

# **THE ECO-SCHOOLS PROGRAMME: FROM LOCAL IMPACT TO GLOBAL REACH**

















# Who we are...



- Established in 1981, the **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)** is one of the world's largest environmental education organisations
- Over 100 member organisations in 81 countries.
- Our educational programmes, **Eco-Schools**, **Learning about Ecosystems and Forests (LEAF)**, **Young Reporters for the Environment (YRE)** and the recently formalized **Eco-Campus**, empower young people to create an environmentally conscious world through a solutions-based approach.
- Our **Green Key** and **Blue Flag** programmes are globally recognised for promoting sustainable business practices and the protection of natural resources.







# What is Eco-Schools?

Over 30 years, the **Eco-Schools** programme has grown into one of the largest educational networks championing Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Climate Change Education across the globe.

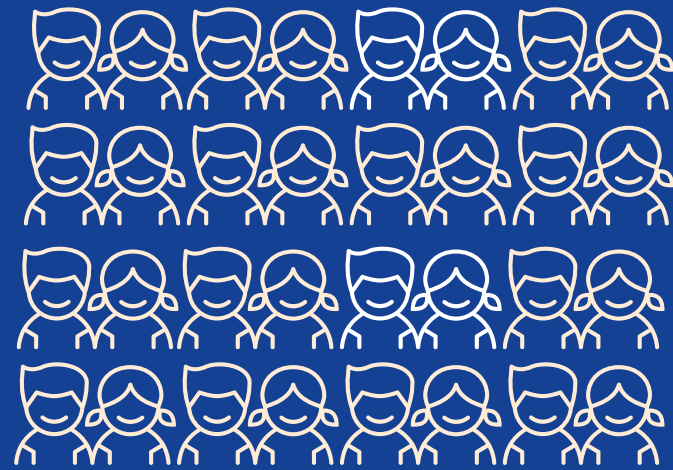
## Delivering GreenComp domains of:

- Values & ethics;
- Embracing complexity;
- Envisioning sustainable futures;
- Acting for sustainability





## FEE ECO- SCHOOLS' GLOBAL ESD IMPACT



**13Mil**

received ESD thanks to  
**over 600K Teachers**

**79**



**Member Countries**  
all around the world



international schools  
in **22 countries**  
registered directly  
through FEE

**20K**



**Green Flags**  
have been awarded

The **whole-school  
approach**

highlights that embedding  
ESD holistically across the  
curriculum fosters  
systemic change

**>52.5K**



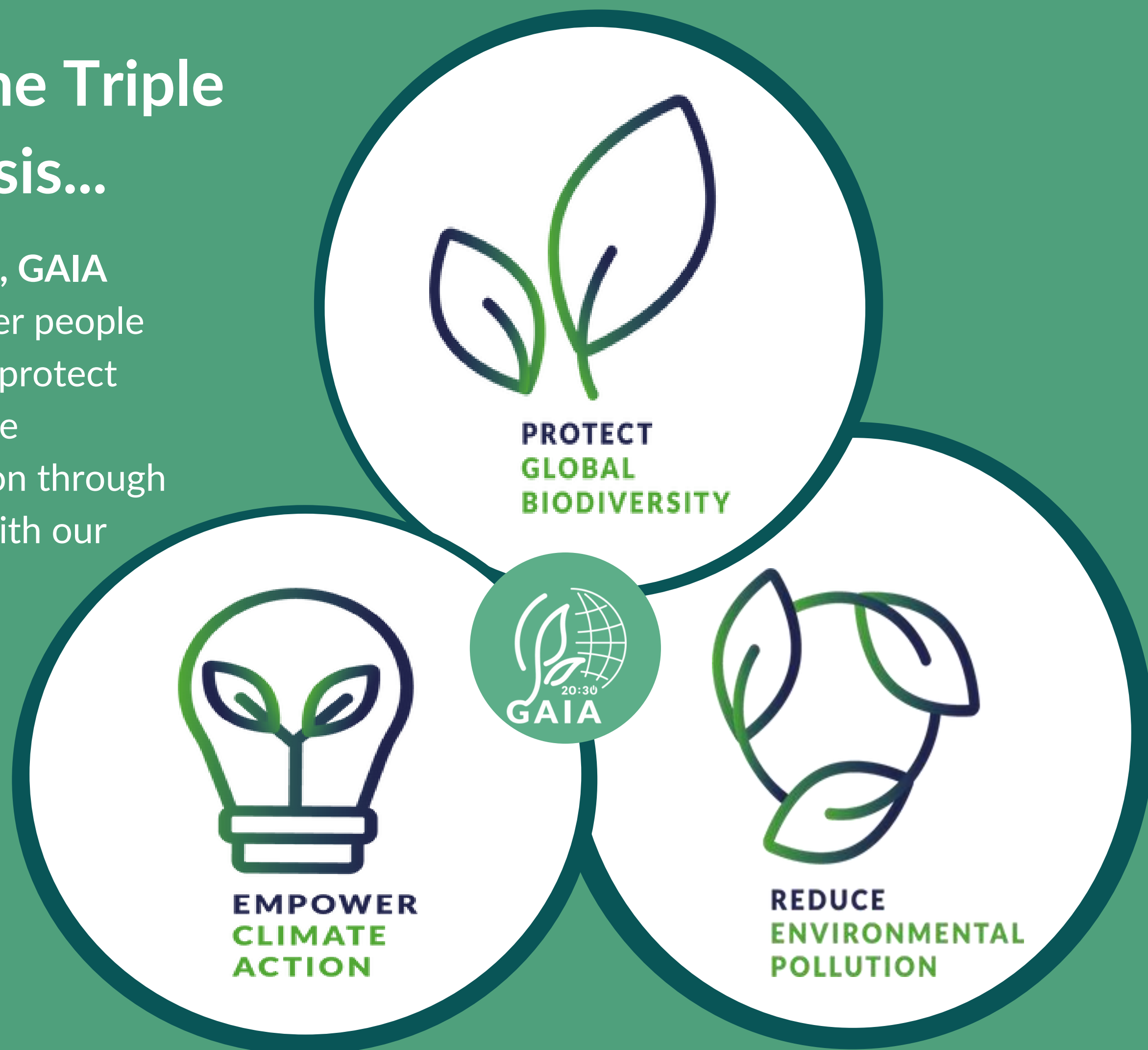
**Eco-Schools**

In 101 countries follow  
a  
**Project-Based  
Seven-Step  
Framework,**  
driving Greening  
Education and creating  
lasting change in their  
schools and whole  
communities!



# Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis...

FEE's 10-year strategy, GAIA 20:30, aims to empower people to take climate action, protect biodiversity, and reduce environmental pollution through ESD in collaboration with our members and partners worldwide.



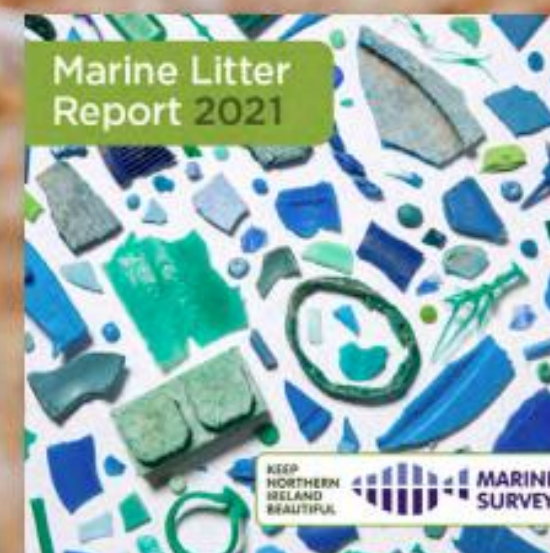
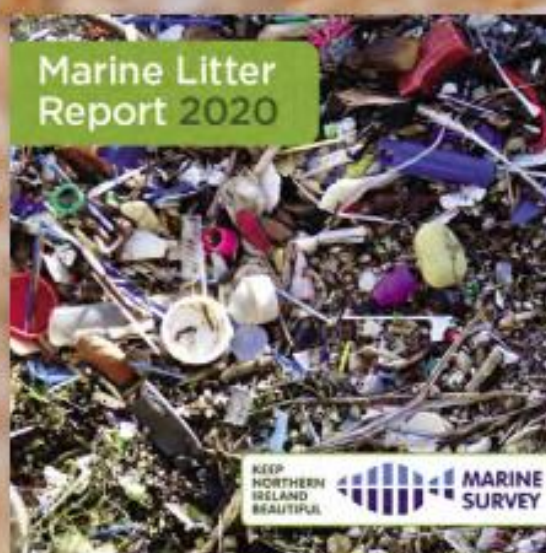
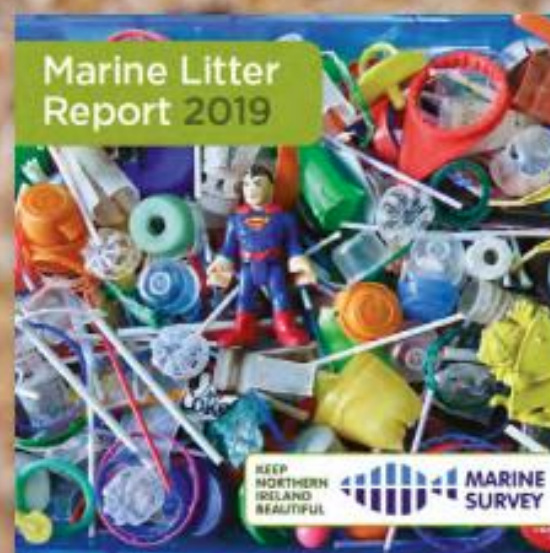
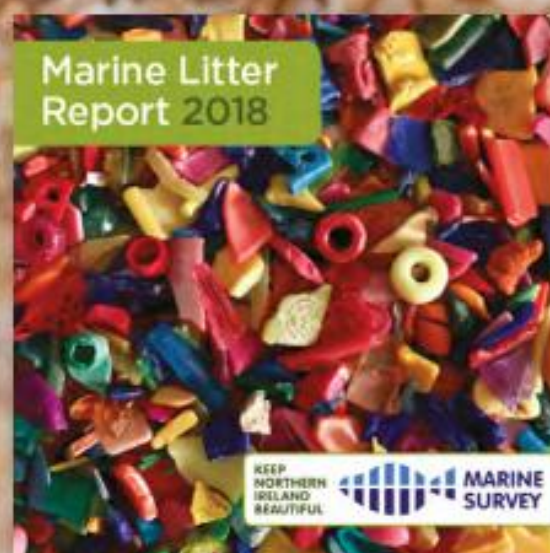
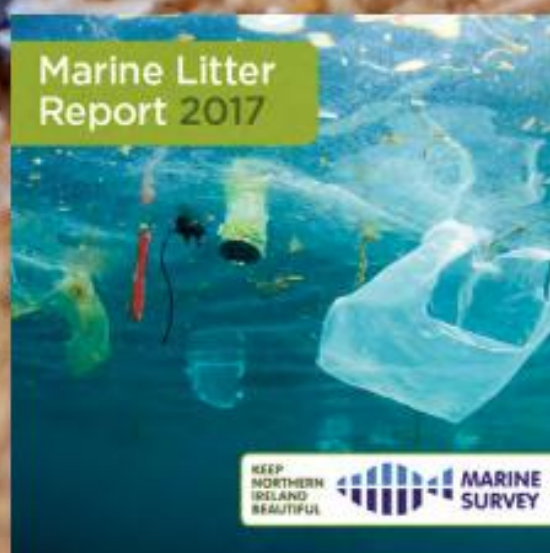


# Marine Litter Report 2022

KEEP  
NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
BEAUTIFUL



MARINE  
SURVEY



Ten years of the  
Northern Ireland  
Marine Survey  
2012-2022\*

\*There was no report  
published for 2015.





The need for multi-tasking cloning...



## Globally

The earth's average global temperature

has risen by  $>1^{\circ}\text{C}$ , with most of the warming occurring in the past 35 years.

While 95% of surveyed primary and secondary teachers

felt that teaching climate change is important,  $<30\%$  expressed a readiness to teach it.

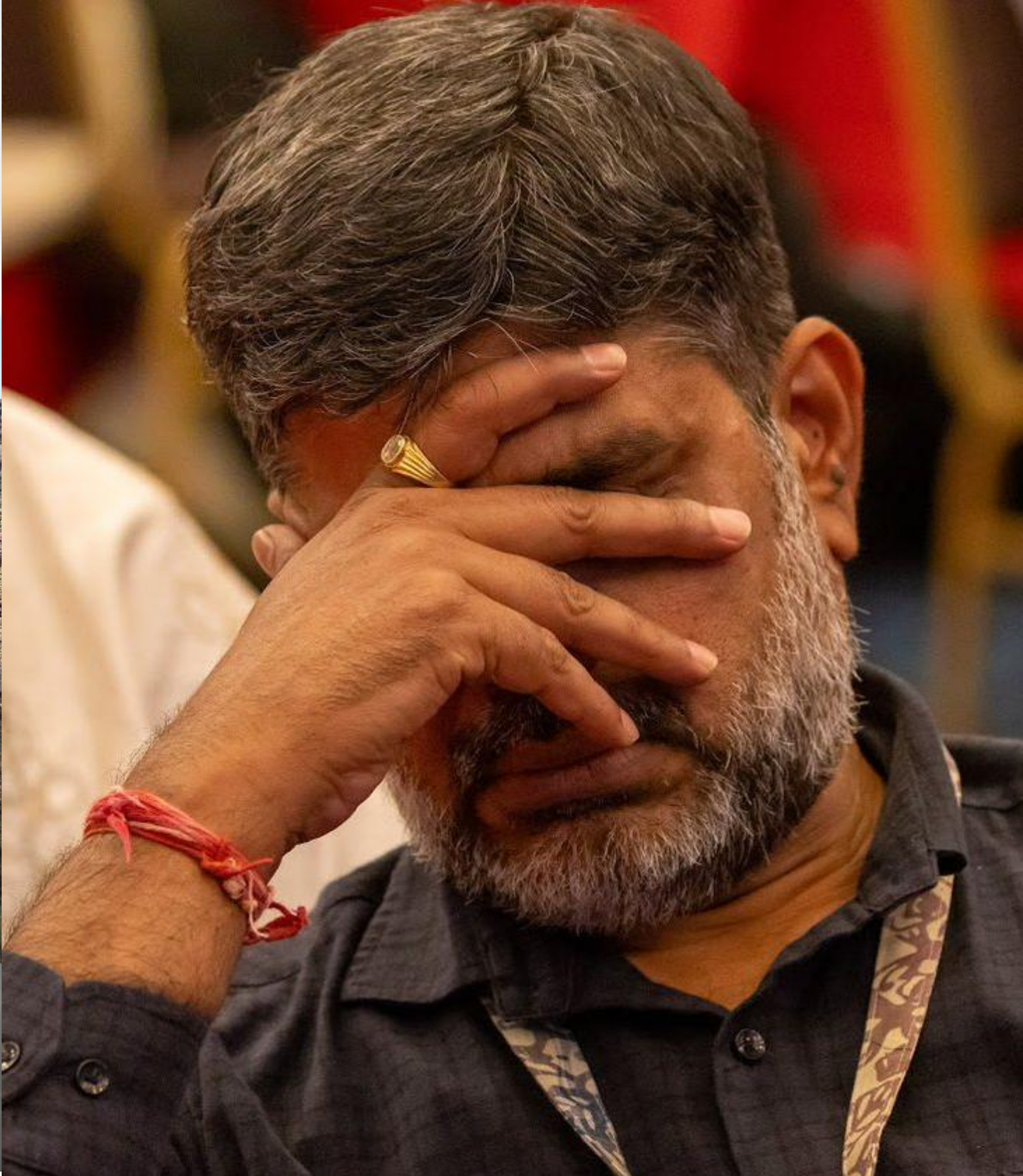
Around half of the 100 countries reviewed

had no mention of climate change in their national curriculum, UNESCO findings reveal.

70% of young people cannot explain climate change

or can only explain its broad principles, or do not know anything about it.









We have probed the earth, excavated it, burned it, ripped things from it, buried things in it, chopped down its forests, levelled its hills, muddied its waters, and dirtied its air. That does not fit my definition of a good tenant. If we were here on a month-to-month basis, we would have been evicted long ago.

Rose Elizabeth Bird (1936-1999)

Chief Justice of California Supreme Court



# The Kübler-Ross Change Curve





# The Kübler-Ross Change Curve





## In Europe

**94% of EU citizens** say that protecting the environment matters personally to them.

- Many young people consider that **education and training is failing** to prepare them to tackle climate change, protect the environment and live and act more sustainably.

**3 in 10 young people** globally are “very” or “extremely” worried about climate change and 70% feel hopeless.

Eco-anxiety!

**3 in 4** respondents to an EU survey ranked **education and training as the most important sector** to help people understand and take action on climate change and the environmental crises.



# The Kübler-Ross Change Curve





# The Roadmap to Greening Education (1)

Built on a **Whole Institution Approach**, GEP drives transformation across four pillars:

FEE is proud to support UNESCO as co-coordinator of **Pillar One on Greening Schools** and coordinator of the **Higher Education working group**. Both **YRE** and **Global Action Days** are recommended best practice for **Pillar Four**.



## Greening schools

From early childhood through adult education, work to ensure that all schools achieve green school accreditation, including teacher training and higher education

## Greening curriculum

Embrace lifelong learning approach that integrates climate education into school curricula, technical and vocational education, workplace skills development, teaching materials, pedagogy, and assessment



## Four action areas of transformative education

## Greening communities

Strengthen community resilience by integrating climate education into lifelong learning, with a focus on empowering and mobilizing young individuals, community centers, and learning cities to take action on climate change.



## Greening teacher training and education systems' capacities

Strengthen education systems to be climate-smart with adequate measures, and ensure teachers and policymakers are trained in school accreditation, including teacher training and higher education.



# Behaviour Change Crisis



Figure 1. Rare's Levers of Behavior Change Framework  
(Rare, 2020)

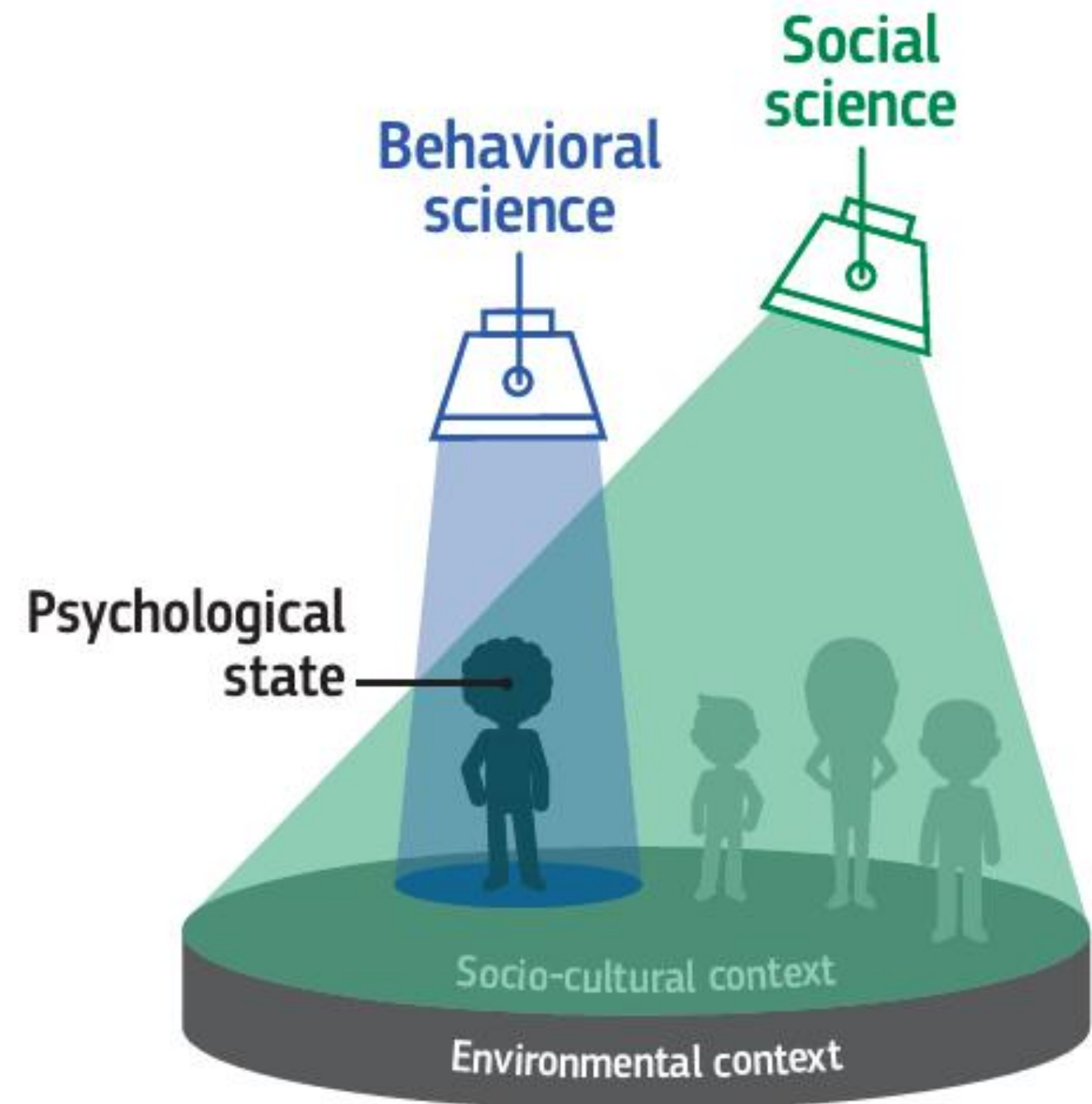


Figure 2. The interaction of behavioral and social science in understanding human behavior. Behavioral science focuses on understanding an actor's psychological state, whereas social science focuses on understanding the socio-cultural context for that actor. Both are necessary for understanding an actor's behavior within a given environmental context. Changes to the socio-cultural context, environmental context, or actor's behavior create feedback loops with one another.



# Considering the Implications

| Perspective          | Consumer                    | Citizen                         |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Core question        | What do I want?             | What do we need?                |
| Main relationship    | Market / system of exchange | Community / system of belonging |
| Expression of agency | Choice                      | Responsibility                  |
| Measure of success   | Satisfaction, efficiency    | Justice, participation          |
| Time horizon         | Immediate                   | Generational                    |

**A continuum  
of participation**



**Each step widens the  
circle of awareness**





# Working to achieve global agendas for ESD and Quality Education by 2030



**SDG 4.7 Quality Education:**  
Ensuring all learners gain  
knowledge and skills to promote  
sustainable development.



**SGD 13.3 Climate Action:**  
Enhancing education, awareness  
and capacity on climate change  
mitigation and adaptation.











# National competition days

## Holy Trinity College Successful in National Energy Challenge

Holy Trinity College has achieved impressive results from their energy saving actions during TIDY Northern Ireland and Airtricity's, Operation Energy Power Down Day which took place on Thursday the 7th November.

pupils off for not doing what they are told."

The work by the students certainly paid off with significant savings on the day and continued savings into the

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Holy Trinity College

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> Nov.

Operation Energy  
Power Down Day

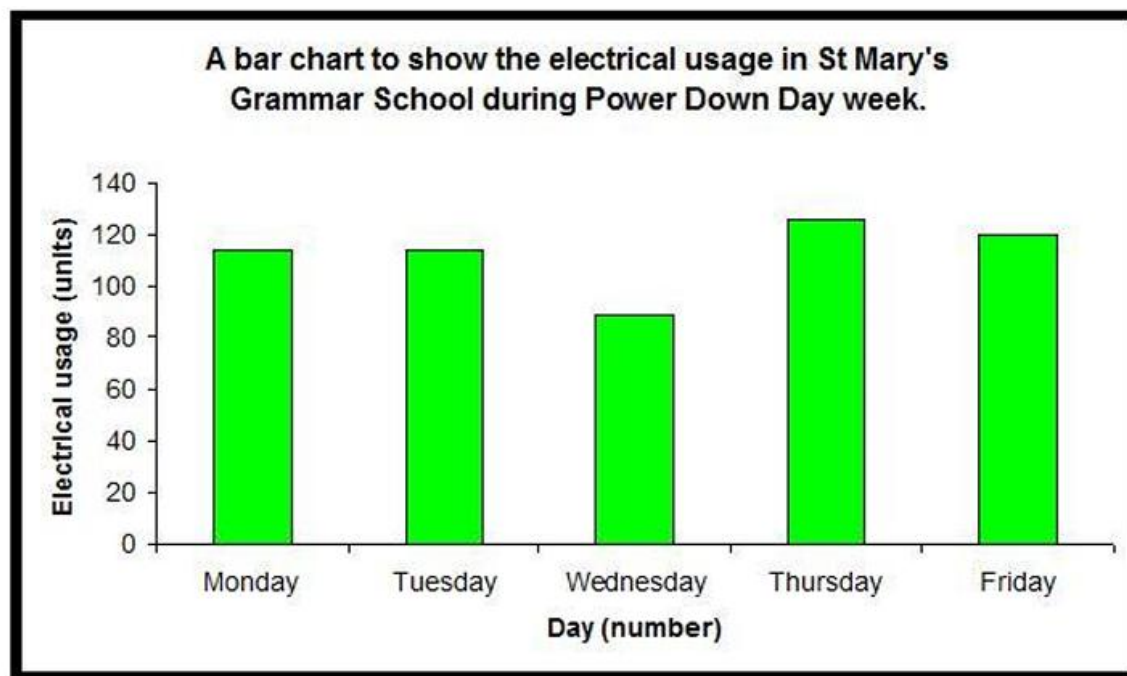


Eco Committee



Eco committee

20% Saving for Power  
Down Day





# Primary Activity Ideas

# Curriculum Links and Skills

The Water topic allows you to incorporate and promote **Thinking Skills & Personal Capabilities** and **Cross-Curricular Skills** into your lessons.

## Language & Literacy

### Writing

- Creating presentations on the Water theme.
- Write a report on how and where water is used and how we can conserve it.
- Write an article about how a lack of water affects people in the Developing world.
- Create poems such as an acrostic about the water theme.
- Take notes during observations of water usage in the school.
- Write an outline plan for tackling a Water-based issue.
- Spellings-high frequency Water topic words.
- Phonic work in the context of the theme of Water.

### Talking & Listening

- Discuss video clips related to Water.
- Storytelling.
- Interview locals about water use in the area. Where does it come from and where is it used? Ask about flooding in the local area.
- Carry out interviews with staff of organisations who look after our water and promote sustainable water usage.

### Reading

- Gathering articles about Water.
- Fiction and non-fiction books on Water.
- Finding out about the impacts
- Collect a range of reading material for display which focuses on the Water theme.

## Religious Education

- Explore the importance of rivers to human spirituality and wellbeing.
- Stewardship-care for the planet.

## Mathematics & Numeracy

### Number

- Conduct a survey on water usage in the school; apply knowledge of percentages to ascertain any change in use over time.
- Find out how much money is spent by the school on water/year. How much money could the school save by reducing water usage?
- Use the four operations to solve more complex word problems and puzzles involving numbers and measures related to a Water investigation.

### Measures

- Undertake monitoring of water use in school and at home.
- Estimate, measure and record capacities/volumes using appropriate units.
- Read and interpret simple graphs and apply knowledge to solve related problems. E.g. water availability statistics.
- Relate water volumes figures to common objects. Such as swimming pools.

### Shape & Space

- Fill different shaped containers with water and see how it acts? Try a similar experiment with ice.

### Handling Data

- Apply findings on water through graphs, diagrams, charts etc.
- Discuss, plan, collect, organise and represent data in response to a question or statement such as have we saved water by raising awareness? Interpret information and evaluate the effectiveness of the process.
- Insert water data into a prepared relevant computer database and interrogate.
- Discuss examples of water data represented in newspapers, magazines and multimedia sources.
- Carry out a simple class/school survey on water habits. Do you turn the tap off when you brush your teeth? etc.

## Lesson Suggested Learning Intentions

(taken from W.A.U. strands on Northern Ireland Curriculum website)

### Strand 1: Interdependence

'How lifestyle choices can affect the health of themselves and others (S&T); about the variety of living things and the conditions necessary for their growth and survival (S&T); about issues associated with the conservation, preservation and regeneration of the environment (G).'

### Strand 2: Movement and Energy

'The advantages and disadvantages of renewable and non-renewable energy sources (G); how natural disasters and extreme weather cause the movement of people and animals (G); about the impact of drought, floods on the everyday lives of people (H); how the lack of basic resources impacts on the lives of people in different countries (G).'

### Strand 3: Place

'How weather affects the lives of people and animals here and elsewhere (G); about the importance and use of natural resources locally and globally (G); how locations in Northern Ireland can depend on one another (G); how some living things can change in order to adapt and survive in their environment and that there are places where living things cannot survive (S&T); about the ways in which people may conserve and change the environment both locally and globally (G).'

### Strand 4: Change Over Time

'About the relevance of the water cycle (S&T) (G); about organisations who work to protect the environment and wildlife (G); how long or short term climatic changes are impacting on our environment (G) (S&T); about the effects of heating and cooling (S&T); that some substances dissolve and others do not (S&T); about the depletion of the world's resources and how this has occurred (G); that there are things we can do to prevent water pollution (G).'

### Being Creative

Example: Create games, artwork or songs that highlight the importance of water in our lives. Use these to reinforce scientific and technological knowledge and understanding gained through other projects on water.

### Using Mathematics

Example: Collect data on water usage at home and in school or on rainfall. Read, interpret, organise and present the information found in mathematical formats such as a bar chart or line graph.

### Communication

Example: Get in touch with other Eco-Schools from around the world, find out what they are doing to conserve water.

### Working with Others

Example: Create an awareness raising campaign on water and present this to the school. Raise money for water projects in the Developing world. Invite Trócaire or NI Water to the school to be part of a Water Assembly.

### Managing Information

Example: Use text and internet sources to complete a project about the importance of water for life and wellbeing.

### Thinking, Problem-Solving and Decision-Making

Example: Investigate the water cycle, how it impacts upon the supply of water, provides us with clean water and its role in sustaining life on earth.

### Using ICT

Example: Use the internet to discover how water is supplied and sourced in other countries. Make links with schools in Developing countries.

### Self-Management

Example: Raise awareness of the changes that we all can make to improve the amount of water we use. Create some Tap Tips for children to use in school and at home.



World record, or not!





## 12,805

pupils involved in lifting  
**2,533** bags of litter recorded  
to date

## 20%



energy saved  
on power  
down days

## 34%

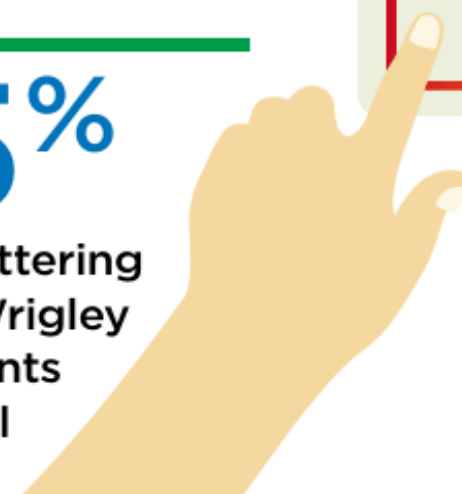
reduction in waste going  
to landfill (average 11kgs  
daily/school)

## 1 hour

extra time spent on  
Outdoor Learning per  
week in the third term,  
a 4.2% increase

## 15-25%

positive change in littering  
behaviour among Wrigley  
Litter Less participants  
compared to control  
group



## Eco-Schools: impact measurements 2017/18



\*these figures are drawn from results  
submitted by schools to the Eco-Schools  
Data Zone in 2017/18.

These figures are calculated on the basis  
that every school/pupil in NI return the  
same results as submitted in the Data  
Zone in 2017/18.

## 40%

average reduction  
in car use by  
**36,000** pupils  
during the  
Travel Challenge



## 2018

saw the registration of  
the first Northern Ireland  
3rd level EcoCampus –  
Stranmills University  
College



## 67%

raised knowledge  
and awareness of  
Climate Change topic



CLIMATE  
CHANGE





# Benefits of the programme and manifold...



"Eco Schools is all embracing and contributes to significant improvements to the physical health and emotional well-being of pupils, which has resulted in a significant rise in educational attainment. Eco-Schools gives them a voice and builds their self-esteem, sowing the seeds of young, articulate, confident adolescents."

**Dinah MacManus,**

Principal, Holy Family Primary School, Belfast



"Having Eco-School status is something that's really important to us. It strengthens links with feeder primary schools and with the community. It's not just about transforming the children's attitudes but the attitudes of their parents too."

**Jennifer McClelland,**

Teacher, Banbridge High School



# GREENING EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL FOR THIRTY YEARS!



Established in 1996 the Eco-Schools programme in Portugal has **2,254 out of 10,000** schools registered on the Eco-Schools programme

66 Higher Education Institutions are working to integrate ESD in a whole institution approach via Eco-Campus



YRE Global Competition winners: 2nd Place in the One Take Photo Category with 'Controlling the Ice Plant at Fursdouro Beach'; 3rd Place in the Photo Story Category with 'Scouts Plant Trees for a Sustainable Future'

Global Action Days 2025: **19,815** participants from Portuguese kindergartens, primary and secondary schools and universities took part in 5 actions linked to Ecosystem Restoration





**REGISTER NOW FOR  
GLOBAL ACTION DAYS 2026**



**Help make a difference!**





2025-2026



YRE INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

# Food security & climate change.





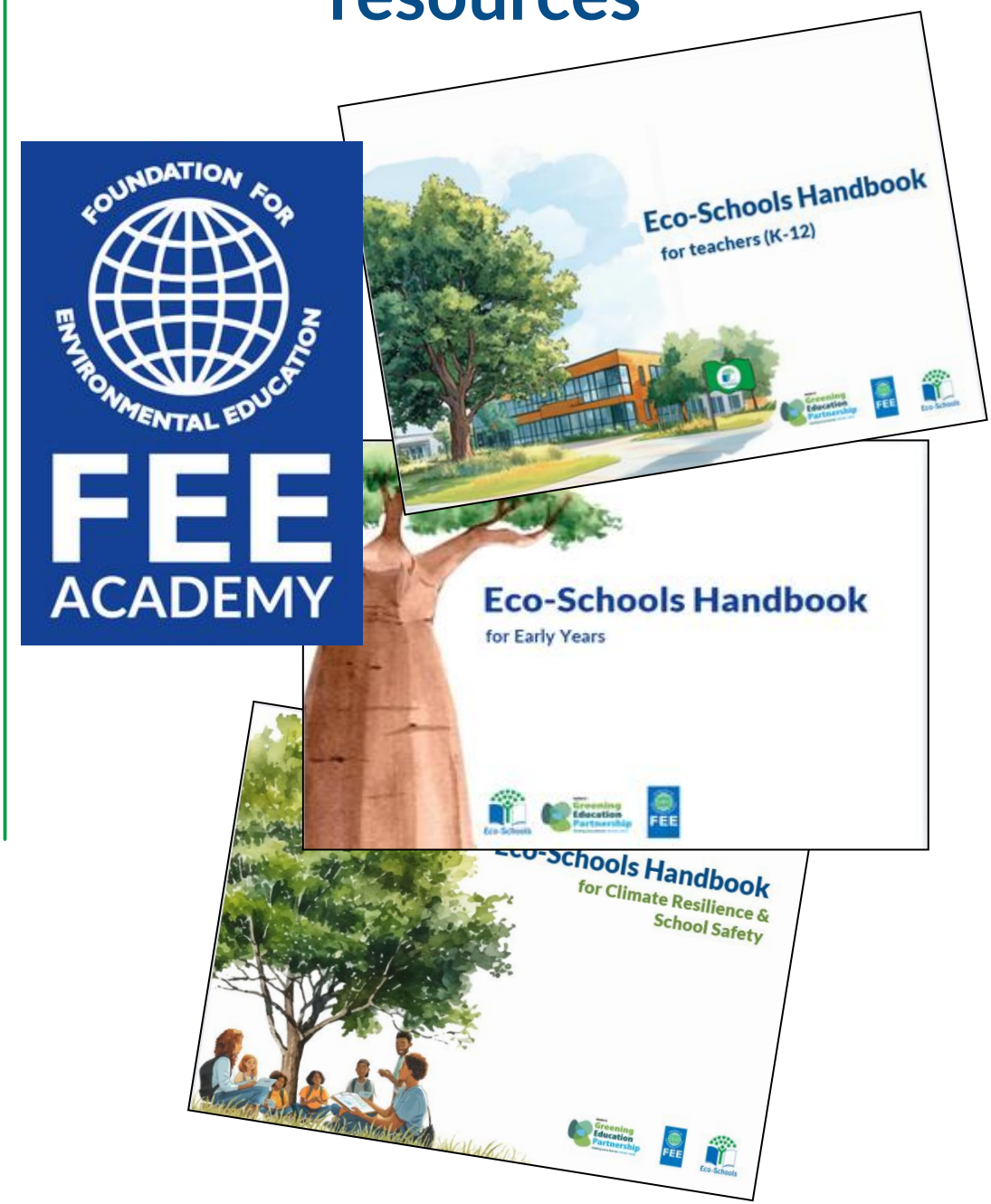
# Eco-schools support from FEE

## Aligned scheme



with 30 years experience in fostering a whole-school approach with internationally recognised Green Flag standard of Excellence in ESD

## Handbooks and resources



## Global Community of Practice



EU Policy Dialogue  
Greening Education in Europe:  
Empowering Change for a Sustainable  
and Resilient Future

TUESDAY 17 JUNE 13.30 - 15.00 CEST ONLINE EVENT

ORGANISED IN COLLABORATION WITH EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S DG EAC AND UNESCO



## Best practices for Greening Communities



25 YEARS  
1994 - 2019

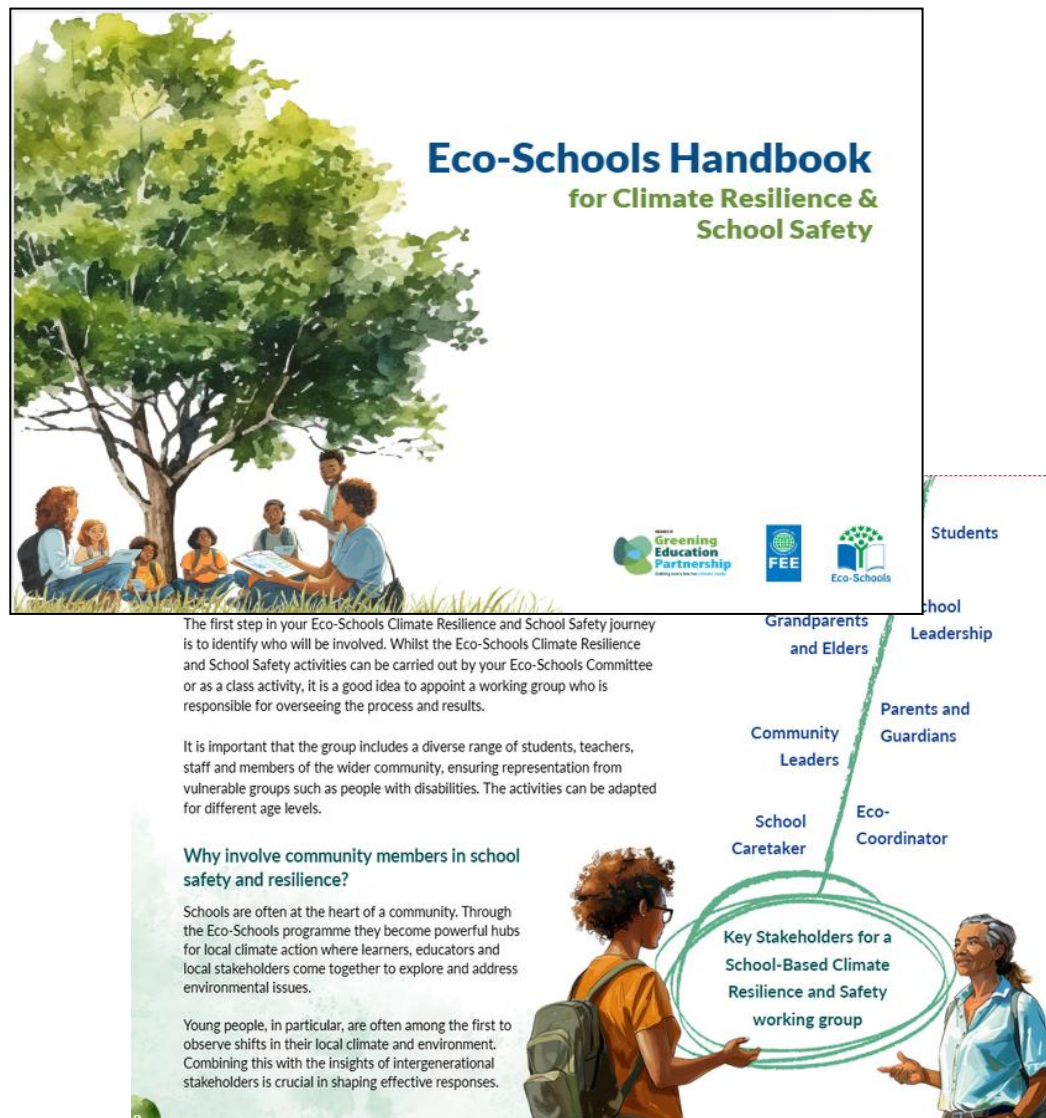
GLOBAL  
ACTION  
DAYS





# Addressing Climate Resilience and School Safety

## Education Resources:



## Expert Partners:



## Supports the Comprehensive School Safety Framework of GADRRRES

# Climate Resilience and School Safety Handbook

## From Anxiety → Agency through Eco-Schools



30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2024

Three generations...











18-20 September 2025  
Kuala Lumpur - Malaysia

# ECO-CAMPUS EVOLUTION A NEW PROGRAMME FOR **FEE**

*Transforming Higher Education for Climate Action: A Whole-System Approach*







**On 8 April 2015, Cork University Hospital celebrated becoming the first hospital in the world to be awarded the prestigious Green Flag by An Taisce's Eco-Campus programme on behalf of the international Foundation for Environmental Education.**

*Ospidéal na hOllscoile Corcaigh*  
Cork University Hospital

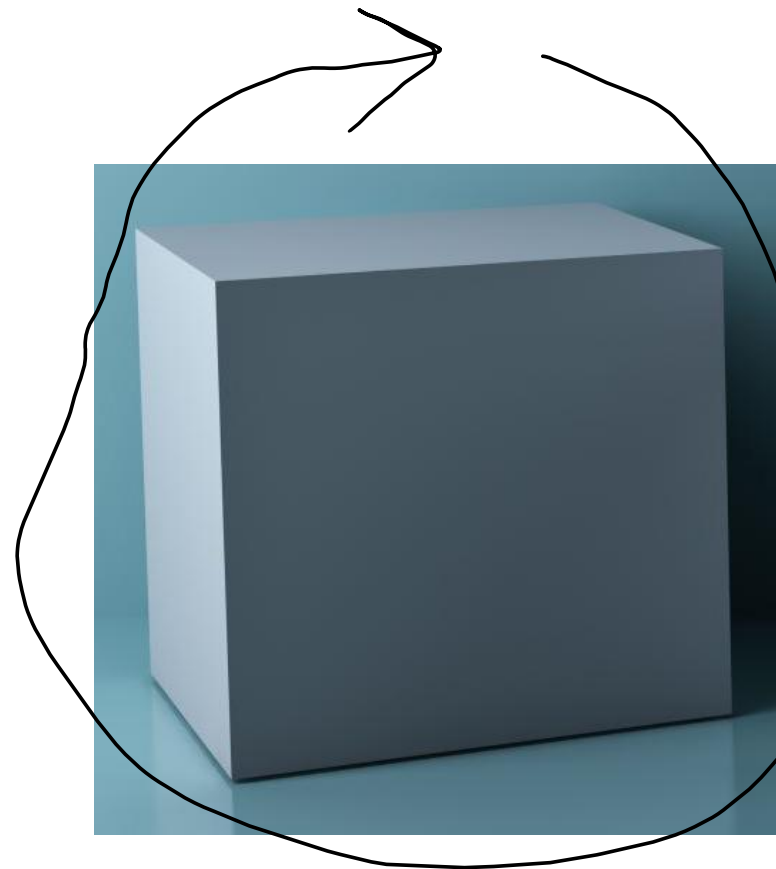






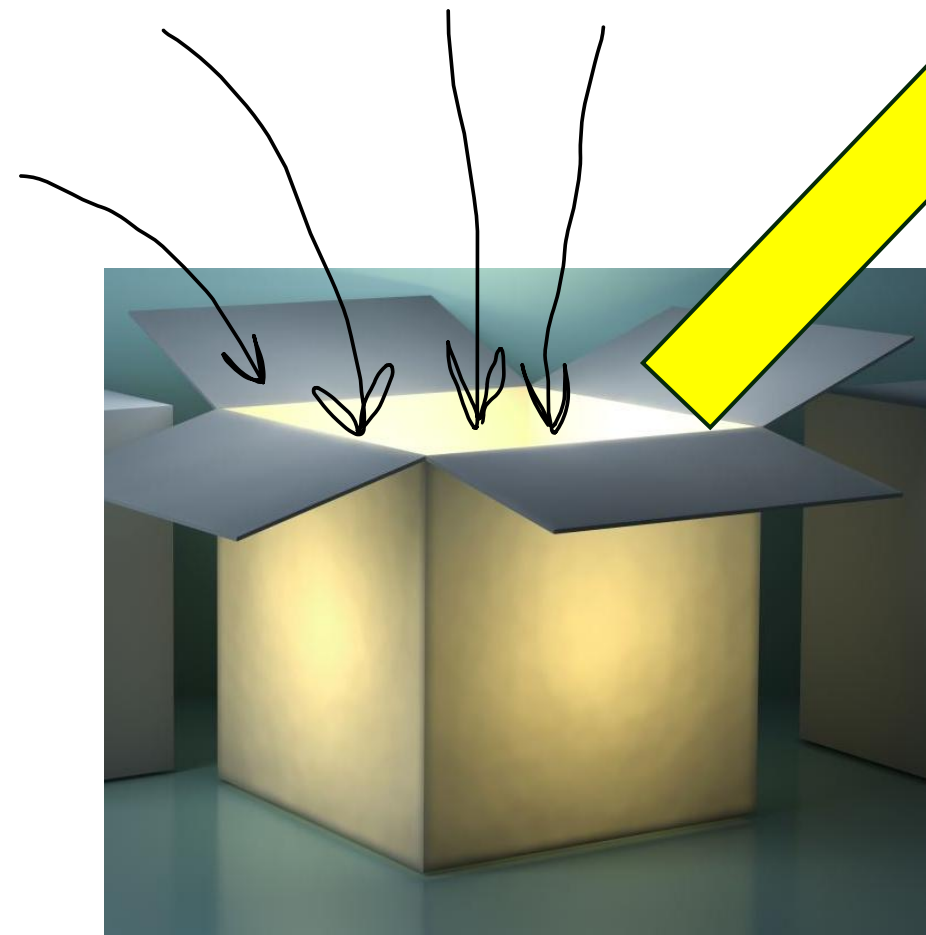
# Black Box Thinking

Closed Loop System with repeated mistakes



Failure

Open Loop System with ongoing learning



Failure

Improved ideas

*Black Box Thinking, Matthew Syed 2015*