

## **ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION IN ALBANIA**

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Albania is a country which is experiencing the period of transition, so it has its own problems about the environment and, of course, one of the most important aspects is the environmental education of the young generation. The school with its own programs plays an important role in this education.

Environmental concepts do refer to several subjects being treated in different ways:

- integration in certain topics which deal with specific scientific issues, i.e. they are given indirectly;

- in separate topics of different subjects;

- in separate chapters, in certain subjects.

The programme of environmental education has the following goals:

- understanding the personal responsibility and introducing knowledge to students are the most important tasks of environmental education;

- the environmental education gets its inspiration at the principle “human-beings are part of nature and not superior to it”;

- the provision of the opportunities to students in order to express their attitudes and opinions related to their responsibility;

- it is important that environmental education is not merely stating to students facts for environmental pollution, but emphasizing the need for finding solution of the causes of environmental problems, and not only the consequences;

- the overall understanding that environmental education is not simply a “clear” education, but “a living mean”.

These goals and objectives can be generally found throughout our school curriculum. In our schools the environmental education is not conceived as a separate subject, but as integrated in many subjects, as a component of scientific knowledge in school.

The theme of responsibility encourages the teaching of citizenship in ideals that are basic to a democracy, such as elections of governments by the people and the work in the name of prosperity of society. By uniting and working together, we provide a healthier environment. The school, the family and the society bear the most essential responsibility in student’s education.

While dealing with environmental themes, pupils have got acquainted with full information and they have also organized practical activities contributing though even in a modest way to the preserving of the nature.

For example, they have helped to clean the area near the seashore and the seaside of Durres, the area of the parts in the hills of the city, and in planting with trees the places around the school.

Very often the reaction of the pupils while treating these important themes has been quite interesting. There are some pupils who have written little booklet under the title "How I wish the nature to be". There are some others who express their wish and preoccupation about environment through verses and stories and very beautiful drawings. In this viewpoint, of making the young generation concerned about the environmental problems, the Ministry of Education has organized an exhibition under the motto "The environment and us". In this exhibition very interesting works were exposed.

The slow development of industry has contributed to the fact that our country has not serious ecological and environmental problems. Thus our work has been focused in creating not only of clean and green surroundings but always not to neglect the treatment of the environmental in future in order to keep away from the serious problems of the present-day world.

The project SEMEP helped to be created associations of young ecologists in the secondary schools in 3 cities of Albania. The pilot project was put into practice with the participation of the schools of the Durres city. It is worth emphasizing that this project was welcomed and applied by both teachers and pupils which is due to the fact that Durres is a seacoastal city with great historical and archeological values. If they favourable conditions are created we hope that in the future this city will attract a lot of tourists. The young people of Durres are fully aware of this fact, that is why they are eager to apply this project as soon as possible. Some pupils have expressed their thoughts and hopes writing very interesting works.

The lack of necessary laboratory equipment at schools forced us to use the laboratories of different enterprises for developing the experiments. In such a way not only the youngsters but also the parents were involved in the problems of the environment.

Of course expanding of the project SEMEP would need an appropriate equipping for laboratories in order to carry out the experiments at the highest level.

Based on this experience there are some groups of the young ecologists functioning in some elementary schools.

We feel that what we have done is only the beginning but considering it a good beginning we hope to further enrich the practical activities for helping the surroundings which make the young generation feel aware and believe the future to be better and better.

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