

D E C E M B E R 2 0 1 1

# The Eco-Times

Your gateway to DIA's Environment!  
Edition I



## Mission Statement

The Ecology Club is a student led initiative at Dubai International Academy that strives to incorporate environmental practices in all stakeholders at Dubai International Academy, raise awareness of environmental damage caused by reckless activities, and promote an "Eco Attitude" among all students.

By incorporating environmental practices into students at a very young age, they will become the future's environmental warriors.

## Welcome to The Eco Times!

Welcome to the first edition of DIA's inaugural student initiated environmental newspaper, Eco Times. This newspaper will serve as a medium for students, parents, and teachers to gain insightful information about the environmental movement at DIA and the Ecology Club. We live in an era where communication is vital to performance, and thus, this newspaper hopes to instill a 'greener' and an environmentally conscious attitude among our readers.

*Amay Bhojani & Farzad Siganporia, Presidents of the Ecology Club*

### Highlights of this edition!

#### Our Activities!

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Some of the many activities we partake in on a daily basis!

#### Dolphins!

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Budding marine biologists visited Dolphin Bay at The Atlantis

#### Our Core Team

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Introducing our Core Team- the driving force behind the Ecology Club



# Inaugural Address by Mr. David Impey, Secondary School Principal

It is a pleasure to welcome the first issue of this Newsletter, which will keep the DIA community informed of the considerable action taken by the Ecology Club.

After years of steady growth, involvement and competition, environmental efforts have expanded and accelerated throughout Dubai International Academy with the elementary and secondary school working in unison to reduce unnecessary energy, waste and water consumption. This concerted drive is part of the HSBC Eco Schools initiative, with DIA working towards achieving the prestigious Green Flag- an indication that our school is environmentally sustainable. Vital elements of the process include students planning collaboratively and taking action on a sustained basis. The tremendous opportunities for strong Student Leadership, with all the benefits, are central facets of DIA!



Our main focus this year is on the modern version of the 3R's – reduce, reuse and recycle. Ecology Club members ranging from the ages of 8 to 18 have made great strides by implementing a number of saving methods such as using Bokashi bins to compost organic waste, reducing the flush volume in each toilet by placing water bottles in the cisterns and turning off the hall lights during period six each day.

Community involvement and environmental awareness have also been on the increase since the start of this academic year. Ms. Mackenzie and Ecology Club students in the Elementary school recently raised enough money from a bake sale to plant 40 Ghaf trees in the UAE which will help offset carbon emissions and preserve the species. In mid-December Ms. Fatima and a groups students visited Nad Al Sheba for the UAE Clean Up Day, in an effort to educate students about the need for proper waste management. A team of biology teachers recently accompanied high school students to Dolphin Bay at Atlantis where they learned about marine mammal conservation in a hands-on environment. We strongly believe that building a relationship between Dubai's community and DIA's students will have a lasting impact on their education and their lives.

Congratulations to all students involved, and thanks to Ms. Fatima, Ms. Shete and Ms. Daniel in the Secondary School, Ms. Mackenzie and Ms. Buck in the Elementary, Ms. Hager, who co-ordinates the whole-school program and strategies, and of course Mr. Navneet and the administration team for their support.

Well done so far, and best wishes!

**David Impey**

*Secondary School Principal*

## A peek into our activities!

Activities in focus this month include  
Hydroponics, Compost Creation, Organic  
Garden, and Water for Life!

### Hydroponics

Imagine the potential of a method of growing nutritious vegetation without the presence of a good climate system? Hydroponics is just that. A hydroponics unit allows for the growth of plants with the usage of a small amount of water. The Ecology Club has recently applied for a AED1,440 grant from HSBC to increase our usage of Hydroponics.

### Compost Creation

Compost, a replacement for hazardous fertilizer, contains organic waste enriched with minerals and nutrients and free of toxic chemicals, is being created in DIA with the use of specialized Bokashi Bins. Located in the cafeteria, students are advised to utilize this beneficial facility. Our compost goes directly into our Organic Garden.

### Organic Garden

This year, the Ecology Club has created DIA's very own organic garden! Located behind the Secondary School Swimming Pool, the organic garden includes a variety of herbs and vegetables. Instead of toxic fertilizer, we have used Organic Compost, which we have created. As fresh as it gets!

### Water for Life

The Water for Life club is one of the many initiatives by the Aqua Initiative, a charity founded by DIA students to promote the usage of clean water and hygienic sanitation in Less Developed Countries. In addition to conserving Water usage at DIA, the Water for Life club organizes an annual carnival to raise funds in order to provide hygienic water and sanitation facilities to less privileged nations in Africa.





## A Trip to Dolphin Bay!

Twenty-four enthusiastic MYP and DP students from Dubai International Academy recently visited Dolphin Bay at Atlantis to learn about marine conservation. The day began with trained experts giving a brief lecture on dolphin anatomy and habitat, followed by a question and answer session. Students then formed teams and were led to the bay where they worked with a trainer and a dolphin to participate in feeding and handling techniques. Groups also learned about dolphin behavior associated within their individual social groups and had the wonderful opportunity to use their sense of touch to understand dolphin anatomy and bone structure.

The trained experts discussed dolphin health with the students and explained the various blood and gastric tests conducted at Dolphin Bay, Atlantis. Students were encouraged to ask questions while in the water with the animals, which Dolphin Bay's trainers answered with ease. Groups finished up their dolphin experience with a 20-minute discussion on marine conservation, recycling and sustainability. Students worked with the trainers to determine how waste, specifically garbage made of plastics, can affect the habitat and health of marine organisms.

## Prefect Body!

This academic year, the Prefect Body has, in addition to its regular duties, taken on an active role in promoting eco-friendly practices at DIA. A sub-committee within the body, known as the "Green Group", has been specially assigned to develop plans for reducing DIA's carbon footprint and implement "green" practices into daily student life. The first initiative to be launched, in collaboration with the Ecology Club, is a large-scale awareness campaign, which aims to encourage students to take part in eco-friendly practices.



## Keeping it 'green' since '01

The Elementary School is filled with budding environmentalists, eager to contribute to the schools environmental efforts. The Ecology Committee in the Elementary School is comprised of elected members from Year 4 to Year 6 with students aging from 9 years to 11 years.

Partaking in activities such as re-using plastic bottles, conserving turtles, spreading awareness about compost creation, the Elementary School has strived to improve the ecological community we reside in. Working with the Emirates Maritime Environmental Group (EMEG), the Elementary School released baby turtles on Ghantoot Beach!

*Well done Elementary Students!*



## Recycle for a Cause

On the 7<sup>th</sup> of December, Ecology Club members were privileged with a visit from Mrs. Susan Taylor from an environmental organization, Recycle for a Cause. This organization supports philanthropic initiatives such as the PCF charity in the Philippines. The PCF Charity aims to decrease the number of dumpsite communities in the Philippines through recycling paper, cans, and plastics. Using this recycled material, PCF makes innovative and creative merchandise such as pouches, reusable plastic bags, and accessories. Recycle for a Cause was recently implemented in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. It is our pleasure to announce that the DIA Ecology Club will be working with Recycle for a Cause in the near future. A special thanks to Mrs. Susan Taylor for visiting our Ecology Club!



## Introducing our Core Team:

### Amay Bhojani, President

Amay Bhojani is a 16-year-old student in Year 12. Amay has been in DIA since 2005. This is his 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the Ecology Club, and 2<sup>nd</sup> as a member of the Core Team. In addition to presiding the Ecology Club, Amay is serves as Vice-President of the DIA Student Council. He is also coordinator and Secretary General of the Model United Nations chapter at DIA. He looks forward to seeing young students transform into budding environmentalists.



### Farzad Sigantoria, Deputy Treasurer

Farzad Sigantoria is a 16-year-old student in Year 12. Farzad has been in DIA since 2008. This is his 2<sup>nd</sup> year in the Ecology Club, and 2<sup>nd</sup> year as a member of the Core Team. He serves as the Deputy Treasurer in the DIA Student Council. He is an avid participant in Model United Nations. He is hoping for an increased participation by all students in this year's Ecology Club.

### Abhinav Menon, Vice President

Abhinav Menon is a 16-year-old student in Year 11. Abhinav has been in DIA since 2007. He also serves as Deputy Secretary General of the Model United Nations Society and as a representative on the Student Council. He is excited for a greener DIA!



### Shayan Mirzazadeh, Head of Water

Shayan Mirzazadeh is an 18-year-old student in Year 12. Shayan has been in DIA since 2009. This is his 1<sup>st</sup> year in the Ecology Club. Shayan also serves as the President for the Water for Life Club. In addition to this, Shayan is a member of the DIA Football Team. He looks forward to innovative ways to reduce water consumption among students!



### Thea Vadstein, Head of Energy

Thea Vadstein is a 16-year-old student in Year 12. Thea has been in DIA since 2006. This is her fifth year in the Ecology Club. Thea is also involved in the Cooking Club at DIA. She looks forward to increasing awareness of environmentally friendly energy practices.

## Yasmin Ghanem, Head of Energy

Yasmin Ghanem is a 17-year-old student in Year 12. Yasmin has been in DIA since 2009. This is her second year in the Ecology Club.

Yasmin is also involved in the Cooking Club at DIA. She is eager to implement a variety of energy related projects such as Solar Cells.



## Priyanka Bhatia, Head of Waste

Priyanka Bhatia is a 15-year-old student in Year 11. This is her first year in the Ecology Club. Other than the Ecology Club, Priyanka is involved in Model United Nations at DIA. She looks forward to increasing student usage of compost creation.

## Pranav Chaudary, Head of Waste

Pranav Chaudary is a 16 year old student in Year 12. This is his first year in the Ecology Club. Other than the Ecology Club, Pranav is a member of the Debate Society at DIA. He looks forward to alternative recycling methods.



## Mrs. Tanveer Fatima, SS Coordinator

Mrs. Tanveer Fatima has been a Science teacher at DIA for the past 5 years. She has taught in Dubai for 22 years. Since joining DIA, Mrs. Tanveer has been heavily involved in the Ecology Club. She is the Environmental Coordinator for the HSBC Eco-Schools Initiative. She is excited for attaining the prestigious 'Green Flag'

## Mrs. Jennifer Hager, Environmental Coordinator

Mrs. Jennifer Hager has been a Biology teacher at DIA for the past 2 years. She has been apart of researching programs at a variety of prestigious universities. Mrs. Hager gained her Masters in biological and chemical studies from the University of Maryland. She is the MYP Environments Coordinator. She looks forward to promoting environmentalism among students of all ages.



## Mrs. Sharon McKenzie, ES Coordinator

Ms. Sharon McKenzie is an active member in the EcoClub and works closely with her ES and the SS students to maintain a collaborative balance. Ms. McKenzie and her students recently raised enough money to purchase 40 Ghaf trees. She also mentored a number of students during a local turtle release.



# Connect with us!

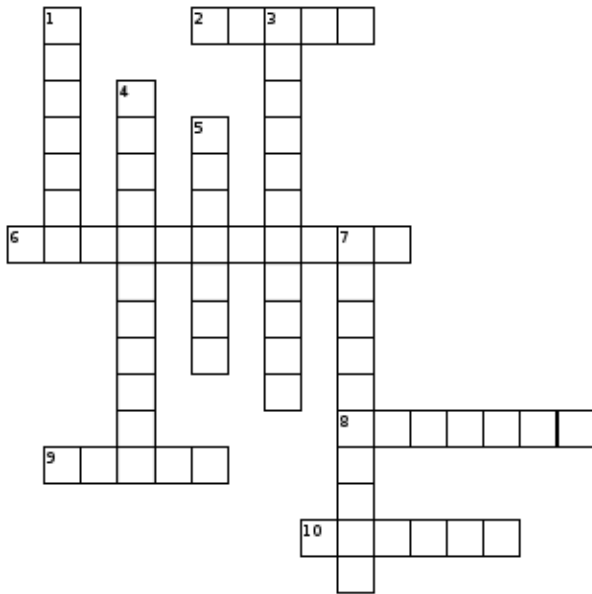
[Join our Facebook Group!](#)

[Follow our activities through our blog!](#)

Watch out for our new website soon!

To contribute to the Ecology Club, email:  
[amaybhojani@gmail.com](mailto:amaybhojani@gmail.com)

## Eco-Activity!



*Across Clues*

- 2. Any form of unwanted or used resource
- 6. A sustainable method of producing crops using water
- 8. The appropriate methodology of the disposal of waste
- 9. The universal solvent
- 10. Usually in the form of electricity, may be found in oil

*Down Clues*

- 1. The study of all ecosystems
- 3. The longevity of our practices
- 4. Our surroundings are also our \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. An alternative to fertilizer which we make in the cafeteria
- 7. The most important verb in Environmentalism!