

Issue 34

# EARTH FOCUS

One Planet - One Community

## Renewable Energies



Produced by Young People for Young People of All Ages

## Managing Editor English:

Kate Brown – [editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org)

## Managing Editor French:

Fiona Dalton – [fiona.dalton@orange.fr](mailto:fiona.dalton@orange.fr)

**Translation:** Adeline Ambrosi

**Youth Editors:** Kaitlyn Bonzo

## Design & Production:

Hubert Schneebeli, [ARCANNEDSIGN.COM](http://ARCANNEDSIGN.COM)

## Contributing Schools:

Aga Khan Academy, Kenya ; American International School of Bucharest, Romania ; Bandung International School, Indonesia ; Collège André-Chavanne, Switzerland ; Collège Voltaire, Switzerland ; International School of Geneva, Switzerland ; Institut International de Lancy, Switzerland ; Middleton Technology College, UK ; Southern Cross School, South Africa ; Yüzyl Işıl High School, Turkey.

## Founding Editors:

Barry Gilbert-Miguët & David F. Batten

## Advertising + Sponsorship America:

Guy Griffiths, Old City Publishing

628 North Second Street

Philadelphia, PA 19123 USA

Phone: +1 215 925 4390

Fax: +1 215 925 4371

E-mail: [guy@oldcitypublishing.com](mailto:guy@oldcitypublishing.com)

## Advertising + Sponsorship

## Europe & Rest of World:

Nicola Spafford Furey,

6, Chemin Sous Cherre, 1245 Collonge-

Bellerive, Geneva, Switzerland

Phone: +41 22 349 50 05

Fax: +41 22 349 50 77

E-mail: [nicola@earthfocus.org](mailto:nicola@earthfocus.org)

## Earth Focus Foundation

**Founder:** S.A. Princess Catherine Aga Khan

**President:** Dr Nicholas Tate

**Vice-President :** Monsieur Carlo Lamprecht

**Vice-President:** Mrs. Nicola Spafford Furey

**Treasury:** Mr. François Collini

## Members:

Mrs. Jacqueline Coté

Mrs. Michaelene Stack

Mr. Brian Ruszczyk

Mr. Frederik de Cock

Mr. Axel Sursock

Professor Martin Beniston

Honourary Patrons

Mrs. Dorothy Latsis

Professor Hannelore Lee-Jabnke

Mrs. Bruna Adriana Faidutti

Dr. David Bellamy

Mr. Anthony Simon

Mr. Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz

## Friends of Earth Focus:

David F. Batten, Barry Gilbert-Miguët,

Karen Stilon de Piro, George Walker

## Title

I've recently read about Anaconda, a giant rubber tube being developed to harness the energy of waves. I've also read that many wind turbines are being built in places where there is not enough wind to enable them to recoup the energy used to make them. Clearly, the use of renewable energy technologies is not straightforward – some of you have shared your views on the issues on pages x to x. But in the face of climate change (explained in your words on pages x to x) harnessing renewable energies is one important way to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions. In his editorial Professor Beniston makes it clear that we, and our governments, need to be adopting a range of such approaches, including strategies to save energy. We're honoured that Professor Beniston, a member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and an expert in this field, could write for Earth Focus. And, as ever, we're pleased that so many of you have contributed – not only on the topic of renewable energies, but sharing what you're doing to make a difference.

Keep sending us your articles, poems, photos and drawings!

Kate Brown  
Editor



This issue has been produced thanks to the kind support of Credit Suisse Private Banking, Bank Julius Baer & Co. Ltd and other generous anonymous donors.



Ecole Internationale de Genève  
International School of Geneva

Earth Focus is a forum for discussion and a catalyst for action for young people. We deal with issues concerning the environment, community, and culture at all levels.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

Copyright © 2008 Earth Focus Foundation.

All rights are reserved by Earth Focus Foundation, International School of Geneva and Old City Publishing, Inc..



Printed on recycled paper with soy-based inks. Published quarterly and distributed worldwide by International School of Geneva in association with Old City Publishing, Inc.. Publication management is provided by Old City Publishing, Inc..

CODEN CODE: EAF0FG

ISSN: 1029-1784

THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN EARTH FOCUS ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE EDITORS OR PUBLISHER OR SUPPORTERS.

# RENEWABLE ENERGIES

Renewable energy technologies:  
Just one element of the strategy to reduce emissions.

It is estimated that up to 75% of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are related to the use of oil, coal and natural gas. Any serious attempts to reduce green-house gas emissions must therefore consider alternatives to these fossil fuels. Renewable energy technologies, which harness the energy of the wind, sun and water, have an important role to play. However, a closer look at the issues shows that their use must be just one of many strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

One major problem is that, even if renewable energy technologies are used more widely, they still will not produce enough energy to meet global requirements, predicted to rise as countries like China and India become more industrialised.

This is partly due to the limitations of renewable energies. For example, solar energy is constrained by the maximum amount of energy that is available: air molecules, dust particles and clouds in the atmosphere absorb the sun's energy and reduce the amount that reaches the earth's surface. In "wind farms" wind energy used by one turbine is no longer available for the next turbine. So turbines must be positioned very carefully and if the dominant wind direction changes, over time the turbines may become less efficient. Rapid accumulation of sediment can limit the lifetime of hydroelectric dams.

What's more, some renewable energies have their own negative impacts. Large areas of land are required to produce biofuels, and growing biofuels instead of staple crops can leave people without food. This raises an ethical question: is it right that people in developing countries should risk the safety of their food supplies to grow biofuels for developed nations?

Because governments and industries are under pressure to reduce greenhouse emissions, some of the materials needed for use in renewable energy technologies are in great demand. For example the price of the elements used in solar cells and solar panels has soared. It is also impor-

tant to consider the energy and pollution involved in making these solar technologies as well as other renewable energy technologies.

Finally, it is just as important for governments to be thinking about reducing energy waste as about better energy production. Energy consumption could be reduced by over 50% in mid-sized European and North American cities simply by better-designed buildings and the improved insulation of those that exist. More efficient public transport systems would also significantly help lower fossil-fuel use.

In summary, there is no single "miracle" solution to the greenhouse gas problem. A range of different strategies will need to be put into place in order to reduce our dependency on fossil fuels. Of course, renewable energies will be part of the mix of technologies, but in parallel with a range of other solutions that include energy savings. Current estimates suggest that such a 'mixed' approach could reduce emissions by 30-50%. The moment may indeed be ripe, with oil prices so high, to accelerate the switch from fossil fuel dependency.

Dr. Martin Beniston is a Professor at the University of Geneva, former vice-chair and current member of the IPCC (the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) and an expert on climate change.



## Guest editorial p.3



Dr. Martin Beniston is a Professor at the University of Geneva, former vice-chair and current member of the IPCC.

## Letters p.6



## Renewable energies p.8



This edition of Earth Focus is dedicated to renewable energies, and in the following pages are words and pictures illustrating the importance of wind power, solar energy and other renewable energies. However, lots of you wrote to Earth Focus explaining the problem with non-renewable energies.

### Next issues :

#36 Stolen Childhood

#37 Health, Wealth and Wisdom

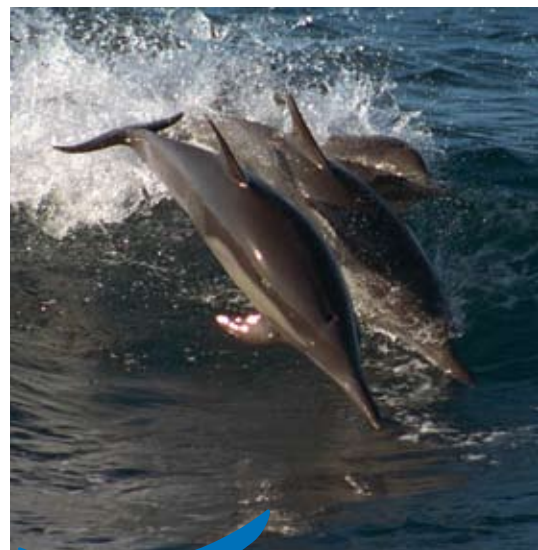
Send your articles to :

**[editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org)**



# Summary

Letters .....	p. 6
Main Feature .....	p. 8
You can make a difference! .....	p. 10
Global Warming, Turkey .....	p. 11
Global Warning .....	p. 12
New Eco-Energy .....	p. 14
Friendly Energies .....	p. 15
Renewable Energies .....	p. 16
Fuels for the Future .....	p. 17
Fuelling Cars Renewably .....	p. 19
Purple Peace .....	p. 21
GIN, Düsseldorf .....	p. 23
South African UN Conference. ....	p. 26
Say No to Plastics .....	p. 27
Ecotourism .....	p. 28
Yüzyıl Işıl High School .....	p. 28
Ocean Care .....	p. 31



**ocean care**  
p.31

**GIN**  
p.23



The Global Issues Network aims to help students realize that they can make a difference. The Network's global issues conference, held in March 2008 in Düsseldorf saw young people from around the world meeting together to discuss and develop solutions to global problems. Students from the International School of Geneva and the American International School of Bucharest report.

To find out more about the Global Issues Network, see [www.global-issues-network.org](http://www.global-issues-network.org)

Dear Earth Focus,

I am worried that this will happen to Earth. I wish people would stop polluting the earth. If we keep this up, by 2025 our world will be a dump. Some people (like my family) recycle and help the environment. I think there should be a law that you can only trash so much in a month.

Sincerely,

**Michael Walter**, 11, American,  
Institut International de Lancy, Geneva

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank you because your magazine helps children be aware of the serious issues concerning us. I think raising awareness is one of the things we can do...in order to fight against Global Warming.

**Selçuk Ertu** , turc, Turkish,  
Yüzyıl Işıl High School, Istanbul

## Mountain Country Side

As I fly up the chair lift,  
I see the amazing mountain countryside,  
Sitting there so peacefully,  
With the mountains perching,  
As tall as a sky scraper,  
Covered with snow as white as a blanket.

As I look down,  
I see the thousands of skiers,  
Sliding down the different types of terrain,  
Deep powder, mogules, ice, thin powder,  
All kinds of naturally made snow.

As I look forward and back,  
I see the millions of dark brown tree trunks,  
Sitting at an up right angle,  
With that green ever green leaves,  
Hanging off those trunks,  
With light drops of white powder,  
That had fell down from the sky.

As I reach the end of my journey up the ski life,  
I get ready to ride down the slopes,  
And I hope and wish,  
Will stay there forever.

**Owen Donkin**, 13, English,  
Institut International de Lancy, Geneva

## Our trip to Dublin !

Students from Collège André-Chavanne, Geneva visited Dublin, Ireland, in April 2008. Here's what they thought:

"People in Dublin were nice, happy, hospitable and always in a hurry but they took the time to answer you."

"If you go to Dublin, you should enter a bar to listen to the Irish music, watch the Irish dance, drink a Guinness and eat some Irish stew. Take also the time to take a walk in the park because they are so huge and green like everything in Dublin"

"Trinity College was one of the best visits. The library is so amazing that it'll leave you're you speechless".

"Going out of Dublin to see this wonderful lake (In Glendaloch) and that 'paradisiacal' nature was so relaxing."

**Cecile Blunier, Jennifer Favre, Krishna Cadag, Magalie Ntongo, Sophia Reyes Mury, Reema Sharba, Alessia, Aline, Antoine, Anouk ,Nuria and Ludovic Kabaya**, Collège André-Chavanne.



# MEDIAS !!

Why I think the media is over-criticized.

Although the media is often a target of criticism, it has made many positive contributions to the modern world. The fact that the media is nowadays so widely criticized is due to the fact that they have become a victim of the modern economy: they are looking for profit. This means that the focus of the corporations behind the media has shifted from respect, justice and democracy to money and power. But if we suppose we are dealing with an independent, free media, then one can say that a positive contribution of the media is enhancing democracy. The media's main purpose is to spread information, and because a healthy democracy requires an informed public, there is an obvious link.

Democracy reduced to its most basic form is about people being able to choose their own leaders, about ordinary citizens participating in national or international decision making. But the quality of the participation depends on how well the people are armed with the necessary information, and how much access they have to contradicting opinions, as to be able to make up their own mind. And because the media spreads information, how well we are armed depends on how much we encounter the media. This means that democracy is made possible, and above all effective, through the media's spread of information.

The media is nowadays aiding democracy to be effective in certain countries, like Iraq for example. After the war, there is a need for stability, and this is why a system of democracy is being set up. The media is trying to find reliable sources, and obtain the freedom of speech as to be able to inform the Iraqi public. They are giving local journalists safety measures to be able to obtain more information, international journalists are given limits as to where their articles should be more sensitive, Iraqi media capacity is increased, and the public access to information is promoted. All this to help democracy to be effective. This shows how democracy and the media go hand in hand.

The modern world needs democracy, and democracy needs a free media. This means that the media might appear mean, and privacy invading when we look at it from a 'Britney Spears viewpoint', but the media is definitely a positive contribution to the modern world!

**Pepijn Holst, 17,**  
Netherlands, International School of Geneva, LGB



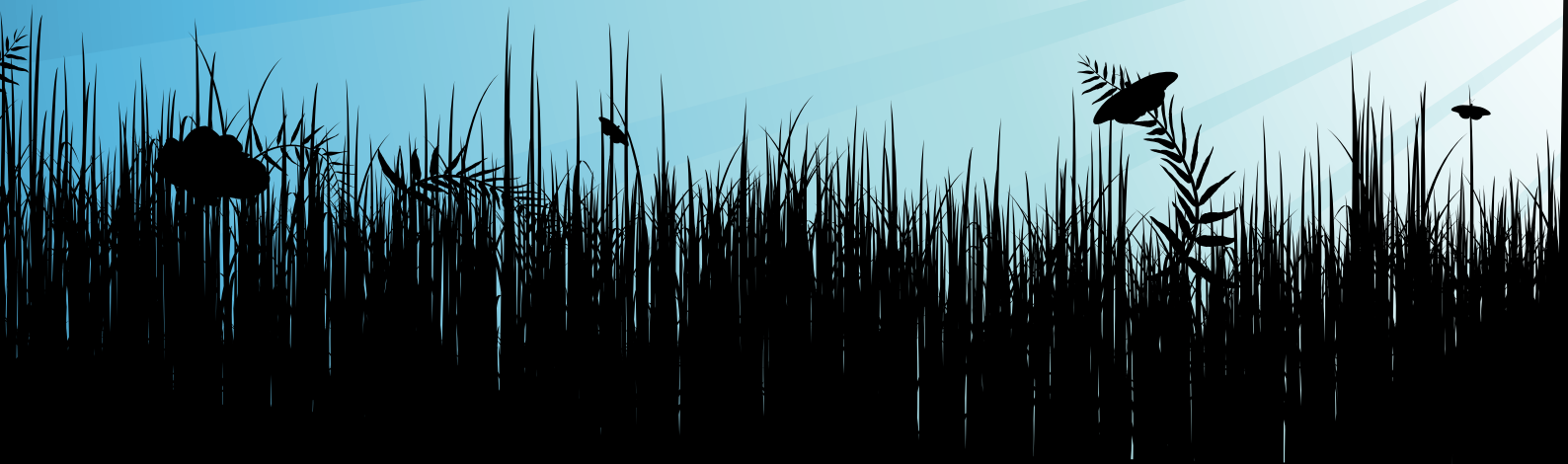


ROUND AND ROUND,TURNING AND TURNING,  
NO FOSSIL FUELS ARE BURNING.  
IN THE DISTANCE THERE IS AN IMMENSE TOWER,  
GIVING US RENEWABLE POWER.

AN OLD WATER MILL,  
IS PRODUCING POWER FOR YOUR CASH TILL.  
IT DOESN'T POLLUTE OR DAMAGE,  
AND ITS SOMETHING WE CAN MANAGE.

THEN THERE IS TIDAL ENERGY,  
BIG BARRIERS OUT TO SEA,  
THEY COLLECT THE POWER OF THE TIDE.  
IF WE DON'T DO THIS, THEN WE WILL ALL DIE!

By Matthew Beveridge 13, and Jethro Simmonds, 12, both British  
Institut International de Lancy, Geneva







# RENEWABLE ENERGIES

This edition of Earth Focus is dedicated to renewable energies, and in the following pages are words and pictures illustrating the importance of wind power, solar energy and other renewable energies. However, lots of you wrote to Earth Focus explaining the problem with non-renewable energies.

We think these articles highlight the importance of renewable energies through explaining the links between burning fossil fuel, pollution and global warming.





why waiting?...

# YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

**Did you know that the majority of activities you do are related to global warming? Global warming will affect the environment, you and I in many detrimental ways.**

When you use the computer, buy clothes, leave the lights on, leave your computer on standby, and watch the television you affect global warming. The activities I mentioned are just a few of many activities that affect the environment. If you still think it's a myth, how do you explain that the North and South Pole ice caps are melting and sea level rising? If you don't try to solve this predicament, you will bear the shortcomings as well.

One of the many examples of how you affect global warming is the clothes you are wearing right now, which have a huge impact on the environment. Factories that assemble machines in the manufacturing industry emit smoke into the atmosphere, which will impact the environment and this is just the beginning of the chain reaction.

For example, machines used in manufacturing clothes release carbon dioxide to the air. After the clothes are made, it will be transported to a warehouse to be stored before being sent to stores in shopping malls.

The vehicles that transport the merchandise to the warehouse and shopping malls, release carbon dioxide from the engines to the atmosphere, which will definitely have an impact on the environment. So think about it when you go shopping the next time around in terms of the clothes you are thinking of buying. The solution I would like recommend is to reduce buying unnecessary items.

Another factor to global warming is the power stations generating electricity, which is used unnecessarily. In our daily lives we cannot live without electricity as comfort is paramount. Even though we need to use electricity, we can reduce by turning off unnecessary lights. I'm sure you will have an electrical device inadvertently turned on.

Electricity is formed by fossil fuels. Burning fossil fuels has a massive impact on global warming. When fossil fuels are burnt, carbon dioxide would be released into the atmosphere and there goes our planet. It gets warmer, ice-caps melts and more natural disasters occur which would decrease the world's population.

How electricity is formed?

Right now, you must be thinking "I'm just an individual out of the world's huge population, how could I help?" Well, think of a mosquito in your room. That sure makes a difference, doesn't it? When you are about to drive, think twice, is it really necessary? For the bulbs in your house, replace your incandescent bulbs with more efficient compact fluorescents. Besides that, plant plants. It will not only make your house more beautiful but also reduce the impact on global warming. Last but not least, recycle, reuse and reduce to save your world. You can make a difference!

**Kenny Lim, American School of Doha**



global warming

## TURKEY

**More carbon dioxide is now in the atmosphere than in the past. CO2 stays in the atmosphere, acts like a warm blanket, and holds the heat. Human beings overload the atmosphere with gases from fossil-fuel driven cars, factories and power plants.**

According to Aldo Bonincontro global warming that humans are causing will produce hotter average temperatures in the whole Earth. The summers of the temperate regions will become longer and drier. Spain, South Italy, Greece, and Turkey will become as dry as deserts. The same will happen in other areas of the world, like North America, Middle East, South Africa, Central Asia. Global warming will have serious effects on human health: in summers more old people, especially the ones with circulatory problems, will die. Some diseases like Malaria which is typical in tropical zones, will reach to Europe and the other temperate regions.

According to the scenario which is prepared by Istanbul Technical University, in 2070 all around Turkey the general temperature rise will be 6°C. Except in the Black Sea region, there will be very little rain. When the ecosystem changes different species of living things will be under the threat of extinction. Prof. Nüzhet Dalfes from I.T.U. says that “In the future Turkey won’t be in a good position.”

Selçuk Ertuğ, Turkish, Yüzyıl Işıl High School, Istanbul

### *Pollution – The Earth Cries*

*The humungous monsters  
Tall, ugly, grey,  
Peer down at us  
Puffing out grey clouds of smoke*

*Earth is not what it was  
It was green, it was free  
Now the monsters raid it  
They make it grey and sad*

*We say we love Earth  
Do we really?  
Then why let the monsters in?  
Why not stop them?*

*Do we really care?  
We say we do  
Then why not free the Earth,  
Why not give it happiness?*

**By Sohini Kumar, 12, India  
Institut International de Lancy, Geneva**

*World is getting worse and worse,  
So stand up for stopping this curse.  
Not just East, not just West  
Try hard to make the whole world best.*

*Don't waste water too much,  
Don't use spray deodorants as such.  
The most important one is,  
Don't cut trees!*

*People make the world like this,  
So please listen to me for notice.  
Can't you see the rubbish around !  
And the soil in drought.*

*Wake up and be in action,  
Can't you see the pollution  
Don't sit like this  
We must never be remiss*

**Melis Nazlı Özel Yüzyıl Işıl  
High School, Istanbul**





avertissement

# A GLOBAL WARNING ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING!

**Grade Six students at Southern Cross School, Hoedspruit, South Africa, have been learning about global warming, supported by their teacher Tanya Wienand. Here they talk about the history behind this environmental change, what the effects are and how we, as individuals, can slow down the effects, through using renewable energies, and more...**

We are always talking about global warming. How many of you know what global warming is or even understand the words? The Oxford dictionary explains global warming as: “the increase of the temperature of the earth’s atmosphere as a result of the greenhouse gases”.

**Sabeeya Razak, 11**

Since the start of time, our sun has been heating the earth. Powerful rays have entered our atmosphere and have been absorbed then reflected. In this process the sun’s rays have heated the earth’s surface making life on earth possible.



*Southern Cross School, Hoedspruit, South Africa.*

Global warming began in the late 18th century and continued to the early 19th century. This period of time was called the Industrial Revolution. From the Industrial Revolution to modern day, industry has let out high quantities of carbon dioxide [CO<sub>2</sub>] into the atmosphere.

CO<sub>2</sub> and methane [CH<sub>4</sub>] are the main gasses in a group of gasses called greenhouse gasses. They are the “tool” for the heating of the earth.

The Greenhouse Effect works similarly to a green-

house. The gasses cover the inside of the atmosphere. The greenhouse gasses trap the sun’s rays between the earth and the atmosphere, thus over heating the earth. Global warming is when the earth becomes hotter due to the Greenhouse Effect.

Scientists have recently discovered that a 3°C rise in temperature can destroy masses of South Africa’s flora. As a result of this destruction, the species dependent on this flora will also die, resulting in a decrease of tourism to the country.

Other effects that global warming will have on the earth are that:

- An increase in heat will eventually melt the polar ice.
- A decrease of polar ice will decrease the amount of reflection of the sun’s rays.
- Also, a decrease in polar ice will kill many polar species, such as polar bears.
- If the polar ice melts, it will flow into the sea, decreasing the amount of salt in the sea.

**Megan King, 11**

The effects of global warming include air pollution, the melting of Polar ice, temperature changes and weather changes. Animals and plants live in different areas because they have adapted to that specific area. It is a whole system which is balanced, and if the temperature rises, the whole system will be destroyed! Many plants and animals will become extinct. There will be many weather changes all over the world such as increase occurrence of droughts, storms, floods and earthquakes. All of these weather changes can cause millions of deaths throughout the world!

**Wayne Parker, 11**

Not many people recognize what they are doing to our earth. Everyone is part of causing global warming every day. We pollute the earth by using electricity, driving cars, buying unnecessary things and littering. All of these things cause global warming. Electricity comes from factories! Cars come from factories and they pollute the air



by the smoke that comes out of cars' exhausts. When you buy toys, they come from factories! The packaging of food comes from factories! We are not trying to say that you must stop doing these things, but just try to cut down on these things.

**Wayne Parker, II**

The world must work together to stop destroying our forests and jungles. We must plant more trees to allow the absorption of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. We must try to find better agricultural methods. Industries must



*Tanya Wienand's Grade Six class.*

work towards making more eco-friendly products. We all need to stand together so that we can all look after our earth! We must protect our environment and make sure that the corporate companies do not burn too much fossil fuel. Together, we can achieve this goal!

**Sabeeya Razak, II**

The government is helping by putting a limit on greenhouse gas production. For example, a factory would only be

allowed to use 30 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, and they would have to pay a fine if they used 38 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. If they use only 10 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> they could either store it for future use or sell it to another company. This is called carbon trading.

To slow down the effect of global warming:

- Recycle! Separate glass; plastics; tins etc
- Use electricity wisely! Only switch on your electrical appliances (lights, TV) when you need them.
- Don't buy electricity if you can afford solar panels.
- Use water wisely! Don't leave the water running while you brush your teeth or put soap in your hands.
- Use your car as seldom as possible! Walk or ride your bike and if you need to drive, share it with as many people as possible.

All of these simple but effective practices will help. Remember, one person can make a difference, so start with you!

**Zoë Moolman, II**

We can slow down the effects of global warming by riding a bike to school and not driving. Try to refrain from driving as much as possible, use as little electricity as possible and drive long distances instead of flying. Also, purchase fewer things in un-recyclable packaging, so that factories will eventually only make recyclable packaging.

The South African government is slowing down the effect of global warming by trying to find alternate energy sources. You are probably wondering when this is all going to happen?...It's happening right now! This is why we have to act now, to try and reverse the effects of global warming or just to decrease the intensity of its effect.

**Luke Ridgard, II**

It's incontrovertible that global warming has started. So the question is: WHAT WILL WE DO? Small changes in your life can save the world, like a real superhero!

**Megan King, II**



écolo

## NEW ECO-ENERGY

**Most people associate oil and gas with running of cars and other methods of transport. However, many people are not aware that the burning of oil and other fuels is mostly used for electricity, and heating.**

The burning of these fuels is one of the main causes for global warming. So far we have developed several eco-friendly ways to produce electricity and heat in our homes without the use of fossil fuels. The big push is for the building of new long-lasting solar power plants, could this be the answer to saving our planet?

Recently, solar power plants have become very popular. However, they still have several drawbacks. The reason solar power plants are not always practical is because of the fact that they have trouble storing energy from sunlight for long periods of time. Therefore, power plants could not produce energy efficiently on cloudy days or at night. In fact, Larry Stoddard, the manager of renewable energy consulting, explains that when a large cloud covers the sun a 300 acre power plant can lose 50 megawatts of energy in 120 seconds. When you consider that 250 megawatts is enough power to run a large city, you see how storing energy in solar plants can be a problem. However a new solar device is being developed by the solar power industry, which collects heat from the sun and boils water into steam, then spins a turbine which makes power. This process allows solar thermal power plants to store the heat for several hours or even days before converting it into power. This is definitely a huge improvement for renewable energy production.

In my opinion, these new thermal solar power plants are crucial to helping reduce global warming and the depletion of our resources. However, much more should be done in order to help speed up this project. The first thing that needs to be done is that the new system should be run through several trial tests in order to ensure that it works properly. After successful testing the government should begin shutting down power plants that run on coal and replace them with new thermal solar power plants. This system should also be compatible within large buildings, such as schools, so that businesses and other organizations can also provide their own energy to their complex. I think the government should begin funding this research project.

Nick Perkins, Grade 9,  
International School of Duesseldorf.



*Solar power plant (© José Luis Gutiérrez)*





united-kingdom

# FRENDLY ENERGIES

## An Eco-Friendly Way to Create Electricity?

There are many different way to create renewable electricity, such as solar panel, hydro power (using moving water to create electricity) and of course the one I'm going to talk about, wind turbines.

The first wind farm was set up in November 1991. Now wind turbines can be found all over the world both on shore and off shore. I am mainly going to concentrate on wind turbines in the UK.

There are 1,969 wind turbines in the UK throughout 169 wind farms and still more are being built. All of these turbines can power 1,361,693 homes throughout a year. These huge turbines have rota diameters up to 65 metres and the towers can range from 25 to 80 metres tall. They usually have three blades and do ten to thirty revolutions per minute. The blades face the wind and the wind turns the blades, which then spins the shaft inside the turbine which is connected to a generator that creates electricity.

Although wind farms seems like the perfect solution to solving global warming there are some disadvantages.

A field full of wind turbine is far from a picturesque setting. A few of the people living near wind farms comment on how they destroy the countryside and make a lot of noise. Another advantage is that they can cause slight electromagnet interference with people's TV signals, radio signals and communication devices such as mobile phones. Of course when there is no wind, no electricity can be produced, so people whose houses are powered by wind turbines also need to have a generator.

However, these comments have been said from people living near wind farms:

"Inspiring. The future now looks a little rosier"

"A fascinating view of the future"

Another advantage is that wind energy is one of the cheapest ways to create renewable electricity.

Although there are some disadvantages I do think that wind turbines could reduce global warming, as they are an eco friendly way to produce electricity, and do not give out carbon dioxide. I think they will make our world a better place.

Isabelle Turney, 13, English  
Institut International de Lancy

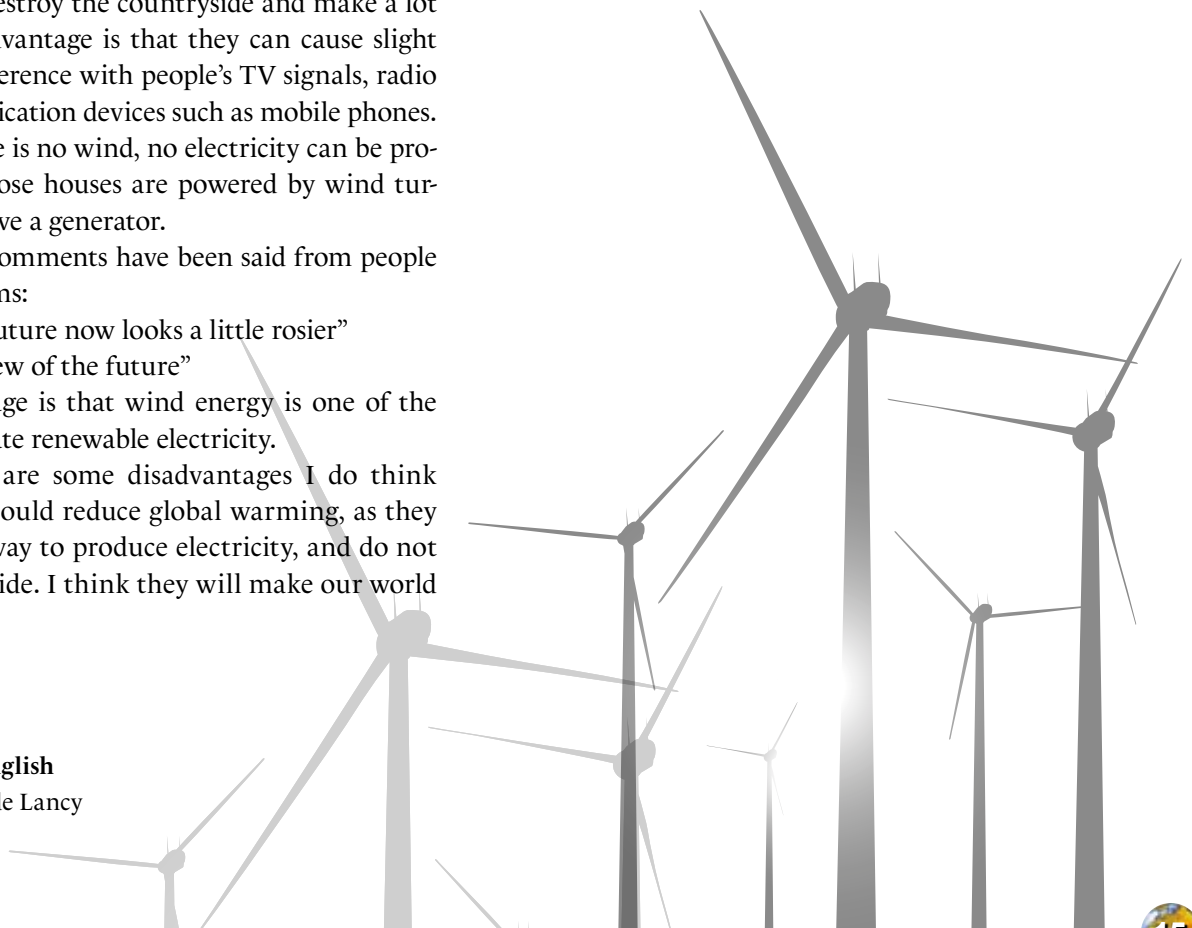
## Solar power in a cloudy country

The UK is not the world's sunniest place, but even on a cloudy day, enough sunlight gets through to provide solar power.

Now PV cells are being made into roof tiles, and built into glass for windows- so your home could provide a lot of its own electricity.

Experts think that solar power will be providing some of the UK's electricity by 2020, and it's share will keep growing.

Clint Okeyo, 13, Kenya,  
Institut International de Lancy





images

# RENEWABLE ENERGIES

**Evdokia VALLIS**, a 13 year old from the Greek island of Lesbos, is the 2008 winner of the seventeenth International Children's Painting Competition on the Environment organized by UNEP, the United Nations Environment Programme.

This annual competition is jointly organized by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Japan-based Foundation for Global Peace and Environment (FGPE), Bayer and Nikon. The painting competition has been held since 1990 and in that time has received over 200,000 entries from children in over 100 countries.

This year's competition theme was Climate Change: Actions you can take now. Children aged 6 to 14 were invited to express through painting actions they can take to reduce the impact of climate change such as using renewable energy, introducing energy saving light bulbs at home, sharing vehicles and using public transport, planting trees etc.

"Children's paintings always reflect the state of the crisis of the environmental destruction, expressing their sorrow with unique and creative ideas. At the same time, they show us various kinds of ways, what we should do or what we can do to preserve our Mother Planet for the future generations", said Ms. Tomoko Yano, Secretary General, Foundation for Global Peace and Environment. "We

deeply wish that their genuine messages will move much more people around the world to take actions together for confronting our common threat, Climate Change."

The 18<sup>th</sup> annual competition is now open, and the theme is Climate Change: Our Challenge. If you are aged between 5 and 13 and would like to enter, you need to send your A3 or A4 painting to your UNEP regional office by 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2009. To find out the address of your regional office and for a full list of entry rules, please contact Ms Kristin Ebbesen, Information assistant, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, Geneva, Tel: +41-229178279, Email: [kristin.ebbesen@unep.ch](mailto:kristin.ebbesen@unep.ch). You could win a fully paid trip to the 2009 Tunza International Children's Conference

*Evdokia's winning picture; Kanako Sternberg, age 10, studying at the Institut International de Geneve, won second prize in the European Region for this picture encouraging us to use public transport.*





debat

# FUELS FOR THE FUTURE

**350 students from both public and private schools in Geneva took part in the Fuels for the Future debate, on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2007 at the Geneva International Conference Centre. In addition to the discussion on energies, young people also prepared a message for the International Volunteer Day, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2007.**

The use of corn instead of gas and oil was one of the energy alternatives discussed. What about hydrogen, nuclear fusion and nuclear fission? There was also a debate about different types of wind and solar power, discussions led by the students for their fellow students.

The young people expressed concern with regards to the substantiality of these alternative energies: "What are we going to do at the end of the day with all of the waste produced by them?" they questioned. One of the participants pointed out that there were a number of dangerous nuclear waste sites in the US alone, awaiting disposal. "Where do you dump all of it? What does it mean for the environment in the future?" he asked. These students were very worried about environmental issues and the future of our planet.

In the afternoon, a roundtable brought together experts from various institutions to talk about alternative energies. On the panel were Ms. Agathe Weber of the Polar Foundation, Mr. Pascal Peduzzi of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Mr. Luc Job, Association for the Development of Renewable Energies (ADER), Ms. Jacqueline Coté, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Dr. Beat Von Scarpatetti, Transatlantic 21, as well as Mr. Damien Sidler of Services Industriels de Genève (SIG), who brought some interesting statistics about the energy consumption in the State of Geneva which is covered only 27% by the energy resources available in the canton. The rest comes from Valais and also from neighboring France and even from Belgium.

The aim of the Earth Focus debates was to raise awareness and responsibility of young people towards issues of today's world; thus allowing them to actively take part in an open discussion where each one has a role. The event was co-organized by Earth Focus Foundation and ICVolunteers.

The final message prepared by the students of Collège du Léman, Ecole Internationale, the Collège André Chavanne, Collège Rousseau and Deutsche Schule, puts things very clearly: "We, the youth of today, firmly believe that to overcome our energy problems we need to move from using fossil fuels to renewable and more sustainable energies in order to maintain a stable environment and to ensure the future of our planet."



*Students from across Geneva at the International Conference Centre for the Fuels for the Future debate.*

It goes well with the message for the International Volunteer Day, 5 December 2007, of Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, who recalled that the world's Governments were meeting in Bali, Indonesia, at the same moment to discuss climate change. In his message, Ban Ki-Moon stressed the important role of volunteers as key actors in many areas, including the environment and the fight against climate change: "...Governments cannot hope to [succeed] alone. Instead, we need people everywhere to volunteer for this challenge, and to help communities mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change."

This volunteer effort starts small, at the local level, giving a hand, joining hands... this is the message given by the young people gathered for this debate.

## V. Krebs, Executive Director ICVolunteers

Hamdi Tartarini, a student at the Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa, Kenya, speaks about her experience of the Future Fuels debate.

Two students, myself and Hannah, had the opportunity to visit Geneva and the Earth Focus headquarters. We visited the United Nations and the Students' League of Nations, as well as the Kilimanjaro Initiative that was held at





the International Labour Organisation, and took part in a youth debate.

The topic of the debate was “Future Fuels”, held on 4th December 2007 at the International Conference Centre. The aim of the debate was to create awareness of energy problems as well as looking further into more renewable and sustainable energy. Various schools presented the advantages and disadvantages of different energies such as biogas, nuclear fission, and hydrogen. This gave us an opportunity to interact with others students from Geneva as well as asking questions.

Personally, it allowed me to share my thoughts with students from a different cultural background and with different perspectives. The debate was an enlightening experience. I was able to compare energy use between Kenya and Geneva. I observed that the numbers of cars used in Geneva are far more than here in Kenya. This is because there are not more than two people per car!

**Hamdi Tartarini, 17, Kenya, The Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa**



*Volunteer efforts start small, at the local level, giving a hand, joining hands.*





transportation

## FUELLING CARS RENEWABLY

**As most of us know, global warming is one of today's major issues. In the 1990s, the Kyoto Protocol was created to curb the emission of CO<sub>2</sub> that was being produced. Needless to say, most countries signed except the largest producer of CO<sub>2</sub>, the United States.**

though there are states that have signed the protocol such as California. In fact, California was the first to introduce stricter emission requirements for motor vehicle in the 1970s before almost anyone started thinking about global warming. Today California still has the strictest emissions requirements for cars though most countries, especially member states of the European Union are introducing similar emissions requirements.

So far, the problem has been exposed but what about the solutions that we have come up with? Well, one of the first solutions was the electric car that came around the 1970s and 80s, but they were too expensive and weren't able to go very far with the battery technology available back then. Today the electric car has returned but with the main problems solved. For instance there is the Tesla Roadster which can go 400km without having to be re-charged and there are also many small city cars such as



the GeeWiz. Another solution, which has been introduced very recently, is the hybrid car. A hybrid car runs on both petrol and electric power because it has two engines. This design is essentially used to reduce fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in city driving where petrol engines pollute the most. On a highway, where petrol engines don't use as much fuel and therefore don't pollute as much, the electric engine is rarely used thus overcoming the problem of the low range of fully electric cars. As for alternatively fuelled cars a recent introduction is the hydrogen car which, instead of CO<sub>2</sub>, emits water but the cost of the fuel is very high and a hydrogen vehicle would be beyond the reach of most people. In Brazil, all cars are designed to be able to use petrol and a renewable fuel in this case ethanol. In Sweden, people can also make their cars run on alcohol for a relatively low cost.

However fossil fuel powered cars, (petrol and diesel) aren't as bad as we think. Before the Toyota Prius arrived (the world's best selling hybrid car) there was the Volkswagen Lupo 3L which was a little diesel powered car, that emitted less CO<sub>2</sub> than the Toyota Prius seven years ago! An interesting test was a fuel efficiency challenge between a Prius and a Fiat Panda 1.00hp. The Prius won, but not by much considering that they compared to an environmentally biased hybrid. This brings me to the advantage «normal» cars have over hybrids, they're lighter. Now what does weight have to do with pollution? Weight can dictate how hard an engine has to work to get a car to a certain speed. In a light car, the engine doesn't have to work as hard as a heavy car's engine to get to any speed. So to get to 60 km/h

a light car will use less fuel than a heavy one. Another disadvantage for hybrid and electric cars are the batteries. They do not last forever, after at least five or more years, the batteries must be thrown away and this causes pollution. Another advantage for fossil fuel cars is that compared to hybrids they pollute much less when they are being manufactured because they only need one engine and are devoid of all the extra equipment that you would find in a hybrid car. Now hydrogen powered cars seem to be the better solution because they only need one engine as well, but, to produce hydrogen a massive amount of energy is needed which is either provided by coal-fired power plants or nuclear power plants, which negates any advantage that would be provided by the hydrogen fuelled vehicles.

In conclusion, the ideal car for the future that pollutes less on the road and during the manufacturing process should run on a renewable plant-based fuel such as ethanol or alcohol. The car should also be made as light as possible and a plastic body would be ideal for this task, make the body recyclable and it fills two functions instead of one. Of course, this type of car is a long way away though the technology that would be needed is very close to being developed. Signs of intent for cars to be powered by renewable fuels have been made not by mainstream manufactures but by sports car companies such as Ferrari. If the companies that produce the most polluting cars are looking into renewable energy sources, then a renewable fuel to power vehicles that will arrive in the near future seems assured.

**Dan Orsholits, Collège Voltaire, Geneva**

*Additional article or picture*





PURPLE PEACE

# PROMOTING WORLD PEACE TO HEAL THE WORLD

**Purple Peace is a global campaign. We are a team of young people that are motivated to promote world peace. Four members of Purple Peace represented the campaign by participating in the J8 competition run by UNICEF because we wanted to voice our opinions on how to make the world a better place for everyone, as we are the younger generation.**

For the competition, we had to create a presentation covering the topics of: the environment and climate change, the global economy, development and infectious disease. We had to suggest practical solutions to these global issues, as if we were the G8 leaders. We were competing with many other schools around the UK, and if we won this competition we would be representatives of the UK and have the opportunity to attend the J8 summit that would be held in Japan. At the J8, each team from a G8 country and one developing country meet up and discuss possible solutions to current problems in the world. These solutions are then presented to the G8 leaders.

Below are a few outlines of the solutions we proposed:

## Environment and Climate Change

- create roof gardens in urban areas, particularly those with high pollution rates. These gardens would be eco-friendly and make urban areas a greener place.
- - Hot climate countries such as Australia and those in Africa could benefit by using solar energy more frequently as the world's resources are limited.

## The Global Economy

- - Promote eco-tourism in LEDCs, not only would this benefit the environment, it would also create an industry and hence improve the country's economy.
- -Pause debts that Africa has for 8 years, this would give them a chance to develop their country instead of needlessly repaying back the money that they haven't had the chance to use efficiently.

## Development

- G8 countries could give grants to big companies to locate in LEDCs which will provide employment for those citizens and it will give them a better quality of life.
- Big international companies should propose apprenticeship and training schemes in low income continents. The companies would benefit from the investment as they would have trained workers that would have the skills that the company particularly requires.

## Infectious Diseases

- More medical research should take place in order to develop tablets that are more suitable for children. Pharmaceutical companies - especially those in MEDCs, who have the money and equipment - should ensure the medication should be more available and suited for children.
- Children need medical support, however they should also receive emotional support too. We believe these children should be treated less like HIV/AIDS victims and more like children with emotion. Hence health centres, counselling and support groups should be established.

A few weeks after we submitted our presentation we found out that we were short listed! After hearing this news we were incredibly excited and even more inspired. On 11<sup>th</sup> April we travelled to London from Manchester to attend the J8 selection day where we would meet the judges and the other seven teams. We had to prepare a five minute presentation showing our dedication to this competition





and participate in many group activities. We also got an insight of what happened at the J8 summit at the previous year, and a flavour of what other people's ideas were. The events on the day were very valuable and we have all learnt a lot of things and also made many new friends. We came across many hard working teams that have also put a lot of effort into this just like us. We realised many teams had similar ideas to us and some teams had very interesting ideas too. And it was great to share our knowledge. Furthermore, during the journey down to London, we met Bob Geldof on the train!

Unfortunately, Purple Peace did not win the competition. Although we were disappointed, we felt at the same time as this was an excellent and memorable experience for us. We are proud and happy that we have achieved so much to get into the short listed teams and have got this far.

We are still going to continue our campaign and raise awareness to the global issues surrounding us. Purple Peace will continue to hold fundraising events to donate to charities we believe in by selling badges and bags etc. We hope to recruit even more members in this campaign, so we as the younger generation can move forward and make an impact in the society. We would like to thank every member of Purple Peace and those that have supported us.

**By Eva Ma, Amreen Qureshi, and Vivenne Wong, all 16, from North Manchester High School for Girls, and Chris Chan, also 16, from Middleton Technology College, UK.**

*Additional article or picture*



2008 conference

## “GLOBAL ISSUES NETWORK” DÜSSELDORF

**The Global Issues Network aims to help students realize that they can make a difference. The Network’s global issues conference, held in March 2008 in Düsseldorf saw young people from around the world meeting together to discuss and develop solutions to global problems. Students from the International School of Geneva and the American International School of Bucharest report.**

On the 12<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2008, 24 students from the International School of Geneva embarked on a journey to the Global Issues Network Conference held in Düsseldorf with the same purpose: making a change in the world. I was proud to be one of them. The theme of the conference was a quote by Mahatma Gandhi stating “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.”

When we arrived at the International School of Düsseldorf, we were amazed at the number of dynamic young people like ourselves from places as far as Qatar, South Korea, America and South Africa who were equally driven by the ambition to act as soon as possible. It was so inspiring to see that our tiny group from Geneva’s ideas would travel in a network of individuals from all around the world. This being said, if it wasn’t for the countless adults who dedicated their time to the occasion, the conference wouldn’t have been as worthwhile.

We had the chance to listen to a few keynote speakers, all of which had made a difference in the world. The person who inspired me the most was a man from Nebraska named Dean Jacobs who had traveled all around the globe for two years on a budget of ten to fifteen dollars a day. His message was that we should follow our dreams and hearts. I thought that he had an excellent perspective of the way we should look at things to improve the situation the world is in. He was such a role-model to youth, it was amazing! Dean Jacobs showed us pictures of where he had traveled and who he had met during his voyage. From Israel, to Cambodia, to Kenya, he had seen it all.

During the conference, as well as doing three presentations, we also had the chance to listen to a few other presentations. My favorite one was called “Blood Diamond”. Presented by the International School of Milan, the aim of it was for us to explore the process of diamonds through an interactive game where we each had a role.

Another aspect of Düsseldorf was the river groups. We were each mixed up with people from different schools and

placed into different groups with river names. I was in the Mississippi group. We were asked to discuss and debate a discussion topic which was:



*Students from around the world met at the Global Issues Network Conference Düsseldorf to discuss and develop solutions to global problems.*

“It is people who do development, not governments, and therefore sustainable development is a local activity. All people have some ability, however constrained, of changing what they do, in small ways.” Hodder Murray. My group’s opinion of this statement was that we agreed that it was the responsibility of the people to live a sustainable lifestyle but that they could not do so without the help of their governments.

Before leaving, each school was asked to present an action plan to another school. Our main aims were being more sustainable individually and promoting Earth Day.

Overall, the conference was definitely worth all the lunch breaks we spent planning our presentations. The





Global Issues Network Conference is a great way to meet new people and branch out your ideas. If you are interested in going, I would highly recommend it! It is a worthwhile experience and I will never forget it.

**Sophie, International School of Geneva**

One of the topics we decided to present was human rights issues. This year, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is 60 years old. We thought that it is somewhat flawed and also now in need of revision, in order for it to meet today's needs. We decided to create a modified and updated version of it, which we will later present to the United Nations Human Rights Commission.

Another topic we presented was on underage sex trafficking. We gave many case studies on different methods

America, Vietnam, South Africa, and many, many more. We also had the chance to listen and interact with many knowledgeable keynote speakers. In addition, we attended a wide range of presentations by other schools, from the conflict between Israel and Palestine, to the effect media has in Africa.

Towards the end of the conference, we were absolutely shocked and disgusted by the thing we learnt about the vast numbers of global issues created by us, human beings. The theme of the conference was sustainable development. We saw how selfish we've been, simply taking more than what we need and whatever we want, without thinking of others.

We would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the students and staffs of the International School of Düsseldorf, and all the other organizers, for all the extra time they gave up to work to make sure that our stay was as hospitable as possible. They also had to overcome many difficulties to ensure that the conference was successful.

To conclude, we found this conference to be incredibly inspiring and enlightening.

**Robert Ekblom (Finland), Divyank Aggarwal (India), Nazi-hah Noor (Malaysia), Bryson Ddaddah (Kenya), and Maddie Buchanan (America), all 15, International School of Geneva.**



*"You must be the change you wish to see in the world" Mahatma Gandhi*

used by traffickers to lure defenseless children into their monstrous business. We spread awareness of the current situation to our audience.

We also presented Earth Focus magazine. We promoted that it is a very useful medium for youths all over the world to communicate and share ideas. It is also an excellent way to get our point across and have our voice heard.

Prior to the conference, we regularly sacrificed our lunch times, evenings, and weekends to have group meetings in preparation to the conference. After several months of dedicated hard work, we traveled to Düsseldorf as ambassadors of our school to spread our knowledge. We were also able to exchange our ideas about current world issues with other youths from various schools from many different countries such as Qatar, Germany, United States of

To find out more about the  
Global Issues Network, visit  
[www.global-issues-network.org](http://www.global-issues-network.org)



**Eleanor Roosevelt once said: “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”**

March 15<sup>th</sup> 2008 is the day that six teenage students from the American International School of Bucharest decided to start something new, something big and exciting: The birthday of “Recycle Romania”. Alex Cristescu, Daniel Davidai, Priscila Nzungi, Alexandra Androne, Sapir Blau and Angelika Strohmayer participated in the Global Issues Network (GIN) Conference in Duesseldorf, Germany. It was the first time the American International School of Bucharest (AISB) had participated in this conference, and hence it was a new and exciting trip. Not knowing what to expect six excited students traveled to Germany to change the world. At the conference the students were inspired to start a project that would not only affect their school community, but something bigger.

None of them had ever done something of such large scale for the environment. At first they wanted to simply start a recycling program in their school. As it was the first time they were in the conference, they wanted to start small. The only problem with this was: Where does the trash go after it had been collected for recycling? Romania does not have the infrastructure and factories to recycle; hence the idea: Recycle Romania.

Recycle Romania is a student-led organization that dedicates much time, effort and thought into raising awareness about pollution in Romania, why it is bad, as well as teaching the young how they can easily contribute to the project, by simply recycling, and separating plastic from paper and glass etc.

Earth Day was introduced to the AISB community for the first time this year. Teachers are creating pamphlets that will be given to Romanian Public Schools to read for this event. This will raise awareness, and begin to educate the young children, and future of Romania. Once the children understand the problems the country and the world are facing, AISB and Recycle Romania is hoping that the children will pass on their knowledge to parents, grandparents and other family members creating a cycle of teaching. We hope for this circle of education to educate the entire nation, and with this, create new opportunities for environmentally friendly methods of trash pick-up and recycling.

The first step the group will take, however, is: writing a petition to the Romanian government describing the situation, and describing that recycling bins, plants and collections are a necessity in today's society. It is impossible for a country to grow with sustainable resources if there is not even a hint of will to recycle properly.

Facebook and Myspace groups have been set up (face-

book: Recycle Romania, Myspace: [groups.myspace.com/aisbrecycleromania](http://groups.myspace.com/aisbrecycleromania)). And a web page will soon be created by the IT department headed by Daniel Davidai.



*Students from the American International School of Bucharest attend the GIN conference. From left to right: Priscila Nzungi, Alexandra Androne, Sapir Blau, Alex Cristescu, Angelika Strohmayer, and Daniel Davidai.*

This may seem as a huge goal for a group of six teenagers. The sextet is very enthusiastic about this programme and believes in the power of youth. At this point in time, the organization is only a vision, but it will soon become reality. The only thing that is missing is the signatures. The students will stand on the streets, in malls, in large cities as well as touristic areas in Romania. The areas where the youth goes, as well as large companies and TV, Radio and Newspaper advertisements are hoped for by the group.

“Vision without action is a daydream.  
Action without vision is a nightmare.”

Japanese Proverb

The GIN taught the six students, amongst approximately 400, this message throughout the three days of conference. The students from AISB are taking action in their local community, not as a simple community service group, but as an organization they named: Recycle Romania. The organization that will give Romania a little nudge to show the government what exactly is going on.

**Angelika Strohmayer, autrichienne, 15 ans**  
Ecole Internationale américaine de Bucarest



a rich experience !

## SOUTH AFRICAN MODEL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE

**Opportunity! Like a shower in the midst of a sunny day – it comes and goes like the drops of rain, changing the course of our lives with the choices we make. We can choose to seek shelter from it, avoid it and forever live in monotony or we can choose to drench ourselves in it and fill our lives with adventure and new experiences that will ultimately provide us with the chance to live life to the fullest.**

I ask you, have you ever walked away from an opportunity to take part in an event because you were afraid of exploring your abilities or strengthening them? Were you afraid that you did not have the skills required to be able to participate in it? If so, have you then wished that you had been courageous enough to have participated? Have you felt the guilt of knowing that you could have experienced something great, but now missed that opportunity?

For me, the South African Model United Nation Conference could have been that missed opportunity. When first hearing of the Conference, I was sceptical about applying for it, knowing my fear of public speaking. Frankly, I was afraid of participating in any event that required my active vocal participation. I was quite certain at that time that this was not an event for me. I nearly overlooked it, not because I lacked the skill, but because I lacked the courage!

Luckily, my mind would not let me rest. I was raring for a new experience and the thought of going to South Africa intrigued me. After days of consideration, I finally filled out the application form, plunging myself into the challenging unknown that lay ahead. This was a life-changing moment for me.

The Conference, which took place between the 11th and 16th of October 2007, brought together young adults from different parts of the world to debate issues of global concern with the aim of developing their understanding of today's world issues and the role of the international society in contributing/combating these issues. It required groups of four people to take on an empathic role and represent a country's policies during the debates on these global issues, namely: Climate Change, The New Threat to International Peace and Security ; Discrimination on the Grounds of HIV and AIDS ; and Child Labour. These issues are currently some of the most globally topical concerns. In fact, this year's Nobel Peace Prize award was awarded to people fighting Climate Change. The debates, and the months of preparation leading up to them, contributed immensely to my understanding of the magnitude of current world affairs. It broadened my perception of the world we live in; I realised for the first time, the complexities that we face on a daily basis just in order to survive. The threat to our world

is imminent and great, and I believe that I did not just walk away from the Conference with a wider understanding of these issues, but with a greater desire that I can and will be able to contribute towards fighting and alleviating these problems.

The Conference also involved a night's stay at Robben Island, the maximum security prison where political prisoners were held during the Apartheid regime. Upon arrival, we were stripped of everything except our clothes, tied up and put inside cells. I was put in an isolation cell: a small, empty room with nothing but a tiny window at the top providing a source of light. The hours of solitude, cold and restlessness seeped into my body, numbing me with the pain of enslavement and oppression. I didn't know how long they planned on keeping me in there, and as the daylight turned to night, the loneliness was torturous. Yet the experience was deeply-moving. We were able, for a few hours, to experience what some people had gone through for more than a quarter century of their lives! And to be able to experience that gave me a deeper appreciation for freedom and the life I currently lead.

However, the richest experience came with the new ties of friendship that were made there. The Conference gave me an opportunity to connect with people from different backgrounds and ethnicities, allowing me to get a wider exposure to a variety of cultures. The delegates were the friendliest and most outgoing people I had ever met and, over the days, we were able to share common interests, experiences, have a laugh and an amazing time together. Spending time with these people for those few days were, and will be, the most memorable part of the Conference.

I write this reflection in the hope that people realize the great experiences they could attain if they are courageous enough to fight their fears. For me, this was truly an incredible journey in life. I learnt more about myself and my abilities and I hope that those who are able to read this article learn, as I did, to never let their fears get the better of them, as overcoming those fears could give you the richest experience of all.

Shailen Shah, Académie Aga Khan, Mombasa





walk the talk

## BANDUNG INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL SAYS NO TO PLASTICS

**On April 22nd, 2008, Bandung International School, located in West Java, celebrated Earth Day. The whole school community was involved together in order to bring a meaningful experience of environmental awareness to the school.**

The theme of this year was ‘Sustainability’ with a focus on ‘Say no to plastic’. This theme aimed to encourage people to reduce use of plastic bags.

During the celebration, we enjoyed many meaningful activities. Elementary school children performed a skit about having a special trash bin. All students at BIS put empty cardboard containers in that bin which is next to the school canteen so that we can recycle. They also sang a song about reducing the use of plastic bags.

With all these programs, we had a lot of fun!

Part of our celebration included a Nature Walk. From small children until adults, we had a good time in beautiful scenery.

We also had environmental games with small children.

By having an annual celebration at school, we become more active and aware. By having a Nature Walk, we feel the natural world around us and know that we should keep our world well in order to leave it for our children, grandchildren, and great great grandchildren. All these activities will remain a wonderful memory. There is a quote. ‘All we have now we borrowed from the future.’ As we borrowed nature from the future, we should keep it well.

**Jae Min Chang , Grade 10, Bandung International School**



*Earth Day performance: ‘Elementary students reminded everyone to use the recycling bins*



*Bandung International School’s nature walk to celebrate Earth Day*



ecotourisme

## A CHANCE TO SERVE THE COMMUNITY

**In the last edition of Earth Focus Peter McMurray, Head of the Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa wrote about the importance of the CAS component of the IB. Courtney Reeve reflects here on her experience of Creativity, Action and Service in Indonesia.**



*"I learned a great deal from each island experience and the people I worked with"*

I was offered a significant leadership experience when the eco-tourism business, Island Connections International, selected me for an internship. I was asked to be a cultural and linguistics consultant to serve the tourists and local community. My background as an international student gave me cultural insight and an attitude ready to serve and understand people on the remote islands of Indonesia.

I willingly volunteered to participate in the program to contribute to the local community. I was called to serve through clearing garbage from the islands, repairing educational, health and religious facilities, assisting in the preparation of tours and teaching the language. Island International seeks to equally impact the local community as well as those who travel from abroad for cultural adventure. As a foreigner in Indonesia, I was able to bridge the gap between the barriers and misunderstandings of the Indonesian islanders and tourists. My ability to speak the Indonesian language allowed me to translate for the people. For each tour, I would guide the tourists through the cultural immersion of living with the local people. As a team, we would set out to do community projects joining with the local people in improving the quality of life on the remote islands.

Part of the experience was personally connecting to the local islanders. I was able to build friendships with people in a matter of hours through deep conversation and involvement in their lives. On one occasion, I befriended a young girl who was dealing with the loss of her father and the absence of a mother. We were able to talk through some difficult challenges of death, life and promises. Her friendship was one of the many rewards I received along my journey.

Part of entering the homes of islanders involved exposure to the vibrant and hospitable culture of the Malayu people. Arriving at each island, the tourist groups and I would be greeted with traditional ceremonies of drum playing and song. A typical day on the island would begin with early mornings and a bucket shower, then seafood meals without utensils, the usual women's volleyball game or public karaoke and conclude with sleeping on the hardwood floor. The islanders honored us through providing exposure to their culture and offering their joyful hospitality. We were able to return the favor by giving back through gratitude, friendship, and service.

I learned a great deal from each island experience and the people I worked with. The satisfaction of serving people has challenged me to make a difference by taking time to love. I learned to use my multi-cultural exposure to benefit the impoverished people of the islands and invite the tourists to do the same. I have been encouraged to find more opportunities where I can contribute to the community through acts of service.

**Courtney Ann Reeve, Grade II,**  
Bandung International School



YÜZYIL IŞIL, HIGH SCHOOL, ISTANBUL TURKEY

## WHAT WE'RE DOING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

### The Comenius Project

Through the Comenius Project, a cultural project sponsored by European Union, Yüzyıl Işıl High School is working with schools in Austria, Spain, Greece and Sweden. Under the title 'Diversity Around Us' meetings and activities are held in each of these countries, giving students the opportunity to share their cultures. The school created a logo for the project – they chose a seal, found in the Mediterranean Sea of Turkey and under threat of extinction.

As a part of the Comenius Project held among international schools, we had guests from various foreign countries at our school, Yüzyıl Işıl. The name of the project was Cultural Diversity Around Us. We came together with foreign students and their teachers to share and learn about each others' cultures. On the first day they arrived we were so excited. I met my friend from France who I would host. We were so happy to get new friends. On the same day our school principal made an opening speech in the theatre hall. Later on we had various activities and presentations showing them our music, food and dances. Then we went to Atatürk aboretum and played games. These games made us get closer. At nights every student of our school hosted a foreign friend at his/her home. On the second day we took them to Topkapı Palace, Grand Bazaar and Sultanahmet Avenue. When the day came to depart we were crying because we loved them very much.

**Dilara Aka, Turkey**

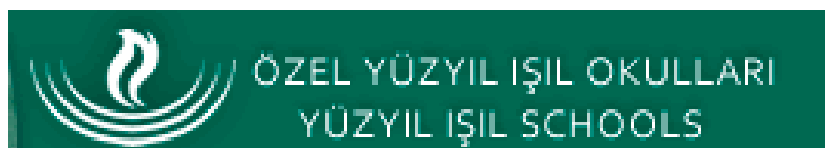
Our country has wonderful land and climate in which various plants and trees can grow. It is a very special country since we have big and important forests. I believe people need to be educated to keep those forests. While we are having deforestation because of construction companies, we, as Yüzyıl Işıl High School students, went to plant trees with our guests coming from other countries to visit our school for the Comenius Project. As a school we went to an area called Uskumruköy with our guests. Our main aim was to make the environment get greener. Our teacher formed mixed groups of Yüzyıl Işıl and foreign students. There was a friendly atmosphere in each group. We were excited to know more about each others' language and country. When we arrived at Uskumruköy we started to plant tree saplings according to the instructions given to

us. We were pleased to do something positive for the environment. Our foreign guests and we knew that our friendship would also grow while the trees were growing. For the first time I put hand in hand with a Spanish student and did something to save our world. This made me and my friends feel peaceful and happy.

**Aşlışah Alkoçlar, Turkey**

### Creativity, Action, Service at Yüzyıl Işıl High School

I want to share a very important thing about our school's activities with you. Our CAS students helped a school which is very poor, unkempt and old. That experience was amazing because the students who helped the school are only 17 years old. They became our sister school. I hope in the future I'll do something as they did.



The school's name is Kizilagac village school. Maybe you know maybe you don't but in our country the

villages are under-developed. There are lots of beauties in our villages but the life style there isn't as comfortable as ours. They don't have enough technological things as we have. That's why I'm very happy and proud of that activity.

When they arrived at Kizilagac village they saw that the school was in terrible condition. They didn't have a library, or comfortable desks but when CAS students fixed the school everything changed. They also donated the school the books we had collected for them.

Can you imagine the feelings of those students? They must have been very happy. I think we should never forget to appreciate what we have.

**Yağmur Çakiroğlu, Turkey**

Our IB students in High School do various CAS activities. This year I and a few of my friends from prep class wanted to be among them. We wanted to see what it was like to help people.

At one weekend our teachers and administrators took





us to Turgutlıköyü Primary School which is our sister school. We arrived there early in the morning. When we got to school we were very excited. Although they didn't know us they behaved very friendly. When I saw their classrooms I was shocked. They had only two classes. One of



*The school from above, showing how close it is to Belgrade forest.*

them was for students going from grade 1 to 3. The other was for students going to grades 4 and 5. All those students were sitting together in the same class but studying different subjects. They said there were only two teachers teaching them. When one grade level was learning something from the teacher the other grade level students were keeping quiet and doing practice in their notebooks.

After the school tour, we talked to the principal and asked what they needed. They needed a library with books. Although they were not rich people they were very hospitable. The mothers of the students made delicious food for us and we had our lunch there. The students performed a small play to entertain us. We gave them our presents and promised to make their library soon. When we came back we started a campaign at school to help them.

Now I'm happy that I went there with the IB students. I realized how lucky I am. I learnt helping people in need is really necessary.

**Hazal Dünderalp, Turkey**

## Sponsored Walk

Every year our English teacher Gaye Koçer organizes a sponsored walk in spring time with high school prep and grade nine students. We go to Belgrad Forest which is near to our school. 10 days before our teacher distributes us the

sponsor forms and asks us to find as many sponsors as we can. The walking track in the forest is around a lake and it is 7 km. We try to find sponsors for each km we walk. For example, my mother gives 10 YTL for each km I walk. Our neighbour may give me 5 YTL for each km.

On the day we go to the forest with our sports clothes on and have our picnic first. Then we walk around the lake. After the walk we start collecting the money our sponsors had promised. When our teacher finishes collecting the money from all students we decide on the place where we are going to donate it. We decide on the organization through our votes.

This activity shows that we can do a lot when we are together. We share the pleasure of helping people in need. Besides we have a healthy and enjoyable day. I'm sure this year's walk which is on 22<sup>nd</sup> May will also be successful.

**Sibel Kızavul, Turkey**



*Sponsored walk donation: Students from Yüzyıl İşıl High School making a donation to the Foundation For Children with Leukemia. You can see their teacher, Gaye Koçer on the left, and the school principal on the far right.*



a final thought

## DOLPHINS ARE ANIMALS, NOT THERAPISTS



**OceanCare is a non-profit association, founded in 1989, which works for the protection of sea mammals and their environment. Here, three people who work with or support OceanCare share their expertise on, and feelings about, the maltreatment of dolphins at the hands of humans.**

### **Dolphin assisted therapy: a lose-lose proposition for all involved**

People with physical or mental diseases often try to speed up their recovery with dolphin assisted therapy (DAT). Supporters claim that it is an effective treatment for many ailments. “Their justifications range across the whole spectrum of plausibility”, explains Dr. Lori Marino, who works in the field of neuroscience and behavioural Biology at Emory University in Atlanta (USA). Some say dolphins have special powers because of their ultrasound, or that they are an effective means of reinforcing learning. Furthermore a therapy in the water can minimize the perception of pain as well as increase the mobility of a patient with physical disabilities.

Many researchers have studied DAT and, based on their findings, support the therapy. Dr. Marino checked the sci-

entific basis and methods used in these studies, and found some astonishing results. “All of the studies had significant methodological weaknesses so that their findings were invalid”, said Dr Marino. “Therefore, to date, there is no evidence to support the claim that DAT has positive therapeutic effects”. Dolphins are animals, not therapists.



Dolphin therapy is expensive, on the one hand for the family or the person who has to pay for it, on the other hand for the dolphin. Typical DAT programs cost between \$3,000 and \$5,000. The marine mammals living in a dolphinarium or in a marine park often have to “work” for several hours.

Dr Marino describes the process: “in most cases the client or patient enters a pool with a captive dolphin and engages in a variety of activities from swimming with and riding on the dolphin to petting or feeding”. Although it is often erroneously assumed that dolphins like humans or even look for the presence of ill people, observations have proved that these animals are under enormous pressure and there-





*Previous picture: Free dolphins, in the vastness and biological diversity of the open sea; (Jim Frohoff)*  
*Above: Dolphins are free ranging, social, sonic, and highly intelligent marine mammals*

fore sometimes show aggressive behaviour. This offers an explanation as to why there are many documented cases of serious injuries resulting from swimming with dolphins in captivity. In addition, both humans and dolphins run the risk of contracting a disease. But of course nobody involved in the DAT-industry is promoting this important information.

Everybody who wants to take part in a dolphin therapy should think of the consequences. There is a direct connection between these programs and the taking of dolphins from the wild. They used to live freely and are far away from being domesticated. Marine mammals lose their dignity when they are kept in captivity. An economic rule of thumb says that demand determines supply – so the only way out of this vicious circle is to avoid the booming dolphinariums, the dolphin swimming programmes and the dolphin therapy. And of course there are alternatives. “If parents feel as though they want their child to experience closeness to another animal, there are much more benign forms of animal-assisted therapy”, explains Dr Marino. She recommends looking for officially recognised therapists who work with dogs or horses. However, even then anyone interested should check the conditions of the animals and

the possible risks.

**Melanie Schär, 23,**  
is a student at the University of Berne.



*Captive dolphin: Confining a dolphin to a small space inevitably causes stress in the animal*





### Facts and figures

- There are more than 200 dolphinariums worldwide
- Due to DAT and swim-with programs the dolphinaria industry is still growing
- Most dolphins in captivity are wild-caught
- Captured dolphins are six times more likely to die within the month directly after capture than at other time
- People have sustained injury from swimming with captive dolphins such as internal injuries, serious wounds, and broken bones
- Dolphins in captivity are taken permanently from their families and have no chance to engage in species specific behaviour
- The stress of captivity often results in stomach ulcers amongst dolphins
- While a live dolphin was worth US\$ 300 in the 1960s, today more than US\$ 100,000 is paid for one captured animal

Compiled by Silvia Frey, an Environmental Scientist at OceanCare.

### More on Dolphins

Dolphin-Assisted-Therapy has become a lucrative business over the last years and presents a serious threat to the welfare of dolphins in that it creates further captures, trade, and captive breeding of dolphins worldwide. Furthermore, it takes advantage of desperate and vulnerable parents, who readily pay large sums of money to give their ill or disabled children what the billion-dollar dolphin captivity industry advertises as a life-enhancing dolphin experience.

There is no scientific evidence to substantiate the claim that spending time in a tank or sea enclosure with dolphins has a healing effect on ill and disabled people. Even if there was, could this really justify the high price that dolphins pay for our desire to be close to them? When considering whether or not using dolphins to heal people is acceptable, it is important to take the following facts into account.

Dolphins are free ranging, social, sonic, and highly intelligent marine mammals. The vastness and biological diversity of the open sea, in which dolphins and other whales have developed over more than 50 million years, cannot be duplicated in a tank or an enclosure in the sea. Consequently, the complexity of dolphins' behavioural repertoire cannot be accommodated in captivity. Based on today's knowledge of Cetaceans' sophisticated physiology and highly developed emotional sense, one must conclude that confining dolphins and other whales to a small space inevitably causes stress in the animals. This negative effect is reinforced by the fact that dolphins used in swim programs have to be trained by means of food control to endure the constant pressure of being treated as pets.

It is hardly surprising that dolphins used in swim programs have demonstrated agitated and aggressive behaviours under the stressful conditions of confinement and forced interactions with people. These behaviours have

resulted in injury to swimmers. There are accounts of human injuries in the form of lacerations, tooth rakes, internal injuries, broken bones, and shock. As a matter of fact, I would suggest that the decision to end the television series 'Flipper' was largely because it became too dangerous for the actors to be in the water with the dolphins. Needless to say, a 3-400 pound frustrated animal can cause serious injury to a human being.

The issue of using dolphins as a tool to obtain a feel-good experience is not one of science, but of ethics. It is inherently hypocritical to capture and confine dolphins, thereby destroying the quality of their lives, in an attempt to enhance our own.

Richard O'Barry has over 30 years experience working to free captive dolphins and educate the public about their plight. He is currently Director of [SaveJapanDolphins.org](http://SaveJapanDolphins.org).



*There is a direct connection between swim-with programs and the taking of dolphins from the wild.*

# CALLING ALL TEACHERS!

## EARTH FOCUS #36

At Earth Focus we are in the process of gathering articles for the 36th edition of the Earth Focus magazine. We reply on the insightful, emotive and passionate voices of students of all ages, and on the time and energy you give to students to help them develop their ideas. Please continue to provide opportunities for your students to write for us, and keep their contributions coming!

The title of the next edition is 'Stolen Childhood' and we are looking for students' perspectives on this topic, in the form of articles, poems, creative writing, and pictures. Future editions include 'Health, Wealth and Wisdom' and 'Whose Right?' We hope students will find inspiration amongst these titles – though we are always happy to receive articles on any topic students are passionate about.

If possible, please email contributions to [editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org) in Word format. Alternatively, you can post them to Earth Focus Foundation, C.P. 3006, 1211 Geneva 3, Switzerland. Pictures and drawings should be high resolution,

and if they are included in the text, please send them separately as well. To allow us to properly credit the students, include their names, ages and nationalities, as well as the name of the school. Earth Focus cannot print plagiarised work, so please encourage your students to write in their own words and acknowledge their sources.

We are keen for Earth Focus to be as student-led as possible, and as a result we are building a team of student editors. We are looking for a student representative from each school who would be willing to channel and encourage contributions, as well as offering us advice and suggestions on how we could improve. To put forward a student, please contact the editor at

[editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org).

As well as the magazine, Earth Focus Foundation organizes a wide range of activities including debates, exchanges and competitions. To find out more, email [editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org) or visit [www.earthfocus.org](http://www.earthfocus.org).



# CALLING ALL STUDENTS! EARTH FOCUS #36

At Earth Focus we are in the process of gathering articles for the 36th edition of the Earth Focus magazine. The title of the next edition is 'Stolen Childhood' and we are currently looking for your perspectives on this topic, in the form of articles, poems, creative writing, and pictures. Future editions include 'Health, Wealth and Wisdom' and 'Whose Right?' We hope you'll find inspiration amongst these titles – though we're always happy to receive articles on any topic you are passionate about.

If possible, email contributions to [editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org) in Word format. Alternatively, you can post them to Earth Focus Foundation, C.P. 3006, 1211 Geneva 3, Switzerland. Pictures and drawings should be high resolution, and if they are included in the text, please also send them separately. Include your name, age and nationality, and the name of your school. Earth Focus cannot print plagiarised work, so make sure you write in your own words and acknowledge your sources.

We are keen for Earth Focus to be as student-led as possible, and as a result we're building a team of student editors. We are looking for a student representative from each school who would be willing to channel and encourage contributions, as well as offering us advice and suggestions on how we could improve. If you are interested in being a student representative for your school, please contact the editor at: [editor@earthfocus.org](mailto:editor@earthfocus.org).

We reply on your insightful, emotive and passionate contributions – so please get writing! Not only will your thoughts and ideas be shared with fellow students around the world, but you will also be a published author!







*“Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan was a role model to many of us,  
and his example will continue to inspire new world citizens  
for several generations to come”*

Kofi Annan  
UN Secretary-General, 28 October 2003

Our vision :

“ To build and protect a better world, sustainable and more peaceful for our children and grand children ”

Our mission :

Provide a platform and a voice

Promote and share an understanding of the environment and of sustainable development

Encourage the feeling that the young people have an important role to play

[www.earthfocusfoundation.org](http://www.earthfocusfoundation.org)

[www.earthfocus.org](http://www.earthfocus.org)

Education is the best way to “make the change”  
Your support will benefit young people worldwide !

