



**Young Reporters
for the environment**

YOUNG REPORTERS FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

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 International Coordination*
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YRE International Jury

This year, the international jury will be taking place in Paris on thursday 28th May in the afternoon.

The international jury will be composed by:



Mr. Bernard Combes – UNESCO
 Ms. Fabienne Pierre – UNEP
 Ms. Morgan Strecker – UNEP
 Mr. David Ainsworth – Convention on Biological Diversity
 Mr. Alan Chambers – Feet of Green
 Mr. Peter Herbert – Feet of Green
 Mr. Richard Hale – Feet of Green
 Mr. David Solon – Redactor of the “TerraEco” magazine
 Mr. Thierry Lerévérend – FEE France Director
 Mrs. Sarah Winterton – FEE political responsible for YRE

They will be selecting 5 pictures and 9 awards (including the super-award) from the articles presented to the international jury by national YRE operators.

Good luck to all of the participants and thanks to the members of the jury for accepting this task!

We will of course let you know of the outcomes shortly after the international jury!

News from Romania

Romania counted 65 projects registered on the YRE site for the school year 2008-2009, projects from all over the corners of Romania, from simple and unknown villages to cities.

More and more teachers and students discover the importance of the YRE programme for their schools and for their communities and they started to react, having the support of the local authorities and institutions.

One important topic of the projects registered on YRE programme is the deforestation. Each day, in any part of Romania, hectares of forests disappear due to our ignorance and due to the insatiable desire of enrichment of some forest land owners. The young reporters, helped by local authorities and coordinated by their teachers, switched to action. One example is the afforestation action who involved the students from Ion Creanga School, from Suceava. On 8th of April, they took part to a afforestation of Abies Alba trees in the forest of a countryside, called Deleni, situated near their town.



*Ms. Simona Folea,
YRE National
Operator for
Romania*

YRE international mission in Portugal

Manteigas, Gouveia and Seia welcomed the Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) from schools across the country and a young Cypriot who also participated in the International YRE Mission – Estrela 2009 which took place between the 29th of March and 4th of April.

The activity in which these 16 youths took part in, under the guidance of 4 ABAE tutors, consisted of environmental research in the region of *Serra da Estrela* (in the Centre-North of Portugal). The communication of this research was in the form of newspaper articles and photojournalism.

The goals of this activity were to:

- Apply the methodology inherent to the YRE program: environmental research and communication
- Develop diverse skills such as: research, writing, teamwork, learning the English language, etc.
- Investigating good practices related to sustainable development
- Learning about the opportunities and challenges of the *Serra de Estrela* region in respect to the themes of water, biodiversity and climate change
- Identify problems and suggest solutions during the research process
- Provide a group of youths with the opportunity to meet with youths from other regions of Portugal and other countries

Read all about the mission in Portugal here :
<http://www.youngreporters.org/index.php3>

YRE mission in Portugal : “Shepherds still exist...”

In an isolated valley lost in the world the job of a shepherd still continues to manifest itself in terms of traditions.

Manuel Silva dos Santos, well-known as Manuel "Grazina", lives with his wife and his 18 years-old daughter in Amoreira valley in Serra da Estrela. It is in this place that every day dozens of sheep and goats go out to get some fresh air and get food.

This place is rounded by a very pleasant landscape where in a delightful afternoon Manuel offered a little bit of his time for an interview, always with a good disposition and humour.

Young Reporter Environment - Good afternoon Mr. Manuel.

Manuel Grazina - Good afternoon people.

YRE - So, as you know, we would like to ask you a few questions about your job that doesn't find many followers nowadays. Since when are you a shepherd?

M.G. - I've been a shepherd since I was born! My parents were shepherds and I was raised in my mother's lap while she was taking care of our sheep and goats. It's a family tradition: almost all my brothers and sisters have these animals too.

YRE - Are you from this region?

M.G. - I'm from Manteigas, but my wife is from here. To be a shepherd I had to come here. It's very difficult to be a shepherd in Manteigas. The terrain has too many rocks and little vegetation which is not good for the animals. For a shepherd to feed his flock he has to go for two or three months without seeing his family as they had to leave to far-away lands.

YRE - Were you always a shepherd?

M.G. - Despite always having flock, this wasn't enough to gain my life. I worked for the forest service for over 30 years as well.

Read the entire article here :

http://www.youngreporters.org/article.php3?id_article=4355

Read other articles produced during the mission :

« **St. Peter's forest angels** » http://www.youngreporters.org/article.php3?id_article=4353

« **A union can solve the future problems** » http://www.youngreporters.org/article.php3?id_article=4352

« **How to combat the fire efficiently?** » http://www.youngreporters.org/article.php3?id_article=4351

« **Serra da Estrela's Natural Park** » http://www.youngreporters.org/article.php3?id_article=4350

2010 : Biodiversity Target

On December 20th 2006, the United Nations proclaimed 2010 as “International Year of Biodiversity”. To prepare this international year, Young Reporters for the Environment introduced the Biodiversity theme in its main environmental problems, and will present a special report on Biodiversity in every newsletter.

What is Biodiversity ?

The term “biodiversity” has had many definitions in the past years, some more or less scientific. In 1992, during the United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, “biodiversity” was defined as:

“the variability among living organisms from all sources, including, 'inter alia', terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they are part: this includes diversity within species (genetics), between species and of ecosystems”.

This definition has been adopted by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, which is an international treaty that was adopted in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992.

In January’s newsletter, we tackled the question “why is biodiversity important?”. This month, we wish to introduce you to the IUCN Red List, a tool to protect it.

What is IUCN?

IUCN, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. (cms.iucn.org/about)

Why make such a list?

This list is compiled through exhaustive, partner-led research, and is designed to provide a realistic scientific assessment of the status of the world’s species. This list is used as the basis for how many countries develop their own national laws and policies as well as how business and investors assess their impacts before they develop.

(www.iucnredlist.org)

How does it work ?

The system is designed to determine the relative

IUCN Red List

risk of extinction, and and to highlight those plants and animals that are facing a higher risk of global extinction. Those are listed as Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable. The IUCN Red List also includes information on plants and animals that are categorized as Extinct or Extinct in the Wild, on taxa that cannot be evaluated because of insufficient information (Data Deficient), and on plants and animals that are either close to meeting the threatened thresholds or that would be threatened were it not for an ongoing taxon-specific conservation programme (Near Threatened).

Plants and animals that have been evaluated to have a low risk of extinction are classified as Least Concern. The Least Concern assessments did not appear on IUCN Red Lists produced before 2003 because the main focus of attention has been on threatened species.

(www.iucnredlist.org)

The IUCN Red List is available on their website in English, French and Spanish.



YRE of the month : “The Use of solar energy in schools”

The young reporter’s group of our school dealt with the above subject because we consider it a current and important issue. The solar energy is an important renewable source that will never be lost, that has low cost and is friendly to the environment because it is noiseless and does not emit pollutants. In the site of YRE we found an article of two students of secondary school in Lisabon of Portugal which suggest using a photovoltaic panel to give electricity for the information panel at their school.

In Cyprus people and mainly the children in schools, suffer from the unbearable heat during the summer months, and thus, the use of air conditioners in classes is necessary. These results to the increased consumption of electric current with an increased monthly cost. For the reduction of this cost serious measures should be taken. A great solution is the use of solar energy in schools and the exploitation of solar energy because in Cyprus there is a big sunlight and plenty of sun’s radiation which the island receives (up to 2000KWh/m²).

Solar element is a system that turns the abundant solar energy to electric current. It is one of the most rapid developing technologies of renewable sources of energy in the world.

The use of solar panels is also friendly to the environment. Each kilowatt of energy that is produced by solar panels and not by conventional fuel means the causes of 1,1 kg carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere. Moreover, it leads to less emission of other dangerous pollutants like flying microparticles, nitrogen oxides, and the sulphur components.

For further investigations of the topic, we visited a photovoltaic park in the University of Cyprus in Nicosia interviewed Mr. George Makridi. We also communicated with E.A.C., the Department of Energy at Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Tourism. We collected useful information which is listed below. [...]

Also in Cyprus there are 321 buildings that have solar panel, of which 94 are in the province of Larnaca.

Solar panels have been installed in 29 schools with total power 129,91KW, of which the 3 are in Larnaca with total power 15,08KW.

Beginning from 2009 the installation of photovoltaic element is programmed to take place in 48 schools in Cyprus, of which 9 of them are in the province of Larnaca. One of these schools where it will be done installation of photovoltaic it’s ours.

We tried to calculate what benefit we can have if we will use the ceiling of our school to put photovoltaic. With the help of Google Earth in the internet we located our school. Our school has got very good orientation for installation of photovoltaics (almost North –South). We measure the area of the roof and found that it’s 2514m².

We calculated how many photovoltaic plates of about 0,2 KW power we can install on the roof if we put them with an angle of 27,5° and with orientation to the South for the best ascription.

We found that we will need about 670 photovoltaics plates. [...]

Knowing that photovoltaic system of 1kilowatt with suitable orientation produces on average more than 1500KWh of energy per year, we calculated total power of installation.[...]

We can see that by using solar energy we can completely cover the needs of our school in air conditioning and we can save a good amount of energy which we can sell.

By installing photovoltaics in our school we can significantly contribute to protecting the environment. We will limit the carbon dioxide release in the air by 221100kg per year.

[...] Our recommendation is that photovoltaics should be installed in every school in Cyprus in order to make a good investment with our government’s money. The responsible authorities should motivate everyone to install photovoltaics in all the buildings of our country.

*YRE team of “Vergina Gymnasium” Larnaca ,Cyprus:
Students: Giannis Ionas C1 ,Marilena Hadjiprodrumou C1 ,
Rafaela Koulia C1 ,Georgia Philippou C2 ,Irene Sykopetritou C2. Teacher: Tatiana Nicolaou*

Read the complete article on the website :
http://www.youngreporters.org/article.php3?id_article=4229

The Young Reporters for the Environment International Coordination hopes you enjoyed reading this Newsletter



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