The Global Forum for Environmental Education, Volume 1 Number 3, page 2

Coloquio

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El Ayuntamiento de la Haya, Países Bajos.
The Global Forum for Environmental Education, Volume 1 Number 3, page 3

From the editor.

The editors are happy to present this third issue of the Global Forum. It contains articles from New Zealand, Scotland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Brazil, Turkey and India. With New Zealand we have members in all continents of the world now, and the name Global Forum becomes literally true.

We hope that the European Community has decided to substitute the Global Forum. We are reviewing support now from the EC and from the city of The Hague. We hope that there will be more organizations, governmental or business, that will be willing to support the Global Forum. We strongly invite you to send us suggestions for getting financial support.

We would like to ask you again to send in material articles, drawings, poetry, etc., made by students. We feel that students should get a larger place than they have now in the magazine. Also if you have an article describing successful projects in your school, or experiences you would like to share with the other members of Caretakers of the Environment International, please send them to us. We will use it in one of the next issues. We hope to send the fourth issue, the last of the first volume, by June, before the Peruvian Conference. It is hoped that the first issue of the second volume will appear in September, around the end of the conference.

While this issue is appearing, the world is in great turmoil, around the war in the Gulf. Even though we are relieved the war has come to an end, our thoughts are with the participants of the Chicago conference from Kuwait, Abbas Mohammed Abdul Jad, Al-Ghazali, Ahmed Yasser, Al-Halid Eiad Al-Jububrahim and Habib Shobeni Madhi. We hope they are alive and well, and that they soon will be able to resume working for the Kuwait Environmental Protection Council. We hope that the people of the Middle East cooperatively with people from other parts of the world will begin solving the great environmental problems facing that region.

We hope you will enjoy reading the contributions from these different nations.

Jan Apoltheke, Chief editor.

The organization of the fifth conference is fully underway. The conference will be six days, and will include field trips to Machupicchu, the "Lost city of the Incas," Cusco for the third time and Lima for the second time. The conference is organized by Caretakers of the Environment International and the National University of Cusco, San Antonio Abad.

As a result of the conference we hope to establish a documentation center on Environment and Development. Activities are needed to contribute to taking material for the center.

The news about the cholera epidemic may have disturbed a number of you. We strongly recommend that each participant gets vaccinated against cholera, even though it appears that the epidemic is centered around Lima, but not around Cusco, where the conference is held. It is stressed, that all foreign visitors need to apply for a visa at a Peruvian consulate or diplomatic mission in their country. For cheap flights from Europe to Peru contact Julio Walls, secretary of the international liaison number 32 71 411 470 60. All communications concerning the conference should be made to:

Zaguan del Cielo L-9 Cusco, Peru.

Del editor.

Los editores se complace en presentar esta tercera edición de la revista "Global Forum." La revista incluye artículos de Nueva Zelanda, Escocia, Dinamarca, Irlanda, Japón, Países Bajos, Brasil, Turquía e India. Ahora que tenemos miembros en todas partes, en todos los continentes, y el nombre de "Global Forum" se está convirtiendo en un sinónimo mundial.

Nos complacería anunciar que la Comunidad Europea ha decidido sustituir al "Global Forum." La revista se apoya por parte de la CE2 y de la ciudad de La Haya. Esperamos obtener la ayuda de otras organizaciones que deseen sustentar el "Global Forum." Os pedimos sinceramente que nos sugiráis ideas para conseguir la ayuda financiera.

Os exhortamos nuestra oferta para que nos remitáis artículos, dibujos, poesías, etc., elaborados por los alumnos. Creemos que los alumnos deberían tener una mayor participación en esta revista. Asimismo, al desear de artículos que describan proyectos de estudio realizados en vuestras escuelas, o experiencias que en gasta a compartir con los demás miembros del "Caretakers of the Environment," nos dedicamos a ellas. Los inscribir en uno de nuestros próximos números. Esperamos acoger el cuarto número, hacia el mes de junio, antes de la Conferencia de Perú. El primer ejemplar del segundo volumen aparecerá hacia el mes de septiembre, es decir, poco después de acabar la Conferencia.

Mientras se impulsa este número, el mundo está inmerso en la gran contienda deslindada por la Guerra en el Golfo. Aunque la guerra ha terminado no podemos evitar pensar en nuestros compañeros de Kuwait, Abbas Mohammed Abdul Jad, Al-Ghazali, Ahmed Yasser, Al-Halid Eiad Al-Jububrahim y Habib Shobeni Madhi que asistieron a la Conferencia de Chicago y a los graves problemas ambientales que se enfrentan a la región, la que se temen medidas en un breve plazo para minimizar los daños al medio ambiente.

Pensamos que distinguidas la lectura de estas aportaciones procedentes de varias naciones diferentes.

Jan Apoltheke, Redactor Jefe.
A "Vacation School in Environmental Science" a new educational concept linking schools and universities.

By Dr Graeme Buchan

Lincoln University, Canterbury, New Zealand

Abstract: The author describes a highly successful environmental education event attended by 136 enthusiastic senior high school pupils from throughout New Zealand in May 1990. The "Vacation School in Environmental Science" exposed the participants to the thrills and challenges of environmental issues and instilled two objectives. First, it helped promote environmental education at the high school level, ensuring a broader understanding of the environment. Second, it motivated young people to take practical and effective action in order to meet the challenges of environmental problems.

Introduction.

In May 1990 at New Zealand’s newest university, a new concept emerged: bridging the gap between school and higher education: a vacation school in environmental science. The School, lasting five days at Lincoln University, was a success in communicating to young youth of understanding the environment. The Patron of the School was Sir Edmund Hillary, leader of the first ascent of Mt. Everest.

Why the School? The stimulus to run the School was twofold. First, the inception of a new B.Sc. degree at Lincoln University required a new teaching event. Second, and more importantly, the need was felt to reach the youth of New Zealand with a new message of environmental education and earthcare. Many universities now run short, residential ‘summer schools’ for secondary school students. Often these simply are ‘open house’ events, publicizing available courses. By contrast, we decided to run a theme-based school, whose topic, environmental science, would allow us to draw on the resources of both our university and the wider community.

How was it run? For effectiveness, the School was residential, and for economy, the very full programme was condensed into five days. The main ingredients of the programme were: a lecture session, with each lecture strictly limited to thirty minutes; a practical session, a full day field trip encompassing both man-made (agricultural) and natural environments; and discussion groups focusing on ethics and action.

Presentations by groups representing Earthcare in Action, e.g. Greenpeace, the New Zealand Forest and Bird Society, a film evening, and a social program. The lecture sessions were structured around a ‘zookeepers view’ of the environment. The first session took a wide-angle view of the planet Earth, its special life-enabling characteristics and global population and resources. Three other sessions gradually narrowed the view, through climate change, the New Zealand and Pacific environments, finally zooming into an action session on “Stewardship and Conservation.”

The key to the success of the School was the interweaving of science, the philosophical strands of environmental ethics, and practical points to effective action. To bring these strands together in a visible final to the School, I suggested that the young participants should prepare a Charter for the Environment. Their enthusiasm was overwhelming, and culminated in their co-authorship of an “Environmental Charter of the Youth of 1990,” which was presented to the Cabinet the following week.

A very clear message we learned from the School was the great receptiveness of young people for environmental issues. This was reflected in their enthusiastic applications (we had to turn down 100 applications in excess of our limit of 136 places), in the vigour and intensity which flowed from those attending the School, and in their exhortations to run the
School again for the benefit of their peers. The school also had a strong multiplier effect (Nobis, 1990), among both the students and the staff who helped run the School: most students returned to their communities and schools committed to taking action to impose conservation; and the staff, enthused by the stimulus of the School, are now committed to new initiatives. Collectively, those 5 days raised the level of all our perceptions, giving us a vision of further and wider horizons. As a result of the experience, Lincoln University is moving on to take further steps in environmental education and action, including the formation of a University Environment Group, a new in-service resource course for environmental educators in 1991, and plans for further Vacation Schools in future years. I strongly endorse the statement by Nobis (1990), that "Environmental education can become a driving force for action or change once it becomes an integral part of teaching and learning." It is my conviction that environment is the leading development area for education in the next millennium. It is my commitment to make it an integral part at all levels, from early school upwards.

Only through a new ethos can we rescue posterity from the penalties of our careless influence. I recommend the format of our Vacation School to university staff intent on either furthering environmental education, or simply on a role-building exercise. I conclude with a wording of an old farming adage, which the students at the School adopted as a closing statement in their environmental charter:

"Live your life as if you might die tomorrow, but care for the Earth as if you would live forever"


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GLOBAL LANGUAGE

By Duncan Taylor.

Duncan is a senior student at Dyce Academy in Aberdeen, Scotland. He attended the 1990 Caretakers conference in Bristol. This article is his reaction to the experience.

It is strange the effect that it has on people when you start to hear so many different languages and accents. When we were in Bristol last year for the fourth international Caretakers of the Environment conference, a school friend and I heard more than we ever imagined. I found myself exaggerating my accent just so it was clear where I was from. My friend Paul (from Scotland) ended up speaking in a fake American slang, I couldn't decide whether he was 'taking the mickey' or disrespectfully, or (as we all do) not. Because of this an Ethiopian delegate found it even harder to understand Paul and I; especially when we were trying to explain to him what a heater was. Eventually we gave up and, because it was summer, told him he would not need it anyway.

By the middle of the conference I began to get used to hearing lots of different languages around me and, although we were all speaking in different ways, we were all speaking about the same things and problems. Because these were subjects close to our hearts we all made an even harder effort to overcome the language barrier. This seemed to show that to overcome our environmental problems the whole world has to work together and cooperate.

I also found that some countries are doing some great things to help the environment and this frustrated me because we could be doing a lot more. We have the money, many others do not. I arrived home with many stories, a greener conscience and wanting to go to Peru where the fifth conference will be held.
Environmental education
as a political educated criticism of the technical rationality.

by Jette Bondergaard, Denmark.

I am concerned with the possible connection between developing environmental literacy and political education. To me, environmental education cannot be seen without thinking about human rights and ways of sharing the natural resources. Environmental problems are the result of the inequality in the world and in the manner in which some of us are using its resources. The challenge facing environmental education is to help pupils develop an environmental, democratic and ethical way of living together in the future.

My work has been inspired by the German educational philosophy, in which political education means that you have to treat pupils as subjects in their own right, so that they will develop as politically free, democratic and responsible human beings.

Children perceive environmental problems as problems of nature. The pupils I have interviewed seemed to interpret these problems as natural. Problems are either those of the external world: the threat against wild animals, extermination of wild vegetation, especially in the rainforest and unavoidable pollution, or problems connected with human nature: human greed which means human beings cannot help destroying natural resources. The point is, that children do not perceive environmental problems as cultural problems, and as long as they do not understand the problems as political challenges for their cultures, they will not form any ideas of democratic actions for changing society into a more environmentally literate and sustainable behavior.

The German philosopher Jürgen Habermas criticizes the technical rationality of the Western world. He, as well as other philosophers who have inspired my project, claims that the technical rationality is a result of the separation between religion and science, in other words, that at the present time, ‘progress’ is not subjected to any form of ethical control.

The children interviewed wanted very much to discuss the environmental problems (the problems of nature) but they did so without being critical of the technical rationality which led to these problems in the first place. On the contrary they perceived ‘factories’ as ruled by laws of nature, industrial progress itself was seen as determined by nature. Even if mankind was to begin once more from the stone-age we would end up in exactly the same polluted and unjust society as today.

The school must involve children in the challenges of our time. This is one of the main assertions of my project. If the school does develop the debate concerned with the doubts raised by the criticism of technical rationality in our way of life, then we will fail to involve children in the biggest political challenge of our time. This is highlighted by environmental problems as well as hunger, re-armament and injustice in sharing the natural resources of the world.

My interview-survey is a very small one and one can hardly draw such complex conclusions such as this, but it is not the only survey of children’s thoughts about essential questions of life. For instance, a survey undertaken in Sweden suggests that the spontaneous questions asked by children not only in school but in other institutions as well, tells us something about their thoughts. It turned out that environmental questions played a more and more vital role in the lives of children together with questions regarding re-armament in the decade in which the survey was undertaken (1959-1979).

An interesting result from the Swedish survey is the definition of attitudes and philosophies towards life. The point is that you make theoretical frameworks for your attitudes and in the light of this you cannot refuse to argue about your theory and your assessments. So, values clarification is not seen as a private affair (as it is in the U.S.A.) you can argue in a more or less theoretical, intelligent and
consistent way for your assessments and that is what education is about.

The limit of criticism allowed in schools.

In the German tradition 'political education' might have had two intentions: pupils' emancipation and pupils' ability to criticize the technological rationality. In Denmark it has only been understood as development of pupils' emancipation by providing them with an introduction to democratic methods in the educational process, and more than merely debating and discussing the substance of democracy.

But you should not be indifferent to what you are teaching about democracy and society. To be conscious you not only have to be emancipated but also have to know of the democratic traditions and institutions as well as the controversial issues which are discussed at the current time in our global society.

The most important questions involve ethical questions.

Technological criticism can result in various wishes to do something to change the world situation for the better. I have made the assertion, that it is reasonable to distinguish between three very different attitudes, such as:

- the ecological fundamentalistic way (where the prescriptive and right ethic and ecological lifestyle are to be obeyed)
- the relativistic way (no one can describe the right ethical and ecological lifestyle on behalf of others, so everyone may do as he/she feels.)
- the common seeking for sense and rationality (no one knows the right ethical lifestyle yet, but we all have to be responsible for seeking such an order of the world, which is built upon human equality and sustainable sharing the natural resources not only between the members of the Western world but, the world as a whole.)

The third way argues, that the matter is too important to be ignored, but it also says that there will be no other way than the democratic way. This is a very important point for developing pedagogical theories about involving young people in the problems and their solutions.

The democratic school of the future must encourage the common values clarification, as I have suggested, because the problems deal with our common future.

The common values clarification is, in a sense, a challenge to all kinds of sciences, in that the separation between religion and science has to be followed by a new way to connect ethics and science. The challenge is to develop a scientific way of behaving in solidarity with ethical problems. All scientific questions involve ethical problems too. The first of all the ethical questions to deal with is which questions are the most important of our time?

It is difficult to deal with the most important questions because they involve ethical questions and call for ethical solutions built upon solidarity. So we - all of us - need to develop the way of common seeking for sense and rationality. The world needs developed theoretical argument and democratic attitudes towards the ethical and environmental problems, not fundamentalistic and religious bias towards the solutions.

Environmental problems demand a new educational theory.

This assertion will be true, because the more pupils will attempt to make actions themselves the more they will be aware of the dangers of pollution and exploitation of the natural resources. This point was made earlier by the German pedagogue Hermann Giesecke in his book "Das Ende der Erziehung".

The difference between the knowledge of grown-ups and children will decrease in the future due to the media's role in shaping public opinion. As a result the challenge will be to develop new pedagogical theories. Theories about education will need to deal with ethical problems in a more theoretical and rationalistic way than before. Theories which involve the pupils as responsible individuals, will also have to ensure the development of human equality.

I think the growing interest in the environment, if connected to a responsible common seeking for sense and rationality, will prepare us for making better decisions for the future. I was very pleased to read Agnes Heller's book "History and the Human Future" because her theory describes the possibility of our increasing ability of imagining various futures - not only one determined by progress, as the pupils said in my survey.

In my opinion, preparation for making better decisions, not only for developing technological solutions, but for developing a human world order, is what environmental education (and pedagogy) is really all about.

References:
2. This is not exactly the way it has been formulated by The World Commission on Environment and Development: "Our common future". CUP, 1987 p 111.
A place to live in together

By Ruth Irvine

COLERAINES' GIRLS' SECONDARY SCHOOL, NORTHERN IRELAND

Abstract: The article describes a number of projects undertaken by the school at which the author is teaching. The activities undertaken are extracurricular and based on the theme 'A place to live in together'. Activities described are tree planting, bird watching, an important part being action taking in the community. One of the important conclusions is that the study of the environment is a unifying theme for pupils from different religious and cultural backgrounds.

En este artículo, el autor describe una serie de proyectos realizados en la escuela donde imparte clases. Las actividades que lleva a cabo son extracurriculares y se basan en el tema 'Un lugar donde convivimos'. Entre las actividades que se citan están el plantar árboles, observar aves, etc. Un importante resultado es que el estudio del medio ambiente resulta ser un tema que une a alumnos de diferentes religiones y estilos culturales.

The Young Ornithologists’ Club (YOC) in Coleraine Girls’ Secondary School, through their conservation work in the school grounds and in the community, are constantly aware of the effects of pollution, the waste of natural resources which is affecting the ecological balance of the biosphere and therefore causing harm to our world.

We are also aware of the problems which exist in our society between the different religious communities. Realising that we must learn to build a better environment for future generations we adopted the theme of 'A place to live in together.'

As an extra-curricular activity the members of the Young Ornithologists’ Club take part in tree planting, bird watching, making nest boxes, bird tables and bat boxes to distribute to members of the community, conducting lichen surveys, water pollution surveys, results of which were given to Pollution Control. Such is the enthusiasm to improve the quality of life and to improve their environment that they are willing to give up lunch breaks to pick up litter, do acid rain testing and collect cans and bottles for recycling.

We are campaigning for the use of recycled paper in school and we have prepared a petition to urge for more pulp mills in Northern Ireland making recycled paper, and we gave the petition last year to Mr Peter Hamilton, the Under Secretary of State for the Environment when he visited our school as guest of Honor at our Environmental Award Ceremony.

Besides managing our tree nursery, wildflower meadow, wildlife garden and pond within the school grounds, our YOC Club has demonstrated concern about the damage to the Ozone layer, and has attempted to increase public awareness of this problem by conducting surveys in local supermarkets, talking to managers and with members of the public, persuading them to use Ozone friendly products. The pupils have been involved in a Downtown Environmental Study to see how facilities like litter bins, zebra crossings, and public telephones could be improved for the good of the whole community. This year we have raised £889, to help save the Rainforests through a sponsored walk.

The study of the environment has proved to be an important unifying theme in our work as we have become involved with other schools, both in the area and further afield in the exchange of survey work with schools in the South of Ireland as part of a European Action for the Environment project. It was five years ago when our cross-community work began with St. Joseph’s High School in Coleraine. We presented a bird table to them on the occasion of their 25th Anniversary.
This was the beginning of several social visits before more formal plans were made and ideas exchanged for mutual co-operation using the environment as a common theme.

Some of the most interesting aspects of things our young people have learnt through our joint environmental work have been learning to solve problems together, developing social contacts with each other and with the other organisations who have helped us within our conservation work at our joint conservation garden on an area of waste ground on the outskirts of the town of Coleraine.

We are creating a conservation garden not only with the help of pupils from St Joseph’s High School, Coleraine, but also with St Columb’s College, Londonderry and under the expert guidance of Conservation Volunteers. The area was granted to us for a probation period of 3 years after much pressure on the local Borough Council which is now considering funding similar projects in other areas of the town.

In our conservation garden, we have created tree butterfly shrub beds, planted 600 trees, 400 hedging plants, 1000 bulbs and we have succeeded in creating a large pond. We are working on a wildflower meadow and a nature trail pathway at present culminating in a public amenity area where all the people of Coleraine can benefit from the natural beauty of the area.

It was while working at the Marina that we noticed pollution in a stream running past our garden. We decided to trace the stream to its source and do surveys on it to determine the source of the pollution. We traced this to the Industrial Estate and contacted Pollution Control with our findings. We used a cross-curricular approach when tabulating our survey work as was also the case with our lichen surveys which we carried out in the forests around Coleraine. There has been a response from factories involved in this survey work, e.g. Spanboard have built in equipment to reduce pollution. Results of both these surveys were exchanged with our twin schools in the south of Ireland as part of the European Action for the Environment project.

It was during ‘workcamp’ at Magilligan Field Centre near Coleraine and in Cork in Southern Ireland that the highlight of our work was demonstrated when pupils from different religious and cultural backgrounds were mixing together, symbolic of the mixed environment in which they found themselves. Survey results were exchanged as well as a lot of other ideas. The study of the environment has proved to be such an important unifying theme that we are currently planning another series of exchanges involving wetland surveys and oakwood stratification surveys work.

Our environmental work has taken on a more global dimension as we have made several short video films which are currently being transmitted by satellite over Europe. Our involvement with Caretakers of the Environment International has also broadened our horizons and has given us the opportunity to communicate and exchange ideas with several countries in the world. It is planned that details of all our work will be put together with a video into an Environmental Education package which will be made available to any school wishing to obtain a copy.

It must be added in conclusion, that the pupils involved in this work learn to understand and appreciate their environment and adopt a more positive attitude to conservation, while at the same time they are encouraging others to become more aware of ecological and environmental issues. As a result of practical and survey work, the pupils have also been able to use a cross-curricular approach as well as working together for the benefit of the whole community.

By Frits L. Gravenberch,


Abstract: The results of a survey taken among participants of the Bristol conference are discussed by the author. A short description of the week is given, with comments from the participants. Most were positive. A few negative ones concerned the long bus travel, the sparsity of the room in which the displays were set up. The author gives a number of recommendations. The need for exchange of experiences and ideas is emphasized, also the need for international cooperation and contact.

Introduction

As in 1989 we asked the participants of the 1990 Caretakers of the Environment International conference in Bristol their experiences by filling out a questionnaire, which was designed by Frits Gravenberch (Amsterdam, the Netherlands), Janice Palmer (Toronto, Canada) and Arjen Wals (Ann Arbor, USA). This year we also invited students to contribute to the evaluation of the conference activities. Teachers were asked to give their opinion on particular preparatory activities on the side of the national organizing committee. Twenty students, thirty eight teachers and other non-student participants - coming from Brazil, Canada, England, France, Guatemala, Hungary, Ireland/Repl, Northern Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Scotland, USA, Tanzania, Vietnam - handed in their observations. In this article we would like to present the final conclusions and recommendations that are included in the final report that was delivered to the national organizing committee. We will start however, to illustrate the participants' impressions on a day by day basis, by presenting a selection of observations made by individual participants. Those who are interested in the full report are advised to wait for the formal conference report which will include the integral report.

The appreciation of the conference on a day by day basis.

Day one of the conference was a very busy day. The majority of the participants had to use most of the day to travel to the conference site and to install their contribution to the international exposition. Nevertheless, the general impression of day one was very positive.

Of course there were also some critical observations. Some delegates felt unhappy about the space and ambiance in the Junior Common Room where the exhibition was displayed. They felt that the JCR was insufficient and inappropriate as a room for casual exchange of ideas and experiences. Others would have liked to have had an opportunity of some sort, for a country wise introduction as a basis for further exchange.

Day two was the first full day of the conference and included the following activities: official opening in Weston Super Mare, activities to give the participants a sense of the place and an evening program at Wiston Moor Center; sports for students and seminars for the teachers. The majority of the delegates appreciated the various activities very much. Jonathan Porrit's speech in particular, was experienced as very interesting. Complaints made by individuals had to do with too long stays in buses, activities that should have been terminated at an earlier stage and not at the point where they had become boring, complaints about the lunch, as well about the use of disposable containers during dinner. But one student also wrote, to have enjoyed the 'natural' behavior of his fellow students during the sports evening.

During day three the participants partici-
pated in workshops dealing with topics such as Litter and Society, Acid Rain, River Quality, School Grounds, Agriculture and Conservation, Urban Development and Traffic, Energy Conservation, Nuclear Power, Refuse Disposal, Radon Gas.

The overall impression from the data gathered is that day three was a real success. The following impressions were reported by individuals. The drama session, the Morris dancers, the visit to Weston Super Mare college and the session of the Radon gas group in particular were excellent. The speech of the forester during the session on Acid Rain, the session on Coastal Water Quality, the trip to Cadbury's, the role play at the Nuclear Power Station and the boat trip (River Quality Group) were very interesting. With the help of local experts the participants obtained a better understanding of these topics.

Day four included plenary sessions - lectures by Chris Burden and Peter Wilkinson, and small group activities such as themed walks and seminars for teachers, as well as for students and, last but not least, the barbecue in the evening. The activities exhibition, presentation of the International Board and the social evening at the Churchill School were well appreciated. One delegate recommends a medal for the Churchill PTA. Almost all delegates experienced the BBQ as the highlight in the conference program so far. At least one student regretted the early closure of the disco.

Day five included the following items in the formal program: a concluding session for teachers and a session during which the students prepared their final presentation, the farewell banquet and an international cabaret. The data indicate that the teachers' meeting, the students' presentation and the international cabaret were a great success. One delegate however recommends in ways to avoid in future meetings with the "trooping" of delegates during handing out of certificates.

Conclusions and recommendations.

The 1990 Caretakers of the Environment International conference demonstrated clearly a growing interest on the side of teachers and students from countries all over the world for international meetings which enable them to exchange classroom experiences, to study the local environment in the host country and to discuss possible ways to improve Environmental Education. However, the format of the Caretakers' conference in which both teachers and students play an important role is not an easy one for its organizers. Nevertheless, the Bristol meeting demonstrated again what can be achieved by a combination of good preparation together with enthusiasm on the side of the participants. From a more detailed point of view the following observations were made.

Exchange of experiences.

Exchange of experiences and ideas amongst students, teachers and others is an important element of the Caretakers' annual meetings. The 1990 conference program provided for this particular aim by an exhibition of the participants projects in the so-called Junior Common Room. The exchange was formally scheduled as a part of the opening ceremony. Furthermore, this particular room could be visited - basically throughout the conference for further discussions.

It is recommended to continue to have this type of opportunity also in future to take the idea one step further by including more meetings in the formal program, where participants are invited to exchange experiences, know-how and points of view on basis of the information available in the displays of their projects. One way suggested by one of the participants is to organize groupwork sessions during which a particular project is briefly presented by the executor and consequently given more profound discussion. The organizing committee together with the International Board could explore and decide which participants to invite - well in advance and prior to the conference - to prepare a presentation on their particular project for this type of session.

Start-up of international cooperation.

The Caretakers' conference illustrate clearly that there are many opportunities to initiate so-called "action-research" type of activities in which international groups of teachers and educators cooperate. The global idea is to get the participants involved in developing basic knowledge concerning classroom teaching in Environmental Education, in a more system-
atic way as well as in an international context. Many participants of the 1990 conference, as a matter of fact, did indicate in their answers a readiness to take part in international cooperation. It is recommended to the organizers and to the International Board, to stimulate action-research and organize particular sessions in the future formal conference programs in this context. These sessions should function either as starting points or as sessions for report and discussion of on-going activities of this kind. The International Board could stimulate and contribute to this particular activity by asking subject-experts, expert teachers, researchers, educators, research institutes etc., who would like to contribute to these sessions by giving presentations or writing discussion papers.

A growing number of people has become interested in the Caretakers movement. Many participants however, take part for the first time and therefore have a need to feel at home as soon as possible after their arrival at the conference site. It is recommended to schedule social events such as a BBQ earlier in the conference program to enable the participants to get to know each other already at an early stage of the conference.

Most participants expressed their approval with activities that serve to get to know the (natural) environment in the host country. However, there were also many complaints concerning time and effort consuming means of transportation. It is recommended in future conferences to try and cut down as much as possible on the time needed for driving and waiting for transportation. It is suggested to think of solutions such as combined tours which include shopping trips to downtown and/or optional tourist trips before or alter the conference.

Rapportage.
It is my personal feeling that an evaluation of the Caretakers of the Environment International conferences is a very useful activity both to evaluate the conference itself and to stimulate the exchange of ideas and participation in international follow-up activities in between the conferences. Although the “investigation” at the Bristol meeting was the fourth one in a row, I feel that improvement of the questionnaire is still very necessary.

It would be useful if future host countries would ask all participating schools to submit specific information about their environmental education projects. As a minimum participants should submit a description of:
- the project they will present at the conference
- the position of environmental education within their school
- the role of action-taking in their project
- the kind of support they received from school, community and educational authorities
- the things they would like to hear from other participants of the Caretakers of the Environment Conference.

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The Beauty with In *

When I look up I see
Beauty with in
The sky is beauty
The river is beauty
The deep dark spooky closet is beauty
What is beauty to me?

Why is the river beauty?
Because it means a family to me.
Why is the sky beauty to me?
Because it means it loves me.
Why is the deep dark spooky closet beauty?
Because I think of a dark spooky night.
And that is what I think.

Felicia Williams, Handley Elementary School
Saginaw, Michigan, USA.

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The Night*

No one knows where the river goes
Start at one point and ends at another?
It’s slimy, slimy in places and dotted with globs of oil
It sways as the wind hits in the black cold night
Bottles, pieces of glass and blobs of mud twirl and whirl all around
I look in the sky. It’s empty except for the two blue herons swishing and sweeping in the night
I am cold and alone, for I know
No one knows where the River goes.

Karen Odneal, South Intermediate School, Saginaw, Michigan, U.S.A.

Both poems are reprinted from GREEN, Vol II, 2 December 1990.
Destruction of the Tropical Rain-forest:
How "Green" is Brazil's new President?

By Walter L. Filho, Brazil

Abstract: The author discusses the problems facing Brazil's new president. He claims there are two major challenges facing Brazil: the first is the need for a rationalization in the use of the Amazon's resources, the second is the wearing of the population of the native Indians, threatened by the disappearance of their local environment. The author points out that the main problems are the expansion of deforestation in the Amazon rainforests and the migration of the population to the Amazon region. The second major challenge is the need to ensure the survival of the indigenous population, which is threatened by the loss of their traditional way of life.

In November 1989, presidential elections were held in Brazil for the first time in twenty years. A good-looking young man, holder of the "black belt" in karate, was elected as the country's chief executive. When, on March 15th of 1990, the newly elected Brazilian president, Fernando Collor de Mello, took office, one of the first official acts was to declare his commitment to the conservation of Brazil's environmental resources and the protection of the Amazon rainforests. As a sign of goodwill, he nominated a leading Brazilian environmentalist, Jose Lutezemberger, as chief of the country's environmental agency.

However, 1989 was also a record year in terms of the degradations of the Brazilian rainforest, the dry spells being deliberately used by big farmers and landowners to increase the already astronomic proportions of the burning of the world's richest ecosystem.

Estimates given by several international environmental organizations put the total loss at around 3 million hectares - an area which, combined with similar deforestation taking place elsewhere in Latin America, Western Africa, and South-East Asia, is approximately the size of Belgium.

Despite the nomination of Lutezemberger to head up Brazil's environmental protection agency, and the optimism with which the international community welcomed this initiative, President Mello faces two major challenges. The first is the desperate need for the rationalization in the use of the Amazon's resources. The second is the great pressure exerted on the region's environment, and on the region's environment, which is threatened by the loss of their traditional way of life.

The above problems are added to by an exacerbation of the country's economic difficulties, which, in the past, were lightened by the use of the Amazon region's riches - especially the rainforests, which provided an easy source of hard cash. With the attention with which the international community now looks at developments in the region, such a soft choice is no longer tolerated. The fact that widespread destruction of rainforests can lead to major ecological changes worldwide, implies that greater care than hitherto should be taken in the future to protect these rainforest-related issues. Due to the amount and variety of pressures that are being placed on the country's forest ecosystems, the Brazilian President is faced with a task no head of state would wish to be submitted to.

The future will tell how "green" is Brazil's new President, and how successful the policies which his government adopts in relation to the Brazilian rain-forests really are. Meanwhile the international scientific community has a major role to play, as in the past, to support authentic progress and stimulate those who are really working for the reduction of the seriousness of one of today's major environmental problems.
If you owned the world what would you do with it?

By Zafer Ulusoy,
Head English department at Özel Fatos Abla Koleji, Ankara, Turkey.

Abstract: Pollution of the environment is an international problem. Cleaning the environment is generally expensive and difficult. We should use our natural resources more wisely.

Abstract: El ensuciamiento del ambiente es un problema internacional. En general limpiar el ambiente es difícil y caro. Utilizamos los fuentes naturales en un modo más inteligente.

We inherit the world from our parents and pass it on to our children. If you owned the world, what would you do with it?

Would you cut down the forests, plough up the land, dam the rivers and burn all the coal and oil?

Would you plunder your own earth?

Would you then leave these problems to your children to worry about in the future?

“OUR city is a wonderful place to live; where else can you see the air you breath?”

Have you heard this joke? It isn’t very funny. Everyday our cars, our houses, and our industries pour a number of noxious substances into the air. These may not have any immediate bad effects, but gradually breathing this air makes you seriously ill and may even cause your death. We know very well that air pollutants irritate the eyes, throat and lungs, causing sore throats, coughing and so on. Children living in areas with high air pollution levels have a greater incidence of asthma and eczema and other skin diseases than children in less polluted areas. Of course, human beings are not the only living things harmed by air pollution, many plants and animals are also suffer.

In the early days steam engines made it possible to cut down trees and plough the land on a far more ambitious scale than ever before. The development of re-enforced concrete created opportunities for building gigantic new dams.

During the industrial expansion in the early twentieth century, the conservationists’ first aim was to preserve the natural wonders of the world for later generations. Soon more and more people began to realize that twentieth century technology was reaching every corner of the globe, to affect everyone and everything.

It is very difficult to protect a lake or stream from the effects of acid rain. In a few lakes scientists have tried to reverse the effects of acid rain by adding lime, in the same way that farmers spread lime on their fields when the soil becomes too acidic. In any case, adding lime to a lake is expensive, and there are thousands of lakes that need treatment. The only way to stop acid rain is to cut it off at its source. Another important effect of acid rain is the corrosion of materials. It has been known for many years that metals such as steel and copper, corrode much faster in polluted city air, than in clear air in the country side.

Water pollution can be ended by building advanced sewer systems, sewage treatment plants and installations to keep industrial waste and fertilizers from entering the water. The cost will be enormous. In the mean time polluted lakes and streams will continue to die.

Because our homes, factories and cars and aircraft emit smoke and gases continuously into the air, we may be upsetting the delicate atmospheric balance.

When DDT is sprayed on crops and trees, some of it may be blown onto grass, that is later eaten by cows. Studies by biologists have shown that DDT and related compounds are harmful to people.

Authorities have already measured a slight increase in the carbon dioxide concentration of the entire atmosphere since the early 1960’s. It is a result of all the fuels we carelessly burn hour after hour.

Caretakers of the Environment believe that we cannot afford to squander our inheritance. What we believe is: “Yes, use what the earth has to offer, but use it wisely.” Conservation means so much more than merely the wise use of the natural resources that we have inherited.
Contribution from India to the fourth International Caretakers Conference.

K.R. Bali,
Govt. Sr. Sec. School, New Delhi, India

Abstract: The author describes the activities undertaken at his school to increase environmental awareness under the students. The school takes part in a number of activities, centered around the theme “towards a clean and green environment.”

Abstract: El autor describe las actividades que se han emprendido en su escuela para aumentar la conciencia ambiental entre sus estudiantes. La escuela participa en una serie de actividades que giran en torno al tema “por un medio ambiente limpio y verde”.

Having great love for nature and its heritage, I have been trekking extensively in the Himalayas, coastal, desert and semi-desert regions of the country for the last three decades. Large-scale environmental degradation in most of these areas caused deep concern in me. Environmental awareness has therefore been progressively introduced in all outdoor activities in general and trekking in particular. All such activities are now undertaken by our students keeping new dimensions in view:

(a) to develop love for natural environment;
(b) to develop environmental awareness;
(c) to enable them to become environmental investigators and to consider possible ways of solving such problems;
(d) to practically undertake some of the remedial measures.

But as such all the students are not expected to take part in such activities, neither in larger number or at regular intervals, so a project was started in the school at Delhi, namely, “Towards Clean and Green Environment.” This way all the students are now being progressively involved in environmental activities, such as:

(a) keeping the school clean and green;
(b) taking active part in the “Better Delhi Campaign,” organized by Delhi Administration each year;
(c) advising rural folks to promote Social Forestry and Cleanliness;
(d) taking up Cleaning programs at certain selected areas.

To give it a bit more emphasis a pledge has been coined for the staff and students, which they undertake on a particular day of the year: “I pledge, I shall keep My School, My Home, My Village, My City and My Country Clean and Green.” The students work on such projects during the year and the evaluation is done at the end of the year. Action Plan for the next year is discussed and adopted.

The following institutions with whom I am associated are contributing in spreading the message of environmental awareness among the youths of the country:

1. Delhi Mountaineering Association (DMA)
2. Climbers and Explorers Club (CEC)
3. Youth Hostels Association of India (YHAI)
4. World Wild Fund for Nature-India
5. Indian Assembly of Youth (IAY)
6. Bharat Scouts and Guides (BS&G)
7. Delhi Junior Red Cross (J.R.C.)
8. Govt. Sr. Sec. School, Pandara Road, New Delhi.

All these institutions have so far been laying stress mostly on keeping the environment clean, but now the greening aspect is also getting priority with them.

From the Mountain to the Sea

She was born in the mountains,
Out of a earth as a bubbly spring,
She rushed down madly, full of life,
Would anyone deny joy to this lovely being?

Crossing the plains she reached the city,
Where fire and dirt broke her,
For her do you have no pity?
Oh please, will you not help her?

As she moved along slowly,
Stinking water choked her dry,
Will life ever again be so lovely?
Will you only sit back and watch her cry?

Please save her alone, she is beautiful,
She is like a mother to me,
Do not waste for evil her,
Let her run to the sun.

By Anand Kirthivansamy, a secondary school student from New Delhi.
(reprinted from Green, Dec. 1990)
GLOBE SCOPE

Global Assembly of Women and the Environment-Partners in Life, is an international forum, to be held November 4-8, 1991 in Miami, Florida, USA, and implemented by WorldWIDE Sustainable Development in conjunction with UN agencies, governments and NGOs. Its purpose is to demonstrate the capacity of women to achieve environmental management; the elements of leadership necessary for success; and policies which can advance or retard such efforts. For more information contact:
WorldWIDE Network, 1331 H Street, NW Suite 903, Washington, DC 20005, USA.

The Pegasus Program offers an opportunity for senior students, presented by the Robb Coke Board of Education, an integrated studies approach, with a 1 month immersion program in Europe, having the opportunity to experience life in contemporary Eastern and Western Europe, by - living with a family, meeting students in conferences on youth issues, talking with ambassadors and leaders in business, politics, economics, and arts, visiting important cultural, artistic and historic sites, visiting schools and taking part in school activities. For further information contact Dr Jim Baker, or Sheila Oliver 394-6991 or 394-6990.

Sponsored by the International Geographical Union Study Group on Geography and Gender, the Women's Studies Program at the University of Waterloo, University of St. Jerome's College.
Some of the topics already scheduled, from worldwide response, include nutritional discrimination against the female child, rural development, women in food processing enterprises, etc. Emphasis will be on networking and on generating conceptual and methodological contributions to the study of geography and gender.
For further information contact: Mary Clarke or Sara Khadra, Women's Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, N2L 3G1.5

Master of Environmental Education by coursework, Griffith University, Nathan, QLD 4111, Australia. The division of Australian Environmental Studies will offer a Master of Environmental Education degree program on a part time basis, and will consist of a two year part time course component and a one year dissertation, normally undertaken in the third year. For further information contact Mr John Urquhart, at the above address.