school have been labelled (eg there are bins only for bottles and plastics) and from what has been observed the pupils are using and respecting these bins very well. This special effort assisted the school in securing the third position in the SMB Waste Disposal competition. Mrs. Botsoie, the headteacher of the school gives us details on this issue:

Recycling and proper use of bins have been two issues of concern at Glacis school. We had welcomed the SMB competition as a means of motivation for our pupils and they were eager to participate. Regarding the recycled part, a lot of useful objects have been created from various materials such as empty bottles, glass bottles, pieces of paper, plastic bags, plastic glasses, empty boxes, etc. Such creative objects include candle holders, flowers, curtains, mats, cushions, pencil holders and other decorative ornaments which had been displayed in the different classes. Water-bottles are being re-

used to fill in with drinking water for children, thus avoiding wastage when drinking water from the tap. As a result there has been a decrease in our water bills. In addition, bins have been labelled as Plastic bottles, Metals, Papers, and Plastics. Pupils had wisely engaged themselves in classifying their rubbish accordingly. For all the effort we were awarded the 3rd prize in the competition. This will surely encourage us to continue and persuade our pupils in creating an environmentally-friendly atmosphere.

#### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <i>Schools celebrate environmental theme days</i> | 2 |
| <i>News from the schools</i>                      | 2 |
| <i>SUBIOS 2003 Competitions launched</i>          | 2 |
| <i>Our Trip to Aldabra</i>                        | 3 |
| <i>SMB Proper Waste Disposal Competition</i>      | 3 |
| <i>Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles Activities</i>    | 4 |
| <i>Towards an Eco-Tourism Strategy</i>            | 4 |

#### Thought of the Month

Torti I pli rar, Ki nou kwar  
I pli an danze, Ki nou panse,  
Alor, Annou tret li  
Parey en vre Trezor

Minister R. Jumeau  
Turtles March 4th June 2003

#### Write to:

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

## Schools celebrate environmental theme days

To celebrate **Biodiversity Day** a talk on the conservation of sea turtles was organized at NIE. Several schools attended the talk which was delivered by Dr. Jeanne Mortimer and other officers from Conservation Unit in the Ministry of Environment.

World Environment Day, 5th June and **Ocean Day** 8th June, a march was organized in Victoria under the theme, *Save Sea Turtles*. Over 500 school children together with over 400 other people coming from other ministries and organizations walked around the town shouting, singing and waving banners, all requesting people to protect and conserve these rare natural species. Children painted beautiful posters and attractive banners, wore colourful clothes and designed noisy musical

instruments in order to attract the attention of the public.

They did manage to get the attention of people from everywhere to see what was happening. Some even joined in, especially tourists who danced, cheered and took pictures of the exciting small faces who showed so much concern regarding the conservation of sea turtles. Such a successful event shows that our young generation is committed towards environment protection and that sea turtles will in future be well conserved. The Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Education and Youth would like to thank all participants and sponsors who made this special event a success.

To mark **Ocean Day**, the Seychelles National Coral Reef Network organized a one-week

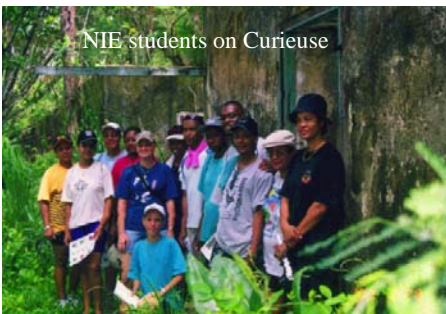
exhibition and a Prize Giving Ceremony for the *Conserving our Reefs* poster competition



launched earlier during this term. Winners received interesting prizes and organizers were very impressed with the quality of work the students produced for the competition.

## News from the schools

A group of 15 NIE students, coming from EE subsidiary subject group and members of NIE environment club participated in a three-day educational camp on Praslin, Aride and Curieuse. On Praslin participants joined the Baie Ste. Anne environment club and visited the Pearl Farm and Fond Ferdinand Reserve. Participants were able to enrich their knowledge of the Seychelles biodiversity and establish contact with one of the island's environment clubs.



NIE students on Curieuse

Students from P6A1 of Plaisance Primary School went on an educational trip to Mont Signal. Apart from admiring the islands of the Ste. Anne Marine Park, students also had the chance to learn some of our endemic and indigenous plants.

Students of Anse Royale Secondary participated in a beautification activity at their school on Saturday 6th June. Colourful flowering shrubs have been planted.

School for the Exceptional Child organised a Recycling competition for students from the school. Interesting and attractive objects were fabricated from a variety of materials which we often just throw away at school or home.

Cascade school, together with their PTA, has engaged in a long term project to upgrade their school environment. Wonderful flowering plants have been planted around the school. The buildings have also been cleaned and repainted.

Anse Boileau Secondary School is also trying to improve their school compound.

Trees, especially palms have been planted at the school. Students and staff are now trying to recycle barrels to make attractive bins so as to better deal with waste management. Students from the school environment club are working closely with the Biodiversity Centre at Barbarons and they planted around 100 palms at the centre.

Students of La Retraite School have made a pledge to take care of their environment. The ceremony was done in the presence of parents. The class prefects were the first to sign the document which will then be circulated to all students of the school to add their signature.

Plaisance Secondary school organised two competitions to commemorate this year's World Environment Day, an Horticultural competition and their annual Regional Public Speaking. Students coming the environment club on their side are working on a medicinal plant project which include researching and the growing of these plants.

## SUBIOS 2003 COMPETITIONS LAUNCHED

**SUBIOS** is the most popular environmental education event in the country. It is a week packed with activities and competitions based on the protection and conservation of marine life. This year's festival will be celebrated from 11th to 18th October.

The Ministry of Education and Youth and the SUBIOS Committee have already launched this year's painting, poem and story writing competition. The theme *"Our Friends, the Dolphins and Whales"* is expecting to attract more participants this year.

As usual, the competition is divided into three categories, 6-11 yrs, 12-

16 yrs, and 17+. Poems and stories can be written in English, French or Creole, but must reflect the theme given. Number of words for stories must also be respected: 300 words for 8-12 yrs; 700 for 13-16 yrs and 1500 for 17+.

Other activities on the programme will be snorkelling excursions, film shows and talks, exhibitions and our prize giving ceremony.

The deadline for the competition is Friday 3rd October 2003 and all entries must be sent to the Environmental Education Unit, ECA/PE Section, Ministry of Education and Youth.

All artwork, stories, and poems must

be original. Any suspected reproduction will be disqualified. Competitors are advised to write his/her name at the back of his or her work, and not on the front. In the past, beautiful work has been disqualified because competitors have only illustrated or written about the underwater scenes and have forgotten about the theme. We are this year urging them to try and show us how dolphins and whales are our friends, or how we must show respect for and live in harmony with these two marine species.

We wish you all good luck. Start working now, do not wait for the last minute.



## Our Trip to Aldabra

Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> of April was a day that we will never forget in a hurry. This is the day that we reaped our rewards for having been students in a school that won top honours in the Eco-School competition. It was on this day that with 12 other children and 3 teachers from other schools on Mahe, we set off for the world heritage site of Aldabra.

We boarded the IDC plane for Assumption at 2.00pm. Three hours later we landed on Assumption and the sea voyage began. This was a three-hour sea journey aboard the boat, 'The Indian Ocean Explorer'. It was quite a site to behold the vast coralline island of Aldabra, more so as we arrived the sharks that were swimming quite close to the shore impressed us.

After a night's rest, we faced the next day with lots of anticipation. We visited 'Basin Libin', a place with lots of basins in the corals. Our next stop was the pond

where jellyfish swim upside down! We learnt from the rangers that these types are found only on Aldabra. Then we toured the lagoon and were shocked by its size. It is so vast and the rangers told us that the whole of Mahe Island could fit inside it. There we saw turtles and tortoises. In the afternoon we were taken to the Frigate colony and we saw millions upon millions of *frigate* birds. They were simply all over! There were also the red-footed boobies.

The very low tide on the second day prevented us from going to Anse Maise so we had to do with Picard for our picnic. However, later in the day things improved and we hopped onto a speedboat for Bras Desede and then Bras Monsieur Clermont. This area of Aldabra is very dense with Mangroves trees.

As our trip drew to an end, we presented our hosts with gifts and at 6.30 am the following day we started our

journey back to Mahe.

One thing that we learnt on this trip was the vast beauty and rich biodiversity that the Seychelles possesses. To us, visiting Aldabra was beyond our wildest imagination. We especially would like to thank the organizers, the President, the Ministry of Education and Youth, the Ministry of Environment, SIF, Aldabra staff and not forgetting our school and community on La Digue, who helped us win the first prize in the Eco-School competition.

By P. Ladouce and Y. Barra, La Digue



## SMB Proper Waste Disposal Competition

Last year the SMB launched the Prosper Waste Disposal Competition. It aims at creating partnership with every Seychellois and augmenting awareness in keeping the environment clean and therefore increasing activity towards proper disposal of SMB waste packaging, in particular their snacks, tetrapaks and pet bottles.

In May this year, judges visited all schools on Mahe, Praslin and La Digue. No schools were notified of the judging dates. It was therefore a surprise for them, yet the judges were very much welcomed and staff were always ready to answer their questions or clarify certain issues.

Several observations were made: Primary schools children were using bins better than secondary schools; there was a lack of bins in certain schools; some schools were not



locating and maintaining their bins properly; waste classification is not well practised in schools; most schools have contract with SWAC; most schools are reusing and recycling their waste; and most schools have a compost which is being used to beautify their compounds.

School for the Exceptional Child came out first and received R2000.00 worth SMB products, Grand Anse Mahe second and won R1000.00, whereas Glacis came out third and they won R500.00.

MoEY congratulates all winning schools and thank SMB for their initiative and sponsorship.

## Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles Activities

Every year the Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles (WCS) runs workshops for new leaders during the April vacation.

Many who attend these training sessions do so because they feel they have limited skills in running a club and wish to become better equipped to manage their association

To meet these needs WCS had, once again, another packed work schedule last April holiday with three training programmes being organised for the leaders. A three-day **New leaders workshop** was organised with the aim of building capacity for new club leaders to enable them to run clubs more efficiently. The facilitators concent-

rated on familiarising the participants with the necessary tools for capacity building and understanding the Wildlife Clubs Strategic Plan 2002 - 2006, WCS Constitution and WCS Rules and Regulations. Activities planned included field trips, how to plan activities for club members and what types of resources are available. The emphasis was on Environmental Education Practical Suggestions and active learning. This will equip the new leaders with necessary skills to help them in managing their school - based clubs.

The other workshop was one on **invasive, alien species** found on Mahe, especially those that are coming problematic. Another output of the workshop was to participate in practical fieldwork, which involved weeding and subsequent planting of endemic palms

at a designated site. Leaders learnt what constitutes invasive plants, factors that accelerate the spread of invasive species and how to manage the problem.

The third workshop was to help familiarise leaders with **trails** and build up their confidence in taking groups out on their own, and for that, Vacoa Trail was selected. They studied plant life on the trail and undertook a river study.

At the end of all the training sessions, the participants left excited and enthused, highly motivated to continue sensitising young people of Seychelles on environmental education awareness and to help save wildlife and habitats.



## Latest Results

### SMB Proper Waste Disposal:

1st - School for the Exceptional Child  
2nd - Grand Anse Mahe  
3rd - Glacis

### Save our Coral Reefs Competition:

#### Category A

1st - Tracey Nicette - Beau Vallon Prim  
2nd - Wayne Adeline - Anse Etoile Prim  
3rd - Rachel Desir - Plaisance Prim

#### Category B

1st - Randolph Cetoupe - Pte Larue Sec  
2nd - Bernard Theresine-Beau Vallon Prim  
3rd - Sheryl Cupidon - Glacis

#### Category C

1st - Tony Lablache, Praslin Sec  
2nd - Trevor Larue - English River  
3rd - Chanel Lajoie - Anse Royale Sec

## Up Coming EE Programme

### SUBIOS Festival:

11th– 18th October  
Art, Story and Poem Competitions,  
*Our Friends, the Dolphins and Whales*, deadline on 3rd October 2003.

### Ozone Day:

16th September, march on La Digue

### Tourism Week:

22nd –27th September

### Tree Planting Day:

27th September

### TUNZA (UNEP children magazine) Competition:

Theme - *Water For The Future*, deadline 14th August, 2003.

### Clean Up the World Campaign:

19th—21st September.

## POET'S CORNER

Aldabra

Aldabra

I ranpli avek  
En kantite reken  
E zoli tyomityo  
Zot vreman atiran  
E menm dous parfwa.  
I ranpli avek mervey.

Tortidmer e tortidter  
Pe fer pronmnad  
Dan sa zoli paradi  
Zot vreman sanse  
E menm ganny proteze.

Aldabra

Nou bann zenn kinn vizit ou  
Nou pou toultan la pou ou  
Pou protez e preserv ou touzour.

Samirah Madeleine

Belonie School

2003 Aldabra trip participant

## Towards an Eco-Tourism Strategy

The preparation of an eco-tourism strategy was a key recommendation in the Ministry of Tourism and Transport's policy paper, "Vision 21: Tourism Development in Seychelles 2001-2010, was officially launched in December 2001. Since then the National Eco-tourism Committee, chaired by the same Ministry, has been engaged in a consultative process to develop a draft document entitled, "Towards an Eco-tourism Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century".

The draft document was presented to the different stakeholders and the public in general in a one-day national consultative workshop organized by the MTT on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2003. The aim of putting the said document to a wider audience was to gain maximum inputs from all concerned. The workshop held at ICCS, brought forward some very interesting and important issues concerning the future development of eco-tourism in Seychelles.

One of the main concerns was to how to sensitize policy makers, local community, and decision makers about eco-tourism. Many good ideas were presented such as the use of the existing U-First campaign as a means of educating the public; the incorporation of eco-tourism in school curricu-

lum; training that is more practical than theoretical, to name a few.

It was decided that a report incorporating the recommendations made at the one-day workshop be prepared and circulated to the participants and other interested parties. Further amendments have also been made to the draft document so as to have a finalized national eco-tourism strategy to be submitted to government soon for approval. Below we publish parts of point 5.2.4 of the final draft with regards to education: **"In addition, schools will be targeted, and the formal education aspect will be strengthened, for example, by including the principles of eco-tourism within the relevant subjects in the school curriculum. Furthermore, the existing environmental and U First clubs in the schools and districts will be well supported so as to foster the concept of eco-tourism. Consideration will also be given to utilizing the U-First Programme to target the general public and not just those working directly in the industry."**

Some interesting questions came up during the workshop as to whether Seychelles should be promoted as an eco-tourism destination as a whole or have certain segments of the market as being eco-tourism friendly. The group discussed issues pertaining to the compati-

bility of eco-tourism with 5-star establishments and the approaches that would be taken to incorporate and promote our culture and products for maximum community benefits. It was also discussed whether government should look into the possibility of supporting and marketing cultural products which would include Seychelles participation in specialized trade fairs. The National Eco-Tourism Strategy (SETS-21) is expected to be officially launched by the end of June 2003.

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