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THIS NEWSLETTER IS PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

In your hands you have the first issue of the environmental information newsletter. The publication of this newsletter is a joint contribution of the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The need to increase the level of qualitative information about the environment in Kosovo has been one of the reasons that have prompted the quarterly publication of this newsletter. The main aim of this publication is to bring to you important information about the environment, but also reflect on the commitment, efforts and activities of environmental institutions, non-governmental organisations and civic initiatives for improving environmental conditions.

In the following pages you will find various tips for environmental protection, environment curiosities, a global environmental events calendar and also important environmental facts. On this occasion, we invite all interested individuals and organisations to cooperate with us by sending information on environmental activities in order to fulfill our goal. We hope that with a fruitful cooperation and a shared commitment, this newsletter will become another source to provide you with up-to-date and interesting information about the state of the environment that surrounds us.

Editorial Team

LOCAL NEWS

Children Protecting the Environment

The Advocacy Training and Resource Center’s (ATRC) project, “Children for Environmental Protection”, has distributed 60 grants to 60 elementary schools in 30 municipalities of Kosovo. Grants in the amount of 180 € were given, aimed at raising the awareness of children on environmental protection, namely the protection of the environment where they learn.



Within the project, trees, flowers and pines were planted, soil was turned into green areas, and seats for students and garbage bins were placed, among many other activities. Projects were led by the “Young Ambassadors of Environment”, who were recently selected by the organisation.

FAST

FACTS

- The major air polluters in Kosovo are energy production, the transport sector and industrial production
- Recently, civil society organisations have become more active and organised in environmental conservation
- Waste generation poses as one of the biggest environmental concerns, in addition to being an economic burden to the Kosovo society
- A major source of water pollution is the discharge of untreated sewage into local water streams
- Currently, about 75% of the population has access to water supply services, while only about 55% with sewerage services

Mr Muharrem Ahmetaj, Director of Idriz Seferi - Bob Kacanik/Kaçanik Primary School, states that projects like these are much welcomed.

"Although with modest means, this activity was extremely important, as we were able to engage both teachers and students. Students were motivated to protect classrooms, the school and the environment."



Mr Ahmetaj believes that another very important segment of this project was the involvement of the US KFOR, who also participated by encouraging students and offering refreshments.

The project was also welcomed 100 kilometers away from the village of Kacanik/Kaçanik Bob, in the Batllavë/Batlava in the municipality of Podujevë/Podujevo. "This is a very good and significant contribution for the school, because in addition to the school's more beautiful and cleaner appearance, students were also motivated to maintain this appearance in the future" says Ms Nazmie Hyseni, teacher at the Luigj Gurakuqi Elementary School in the village of Batllavë/Batlava.

The project for environment protection, supported by the US Embassy in Prishtinë /Priština, will continue in the future. □

Waste Collection and Clean-Up in Lubovishtë/Ljubovište Village

For several years the inhabitants of Ljuboviste/Ljubovište village near Dragash/Dragaš did not have access to a regular waste collection service.

Consequently, the waste was dumped on two slopes of a stream running through the village. Over time, the dumped waste generated an unpleasant odor, attracted rodents and insects, and polluted the water of the stream leading to public health risks and environmental degradation. The call for change was raised by the villagers of Ljuboviste/Ljubovište.



Dumped waste in a slope above a stream before the clean-up

"Waste collection and clean-up in Ljuboviste /Ljubovište village" is one of the pilot projects implemented in Dragash/Dragaš by UNDP and funded by the Government of Finland, addressing the waste management challenges of the municipality. Activities included the clean-up of two waste dumps and the creation of a functional waste collection system.

Removing the waste from the two slopes by the stream lasted around three weeks. The main dumpsite, located at the center of the village, was surrounded with poles and metal nets by the villagers. Throwing waste to the dumpsites was agreed to be forbidden.

This agreement has been fully respected by the villagers for the last six months. Collaboration with a local waste company has begun, and waste is collected door-by-door every Saturday, upon payment by the villagers.

ECO-FRIENDLY TIPS!

☑ Sweep the pavements; don't hose them with drinking water



☑ Try to wash your car less often



☑ Always turn the lights off when you leave a room



Environmental Calendar

6 November 2010

International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict
http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/environment_war/ind ex.html

27 November 2010

International Buy Nothing Day
<https://www.adbusters.org/campaigns/bnd>

02 December 2010

Global Green Awards
http://greenawards.co.uk/categories_x_16/green_awards_2010

11 December 2010

International Mountain Day
http://www.fao.org/mnts/intl_mountain_day_en.asp



The slope after the clean-up

Ljuboviste/Ljubovište is the first village out of 16 villages in the Gora region that has been included in a waste management system. The villagers are happy that both dumpsites are now clean. Meanwhile, some nearby Gorani villages have approached UNDP for support to solve their waste management issues. This can be considered as a positive regional impact of the project. □

Environment and Energy Clubs in Primary Schools

The Kosovo Energy & Environmental Club (KEEC) was established in September 2009, aiming at raising awareness on environmental issues in primary schools throughout Kosovo. “Our mission is to promote long-term energy and environmental sustainability in Kosovo by educating and increasing awareness among young generations on the importance of environmental protection, including the rational and efficient use of energy in our daily life” says Ms Arbresha Meha, Director of the KEEC.

In May 2010, the ongoing project, “Support to the Establishment of Environment and Energy Clubs in Primary Schools within Kosovo”, funded by the U.S. Embassy, conducted workshops in three primary schools in Prishtinë/Priština: Hilmi Rakovica, Hasan Prishtinë/Priština and 7 Marsi. At these schools, an assessment on the possibilities of including environmental and energy issues into the educational curricula at the primary and secondary levels was conducted.

Lectures, group discussions and hands-on activities on various topics related to environmental protection increases the levels of knowledge and understanding of its connections to daily life.

In addition, practical learning by strengthening the pupils’ problem-solving skills is important through group work and school activism. “We have noticed that pupils find it interesting and exciting to practically learn about these issues. This enables them to acquire skills on how to address issues that are relevant for the wider community” says Ms Meha. □



Primary school pupils at the Energy & Environment Club

Help save energy and the environment by reducing your electricity consumption.



Cooperation between Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency and Regional Environmental Movement Bells Kosovo

Kosovo Environmental Protection Agency (KEPA) and Regional Environmental Movement Bells Kosovo have signed a Memorandum of Understanding and Cooperation. The two parties agreed to cooperate and coordinate joint actions on issues related to environmental protection, through a process called "green diplomacy". The number of citizens engaged in environmental issues, and in development at the local and central levels, is expected to increase under this process.



Mr Ilir Morina, Head of KEPA (right) signing the Memorandum of Understanding with Mr Kushtrim Kaloshi, Coordinator of Bells Movement of Kosovo

The subject of this agreement of cooperation is for joint participation in activities implementing a broad awareness raising and informational campaign for Kosovans. The campaigns will be centered around the protection and improvement of environmental conditions in Kosovo, motivating people to engage continuously in environmental issues, based on concrete issues.

The memorandum also makes clear the commitment for environment to be an integral and continuous part of the policy-making process at the central and local levels. Other issues highlighted include support to green initiatives in the general interest of Kosovans, support to non-governmental organisation (NGO) activities that focus on environmental issues, as well as the strengthening of inter-municipal, regional and trans-boundary cooperation. □

GLOBAL NEWS

For the next issue in 02/2011, subscribe at: <http://www.ks.undp.org>

This newsletter is published in cooperation with the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Kosovo.

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50 Million Year Old Fossil of a Daisy Flower Found

A 50 million year old fossil flower belonging to the Asteraceae family (e.g. daisy, sunflower), was found in the Argentine side of Patagonia. A rare discovery, the fossil flower has already opened way to numerous theories on the existence of flowers many years ago.

It is incredibly rare to find such a well-preserved sample of flora from so long ago. Most of the flower fossils that paleobotanists find are grains of pollen. The news has been featured on the prestigious "Science" magazine. □

Solar Energy Boat Starts Its First Journey

Turanor Planet Solar, the biggest ship in the world with solar energy, has begun its world tour from Monte Carlo.

The purpose of this trip is to improve the knowledge on solar energy and its benefits throughout the world. The ship is 31 meters long, 15 meters high and has a total area of 537 square meters. The world trip will last about eight months and will tour the eastern and western coasts of North America, Mexico, Australia, Singapore and the United Arab Emirates. Project Founder Raphel Domjan, 37, is a member of the six-person crew. The name Turanor comes from Singapore, and means "the power of the sun". □

ECO-FRIENDLY TIPS!

☑ Use fabric bags instead of disposable plastic bags for shopping



☑ Turn the tap off while brushing your teeth



☑ Place trash into provided bins instead of littering the environment

