



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education

Welcome to the fourth edition of
the Department of Education's
newsletter on Education for
Sustainable Development (ESD)
where we will keep you up to date
with the latest ESD news.

Welcome to the 4th edition of the Department of Education's newsletter on Education for Sustainable Development. We hope you enjoy it.

If you would like to share what you are doing about sustainable development – let us know (e-mail ESD@education.gov.ie). You could win €500 for ESD if we publish your story.

1. ESD to 2030 – Public Consultation

- 2. Call for applications – Hamdan Prize for Teacher Educators**
 - 3. September 21 – International Day of Peace**
 - 4. Young Social Innovators – 2021 Challenge Award Winners**
 - 5. SEAI – Energy Saving in Schools**
– Schools' Retrofit Programme
 - 6. Did you know?**
 - 7. UCC – SDGs Toolkit**
 - 8. Outdoor Learning**
 - 9. Young Reporters for the Environment**
 - 10. Cycle Right – programme for schools**
 - 11. Wool in Schools programme**
 - 12. EPA – Clean Air Together Citizen Project**
 - 13. Climate Smart – programme for TY**
 - 14. Climate Change – SEAI resources for schools**
 - 15. Picker Pals – free litter programme for primary**
 - 16. ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards**
 - 17. Thomond Community College – ESD World Conference**
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1. A National Strategy on ESD to 2030

The Department of Education together with the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science held a public consultation to inform a new joint strategy on ESD to 2030.

We had over 80 submissions from a wide range of stakeholders, and in excess of 150 people took our survey. We also engaged directly with stakeholders at a number of information sessions, forums, and conferences.

We are now reviewing the responses to the consultation and commencing the drafting of the strategy and an implementation plan which will set out the actions we will take over the next three years.

Further details will be available on [our website](#) in due course.

2. Hamdan Prize for Teacher Educators

The UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development was created in 2008 to support the improvement of teaching and learning quality in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education, which is one of UNESCO's priorities. The prize aims to

support, encourage and benefit those working to enhance the performance and effectiveness of teachers for quality education for all. It will also serve to facilitate the global sharing and dissemination of outstanding practices related to teaching and learning. The objective of the prize supports UNESCO's policies and is related to the programme of the organisation in the field of education and teacher development.

The prize money consists of US\$300,000 to be divided equally among three winners (\$100,000 each), paid directly by the donor, and a certificate for each of the three prize-winners.

To apply for nomination for the prize, go to: [Apply for Hamdan Prize](#). Closing date for receipt of nominees is **24 September 2021**.



3. 21 September – UN International Day of Peace

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The UN General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, through observing 24 hours of non-violence and cease-fire.

The theme for the day this year is “Recovering better for an equitable and sustainable world”. The UN invite you to join the efforts of the United Nations family as it focuses on recovering better for a more equitable and peaceful world. Celebrate peace by standing up against acts of hate online and offline, and by spreading compassion, kindness, and hope in the face of the pandemic, and as we recover.

To find out more see: <https://www.un.org/en/observances/international-day-peace>



4. Young Social Innovators – Challenge Award Winners

Young Social Innovators (YSI) is about encouraging young people to re-imagine the world and empowering them to bring their vision to life. The Young Social Innovators of the Year Ireland Awards celebrate excellence in youth-led social innovation. Held in May each year, shortlisted YSI teams are invited to present their projects to judging panels at its national celebratory awards event.

The 2021 winners of the “Make our future more sustainable” category were Dundalk Grammar School.

“We aimed to educate people in our school community about the dangers of improper waste disposal and teach them how to dispose of their waste properly, whether it be in public, school or at home. We are aiming to make recycling and composting as accessible as possible in our school and to inspire other schools to do the same”.

Find out more about the project

here: <https://youngsocialinnovators.us.launchpad6.com/speakout2021/entry/107>



5. SEAI – Energy Saving in Schools

Save Energy in your School with SEAI's new e-learning resource

A new “***Saving Energy in Schools***” module is now available from SEAI through its Energy Academy – a free e-learning resource that allows anyone to learn about energy efficiency through short, interactive, simple and non-technical courses. The course can help schools lower their energy bills by as much as 10 per cent through educating all school staff on changing energy use and behaviours, and on implementing effective energy management.

Aimed at primary and post-primary school principals, teachers, administrators, caretaking staff and others who may be able to influence energy use within the school, in this 15 minute module you will learn about the main energy consumers in schools, energy management principles, and tips and advice for saving energy in schools.

Learn more about the SEAI Energy Academy and how to register on seai.ie/energyacademy

For queries please contact sara.norris@seai.ie

SEAI & Department of Education – Schools' Retrofit Programme

Now in its fifth year, the SEAI and the Department of Education's Pathfinder Retrofit Programme has carried out medium to deep energy retrofit to 39 schools across Ireland. This year will see six more schools undergoing deep retrofit to a Building Energy Rating (BER) of B with renewable heating systems. The programme will target energy use and CO₂ emission reduction by 50%, testing deep retrofit and low carbon heating solutions.

The Pathfinder programme aims to demonstrate the best practice in schools, testing energy efficiency solutions and renewable heat technology. It will pave the way for and inform a much larger national schools' programme for the energy retrofit of schools built

prior to 2008 from 2023 onwards, as included in the National Development Plan. It is facilitating research on a range of typical retrofit options, which will have been tried and tested.

Schools are selected by the partners, based on the objectives of the programme. All participating schools have attended energy management training and report their energy use annually to SEAI.

For more on this contact orla.coyle@seai.ie



6. DID YOU KNOW?

A hot water tap that leaks one drop per second can add up to 625 litres a month. That's more than one person uses in two weeks.

A plastic bag is used for an average of 12 minutes but will remain in the environment for 1,000 years before it decomposes. Say no to bags when you go shopping!

Worldwide, 132 million girls are out of school including 34.3 million of primary school age.



7. UCC Sustainable Development Goals Toolkit

An open-source, web-based toolkit has been developed at University College Cork (UCC) to assist teaching staff with the integration of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their curriculum. The toolkit includes teaching and learning strategies, videos, databases, case studies and interactive tools to enhance student learning in the Irish and global context. The toolkit also includes mapping tools to help staff realise connections between specific SDGs and their modules, programmes or research while offering self-reflective exercises to guide further SDG integration.

Evidence-based, flexible and inclusive staff professional development is a cornerstone of the SDG toolkit project. CPD workshops were conducted for 78 staff members from UCC and other Irish higher education institutions. These workshops aimed to assist staff with the integration of sustainability concepts into discipline specific learning outcomes aligned with activities and assessments while developing action-oriented pedagogies for transformative learning. The Head, Heart and Hands model was promoted to enhance holistic learner development. These popular 90-minute workshops are currently being expanded into a 30-hour digital badge which will focus on delivering a student-centred learning and teaching experience while cultivating competencies to enable life-long and life-wide learning.

Development of the SDG Toolkit followed a students-as-partners approach during the consultation process, and the advisory committee includes student representatives. The toolkit was designed to support staff at all levels of prior ESD engagement and from all disciplines while promoting interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary dialogue within an emerging Community of Interest. This project is in alignment with Priority 1 of the [UCC Academic Strategy 2018-2022](#) and the [National Strategy on Education for Sustainable](#)

[Development in Ireland, 2014-2020.](#)

The overarching goal of this SDG Toolkit is to guide students to develop a deep transformative understanding of disciplinary knowledge and values aligned with sustainable development, so they are enabled with a mindset to become innovative agents of change and to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world in both their professional and personal lives.

Please join this effort and freely access the resources in this web-based resource. The [SDG Toolkit website](#) will be formally launched during the [National Forums VIT&L Week 2021](#) (8-12 November). The SDG Toolkit project is a collaboration between the UCC Centre for the Integration of Research, Teaching and Learning and the Green Campus Programme and is funded by grants from the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and the Higher Education Authority. If you are interested in further information on this project, please contact [Dr. John Barimo](#).



8. Outdoor Learning

ESD provides opportunities to connect the learning environment to the local environment. Looking beyond the classroom learning environment, learning outdoors provides opportunities to develop risk-taking, problem-solving and teamwork skills thereby enabling

the achievement of engaging, creative and investigative learning that promotes positive wellbeing.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed two webinars on the topic of *Outdoor Learning in the Primary School* to support teachers and principals:

See here for more information: [Outdoor Learning Webinars](#)

Education and Training Boards operate 13 Outdoor Education and Training Centres and Services (OETCs) across the country.

Outdoor Education and Training Centres provide participants with a transformative outdoor experience that contribute the development of their environmental stewardship empowering them to reach their full potential and to contribute to society at all stages of their lives, to develop the personal and social skills necessary to be active citizens, effective employees and drivers of change for a better environment and a more sustainable future.

Outdoor education programmes use adventure sports and the outdoor environment to challenge students to realise their potential, develop new skills and enhance their wellbeing through time in nature. OETCs provide over 100,000 participants with educational and developmental experiences in the outdoors, offer a broad range of programmes for participants in every age bracket and has built a depth of experience and expertise in its provision. Many of the OETCs offer residential programmes and all centres provide courses for primary and post-primary students, and further education and training learners.

Outdoor Education and Training Centres provide high-quality, transformative outdoor education and training experiences that are inclusive, accessible, affordable and sustainable.

For more information visit the websites: <https://www.etbi.ie/outdoor-education/>

9. Young Reporters for the Environment

Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE) is an international programme run by the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce in Ireland. It uses a four-step methodology to encourage and platform student-led environmental journalism.

Participants identify an environmental issue in their locality and research a solution to it. They then communicate this as a journalistic piece in the form of an article, video or photo story and go on to raise awareness of their work throughout their school and local community. Throughout the year, a series of skills-based workshops take place in areas such as photojournalism, article writing and videography. Each year, the best entries are recognised at an annual awards ceremony with the winning entries going on to represent Ireland in the international competition. The theme for the 2021 competition was SDG 13 – Climate Action.

Sarah Fitzgerald from Kinsale Community School in Co. Cork won the Senior category in the YRE Ireland competition in 2021 and has been shortlisted in the YRE international competition as well. Her article “How Climate Smart are our Smartphones” is available here: <https://yreireland.exposure.co/how-climate-smart-are-our-smartphones>

All of the shortlisted and winning entries can be viewed here: <https://yreireland.exposure.co/>



10. CYCLE RIGHT – the National Standard for Cycle Safety Training

CYCLE RIGHT provides practical cycle safety and skills training to promote competent and confident cyclists.

CYCLE RIGHT is an inclusive programme, produced and supported by the Department of Transport, the Road Safety Authority and Cycling Ireland, with input from central and local agencies and other groups.

Available in three stages, **Stage One is the introductory level for novice cyclists** and is widely **delivered in primary schools** around the country. Training focusses on core outcomes and on an introduction to cycling on quiet roads.

CYCLE RIGHT offers a programme uniquely suited to the Irish environment, taking account of rural, suburban and urban conditions that are regularly encountered. The programme helps schools to support a shift to more sustainable forms of transport and to reduce motorised traffic in the vicinity at school time.

If you would like more information or would like your **primary or post-primary school** to get involved in the **CYCLE RIGHT** programme, please [CHECK HERE](#) for further details.



11. Wool in Schools resource

Wool In School is a unique education business in Ireland creating awareness about wool and sustainability. It introduces children and teachers to wool from Farm to Fabric looking at the properties and benefits of wool and why it is a sustainable resource. Wool in School works closely with a number of established mills in Ireland where children are given insight into Irish Woollen Mills.

This is a new online resource for teachers which aims to raise awareness in the classroom about wool and why it is important in the conversation about climate change. Supportive of Ireland's ESD Strategy and a number of the seven primary curriculum areas, Wool Awareness in the classroom aims to:

Encourage Interest about wool and awareness of the environment and nature.

Understanding – How nature and society are intertwined

Action – Call to action to help resolve issues.

Children learn about the properties of wool and the benefits. Encouraging children to understand the uses of wool old and new, reflect on heritage, environment and wool as a fibre of the future.

Wool Awareness in the classroom is also conducive to the intergenerational learning effect promoting child/parent communication and learning through the knit-stitch project with schools, people in the community and nursing homes in Ireland.

Registration cost to teachers of €54 includes: a fibre goodie bag from Cushendale Woollen Mills to support learning about wool in the classroom, full access to 20 hours of material and activities. Insight into one of the oldest mills in Ireland, the process of wool and much more. You will also receive access to the wool in schools blog, new information about wool business in Ireland and information about the Knit-Stitch project supporting intergenerational learning and global citizenship.

For more details log on to www.woolinschool.com or email info@woolinschool.com



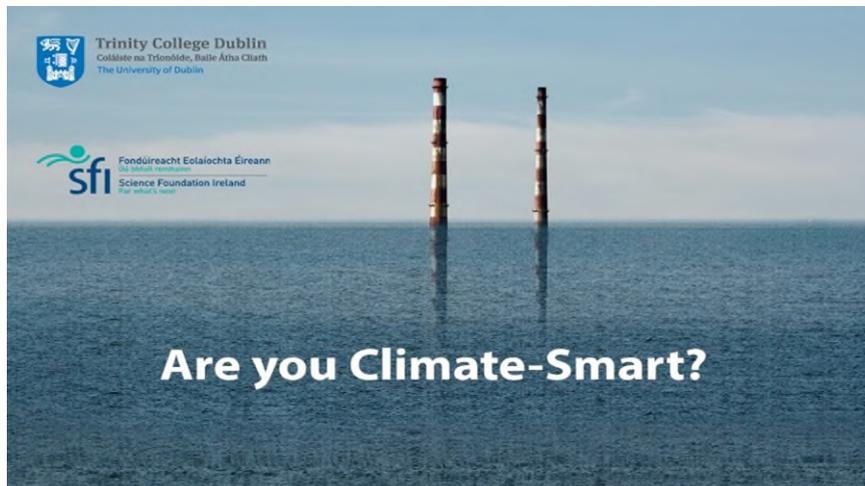
12. EPA – Clean Air Together Citizen Project

On 23 August, The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Environmental Education Unit of An Taisce launched the Clean Air Together citizen science project.

Clean Air Together (Dublin) is a large-scale, exciting, collaborative project aimed at measuring and monitoring levels of the traffic pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) across Dublin with five main objectives: To develop and deliver a methodology for large-scale, citizen-based air quality monitoring of NO₂; To produce data to provide input to the validation of air quality models; To increase public knowledge and engagement with the topic of air quality; To assess the impacts of citizen-based air quality monitoring on awareness, attitudes, and its potential to lead to behaviour change; To effect policy-change by working in partnership with stakeholders.

If you are in Dublin, you can apply for free to be one of 1,000 selected participants by **22 September 2021**. Those chosen to participate will receive a NO₂ measurement kit by post at their designated location, collect and return the measurement tube in liaison with a logistics-distribution company, and are then invited to complete project surveys to provide overall feedback to the project organisers, before receiving their results in early 2022.

Participation in the project is free, and further details and information on how to register can be obtained by visiting cleanairtogether.ie or contacting: cleanairtogether@epa.ie.



13. Climate Change Education: Let's be Climate Smart!

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face globally. It is essential that students understand the complexity of this challenge, and are supported to respond to it. Educational resources to help students adapt to our changing climate are emerging and Anna Davies and Stephan Hugel of Trinity College Dublin have developed the Climate Smart platform **for Transition Year teachers and students** which contains a suite of online interactive workshops and a prototype game focused on combating flooding from extreme weather events in Dublin, which are predicted to increase in frequency and severity in the future.

You can take a look at the resource platform: <https://climatesmart.ie/> and a teaser for the game on [YouTube](#).

The aim of Climate Smart is to increase students' skills, knowledge and agency, with a bit of fun along the way. To make sure that this is effective, Climate Smart would like to invite Transition Year teachers and their students to help us to improve our resources by participating in testing workshops that will run from October to December 2021.

If you would like to find out more about getting involved please contact: Stephan Hugel: SHUGEL@tcd.ie



14. Teach Your Students about Climate Change with SEAI's resources

Primary resources are linked to the primary science and SESE curriculum. These include interactive whiteboard lesson plans, factsheets, posters, books including a new reader Climate SOS. All are available to schools free of charge, email schools@seai.ie to place an order.

Post-primary teachers can use a range of online activities. They are designed to support the teaching and learning of energy and sustainability in Junior Cycle. Learning outcomes for various subject specifications are highlighted in each section.

Free **teacher and student workshops** are available in school, online or outdoor. These hands-on, interactive workshops will help to bring the themes of energy, climate action and sustainability to life. See the SEAI [website](#) for full details and how to book.

Why not sign up to the [You Tube](#) channel where you will find student videos as well as energy experiments.

For more www.seai.ie/schools or email us schools@seai.ie



15. Picker Pals – litter programme for primary

Picker Pals is a popular environmental programme **for lower primary school classes**. Through a fun character-led song, story and educational world, the programme equips and motivates children and their families to go on litter-picking adventures and report their action to their classmates, taking the first steps to becoming young environmentalists.

Each classroom receives a unique Picker Pod containing two fun books for every child in the class; a reader and an activity book. The heart of the programme is the Picker Pack which contains all the tools needed for an adult and child to go out litter-picking. Each week, the pack is taken home by a different child who leads an adult family member on a short litter-pick in their neighbourhood.

The programme is supported with regular thirty-minute Picker Pals TV shows delivered directly to the participating classrooms throughout the year. These shows feature environmental education presented in a fun and digestible way, news from the Picker Pals community and special guests. There are also puppets, quizzes and competitions for classrooms for classes to interact with.

Picker Pals was launched in 2019 and has now expanded to schools in every county in Ireland. Administered by environmental NGO, VOICE (Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment), it will be running in over 1,200 classrooms in the 2021-22 school year. The feedback from schools and families has been overwhelmingly positive with 100 per cent of

respondents saying they would both like to participate again and also recommend it to other teachers.

Philip O'Brien, a teacher of first class from Scoil an Athar Tadhg in Carrignavar was enthusiastic about Picker Pals. "It's a simply awesome initiative that connects school to community with a joint sense of purpose. The pupils were incredibly enthusiastic to be given the opportunity to take the pack home. Many of them elected it as a key highlight of their year. I received many emails from parents with the line 'Who knew picking litter could be such fun?' when describing their child's excitement. I think that over time this initiative will have a significant impact on attitudes in our local area. It has been one of the most meaningful messages I have helped to communicate in my teaching career."

Parents have also wholeheartedly endorsed Picker Pals. The father of a first class pupil in Sutton, County Dublin wrote how his son "has this new awareness about the environment in which he lives and taking responsibility for it. The idea of him littering is almost unthinkable because he realises the consequences that it can have. At the same time, one of the other real benefits that he's shared with his brother is that we can have a very direct impact in terms of doing something for your community. The Picker Pack makes it so easy. As a parent you don't have to think about it at all. Once they get the pack, they're the boss. They have the Picker Pack and they get to take their adult out!"

Participation in the programme is fully funded so there is no cost to participating schools which receive all the materials thanks to the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications, local authorities and philanthropic and corporate sponsors. Participation will be allocated to a limited number of schools in each authority. Principals and class teachers should express their interest through the [Schools Interest Form](#).

Further information is available on the Voice and on the Picker Pals World Websites. The link to which can be found on the VOICE [Voice](#) and Picker Pals World [Picker Pals World](#) websites.



16. ECO-UNESCO's Young Environmentalist Awards

With environmental issues at the forefront of today's agenda, this is the perfect time to get young people involved in saving their environment. The **Young Environmentalist Awards** (YEA) is the biggest **Eco-Action** programme in Ireland which recognises and rewards young people who take practical steps to improve their local environment, through local environmental action projects.

We're calling on students aged 12-18 years old and their teachers to get together and come up with innovative solutions to an environmental issue of their choice. Their project can then be entered into the YEA 2022 where young people will be rewarded for their hard work. Last year, special speakers included Mary Robinson and Michael D. Higgins!

This is a fun, interactive, year-long programme that can easily be carried out across schools, classrooms, peers, or amongst groups of friends. Registrations are due the 26th of November and final projects are due the 20th of February!

Registration is open now at: www.yea.ie

To help teachers get started with their projects, we are running YEA Teacher Trainings with the following Education Centres. Please see dates below:

Kilkenny Education Centre: 9th of September, 7p.m.

Clare, Monaghan, Navan, and Tralee Education Centres: 20th of September, 7p.m.

Dublin West Education Centre: 12th of October, 7p.m.

Blackrock Education Centre: 19th of October, 7p.m.

For further information on the Young Environmentalist Awards contact yea@ecunesco.ie

ECO-UNESCO also offers a range of interactive and engaging workshops on a wide range of environmental issues including plastics, biodiversity, fast fashion among others, all aimed at developing young peoples knowledge and building their skills. Further information is available [here](#).

For queries contact bookings@ecunesco.ie



17. UNESCO World Conference on ESD – Thomond Community College

Limerick city stepped onto the global stage when a student and teacher from Thomond Community College, Moylish Park, Limerick, addressed an international audience of educators and policy makers at the UNESCO world conference on Education for Sustainable Development. The pair was invited to speak at the conference which saw an audience of around 2,500 stakeholders discuss the role of schools, educators and students in combating the global climate crisis.

Anna Linehan, a third-year student in Thomond Community College, was the only student speaking at this prestigious event. She delivered a powerful speech on how action is urgently required to slow the damage being caused to our planet and to the future of her generation. Read more from Anna below.

Eric O'Donnell, a Construction Studies teacher in Thomond Community College, spoke about the many ways in which the school has been engaged in climate and environmental awareness:

“School and community collaboration is essential. Efforts based in education must be enacted in the community and there is a desire to see real and meaningful change in the Limerick community. Power must be given over to student voice. Thomond Community College has worked closely with An Taisce to establish a Green Schools program within the school and community, planting *An Choill Bheag*, the school’s tiny forest initiative, driven by Veronica Lavin who also supported Anna in her preparation for the conference.

Last year Thomond Community College massively reduced plastic waste by implementing a non-reusable plastic bottle ban on campus. This, along with many other educational programs have seen Thomond Community College help guide the way to a healthier, brighter future for Anna and her generation. Anna’s closing remarks to the global audience summed up the need for action; *“Environmental action does not happen in the background; to care about the future of nature, don’t just explain, show us, take us outside to connect and engage with nature”*.

Hello everyone. My name is Anna Linehan my interest in environmental issues has stemmed from and been influenced by my background and home life.

As part of the suburbs with rural area surrounding, I've seen a balance of both green fields and a lot of wheelie bins. My mother wished to minimise emptying our bins by committing to a minimal waste system. This means reusable grocery bags, more local shopping as opposed to imports that would contribute to food miles and less plastic packaging. Her ambition to have as little waste as possible is because she herself grew in a suburban area in France where there was less of a tendency to be careless about where we leave out rubbish and grocery packaging wasn't nearly as prominent.

Before lockdown, my parents and I took part in protests with Limerick Against Pollution hoping to shut down a cement factory so joining the Green Schools Committee for an extra-curricular activity made sense to me because I wanted to be more aware of the environment which stirred from my background. People's home lives influence everything and anything.

In school, I learned that we have come a long way since the idea of the Green Schools committee membership even crossed my mind. Thomond, including the previous 2 schools it once was before joining together, has been part of the Green Schools program for over 12 years.

I have learned that things are being done. Instead of the canteen distributing small, non-reusable water bottles, the school gave everyone reusable water bottles. The school has around five Water Dispensers that has a little counter on the top to let us know how many bottles have not been thrown away as rubbish.

I'm now more open minded to the idea of throwing on a pair of boots and growing trees with people in my year, making a small forest in the corner of our school to preserve native trees and wildlife.

I've learned that we have come a long way and as a school, with the help of young people's voices from the Green School's Committee and Student Council taking initiative and being offered the stage to express concerns.

And that alone is what I've learned from inside school. Outside school, me amongst many people, including many of you, have realised that to be heard about our concerns is key to getting more people involved and more action taken.

Environmental action does not happen 'In the background.'

Due to the pandemic; protests, panels and group activities for sustainable awareness have become extraordinarily restricted making it harder to spread awareness beyond the power of virtual zoom meetings and pamphlets.

We are lacking the connection that is made when communities, states, counties, nations band together to act for change as supposed to just talking about what's wrong. Because we know exactly what needs to be done. We know we need thermal, hydro and solar energy in every single home as opposed to non-renewable sources. We know there will be more plastic than fish in the sea by 2050 if we don't act. We are passed the stage of talking, but Covid-19 has held us back.

I've learned that until we're past limitations of communication, we are further limited on action.

Connection, Communication and Community are key.

If there is any career that has the highest influence over my generation, the generation that hopes to lead this planet out of its current risks of topsy-turvy climates and extinction of wildlife, it's teachers. Teachers are the daily influence on our knowledge, and knowledge on how to be sustainable has never been needed like it is now.

We can start off with small actions. Teachers can give less loose sheet handouts that are only relevant for so many days to study before we throw them in the bin. We can summarise our schools' curriculum digitally and have book rental schemes that recycle the books of students before us, decreasing the trees that fall just for a person's temporary exam, when it could continue to thrive and give us oxygen for a lifetime.

When it is a nice day outside, the sun is shining in and the projector is not needed, keep the lights and any unnecessary electric appliances turned off as opposed to just on 'Stand by.'

All that is easy enough and can be easily arranged.

So, what if we took it one step further?

When covering textiles and upcycling in Home Economics, emphasise the issues with fast fashion and show the benefits of thrifting and turning old fabrics into something of new use!

When sustainable development and ethical business come into play for Business Studies, elaborate as much as explaining a budgeting sheet, as much as explaining taxes. Is our money used enough in the Department of Environment?

When students are in their civics and social studies class, bring further emphasis on how the global development goals can be progressed in our day to day lives.

When science teaches us about ecology, don't just *explain* the relationship between us, other living organisms and our physical surroundings. *Show* us the habitats and their components. *Show* us the great outdoors and the interdependence between animals in different communities! Take us outside to connect and engage with nature. To care about the future of nature, connect us to nature.

We need to physically engage more with the local environment. Connections with nature have been vital for our wellbeing, given the pandemic. Not everyone has the same access to nature but if school is a central part of our future, it deserves to be present in aiding us be with our natural environment.

We must not be limited to second-hand knowledge.

Our world is larger than a textbook.

Our earth is more valuable than a textbook.

Connection is key.

In school, instead of making sustainability a corner of a subject, make it the cornerstone of all subjects. Arguably, sustainability could become a subject in its own right, on the secondary curriculum.

The same way we listen to teachers, teachers need to listen to students. Give opportunities to students and listen to the learners.

What is taught to us doesn't and shouldn't have to be 'by the book.'

Communication is key.

Our school, our parishes AND our communities need to be more vocal about our school's environmental committees. If sustainable awareness is a part of our daily school lives, there's no notion that Green Schools is only for a 'specific minority that care.'

A reason many students choose not to be environmentally active is because climate anxiety can switch off interest given the list of everything in the planet that is perceived as 'inevitable and irreversible.'

But if we do little things that are relevant to the good of our planet, looking for positive change in the future becomes less of a 'Life-Changing' goal and more of a new normal!

When we go out to plant trees in our school gardens, or raise money for climate

awareness, don't limit it to schools! Expand it as a community activity!

Our awareness and care for the planet should not stop or lessen the minute we step outside the school. No one should 'Only care what goes in what bin' in school as supposed to home. Sustainability is an adjustment that is to be made all around us.

Connection, Communication and Community are key.

To do any of the changes I've previously mentioned, we need support from our governments and our different countries around the world connecting and listening to each other.

We've used zoom meetings more than ever so why not use that to our advantage?! Have schools, councils and organisations globalize and reach out to one another so we can know where each of us stand in this movement of change. How can we learn from each other? And how can we understand everyone's individual situation.

If we are doing this only as 'Every country for themselves' it's too easy to ignore the bigger picture and pretend bad things aren't happening. Bad things are happening, but nations uniting is the start to stopping that.

You can view the Conference here: <https://en.unesco.org/events/ESDfor2030>

Data Protection

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