



Seychelles' Environmental Education Newsletter

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

Dear Readers

Welcome to our 5th issue of *Enviro News* for 2003.

A lot of environmental education activities have taken place during this last term to celebrate environmental theme days, Tree Planting Day, Ozone Week, Bird Festival, Clean up the World Campaign and the SUBIOS Festival. Read all about them on the next page.

You will also have the chance to learn about two workshops organised recently. The first was a two-day

workshop organised for all headteachers and other environmental education partners based on the development of Eco-School concept in schools.

The other workshop was organised to train teachers who will take part in the



APERGE Project next year. *Enviro News* has contacted SIF to find out about the tourism development project on Aldabra atoll.

I will also review one of the famous environment festival for school children, and that is no other than SUBIOS Festival.

I would now thank every one who has contributed information for this issue and I would like to encourage more contribution from schools next year.

Happy Reading.

Miss Larue

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Teachers get training for APERGE Project

Twenty-one teachers coming from six primary and three secondary schools received training in order to start the APERGE project next year. The twenty unenthusiastic teachers coming from Anse Etoile, La Retraite, Mont Fleuri Primary, Bel Eau, Anse Royale Primary, Baie Lazare, Plaisance Secondary, English River and Anse Royale Secondary schools attended the two-day workshop which was facilitated by the coordinator for environmental education in MOEY and the two national animateurs, Miss Vicky

Theresine and Mrs Mariette Esparon.

They were introduced to the aim of APERGE as well as how the project is expected to be undertaken locally.

Participants were enlightened on the term of environment and environmental education active learning. As teachers involved were teaching both academic and technical subjects they learned about the importance of environmental issues across the curriculum, and how they could support each other when teaching a particular environment con-

cept /issue.

Also on the programme was how to carry out environment school audits.

They then visited Mont Fleuri Primary School, where they identified several environmental problems. In groups, they designed an action plan on one participation problem identified and plan how they would improve that problem during a period of two years.

The APERGE pilot project will start next year in the nine schools mentioned above.

Thought of the Month

'If there is magic on this planet, it is contained in water'

Loren Eisley

Write to:

Enviro News

Environmental Education Unit, ECA/PE Section, Ministry of Education and Youth, Mont Fleuri

Schools celebrate environmental theme days

The third term was one packed with environmental activities and competitions to celebrate four environmental theme days.



At the very beginning of the term, a march was organized on La Digue to commemorate the **Ozone Week**. Around 90 students from the island participated in the march, singing

songs and shouting slogans based on the need to protect the ozone layer. That attracted the attention of local people as well as many tourists who rushed from guesthouses and beaches to join the kids, as they also took pictures and filmed the activity.

To celebrate **Tree Planting Day**, a number of native trees were planted around several schools in the country. In a small ceremony held at the School for the Exceptional Child, Mrs. Benstrong, Mayor of Victoria, urged the students of the school to develop a culture of caring for their environment.

Clean up of marshes, rivers, beaches and other wildlife areas took place during this year's **Clean up the World**

Campaign, which was celebrated from the 19th to 21st September. A radio quiz was also organized for school children where La Rosiere school was the



winner and Anse Royale the runner-up. Two other theme days on the school calendar this term was **Bird Festival** and **SUBIOS Festival**. Read more about these two festivals below and the follow page.

News from the schools

As has been the case in the past, schools have been busy organising a number of environmental education activities to enrich the knowledge of children regarding biodiversity or to improve their natural environment. Members of Bel Eau wildlife club went for a visit to Jardin du Roi. They were able to learn about a variety of endemic and indigenous species as well as some popular spices used in creole dishes. Anse Royale Secondary school took



part in a beach rehabilitation activity where they planted trees on the sand dunes opposite their school as well as erected wooden poles to protect the beach against erosion and vehicles. Students from Plaisance Primary school have recently visited several inner islands. The wildlife club of the school

went to Cousin, Praslin, Curieuse and La Digue where spots of natural value

were visited. Students from P6 also went on a day trip to Cousin Bird Reserve. A bin shelter has recently been built at the school. This construction site has been sponsored by two parents.

Like Anse Royale, Anse Boileau Secondary school is also trying to monitor and protect the beach opposite their school from erosion. Students clean the beach regularly and have planted trees on the sand dunes. Members of the Book Club of Plaisance Secondary school visited La Digue nature reserve where they not only observed the endemic flycatchers, but also planted native plants in the reserve.

Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles Activities

WORLD BIRDWATCH was a global activity initiated by Birdlife international in 1993.

Since then this activity has been celebrated by birdlife partners every two years on the weekend of 4-5th October. This year's Bird Festival was held from Monday 29th September – Saturday 4th October.

The theme was *Birds in their Habitats*. A number of sensitisation activities were organised for the public and school children about the need to protect birds and their habitats. Nature Seychelles was the local partner coordinating activities for the event this year.

Activities at a national level include a phone-in programme in the popular slot *Lanbyans Labrin*, children's programmes with emphasis on threat-

ened birds aired in the *Dan Lanatir* on Saturday mornings, as well as a feature in Eco-viv with the theme-**Birds and people**- positive and negative impacts of human activities on birds.

Other activities included the launch of a set of four posters depicting the critically endangered birds of Seychelles (Zwazo an Danze i.e Seychelles magpie robin; scops owl; flycatcher; white eye). The set of posters come with an accompanying leaflet and these were presented to the Ministry of Education and that of the Environment.

Members of the public were also invited to go birdwatching and the lucky few who joined the group who took to the hills of La Misere got to see the rare white eye, and the scops owl. Other school groups went birdwatching at Police Bay and La Promenade, whilst a

group of art students painted a mural in Victoria, depicting some of the most endangered birds of Seychelles.

Some 15 members of the Wildlife Clubs from Praslin and their leaders enjoyed a visit to Cousin Island Special Reserve, courtesy of Nature Seychelles.

During the week leading up to the 4th October, all schools were encouraged to participate in a bird count where they recorded numbers and species of birds found in the school grounds. Teachers were encouraged to assist Wildlife Clubs members in making masks of bird faces, make bird feeders, play games which illustrate bird behaviours, migration etc. so as to increase awareness of birds, whilst reinforcing the cross curricular approach to teaching this topic.

Children celebrates the ocean

SUBIOS Festival has once again proved to be the most popular activity on our school extra curricular activity calendar.

For some children it was their first time to try diving. Big Blue Divers introduced a group of students to diving at the Roche Caiman swimming pool, whereas another group received the same training by divers of Underwater Center at Beau Vallon beach. Those secondary students who participated in that activity enthused that it was the best SUBIOS they have ever had.

As usual, presentations by local and international divers, marine biologists and film makers were organised in all secondary schools. The annual special presentation this year took place in the Polytechnic auditorium for students coming from South and West and in the International Conference Center (ICCS) for other schools. Over 500 students turned up at the ICCS and over 200 at the Poly.

This year was one of the best presentation they have ever had. Mr. Leandro Blanco who has just re-

ceived two awards at the Antibes film festival entertained the children with five of his humorous films. The audience cheered and sang along as they watched the films being projected and asked for more or repeats of two favourites, *With the Flow* and *Nobody loves you*. For Mr. Blanco it was surely the best audience he ever had. The question time was also interesting as Mr. Boyle and Mr. Blanco has to consult each other on a number of occasions to answer some difficult and challenging questions from the school children.

Most of this year's activities took place at the SUBIOS Village, Beau Vallon. The annual creative writing and art exhibition was held there and it was officially opened by Minister Danny Faure. During the week school groups visited the exhibition



held under the theme 'Our Friends, the Dolphins and Whales'. SCMRT and Marine Park Authority also set up an exhibition where visitors, especially school children had the chance to learn about our marine ecosystems. At night the village was more lively and many children, accompanied by their parents attended free open-air film shows which were projected on big screen.

Grand-Anse Mahe and Praslin Secondary students had the chance to participate in snorkeling excursions in Port Launay and Curiuse marine parks..

On the last day of the festival winners of the poem, story and painting competitions received prizes at the awards ceremony. The theme for next year's competitions, 'Sea Turtles, Silent Creatures Under Threat' was also announced at the ceremony. Let us hope that next year's festival will be as entertaining and informative as this year. For all those who are planning to take part in the competitions, *Enviro News* wishes you all good luck.

Why tourism development on Aldabra?

The Seychelles Island Foundation (SIF), recently initiated a process calling for tender from organizations and companies interested in obtaining the right to operate a six (6) room up-market eco-tourism development on Aldabra under lease for a period of 10 years.

The eco-tourism development option for Aldabra was approved early this year by the Board of Trustees of the Foundation during its Annual General Meeting following considerations taken regarding the sustainable financial viability of the Aldabra operations as a World Heritage Site.

Sine then, many teachers and students have expressed concern regarding that decision, especially in regard to the environmental impact of the develop on the natural environment of the atoll. *Enviro News* contacted SIF to seek clarification regarding the importance of the development and how the environmental impact will be minimised. Presently the Aldabra scientific research and monitoring activities are heavily dependent on revenues gener-

ated by the sister World Heritage site of Vallee De Mai.

The land-based tourism operation should therefore enable the Foundation to enhance the reputation of Aldabra as a nature reserve, as well as dramatically reduce the cost of operating a Research Station on the atoll and allowing for more funds to be available for other research projects on the atoll with minimum reliance on external sources.

The SIF recognises that Aldabra is a World Heritage site and this imposes a global responsibility and certain restrictions as there is a need to follow various international rules and procedures to maintain our credibility as guardians of this unique site.

Accordingly, the SIF decided that it will grant the tourism developer only some 20 acres of land on Picard Island for the tourism facilities and amenities. Additionally, it has established a set of development and environmental guidelines to guide the tourism operator during the development and operation stages of the project.

Among other concerns included in the guidelines are matters related to materials and resources to be used in the project and restrictions on the locations on Aldabra to which tourism activities will be allowed.

These areas will be clearly demarcated and the types of activities permitted clearly defined to ensure that the operators observe and adhere to these rules and procedures. Infringement of the rules would be sanctioned through serious fines.

It is worth noting that any land based tourism development will be subjected to the highest standard of environmental impact assessment before receiving approval for the project.

Throughout the process of the land-based tourism development strict control will be established through environmental guidelines and regular assessment of the impact of the tourism activities on the environment will be undertaken.

The EE Unit in MoEY is liaising with SIF to organise a meeting for teachers and members of National Youth Assembly to inform them of the project.

Latest Results

SUBIOS:

Category A:

Poem

1st- Emile Ernesta - Praslin Secondary

2nd - Camille Frichot - Independent

3rd - Nandita Nair - International

Story

1st -Jade Johnston - Independent

2nd - Stephanie Franchette - Glacis

3rd - Insuru Walpolo - Anse Boileau Sec.

Art

1st - Armann Shah - Independent

2nd - Darly Sinon - Anse Aux Pins

3rd - Fabio Bastienne - Independent

Category B:

Poem

1st - Thyra Faure - Anse Royale Sec.

2nd - B. Gbilimon & E. Melie - Mt. Fleuri Sec.

3rd - Malshini Senaratne - Anse Boileau Sec.

Story

1st - Terina Madeleine - Plaisance Sec.

2nd - Malshini Senaratne - Anse Boileau Sec

3rd - Sophia Hoareau - Plaisance Sec.

Art

1st - Channel Azemia - Beau Vallon Sec.

2nd - Jonathan Azemia - Anse Royale Sec.

3rd - Tony Lablache - Praslin Sec.

Category C

Poem

1st - Sarah Maurer - Polytechnic

Continue in the next column

Up Coming EE Programme

- **UNEP Painting Competition 2003**, theme - Save the Earth, deadline 12th December.
- **Eco-School Prize Giving** –16th December.
- **Environment Awards Day** –16th December
- **2002 Eco-School winners Aride Trip** - 17th December

Latest Results (continuation)

2nd - Noella Mussard - Polytechnic

3rd - Ramy Ernesta - NIE

Story

1st - Helena Sims -Polytechnic

2nd - Steven Rose - NIE

3rd - Martina Madeleine –Plaisance

Art

1st - Andy Alvis - La Retraite School

2nd - Juliette Zelime -College of the Arts

3rd - Steven Servina –Plaisance

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Poet's Corner

Les baleines et les dauphins
Des merveilles de l'océan
Créatures menacées
Auraient - ils un jour la liberté

Ne sachant leur vrai sentiment
Et vivant dans un cauchemar
Ils pleurent en silence
En attendant qu'on les
délivre de cette souffrance

C'est mon rêve de vivre parmi eux
De partager leur souffrance
De lutter pour leur liberté
Peut être si vous m'aider
J'y arriverai

Emilie Ernesta
SI, Ecole Secondaire de Praslin

Enviro News is now on internet!

All *Enviro News* (including past issues) can now be viewed on Ministry of Environment's website. Go to www.env.gov.sc, then click Education and you'll be able to read our

Headteachers learn about Eco-School

Headteachers are now better equipped to assist their staff in the development and promotion of Eco-school. A workshop was organized recently with the aim of training headteachers to: understand the Eco-school concept, paying close attention to the involvement of the 'whole' school in the programme; to sensitize them and raise their awareness on the importance of environmental education, its benefits for a sustainable future; and better equip them on how to adopt sustainable principles and guidelines to the day-to-day running of their school. The two day workshop was sponsored by SADC Regional Environmental Education Programme (REEP). The same training has also been given to our partners and ECA Regional Coordinators who throughout the year assist in coordinating the Eco-school programme.

Mrs. Kim Ward, the coordinator for Eco-School in South Africa, who is based at SADC REEP office, was the main facilitator. She introduced participants to the concept of 'environment' and 'environmental education' (EE). They also learnt how to carry out a school environmental audit and

develop a school environmental policy. Miss Larue on her side assisted them on how to establish a school environmental committee, plan a school EE calendar and how the Eco-School competition is judged.

For the first time, headteachers learnt that many teachers graduating from NIE have received training in EE, as an optional subject. Mrs. Mariette Lucas introduced them to two EE units which as of this term is compulsory for all trainee teachers who will study at NIE.

Mrs Katy Beaver and Miss Colleen Morel introduced the *Sustainable Living Methodology Guide* to participants. This EE resource is expected to be in schools next year. The resource was very much welcomed by headteachers as they felt it will assist teachers in integrating sustainable development issues in their subjects.

Sustainable development and sustainable school management were two important topics on the programme. Mr. Roph Payet from the Ministry of Environment traced some important world events which have been associated to sustainable development. For many

headteachers it was the first time they had the chance to see the Environment Management Plan of Seychelles. Mr. Payet briefed them on the issues in the document and its implementation process. Headteachers expressed great satisfaction and felt that the training will assist them in coordinating EE activities in their respective schools and integrate environmental issues across the curriculum. They stated that they would try their best to implement what they have learnt and are now more confident in setting up a school environment committee. At the end of the workshops, participants received certificates in a short ceremony where the PS for Education, Mrs. Mondon thanked the organisers and SADC REEP for their support.

EECC MEMBERS

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