

# ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AND AWARENESS

Environmental Education is a process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and added tools necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relationship among man, his culture and his bio-physical surroundings. Environmental education has reached a juncture where it is positioned to become an equal partner with enforcement as a strategy for environmental management.

The Tbilisi Declaration (1978) defined environmental education as a learning process that increases people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and associated challenges, develops the necessary skills and expertise to address the challenges, and fosters attitudes, motivation, and commitment to make informed decisions and take responsible action.

In environmental education, the environment is considered in its totality. An overall perspective is created, which acknowledges the fact that natural environment and man-made environment are interdependent. It is inter-disciplinary and examines major environmental issues from the local, national and international points of view. Ideally, environmental education should enhance critical thinking, problem-solving, and effective decision-making skills as well

as teach individuals to weigh various sides of an environmental issue to make informed and responsible decisions.

The components of environmental education, as listed by the United Nations Environmental, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), are:

1. Awareness and sensitivity to the environment and environmental challenges
2. Knowledge and understanding of the environment and environmental challenges
3. Attitudes of concern for the environment and motivation to improve or maintain environmental quality
4. Skills to identify and help resolve environmental challenges
5. Participation in activities that lead to the resolution of environmental challenges

## Why Environmental Education?

The primary challenge ahead is to raise the level of environmental literacy of Malaysians as a whole and to ensure the environmental literacy of its successive generations. If the nation can meet this challenge,



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# Environmental Education and Awareness



Post independence, the nation saw universal literacy as one of its main national goals. This has largely been achieved. Then came computer literacy which saw Malaysians acquiring increasing competence and proficiency. The next stride? We must now all embark urgently on the next great learning endeavour : environmental literacy. As Malaysians, we should see the poignancy in this endeavour. After all our homeland is referred to patriotically in our national anthem, songs, poems, plays, dramas, writings and speeches as “Tanahair”. Literally it means “our lands and waters”.

Our forefathers could not have said it better. Perhaps they knew better. For what is a nation or a homeland if its environment, yes its ‘lands and water’, are not maintained and developed so that it ensures the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Indeed we should all spring to the defence of our ‘Tanahair’ if threatened and imperiled by enemies. And what if the ‘enemy’ is us? Yes, us in an environmental sense!

Humanity’s activities since the mid-20th century has changed the ecological balance of the planetary system fundamentally. The 1960s saw increasing concern, awareness and ‘activism’ centered on the urgent and complex problems affecting the environment, culminating in the United Nations World Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm in 1972. For the first time in human history, the global community was forced by the overwhelming scientific evidence made available, to address the environment in its own right.

The Conference laid the foundations for global environmental governance and conservation. It also launched the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in 1973 and eventually, all this led to the establishment of dedicated departments of environment and environmental legislation being passed by national governments the world over, including our Tanahair, Malaysia.

But while these efforts were being made, conditions continued to deteriorate with environmental disasters occurring mostly in the developed world. Clearly the world was running out of time and the United Nations felt compelled in 1983 to establish the ‘World Commission on Environment and Development’. Emanating from this was the Report of the Bruntland Commission, aptly titled “Our Common Future”. It gave the world a new term, ‘sustainable development’. It was a beacon call. Like democracy, sustainable development will be the idea around which humanity will coalesce and find common cause to make safe the world and Earth’s environment.

The Report fostered the United Nation Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or more to earth, the Earth Summit, Rio De Janeiro in June 1992. The largest number of world leaders ever, gathered at the Conference and emotions ran high - part fear, part hope and part love for Mother Earth. 178 governments approved and adopted

Agenda 21 - the next watershed in saving the environment through sustainable development. Agenda 21 is a comprehensive blueprint of action for sustainable development into the 21st century. A 21 is a guide for individuals, businesses and governments in making choices for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable planet at global, national and local levels.

Malaysia, a signatory to the Rio Earth Summit, has an obligation to adopt and implement Agenda 21 at the national and local levels, which states clearly “One of the fundamental pre-requisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision making”. Individuals, groups and organisations should have access to information relevant to environment and development held by national authorities, including information on products and activities that have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, and information on environmental protection measures! Indeed the stage has been set for environmental education and awareness!

Environmental Education is a process of recognising values and clarifying concepts in order to develop skills and tools necessary to understand and appreciate the inter-relationship among humans, their culture and their biophysical surroundings. In environmental education, the environment is considered in its totality. UNESCO lists the following components as an integral part of this learning process : Awareness and sensitivity to the environment and environmental challenges; knowledge and understanding of the same; attitudes of concern for the environment and motivation to improve or maintain environmental quality; skills to identify and help resolve environmental challenges and lastly participation in activities that can help resolve these challenges. To this we may add that a cornerstone of this education process is continuity.

Perhaps, environmental studies as a subject should be taught in secondary schools. For, if we as a people do not sufficiently care for ‘our lands and waters’ it will surely turn to wasteland. In many ways then, a pristine environment reflects in some measure the purity of our patriotism. We have made a fortunate start by the very act of conceptually calling our country, ‘Tanahair’. We can and should build from here. Let us redouble our efforts by getting our environmental education and awareness programmes into high gear. Then we as a nation can become among the most environmentally literate of peoples in the world - the people of a land that proudly calls its country, ‘our lands and waters’!

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individuals will be more capable of analysing environmental issues and making informed decisions as consumers, employees, parents, youths, students, and voters.

Many of today's environmental challenges are complex and intractable, and they cannot be solved by public laws alone. Addressing these issues will require citizens who are informed and environmentally literate and are willing to translate knowledge into action.

Recognising that environmental education programmes should be a continuous lifelong process beginning at pre-school level and continuing through all stages, the Department of Environment (DOE) has been implementing various environmental education and awareness programmes, mostly on informal education, targeted at various groups. Various educational approaches, with the focus on practical activities and hands-on experience (as it is believed that it is through this process of education that people can be sensitised about environmental issues) have been developed. Some of the major programmes are as listed below:

### School-going children and youth

- Enviro-Camps
- Environmental Hero (*Wira Alam*) Projects
- Environmental Debates
- Sustainable School - Environment Award (*Sekolah Lestari – Anugerah Alam Sekitar*)
- Clean-up Projects (*Gotong Royong*)
- Tree Planting & Landscaping
- Radio Environmental Quizzes
- Environmental essay writing competition
- Painting Competition

### General public

- Malaysia Environment Week celebration (21 – 27 October)
- Langkawi Award (*Anugerah Langkawi*)
- Radio Environmental Quizzes



### Special target groups

- Enviro-camp Facilitators' Training Programmes (for environmental educators/teachers)
- Sustainable City Programme (for the local authorities)
- Women's Conference on Environment (for women)
- "Enviro-Walk" (for senior management of companies/industries)

**"The goal of environmental education is to develop a world population that is aware of, and concerned about, the environment and its associated problems, and which has the knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivation, and commitment to work individually and collectively toward solutions of current problems and the prevention of new ones."**

*United Nations Environmental, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 1975. The Belgrade Charter. Adopted at the International Workshop on Environmental Education, 13 to 22 October, 1975. Belgrade, Yugoslavia.*

Besides conducting awareness programmes, publications such as posters, brochures, quarterly bulletins, training modules, and educational videos have also been developed for disseminating information on environment-related issues.

The most important element of environmental education is continuity. It has to be continuously undertaken and to sustain a programme is not an easy task especially when faced with financial and manpower constraints. Thus a public sector department, such as the DOE, seeks partnership and collaboration especially with the private sector. Active participation from private companies to develop environmental awareness programmes for identified target groups is encouraged and supported. But the initial step would be to increase environmental awareness for all employees of that company and then, perhaps invite the local/nearby communities to participate in the programme before expanding the programme nationwide for the general public. We are always open to collaborative efforts to organise environmental awareness programmes but the sustainability of these programmes needs to be underscored.

For further information, please contact the Strategic Communications Division of the Department of Environment (DOE Headquarters).

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# Environmental Education Programmes: A Blend of Philosophy and Wisdom

Philosophy is a term that brings very deep and abstract connotations to a concept that is being discussed. It can be rather complex when the explanation needs to relate the specific concept (along with the existence of relevant elements) to all evidence and also arguments to justify the philosophy adopted. This is not an easy task for people who are entrusted with justifying the relevance of concepts to be implemented. They will have to justify it in a manner that satisfies almost everybody. This is even more complex particularly in relation to the environment, where the needs of development and expectations of the public to carry out their responsibilities based on this philosophy may not coincide.

We can see here that an acceptable level of wisdom is required to select a philosophy to convince people to act in a certain desired manner. Wisdom in this context requires knowledge, understanding and evidence in justifying the argument on certain issues. In relation to the Environmental Education (EE) Programme, the wisdom involved must take into account, among others, the aspects that must be covered under this concept, the nature of public involvement, the nature of the environment to be conserved, and the critical efforts required of everyone to preserve and conserve the environment and the earth.

An EE programme in any country should ideally be based on the respective national philosophy on conserving and maintaining the environment. A comparison of the philosophy of EE of other countries should help ensure that the philosophy adopted is benchmarked against what has been done to protect and maintain the environment in recent years in other countries. This is because when it comes to the issue of protecting the environment, the basic question a government may be asked is "are they providing for environmental education with the right philosophy and whether the knowledge and information provided through EE is imbuing the public with the necessary wisdom to protect the environment."

## General Features of Environmental Education Programmes

It is therefore clear that before drawing up an environmental education programme, the philosophy must be established. Next, it must be remembered that the effectiveness of any EE programme depends on the wisdom of the authority entrusted with

developing this programme. Lastly, the level of knowledge (wisdom) expected of the public exposed to this EE programme, must also be established.

Generally, the objective of instituting an EE programme in any country should be to promote awareness and understanding of the natural processes of environmental conservation, to obtain feedback on environmental conservation and preservation, to develop knowledge among people on environmental issues, to build up the concept of responsibility for ensuring that the ecosystem they are living is maintained in its natural state and that the environment is safe and healthy, and making people realise the importance of protecting biodiversity and not exploiting marine resources.

Generally, EE programmes focus more on school children of all ages as they represent the future generation, a very important and useful asset to a country if they are well trained, knowledgeable and exposed, particularly on those aspects of maintaining and conserving our beautiful environment. It is a generally well known fact that teachers involved in EE also learn along with the children and get greater exposure to environmental concerns. Again, it can be seen that teachers and those involved in planning EE programmes must have the necessary wisdom to have a 'world view' of the issues involved in environmental protection and conservation to ensure the effectiveness of their programmes.

Ideally, EE will come under a specific government department because it would need a specific financial allocation to operate the programme and the people involved in running the relevant programmes range widely from volunteers, to the private sector, corporate organisations, government and local agencies. Given the serious implications of EE for mother nature, it is generally seen that in most countries there are several parties involved in imparting this knowledge.

## Comparison of Environmental Programmes in Selected Countries

A summary of bodies involved in implementation of EE, concepts, major programmes and indicators in some countries representing each of the continents in the world, excluding Antarctica, is shown in the table on the next page.

The universal aspects of an environmental message are: conserve, preserve, maintain, natural, keep clean, green and tidy, free from pollution and recycle. These can clearly be achieved through a set of proper strategies. The strategies that come together in the objective to make people at all levels, particularly children in schools understand and have sufficient knowledge on protecting the environment would form the core of the philosophy on environmental education.

EE programmes everywhere include campaigns for increasing and protecting the greenery for a 'fresh' environment. In addition, students and the public are urged to become environment-friendly in terms of having knowledge on maintaining the cleanliness of the environment, protecting our rivers, reservoirs, and water resources from pollution in any possible form and minimising waste products through recycling and reusing. And as Mother Earth encounters more environmental problems in the future, the philosophy is likely to be broadened in scope to deal with these new and more complex problems.

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## Comparison of Environmental Education Programmes in Selected Countries

Source: Fuller 1996 (USA); Aries Immigration Consulting 2004 (Brazil); Department of the Environment and Heritage 2005 (Australia); Oliver *et al.* 2002 (Tanzania); Kirk 1980 (UK); NAAEE, USA ; NAEF, UK; UN Department for Policy Coordination & Sustainable Development Division 1977 (Malaysia)

COUNTRY	KEY GOVERNMENT BODIES INVOLVED	CONCEPT OF PROGRAMMES	HIGHLIGHTS OF PROGRAMMES AND MEASURES	IMPORTANT INDICATORS
United States of America	U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Environmental Education & Volunteer Groups	Every state has its own schedule of activities held from time to time, either in school or university compounds, community centres, business and organisational premises, public parks, animal parks, museums, and nature or science centres (Fuller, 1996)	Restoring the remaining wetlands; environmental education field trips for a hands-on approach in appreciating topics and places that are discussed and seen in class; discovering fascinating nature; exploring archaeology in order to investigate environmental origins; exposing moral and ethical issues involved in preserving sites; seeking information through environmental research.	Almost every state has mandated their public schools to infuse environmental education in their curriculum.
Brazil	Ministry of Environment	Focus on school children through activities in schools to produce future citizens committed to nature through knowledge on living things and the need to protect & maintain their existence.	Programmes relate to the techniques of protecting water, fauna and flora, natural and basic resources, and also to gather representatives of school teachers nationwide for a programme that teaches them to deliver knowledge in relation to environmental education; there are also Teachers' Training Colleges with a programme for graduating environmental education teachers.	Environmental education is now part of the content of all school subjects.
Australia	Ministry for the Environment and Heritage, through National Environmental Education Council and Australian Environmental Education Foundation	Most operate on grant allocations which provide funds for environmental education activities.	Promoting in any available media the relevance of environmental education for sustaining the country's resources well into the future; introduction of an improved and upgraded approach to coordinating all agencies, parties and organisations involved in EE; running projects which support move to protect environment such as industrial design, engineering application and skills for sustainability.	The serious Government call to any group of people, including students, education professionals, industrialists, and indigenous people to work hand-in-hand with the government to protect the environment.
Tanzania	Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism	Activities held within schools and village committee networks	Translating biodiversity which indicates the quality of natural environment into a language that attracts local communities, Making sure community understands national environment issues through organising various activities, Promoting a concept of having pride and responsibility for forest resources as an element of environment, Conducting regular brainstorming sessions to encourage students, teachers and catchment officers to be aware about protecting forest reserves and habitat.	The close ties between local people and environmentalists entrusted with monitoring natural resources.
United Kingdom	National Association for Environmental Education (NAEE). This refers to a charity organisation, being as it has long been established to support the UK Government that cannot achieve sustainable development on its own.	Run mostly by non governmental organisations, voluntary groups and also local authorities in nurseries, schools and other educational institutions.	Supporting the teaching of environmental education programmes by using four educational traditions: Conservation of natural resources, Integrating into outdoor education for greater appreciation; Urban studies; Rural studies. The last two are aimed at knowing more about people and their interaction with environment. These four elements have contributed significantly to the enrichment and development of environmental education in the UK (Kirk, 1980)	The citizen becomes responsible and caring towards the environment and society.
Malaysia	Department of Environment, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment  Curriculum Department Centre, Ministry of Education	Focus on field exposure and co-curricular activities for students and teachers; promoting environmental activities within institutions of higher learning.  Infusion of environmental education across curriculum in primary and secondary schools.	Field exposure to various ecosystems; hands-on training; imparting environmental knowledge outside the classroom; promoting the establishment of environmentally sustainable school via the process of greening, governance, curriculum and co-curriculum activities.	Establishment of nature/environmental clubs; recycling projects; greening of school; activities towards achieving sustainable school status.

Source

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# Linking Corporations with Conservation

Malaysia's rich biological diversity is the envy of many developed countries. However, Malaysians are in a rush to want what developed countries are supposed to have, among them, better cars, better road systems, a better public transportation system, greater accountability and more money in their pockets. The corporate sector in Malaysia also probably wants more monetary reserves in their corporate accounts, greater market penetration, world recognition and branding. Contribution to conservation would probably not rank that high in their agenda.

The reader might be surprised to learn that the operating costs for each of Malaysia's three largest conservation Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) amount to less than RM 18 million per year. These funds are to cover all operations within the country and include fuel cost; salaries and food for the field workers working in wild and remote habitats such as peat swamps; camera traps for taking photographs of wild animals like tigers; and administrative costs. Bearing in mind that conservation organisations are created as 'charitable and not-for-profit' organisations, the amount needed to keep conservationists in the field is a daunting task.

## Conservation as Charitable Work

It is a mistake to assume that there would be abundant funds available from the corporate sector for various charitable initiatives from conservation to health and education, because in newspaper reports, companies often report huge profits. In 2005, the top three Malaysian banks alone were able to generate profits in excess of RM 5,000 million. Surprisingly, though, the donor cake is sliced very thinly for conservation organisations and their activities, compared to what is made available for health and education projects. For example, fundraising for education can raise up to several million ringgit per drive just to build individual school buildings. This prejudice against conservation is not just a Malaysian phenomenon but also in the United States. For example in 2001 in the United States, only 3% of all monies given to charity were for environment or conservation.



Apart from the donors having less of a philanthropic zeal to give to conservation, the conservation organisations are being perceived as welfare organisations in which volunteers run and do everything for free, and that these conservationists can be paid pittance for their contribution to the environment. This false impression makes it even harder to raise funds for conservation purposes.

There is therefore a need for a paradigm shift in thinking about conservation and conservationists. Conservation organisations actually exist to assist, supplement and complement government efforts. Would Malaysians be happy if conservation organisations and their staff do a bad job, are ill-equipped, have high staff turnover and have little commitment? Therefore, conservation has to be seen as a legitimate career. It is not something just to join as a volunteer, but a field in which to be trained professionally, while having at least an adequate remuneration to cover living expenses and to put aside for retirement. Unfortunately, the coins and small cheques that are given to conservation organisations are not able to sustain the growth of professionalism in this field and take up a career as conservationists. It is for this reason that the fund raisers within conservation organisations have to approach corporate organisations to seek help to pay for their projects and operations.

## Categories of Funding

Over the years, there have been quite a few 'conservation-driven' and 'corporate or donor-driven' initiatives in Malaysia. Some of these range from RM10,000 per activity to RM1 million for the entire project each year. The list below is not exhaustive and neither is it in any order of priority. Funds are given for:

- Black hole programmes – these are corporate donors who just give, without wanting to know what happens to the money. A fund exists just to keep fund raisers at bay.
- Greenwash programmes – these are funds given by corporate entities to improve their image. They will still carry out their operations which may be detrimental to the environment and will not even change their existing operations to reduce such harm. They merely wish to project an environmentally-friendly image.
- Donation for conservation-related activities - some donors contribute for tree planting, i.e., funds are given to plant trees. These trees may or may not be advertised as being planted by the donor. The actual planting cost is low, but the conservation organisation gets to keep the rest for its operations or field work.

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# WHO is AWARE of AGENDA 21?

About half the Malaysian population today would have been young children or yet unborn and our Nation an infant, when, about four decades ago, the space programme enabled humanity to view planet Earth from a distance, and in its entirety for the first time. From space, astronauts gained a powerful new view of our Earth, and through their eyes, humanity gained a perspective of its home, never before known in all the millennia of human civilisation. Gone were the political boundaries...its single entity and uniqueness brought home the realisation in no uncertain terms that we are all one people, each responsible as stewards for maintaining Earth's precious, delicate and fragile life-enabling balance of ecosystems.

“My view of our planet was a glimpse of Divinity. ....Suddenly, from behind the rim of the moon, in long, slow-motion moments of immense majesty, there emerges a sparkling blue and white jewel, a light, delicate sky-blue sphere laced with slowly swirling veils of white, rising gradually like a small pearl in a thick sea of black mystery. It takes more than a moment to fully realise this is Earth ...home.”

- Edgar Mitchell, USA

“We saw our planet from space for the first time. From space, we saw a small and fragile ball dominated not by human activity and edifice but by a pattern of clouds, oceans, greenery and soils...”

- Ulf Merbold, Federal Republic of Germany

Alongside these wondrous new images and perceptions of our planet Earth emerged also, an awakening to the alarming concern that all was not well with this wondrous planet we know as home. Humanity's activities, of unprecedented growth and intensity since the mid-20th Century, were changing the fundamental ecological pattern of the planetary systems. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, first published in 1962, is credited to have founded a whole new movement on environmentalism that alerted the world and finally brought to it, a quarter of a century later, the term 'sustainable development'.

In order to fully appreciate the depth and breadth of knowledge, information and

## 'sustainable development'

"Development that ensures it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.."

understanding that is encompassed in these two words we need to embrace the thoughts and concerns and events that led to the linking of these two words which today permeate or should permeate all of human activity.

Many of the older generation of today who lived much of their lives before space travel and ecological disasters view these events with awesome wonder and awful concern for the future.



## Background to Global Environmentalism

It was the work of Rachel Carson and other individuals, groups, and scientific communities that forced the attention of the world community to the urgent and complex problems affecting the physical planet. It was this 'activism', well before governments were awake, that culminated in the United Nations World Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972. For the first time in the history of humanity, the global community was forced, by the scientific evidence, to address the environment in its own right. It was this Conference that led to three major developments:

- 1 Laid the foundations for global environmental governance and a world conservation strategy.
- 2 Launched the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1973 in order to encourage UN agencies already in existence, to integrate environmental measures into their programmes.
- 3 Led to the establishment of dedicated departments of environment and environmental legislation being passed by national governments worldwide, including Malaysia.

While efforts were made by the global community to inject this new element of integrating issues of the natural environment into the business of government and human enterprise, conditions continued to deteriorate with environmental disasters occurring in many parts of the world.

The United Nations was again compelled to respond and in 1983, it set up the World Commission on Environment and Development headed by Mrs Gro Harlem Brundtland, former Prime Minister of Norway. It was an independent body commissioned to re-examine the critical environment and development problems on the planet and to formulate realistic proposals to solve them. The 23 Commissioners from developed and developing countries were tasked to deliberate and formulate proposals to ensure that human progress will be sustained through development but without irreversibly depleting the natural resources that rightfully belong to future generations.

The Report of the Brundtland Commission, '**Our Common Future**' was presented to the United Nations in March 1987. The Commission concluded that the time had come for the integration of the economy and ecology so that governments and their people can take responsibility not just for environmental damage, but also for the policies that give rise to the damage. A new development path was required, one that sustained human progress not just in a few places for a few years but for the entire planet into the distant future. The Report gave to the world the new term 'sustainable development': 'development that ensures it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs...'

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The message from the Report was an urgent call for action. It recommended active followup and called for the UN General Assembly to transform the report into a UN Programme on Sustainable Development. It recommended an international conference to follow up arrangements that will be needed to set benchmarks and maintain progress towards sustainable development.

The outcome of this recommendation was the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) or Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992. The largest number of world leaders ever, gathered at the Conference and 178 Governments approved and adopted Agenda 21 - a Programme of Action for Sustainable Development into the 21st Century under which world governments agreed to promote sustainable development nationally and in international cooperation.

UNCED also reinforced the 27 Principles of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development; the Framework Convention on Climate Change; the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Statement of Forest Principles.

The path of global environmentalism continued with the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) 2002 - Rio + 10, held in Johannesburg, to review global progress towards sustainable development and the reversing of the damaging trends of the past. The Assembly concluded that despite the landmark achievements of Rio in awakening the world to the need to work together for the sake of our planet and future generations, most of the world's environmental problems remain or are getting worse.

## Agenda 21 or 'That Which Must be Done' in the 21st Century

Agenda 21 is described in the original text as 'A blueprint for action for global sustainable development into the 21st Century.' - an ambitious and comprehensive detailed programme of action for all sectors and issues pertaining to the environment. It incorporates many innovative initiatives and imaginative visions for sustainable development. It addresses the pressing problems of today and also aims at preparing the world for the challenges of the next century (already upon us!). Its successful implementation is first and foremost the responsibility of Governments but embraces ALL of society. It consists of forty chapters in four sections:

## Content of Agenda 21

**Chapter 1:Preamble:** opens with the stirring words: 'Humanity stands at a defining moment in history...

### Section 1: Social and Economic Dimensions Chapters 2 - 8

- International cooperation to accelerate sustainable development - combating poverty - changing consumption patterns - demographic dynamics and sustainability - protecting and promoting human health - promoting sustainable human settlement development - integrating environment and development in decision-making...

### Section 2: Conservation and Management of Resources for Development Chapters 9 - 22

- Protection of the atmosphere - integrated approach to planning and management of land resources - combating deforestation - managing fragile ecosystems - desertification and drought - sustainable mountain development - promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development - conservation of biological diversity - environmentally sound management of biotechnology - protection of oceans, all kinds of seas, and coastal areas and rational use and development of their living resources - protection of the quality and supply of freshwater resources - environmentally sound management of toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes and solid wastes and sewage-related issues - safe and environmentally sound management of radioactive wastes...

### Section 3: Strengthening the Role of Major Groups Chapters 23 - 32

- Global action for women towards sustainable and equitable development - children and youth in sustainable development - recognising and strengthening the role of indigenous people and their communities - strengthening the role of non-governmental organisations - local authorities' initiatives in support of Agenda 21 - strengthening the role of workers and their trade unions - business and industry - scientific and technological community; farmers...

### Section 4: Means of Implementation Chapters 33 - 40

- Financial resources and mechanisms - transfer of environmentally sound technology - cooperation and capacity building - science for sustainable development - promoting education, awareness and training - national mechanisms and international cooperation for capacity-building in developing countries - international institutional arrangements - international legal instruments and mechanisms - information for decision-making...



## Sustainable Development?

The concept, which originated in the Brundtland Report,(1987) implies development (social and economic) to be carried out within the carrying capacity of the environment and its ecosystems in order to protect the rights of future generations to the natural resources of a healthy planet.

The content of Agenda 21 is perhaps the closest to an embodiment of all the complexities that the two words sustainable development imply. Use of the term without being aware of the background and content of Agenda 21 (as well as the Rio Principles) may lead to vague, incomplete and inadequate understanding and runs the danger of diminishing the deep meaning and implications of those two words. Those involved in sustainable development work (which is practically everybody!) need to understand the concept and translate it into national, local (and personal) policies based on the principles of sustainable development, effectively implemented and effectively monitored with measurable results.

However, despite efforts by the authorities and the environmental NGO community, Agenda 21 and the concept and principles of sustainable development are not widely known in Malaysia. There is still a wide gap in knowledge, understanding and awareness on this crucial issue. While the words 'sustainable development' are fairly readily used, the question "are you aware of Agenda 21" most often draws a blank - not only among the general public, but also government officials and even university circles.

The Local Agenda 21 programme and the Selangor State Agenda 21 programme initiated in 2000 brought slightly more awareness than there was in 1992 when Agenda 21 first emerged, but even so, the background and true substance of Agenda 21 is too often ignored and there is at best a watered down impression of what 'sustainable development' is all about.



## Education and Awareness for Sustainable Development

### Re-visiting Agenda 21 as an Education Tool

It is crucial for decision makers in every sector and at every level to know the background to and content of Agenda 21 so that a more mature Nation may make greater progress by embracing 'sustainable development' into every aspect of our development plans, policies, and strategies

The text of Agenda 21 would be an excellent primer for learning sustainable development. The content is in simple language and easily understood. Each of the programme areas of the 40 chapters are described in terms of:

- Basis for Action – Objectives – Activities – and
- Means of Implementation

This format is what makes it a valuable tool for education and awareness raising. The sections on 'basis for action' and 'objectives' provide the information to understand and the sections on 'activities' and 'means of implementation' guide us on what we need to do and how. Agenda 21 can be adopted, adapted and implemented by the various actors according to their different situations and capacities, and at each level of administration. It is not necessary to know the entire content but more essentially to know its background, its structure and its content as a

whole, and how to use appropriate chapters as a resource tool for policy planning and implementation. Its value as a point of reference for sustainable development – a concern for everything and everybody – is great!

A simple introduction to Agenda 21 and sustainable development principles can be conducted with little effort as a 11/2 hour in-house tutorial within departments for officials at different levels. A plan for implementation can be easily worked out.

What is important, especially for those in positions of authority, is to understand that it is not just protection of the environment that matters but the whole philosophy of sustainable development that needs to be internalised within the mind set, as every human endeavour has an impact on the entire eco-system and threatens the survival of the future – planet and people. If we do not assist our society to absorb the philosophy and principles of sustainable development with a fierce passion, we will continue to put out fires while the forest burns!

### Who is Aware of Agenda 21!

Every person needs to have a basic understanding and awareness of the effect of human impact on the environment. The text of

Agenda 21 is a valuable educational tool as well as an Action Plan because every Action called for is introduced by a paragraph on the Basis for Action. It is not just what you need to do but why – and that should make the difference to a person's attitude to action.

Free copies of Agenda 21 should flood government and corporate offices and in-house tutorials conducted with compulsory attendance!

It is imperative to have more aggressive and effective training for all decision makers as well as all of society if we are to make the shift in mindset that is so vital to set us on the path to an ecologically sustainable future both nationally and globally for "Our Common Future".

2007 will be the year of Johannesburg + 5; Rio + 15 and Stockholm + 35 AND Malaysia + 50 – a significant time to start with greater hope and promise for the future.

Source

**Susheila Vethavanam McCoy**

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*continued from page 6*

- Consultancy programmes – these are funds given to the conservation organisations for work done.
- Tax deduction initiatives – funds given to reduce the rate of corporate tax.
- Win-win partnerships – some corporations give funds for the chance to promote their products. This happens in places like zoos.
- Initiate a new business model – some donors hope that their funds can be used in perpetuity as the initial grant can go towards setting up a business and subsequent profits pay for activities by these conservation organisations.
- Corporate Social Responsibility – some donors feel that it is their responsibility to give back to society and the environment.
- Buying into a conservation success – some corporate donors believe that they are buying into great, successful and very transparent projects. But they also expect to reduce the taxes on their profits.
- Corporate volunteer scheme – these are not donations of money, but donations of time by the staff from the corporate donors.

- Corporate fund raisers – these are fund raising activities by the employees of the corporation and they do so on their own accord.
- Pressure by government – some corporations feel or literally are pressured by the government to donate to conservation.

For those not in the know, not all funds from corporate organisations will be accepted by conservation organisations. This may sound strange but some conservation organisations do not want to be seen as abetting irresponsible natural resource depletion industries. Given that volunteers, staff and even board members are stakeholders in conservation organisations, and that they dictate some of the policies within conservation organisations, it should therefore not come as a surprise that such donor or corporate discrimination exists.

There is a lot of scope for cooperation with corporate bodies. As mentioned, the list is not exhaustive. Readers who may have

other 'out-of-the-box' ideas for linking corporations with conservation, are invited to share their thoughts.

Conservation needs money and conservation organisations need to hear from you. Funds are needed to maintain operations, on-going and new projects, to help save the Earth, which is also YOUR Earth and the only planet that will be the home for your children and their children. You invest in your future by saving funds either for yourself or your family. But what happens if it is a future with no free air, paid water, and virtual reality wild animals (instead of e-pets, they would have e-wildlife)? Investing in your future also means investing so that there is a physical future – yours and your children's future. And it is not free.

### Acknowledgement

This document benefited from useful discussions with Christina Yin Gumal, Maye Yap, and Cynthia Chin.

Source

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# Public Participation in Environmental Decision-Making in Malaysia



Public participation is a crucial tool for the effective implementation of Sustainable Development. The Brundtland Report states that sustainable development is “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. Economic development, social development, and environmental protection are interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development.

Sustainable development made its appearance at the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm, June 1972. But it took another 20 years for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, June 1992 to formulate the respective programmes of work. Two significant outcomes of UNCED, also known as the Earth Summit were the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development and Agenda 21.

## The first of the 27 Principles of the Rio Declaration states:

“Human beings are at the centre of concerns for sustainable development. They are entitled to a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature.”

The Agenda 21 or A21 is a guide for individuals, businesses and governments in making choices for an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable planet at a global, national and local level. The term “Think Globally, Act Locally” is the manifestation of A21 through the movement of Local Agenda 21.

## Present

Malaysia, as signatory to the Earth Summit, has an obligation to adopt and implement the principles of the Summit at national and local levels. Agenda 21 states that, “One of the fundamental pre-requisites for the achievement of sustainable development is broad public participation in decision-making. Individuals, groups and organisations should have access to information relevant to environment and development held by national authorities, including information on products and activities that have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, and information on environmental protection measures.”

The Tenth Principle of the Rio Declaration is, “Environmental issues are best handled with the participation of all concerned citizens, at the relevant level. At the national level, each individual shall have appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities, and the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes. States shall facilitate and encourage public awareness and participation by making information widely available. Effective access to judicial and administrative proceedings, including redress and remedy, shall be provided.”

One of the acts that best represents the need for public participation in decision-making in Peninsular Malaysia is the Town and Country Planning Act 1976. Sections 9(2), 13 and 16B(3) of the act clearly spell the need for public objections to development plans, be it Structure,

Local or Special Area Plans. The Act also states that all written objections will be reviewed at a Public Objections Committee under Sections 10(3b), 14(1) and 16B(3) of the Act. The access to participation is very clear; they have access to information and opportunity to participate in a decision-making process.

The other process that involves public participation is the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. Principle 17 of the Rio Declaration states that, “Environmental impact assessment, as a national instrument, shall be undertaken for proposed activities that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the environment and are subject to a decision of a competent national authority.” A21 states, “Furthermore, in the more specific context of environment and development, the need for new forms of participation has emerged. This includes the need of individuals, groups and organisations to participate in environmental impact assessment procedures and to know about and participate in decisions, particularly those which potentially affect the communities in which they live and work.”

The EIA in Malaysia is a requirement under Section 34A of the Environmental Quality Act 1974. The Environmental Quality (Prescribed Activities) (Environmental Impact Assessment) Order 1987 lists all the 19 prescribed activities that require an EIA to facilitate project approval. Neither in the Act nor Order does it state that public participation is required in the EIA process. It is only found in the Handbook of Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines prepared by the Department of Environment. Even if Section 34A(2) of the EQA states that, “the EIA report must be in accordance with the guidelines prescribed by the Director General,” the participatory process is still very discretionary.

The three main ingredients for public participation - access to information, access to participation and access to judicial proceedings- should be enforced in the EIA process. In most instances, the information needs to (RIO Declaration 10th Principle 1992) be made simple for easy comprehension by communities.

And on the other side of the spectrum, there are occurrences of public dissemination meetings and consultative meetings for communities by proponents and the Department. These incidents further stress the point that the EIA process has to be more systematic. Also, the whole process is more consultative than participatory. The individuals who 'participated' need to be informed of the progress of their comments or the status of the report, whether accepted or otherwise.

Over the years, levels of public participation have grown in leaps and bounds, largely due to DOE's efforts and the dedication of non-governmental organisations (NGO) in Malaysia. The NGOs have played an important role in improving environmental awareness of Malaysians and the government agencies have recognised NGOs as their partners in sustainable development and are more willing to open their doors for their NGO friends.

### Future \*Corporate Social Responsibilities

As we look at the implementation of A21, it would seem that a huge pool of resources have not been tapped at all; the corporate sector. While the government sector and NGOs along with the public have been busy with A21, the private sector has remained out of this effort. The main thrust of the principle is 'common but differentiated responsibility'. Every individual, group and organisation has the same objective: to live a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature, the common goal. But our responsibilities differ according to our circumstances, resources, technologies.

Under the A21, each major group has its own responsibility towards implementing sustainable development.

1. Global Action for Women towards Sustainable and Equitable Development
2. Children and Youth in Sustainable Development
3. Recognising and Strengthening the Role of Indigenous People and Their Communities
4. Local Authorities' Initiatives in Support of Agenda 21
5. Strengthening the Role of Workers and Their Trade Unions
6. Scientific and Technological Community
7. Strengthening the Role of Farmers
8. Strengthening the Role of Non-Governmental Organisations: Partners for Sustainable Development
9. Strengthening the Role of Business and Industry

The focus areas for industries under A21 are promotion of cleaner production and responsible entrepreneurship. There is increasing recognition that production, technology and management that use resources inefficiently form residues that are not reused and discharge wastes that have adverse impacts on human health and the environment. The concept of cleaner production implies striving for optimal efficiencies at every stage of the product life cycle.



### Cleaner Production Means

- To report annually on their environmental records, as well as on their use of energy and natural resources;
- To adopt and report on the implementation of codes of conduct promoting the best environmental practice, such as the Business Charter on Sustainable Development of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and the chemical industry's responsible care initiative.
- Industry and business associations should encourage individual companies to undertake programmes for improved environmental awareness and responsibility at all levels to make these enterprises dedicated to the task of improving environmental performance based on internationally accepted management practices.
- International and non-governmental organisations, including trade and scientific associations, should strengthen cleaner production information dissemination by expanding existing databases, such as the UNEP International Cleaner Production Clearing House (ICPIC), the UNIDO Industrial and Technological Information Bank (INTIB) and the ICC International Environment Bureau (IEB), and should forge networking of national and international information systems.

Entrepreneurship is one of the most important driving forces for innovations, increasing market efficiencies and responding to challenges and opportunities. Small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, in particular, play a very important role in the social and economic development of a country. Responsible entrepreneurship can play a major role in improving the efficiency of resource use, reducing risks and hazards, minimising wastes and safeguarding environmental qualities.

### Improving Efficient Resource Use

- Large business and industry, including transnational corporations, should consider establishing partnership schemes with small and medium-sized enterprises to help facilitate the exchange of experience in managerial skills, market development and technological know-how, where appropriate, with the assistance of international organisations.
- Business and industry should establish national councils for sustainable development and help promote entrepreneurship in the formal and informal sectors. The inclusion of women entrepreneurs should be facilitated.
- Business and industry, including transnational corporations, should increase research and development of environmentally sound technologies and environmental management systems, in collaboration with academia and the scientific/engineering establishments, drawing upon indigenous knowledge, where appropriate.
- Business and industry, including transnational corporations, should ensure responsible and ethical management of products and processes from the point of view of health, safety and environmental aspects. Towards this end, business and industry should increase self-regulation, guided by appropriate codes, charters and initiatives integrated into all elements of business planning and decision-making, and fostering openness and dialogue with employees and the public.

### Conclusion

It is important that the Government continues to recognise the crucial role played by public participation and the corporate sector in sustainable development. Encouragement and incentives must be given to the pioneers of responsible entrepreneurship so that the world can continue to develop without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Source

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# A Public Beauty Approach to a Quality Environment

What is Public Beauty? People in the streets give different answers and some simply say "I don't know". Just what is Public Beauty? And why it is important for all of us to know and participate in public beauty.

Beauty Education may be classified into two categories:

- 1 Private Beauty that promotes personal beauty and health awareness; and
- 2 Public Beauty that promotes the principle of environmental awareness, fosters a sense of responsibility, inculcates a right attitude and promotes public behaviour, leading to the understanding of the dynamic relationship between Man and Nature, ultimately resulting in the maintenance of the beauty of our planet, **THE EARTH**.

## The Importance of Public Beauty Education

Public Beauty Education starts from our own door step, from the young and encompasses all angles of the man-made natural biophysical surroundings. A good Public Beauty Awareness campaign should go a long way towards improving the code and ethics of personal behaviour, while incorporating the value of judgment and ability to understand and think clearly about the complex problems of the environment. Such campaigns done consistently and continuously should help reduce environmental crises, while enhancing environmental quality.

Globalisation, urbanisation and industrialisation have taken their toll, resulting in rapid deterioration of our natural world by pollution and disasters. Human dignity, natural resources, peoples' health, education, diversity and individual economic needs have all taken a back seat to profitability.

## Mandating Public Beauty for a Quality Life

All of us have been trained from young to keep ourselves clean, but how many of us are trained to keep clean the public drains outside our houses? Do you discharge cooking oil and kitchen waste into the drain? Have you noticed printers flushing ink into the sewers? Do you know that some factory owners illegally pump their coolants and wastewater into the sewage,

or discharge them into public drains when it rains to avoid being caught in the act?

How many of us do know that we have trouble with our rivers? Do you know the hazardous and negative impacts from open dump sites, illegal dumping and leachate that threatens our ground water? Have you noticed the troubles beneath the sea's glistening surface as everything eventually ends up in the sea?

Do you know haze (caused by open burning), ozone (smog), metal hydroxide (exhaust from vehicles), particulate pollution (soot), acidic gases and emission from the chimney of the factory or open burning of tyres, generate air pollution hazards for public health? Our personal beauty will be affected when our body begins to malfunction. Meanwhile global warming, and contamination of water resources are already beginning to affect public beauty. We have no other alternative except to restore the vital natural network of our lovely Planet and it must start from you and me!

## Defending and Enhancing Environmental Beauty and Quality

To promote Public Beauty, the educational campaign to build awareness among all age groups must be an ongoing affair. When we clean our house and compound, what we have to do is to clean the public drain as well, household garbage should not be disposed off into the drain; drains must be cleaned to prevent odours and pest growth. Make an attempt to keep your own compound clean as well as the compound outside your fencing! That will surely show your love for the environment. Dispose garbage properly and neatly; clean the refuse chamber, and keep it dry and clean; prevent organic garbage juice discharge as it attracts flies.

**DRIVE LESS WALK MORE** to safeguard your health and save energy simultaneously; it generates less metal hydroxide and carbon dioxide and prevents excessive gaseous emissions and protects our ozone level. Operate your business on a professional ethical code. Whatever reasons you may have, do not discharge hazardous materials into waterways and into the atmosphere.

The Government, the society, the community, the school and the parents must work hand-in-hand to promote and enhance the daily practice of public beauty, through an organised recycling programme. Recycling, reusing and reducing waste is an excellent way of maintaining public beauty. Assist the young to identify the daily activities related to the problems of the environment, such as waste disposal, sewerage, illegal dumping, and other irresponsible unethical behaviour. Explain the relationship of personal and public sanitation that will not only create personal beauty, but also take care of the environment.

## Conclusion

Environmental Education is a long, slow and gradual process of learning to love and care for our environment. Eventually it is public awareness that is manifested in doing things right.

Public Beauty will eventually bring about changes on a larger scale, creating a more socially just, environmentally friendly and ecologically sustainable society.

The existing environmental regulations require action. Waste has to be handled properly regardless of household or industrial waste; the diversity of our native plants and wildlife has to be respected and maintained against the onslaught of development; pollution and spills have to be minimised.

The younger generation is the hope of our future; there must be concerted efforts to educate and move them into the culture of internalising the values of public beauty.

Action speaks louder than words. Private beauty is interrelated closely with public beauty, and it is public beauty that decides private beauty in the long run. Only with public beauty can we maintain private beauty. If the atmosphere and the air that we breathe are so laden with toxic substances, we will begin to look and feel unhealthy! Act now to make Malaysia more beautiful! Act now to protect and beautify Mother Nature!

Source  
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# Awards as an Environmental Education Strategy

Environmental Education strategy inevitably begins with the approach of “convincing the public”. Activities included in this strategy are public awareness campaigns, public and private education on nature conservation, formal and informal training, and organising exhibitions on nature conservation. Individuals and institutions who distinguish themselves in advancing environmental education and awareness by contributing to environmental promotions are symbolically recognised by having awards conferred on them. This recognition is expected to help internalise vital environmental values such that the person behaves in a consistently benign manner towards the environment.

Environmental Excellence Awards represent an initiative of the Department of Environment to recognise individuals and organisations committed to the cause of environmental conservation and preservation. Awards which fall under the category of Environmental Excellence are :

- The Langkawi Award (*Anugerah Langkawi*)
- Sustainable City – Environment Award (*Bandar Lestari – Anugerah Alam Sekitar*)
- Sustainable School – Environment Award (*Sekolah Lestari – Anugerah Alam Sekitar*)
- Environmental Hero Project (*Projek Wira Alam*)

## THE LANGKAWI AWARD (*Anugerah Langkawi*)

In commemoration of the Langkawi Declaration on the Environment in 1989 signed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government, the Langkawi Award has been initiated by the Malaysian Government as an annual national tribute to a Malaysian citizen who has made outstanding contributions in the environmental arena, be it in management, business, scientific research, academia, publications or other relevant areas. The award criteria take into account significant intellectual and physical contributions towards:

- a. the promotion of public participation in the protection of the environment;
- b. resolving specific environmental problems which could have a significant impact at the



- c. mobilising action and efforts towards resolving environmental problems.

### Evaluation Criteria

The contributions of each nominee to the three criteria are evaluated critically:

- 1 Contribution and involvement of the nominee in the environmental arena. This criteria calls for the evaluation of the level of excellence of contribution in a specific area or a combination of areas in the environmental field as listed in the Langkawi Award.
- 2 Evaluation of the creative, proactive and innovative contribution of the nominee in terms of efforts, expertise, time, ideas or resources in the environmental arena. This criteria calls for the evaluation of the nominee's contribution in terms of publications, resourceful ideas, participation in environmental committees and associations, financial resources, time and effort towards the environmental cause.
- 3 A fair evaluation of the nominee's activities towards promoting public participation in the protection of the environment, resulting in a significant impact on resolving environmental protection at the local and global level and drawing societal attention, and mobilising efforts towards resolving serious environmental problems.

In essence, all these criteria evaluate the nominee's ability to draw society's attention towards a significant environmental problem and his success in resolving significant environmental problems through mobilising efforts and actions at the local and global level.

The first Langkawi Award was conferred in 1991 and since then, except for 1996, several outstanding Malaysians have been bestowed this Award for their contribution to the environmental cause. The Award consist of a Certificate of Appreciation signed by the Yang di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia, a Commendation Plaque and a cash prize of RM10,000.



Continued on page 14



## SUSTAINABLE CITY - ENVIRONMENT AWARD *Bandar Lestari - Anugerah Alam Sekitar*

A Sustainable City is a city where achievements in social, economic and physical development are made to last. This means that plans and policies are in place to meet the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. For this reason, the task of ensuring sustainable development is a challenge for city planners and administrators and requires broad-based cross-sectoral and stakeholder participatory approaches. However, if sustainable development is viewed as a process of change, efforts can be made to ensure that a city progresses towards sustainability.



In a move to promote sustainability of our cities, the Department of Environment, in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and relevant government agencies and community based organisations, initiated the Sustainable City – Environment Award to recognise urban centres for their overall commitment and efforts towards environmental sustainability. Technical support was provided by the Institute for Development and Environment (LESTARI) of Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

### Objectives of this Award

- Recognise the efforts and contributions of Local Authorities with regard to environmental sustainability of policies and actions
- Enhance awareness of environmental sustainability with the support of local communities
- Encourage innovative approaches and promote good practices towards environmental sustainability

### Evaluation Criteria

#### 1 Physical Environment

Elements that relate to this criterion are based on the extent of improvement to the surrounding physical environmental conditions for conducive urban living. Initiatives such as



improved air quality, improved water quality and reduction of noise levels, among others are taken into account.

#### 2 Ecological Initiatives

Elements that relate to this criterion are protection of the natural environment, biodiversity-related or habitat enhancement initiatives; environment-friendly innovations such as energy saving, energy efficiency and reduction of heat in the built environment; innovative practices like solar lighting, pedestrian malls, bicycle lanes among others; and new technological and experimental practices such as use of alternative fuels and other environmentally-friendly product development and usage.

#### 3 Urban Services

Initiatives that inculcate the practice of reducing, reusing and recycling of wastes as well as an improvement in the transport

management system will be recognised. Other elements that relate to this category include water and materials efficiency, clean-up projects, sanitation and waste effluent management.

#### 4 Environmental Governance

This criterion recognises leadership in environmental sustainability. Elements that relate to this category include incorporation of policies, practices and procedures that promote accountable and transparent governance, two-way communication with the community, including the extent to which issues such as public complaints are addressed; inculcation of stakeholder and community support; and quality of environmental management training.

#### 5 Education and Awareness

This criterion encompasses the area of education or communication that contributes to enhancing public awareness and understanding of environmental issues and initiatives. Elements that relate to this criterion include the relevance and impact of communication, target audiences and the effectiveness of communication mechanisms, whether individually, or in collaboration with other organisations.

### Award Launch and Winners

Following the launch of the Award on 5 June 2003, in conjunction with World Environment Day, invitations to participate were sent out to all State Capitals through the Local Government Department of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. For the 2003/2004 period, six State Capitals submitted their entries for the Award. They were Penang Municipal Council, Shah Alam City Council, Malacca Historical City Council, Kuantan Municipal Council, Johore Baru City Council and South Kuching City Council. The first Award was claimed by the Kuantan Municipal Council which received the Bandar Lestari Trophy and a Unique Commendation Plaque.





## SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL- ENVIRONMENT AWARD (Sekolah Lestari- Anugerah Alam Sekitar)

The Sustainable School – Environment Award is intended to support and enhance the implementation of the National Policy on the Environment, which encompasses eight principles and seven green strategies. The first green strategy focuses on education and awareness, to provide an understanding of the concept of environmental well-being and sustainable development, in line with the recommendations of Agenda 21.



### Objectives

- To foster good environmental values amongst the school community
- To raise awareness level amongst the school community on the importance of environmental conservation and preservation
- To encourage the school community to carry out effective environmentally friendly activities
- To intensify cooperation between schools and communities in making environmental education a success
- To generate a conducive school atmosphere resulting in a school community that practises a sustainable way of life

### Evaluation Criteria

The four major criteria for evaluation are

#### 1 Management

- Establish a vision and mission on environmental education based on the National Education Philosophy.
- Incorporate environmental education as a component in curriculum and co-curriculum activities.
- Organise and implement environmental education awareness campaigns.
- Accord recognition to individuals or groups who have contributed and actively participated in environmental education programmes.
- Plan information dissemination activities for the surrounding community to enhance environmental awareness.

#### 2 Curriculum

- Incorporate environmental values in learning and teaching.
- Implement environment learning into teaching modules across the curriculum



- Organise programmes / workshops / seminars on environmental education for teachers

#### 3 Co-curriculum

- Implement an annual plan of environmental education activities for uniformed units/ clubs/society
- Organise Environmental Awareness Campaigns
- Organise environmental games or sports such as Green Run, Enviro-Hunt, Enviro-Walk, Enviro-Bike etc.
- Initiate Recycling Programmes

#### 4 Greenery

- School in Parks/Landscape Programmes
- One Student – One Tree Programme
- Planting, Conservation and Rehabilitation of Good Tree Species
- Scientific and Local Names for Tree Marking
- Introduction of Learning Stations

### Category of Schools & Prizes

Both primary and secondary schools may participate in the project and winners of each category receive the following as prizes:

- A Challenge Trophy
- Commendation Certificate signed by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment
- Cash prize of RM 10, 000.

### ENVIRONMENTAL HERO PROJECT (Projek Wira Alam)

The Environmental Hero Project was launched on 5 June 1998 in conjunction with World Environment Day. Organised by the Department of Environment in collaboration with the Ministry of Education Malaysia and Malaysian Nature Society, the goal of the project is to recognise students who are actively involved in efforts to care and protect the environment.

### Objectives

- To provide an opportunity for students to get involved, either individually or collectively, in environmental activities.
- To foster interest and motivate students to learn about the environment.

- To bring students closer to the community, which is in line with the 'Caring Society' concept.
- To produce a young generation with the expertise to take effective, responsible and knowledgeable actions towards the protection of the environment as leaders of the future.
- To recognise contribution in efforts to protect and care for the environment.

### Scope of The Environmental Hero Project

This Project consists of three stages :

- 1 Individual Environmental Hero (*Wira Alam Diri*) (Level 1)
- 2 Community Environmental Hero (*Wira Alam Komuniti*) (Level 2)
- 3 Environmental Hero (*Wira Alam*) (Level 3)

At Level 1 (Individual Environmental Hero) the students are involved in activities related to awareness, attitude and individual actions. At Level 2 (Community Environmental Hero), the activities organised are aimed at increasing student awareness on current environmental issues in the community such as appreciation of environment, conservation, recycling etc. At Level 3 (Environmental Hero), the focus of the activities is on community involvement, resource consumption, research and its application.



#### Source

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# Activity Highlights

Department of Environment, Malaysia

December

## Sustainable City Valuation Workshop - Environment Award 2005/2006



The Sustainable City Valuation Workshop - Environment Award 2005 / 2006 was held on 5 December 2006 at the Crystal Crown Hotel, Petaling Jaya. This workshop was organised by DOE in collaboration with the Department of Local Government and Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI), UKM. The workshop was jointly officiated by Dato' Hajah Rosnani Ibarahim, Director General of Environment and Datin Arpah Abdul Razak, Director General of Local Government. The workshop was aimed at providing detailed information on the programme as well as providing advice to participating local authorities on the submission of the Information Requisition Form. The Sustainable City-Environment Award 2005/2006, received participation from 15 capital cities, 17 municipal/town councils and 15 District Councils.



## Sustainable City - Environment Award 2005/2006 : Public Opinion Survey Workshop



In collaboration with the Institute for Environment and Development (LESTARI), UKM, the DOE organised a Workshop on Public Opinion Survey for DOE State Officers in Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan on 12 December 2006. The workshop provided training on the methodology of conducting public surveys for the Sustainable City – Environment Award. Public opinion survey is an important component in the evaluation process.

## Message from Editorial Board

### Year End Message

Dear Readers,

The out-going year 2006 has been a successful one for the editorial team of IMPAK magazine. We would like to extend our appreciation to our article contributors and publisher and our special gratitude to all our readers for their continuous support and encouragement. We look forward to a promising 2007.

Editorial team

### Forthcoming Issue

In conjunction with **Visit Malaysia Year 2007**, our first issue will focus on the rich natural treasures of our nation. Come travel with us as we take you through this journey of wondrous beauty.

Article contributions and comments are welcomed. They are to be directed to:

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