

THE SKY is the LIMIT



Year 2021-22, Issue 12

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They contain microplastic. Yes, those microplastic that are killing millions of animals. <3!

The chemicals could mess with hormone levels in your body!



The Sky is the Limit

BC NAKLO – Secondary School Newsletter
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200 copies/200 izvodov
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ISSN 2463-7777

June/junij 2022

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LOVE ME OR
LOSE ME!



FROM THE EDITORS

The Editors

This academic year has finally brought some easing down of Covid restrictions so we have been able to **Go places** again! We have, however, only recently started travelling abroad and welcoming our partners in Slovenia so reports on this year's mobilities will be compiled for our next issue in the autumn when more such exchanges have been completed. We have, nevertheless, carried out several exciting field trips where we **visited** a number of businesses that put environment at the top of their priorities and have managed to **reduce the use of plastics** but

also **practise sustainability** in many other ways.

We took some time here at school to **research the use of plastics** and its **alternatives** – our reports can be found in **What we have learnt**.

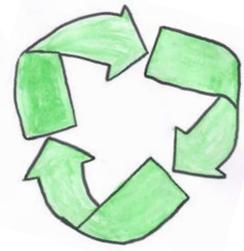
In **Meeting people** a well-traveled, originally Brazilian young teacher tells us about the cleanest and dirtiest countries she has been to, along with some highlights of her dynamic and diverse (professional) life.

In our previous issue we listed our New Year's **resolutions** and we can now show off the **results** in **Yes, we can!** We have also collected a number

of short reports of students and staff on how they try to make small contributions to a greener world by making **tiny sustainable steps** in their daily lives. Finally, students in art classes created some **unique art** from **used** computers, wooden crates and plastic bottle caps.

All these activities have been devised within the **ReLearn Plastics Erasmus+ project** uniting **Spain, Cyprus, Serbia** and **Slovenia** in an effort to rethink the use of plastics at all levels and in all areas of life only to reduce its usage and implement healthier and more sustainable alternatives.

Plastic pollution: Causes, consequences & solutions



By 2N

Plastic in the oceans

Over 300 million tons of plastic is produced every year. At least 14 million tons end up in the oceans. The most common plastic products that end up in the oceans are single-use plastic products. Under the influence of solar UV radiation, wind, currents and other natural factors, plastic breaks down into small particles called microplastics. Plastic damages the aesthetic value of tourist destinations. 99% of seabirds will be eating plastics by 2050. More than 100,000 marine animals die from plastic pollution every

year. Every day around 8 million pieces of plastic make their way into the oceans. Governments, research institutions and industries need to work collaboratively to redesign and rethink plastic products, their use and disposal.

What can we do to stop plastic pollution in the ocean?

1. Reduce your use of single-use plastic
2. Organize more beach clean-ups. Avoid products containing microbeads.
3. Support organizations addressing plastic pollution.

Things you didn't know about plastic bottles

They can leak into water if exposed to heat or left to sit for long periods of time. The chemicals could mess with hormone levels in your body. They contain microplastics. Yes, those microplastics that are killing millions of animals! Bottled water is nothing more than filtered tap water packaged to sell for money. Harmful chemicals such as phthalates in plastic bottles increase the risk of cancer

How to reduce the use of plastic in and around your home

1. Use reusable or paper shopping bags instead of disposable plastic bags.
2. Use an electric toothbrush or a biodegradable bamboo toothbrush.
3. Say no to plastic products such as cutlery, straws, plates and cups. For picnics buy wooden cutlery and paper plates instead of plastic ones.
4. Recycling is very important! If you recycle a regular aluminium can, you could save up to 90% of the energy needed for its production.
5. Buy milk in glass bottles not in carton packaging dipped in plastic.
6. Join local clean-ups.

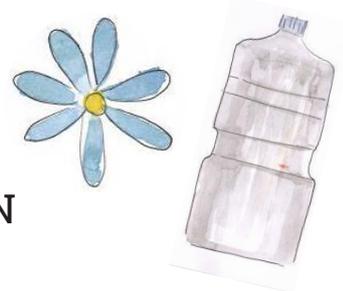
How to reduce the amount of plastic waste at a picnic

1. A lot of plastic comes from plastic bottles so instead of plastic ones buy drinks in glass bottles. People can bring along their own reusable glass or aluminium bottles and fill them with tap water.
2. A lot of meat, fruit, vegetables and soft drinks are packed in plastic – avoid them!
3. Shop for meat, fruit, veggies with a reusable, washable textile bag or mesh.
4. Instead of plastic plates buy paper plates and replace plastic cutlery with wooden cutlery.
5. Use solar cooker for cooking instead of fire.



What is plastic, anyway?

By Nika JEVŠEK, Neja POGAČNIK, Tinkara FLEISCHMAN & Tanej CERAR BOŽIČ



Types of plastic

PET/PETE is used for food and drink packaging to prevent oxygen from getting in and spoiling the product. HDPE is denser, stronger and thicker than PET. It's used for grocery bags and shampoo bottles.

PVE is used in toys, detergent bottles, blood bags, medical tubes. LDPE is easy and cheap to process. It is mostly used for bags. PP is a safer plastic option for food and drink but it isn't completely recyclable.

Where does plastic come from?

Primary sources are crude oil and natural gases. Plastic's polymer chain consists of small molecules called monomers, which represent the main structure of plastics. Every ton of plastic that is produced creates three tons of CO₂.

Interesting facts

First fully synthetic plastic was invented in New York in 1907 by Leo BAEKELAND. We have been using plastic for more than 150 years. PET is the most common plastic in the world.

How are we going to produce plastic when there is no oil?

Manufacturers mostly produce plastic with the help of natural gases and fossil fuels, as stocks in nature are much larger. The products grown in the fields contain dextrose, from which lactic acid is obtained and converted into lactide. Lactide binds long chains and is therefore similar to oil for recycling. We will soon start excavating old landfills.



And what are microplastics?

By Ela ZALOKAR, Neža FISTER, Anja SOVINC, Nikola HALLEGER & Anja KALAN



What are microplastics and where do we find them?

Microplastics are defined as tiny bits that are smaller than 5mm. It comes to our environment by falling with rain over mountains and cities, plastic debris (fishing nets, plastics bags, bottles...) and microplastics that come directly into the sea with self-care products for example facial scrub. Microplastic is found in the oceans, arctic snow, Antarctic ice, drinks and food (table salt, beer, water...).

Why are they harmful and what is their impact on the environment?

Scientists have been looking for harmful effects for more than 20 years.

No one has ever done a direct study about the effects of microplastics on humans, but a study on microplastics' effect was made on animals such as rats and mice. Research has revealed the possibility of metabolic disturbance, neurotoxicity as well as carcinogenic effects. In addition, another experiment showed that microplastics can cross a membrane that is protecting the brain. However, some scientists claim that no harmful effect is present. Last but not least, plastics never degrade, which is another harmful impact on the environment.

What are the two main categories of microplastics?

Primary microplastics are released in the environment as small fragments and represent up to 31% of microplastics in the oceans. The main sources are synthetic clothes, vehicle tyres and some intentionally added microplastics that are found in cosmetic and self-care products such as facial scrub.

Secondary microplastics are the result of bigger plastic objects' degradation (fishing nets, plastic bags, bottles, plastic toys...). They represent up to 81% of microplastics in the ocean.

How do microplastics enter our body?

Microplastics come from the industry production of clothes and washing powders or from the use of bigger plastic pieces. First, these pieces enter the sewage system, then the water flows into the sea where a fish might eat microplastic and it remains in their body. After that, a person eats the fish and the plastic lands in our body. Among other health problems microplastics can cause DNA dama-

ge and inflammation. Out of 13 patients that had surgically given tissue samples, microplastics were found in 11 cases. Microplastics were also detected in the human blood for the first time in March 2022. In addition, microplastics can be consumed by breathing, eating and drinking. The research that was published by the journal *Science of Total Environment*, used samples of healthy lung tissue. Scientists found parts of microplastics that were 0,003mm small. As we

can see, microplastics can be found everywhere and we need to stop producing even more plastic.

What solutions is the EU working on?

The EU policy is trying to protect the environment and human health by reducing marine litter, greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuels. They aim to change the design of the plastic products and support the safer production patterns for plastics.



Bioplastic: An alternative – or is it?

By Maša BERTONCELJ, Meta ILC,
Matevž KRIŽAJ & Zala ZEC

What is bioplastic?

Bioplastic is plastic made of plant or other biological material instead of petroleum. It is also called bio-based plastic.

According to Sanders (2021) the first option to make bioplastic is by extracting sugar from plants like corn, sugarcane and cassava to convert into polylactic acids – PLAs. PLA is biodegradable, carbon-neutral and potentially edible. When transforming corn into plastic, the components break down into starch, protein, and fibre. Starch is used for plastics. Starch is made of long chains of carbon molecules, similar to the carbon chains in regu-

lar plastic. PLA often comes from the same huge industrial facilities making products like ethanol, therefore PLA is the cheapest source of bioplastic. It is the most common type and it is used in plastic bottles, utensils, and textiles. The second option is making bioplastic by using PHA (polyhydroxyalkanoate) made of microorganisms. The microbes are on short cut of nutrients like nitrogen, oxygen and phosphorus, and given high levels of carbon. They produce PHA as carbon reserves and store it in granules until they have enough nutrients they need to grow and reproduce. Companies can harvest the microbe-made PHA which has a chemical

structure similar to regular plastics. Because it is biodegradable and does not harm living tissue, PHA is often used for medical applications such as sutures, slings, bone plates etc.

Bioplastic in the environment

Bioplastic is problematic if it ends up in recycling facilities, since it can lead to more waste on landfills.

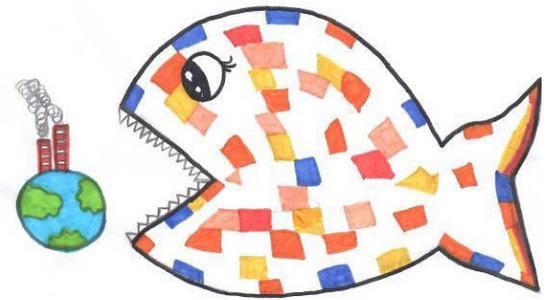
If bioplastic is disposed of in landfills, it is more likely to produce methane, because it does not decompose properly. Most bioplastics require an industrial composting facility in order to actually break down quickly and less harmfully. A recent study (by S. Walker and R. Rothman, 2021) compared seven traditional plastics, four bioplastics, and one material made of both, plastics

and bioplastics. The study showed that the production of bioplastics has resulted in higher levels of pollutants from fertilizers and pesticides used in crop production, in addition to the chemical processing required to convert organic material into plastic. Moreover, the study reveals that bioplastics contribute more to ozone depletion than traditional fossil fuel-derived plastics. It has been also found that bio-based PET, a hybrid bioplastic, is a potential carcinogen and also has pernicious

toxic effects on earth ecosystems.

Biodegradable plastics

Biodegradable plastics can be broken down completely into water, carbon dioxide and compost by microorganisms under the right conditions. 'Biodegradable' implies that the decomposition happens in weeks or months. Bioplastics that do not biodegrade are quickly labelled as 'durable', and some bioplastics



made from biomass that cannot easily be decomposed by microorganisms are considered non-biodegradable.

Edible packaging: If only I could eat my shopping bag!

By Maša BERTONCELJ, Meta ILC, Matevž KRIŽAJ & Zala ZEC



Edible films and coatings are defined as thin layers of material that can be eaten by the consumer as part of the whole food product and it creates no waste. Suck packaging needs to be as tasteless as possible, so the person can only taste the product that is in those edible films. Edible packa-

ging is made of natural, biodegradable, plant-based materials. Food packaging is important for many reasons, it helps advertise the product, keeps food fresh and prevents spills and spoilage. Plastic used for edible packaging can be too water soluble and consequently

cannot last in humid climate, which is one of the disadvantages. It can also be less sanitary. Edible packaging still needs outer packaging made of plastic to prevent bacteria on packaging from contaminating the contents. This means that the outer packaging cannot degrade.





How is plastic recycled?

By Marija Zofija BOHINC, Benjamin KAZIĆ, Tereza ZMRZLIKAR & Nastja GREGOREC

Chemical Recycling

Chemical recycling is the process of recycling plastics through the chemical change of the polymer structure. It can deal with plastics that are not suitable for mechanical recycling.

Mechanical Recycling

Mechanical recycling is the traditional method that has been in use for decades. The plastic recycle can be converted into other products instead of using virgin plastics.

Stages of recycling

Collecting is the first stage of the recycling process. It involves the collection of waste from our homes. The second stage is sorting plastic from

other materials and this is done at a Material Recovery Facility. There are different types of sorting: manual picking (hand picking), trommels, magnet separator etc. Washing helps remove food waste and labels. It is important that these are removed and that the material is as clean as possible, since it can affect the quality of the product later made from recycled materials. At home we can make a big difference by simply rinsing the plastic to get some of the food or other materials off plastic containers before they become dry and sticky. The next stage is shredding or grinding plastic into smaller flakes. The washed and sorted plastic is sent through shredding machines where it is turned into smaller pieces of plastic.

Extrusion is the final stage of plastic recycling. It is process of melting down the plastic and forcing it through an extruder. The plastic is cut into pellets, which are sold to manufacturers. There are companies and organisations that collect and recycle plastic. We can dispose of plastic at a recycling centre, bins in front of stores etc. Plastic can be recycled about 2–3 times, after that it is burnt. Dirty plastic cannot be recycled.

How can I help?

We can help by recycling rubbish, buying fewer plastic containers, seek out public recycling bins, buy recycled products and reuse plastic products that we do buy.

How to identify what to recycle

On-pack recycling labels are an easy way to identify an items' recyclability. Packaging labels can usually be found on the products' back side and inform the consumer whether the product can be recycled or not:



1

PET (the most common plastic, for single-use bottled beverages, inexpensive, lightweight and easy to recycle)



2

HDPE (versatile plastic, packaging, bottles and jugs)



3

PVC (tough, weathers well, piping and siding, cheap)



4

LDPE (flexible plastic, squeezable bottles)



5

PP (high melting point, containers that hold hot liquid)



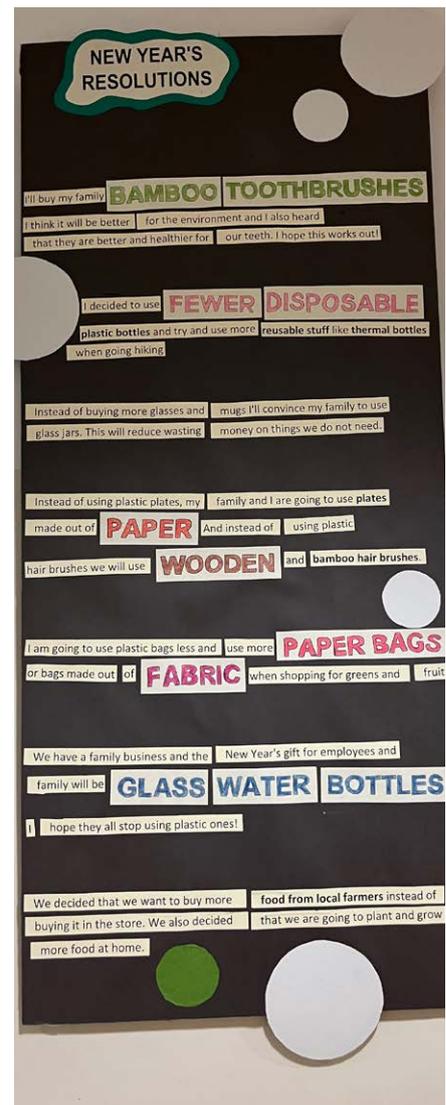
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PS (rigid or foam products, carry-out containers, difficult to recycle)



7

OTHER (plastics that don't fit into the previous categories, bullet-proof materials, sunglasses, DVDs, computer cases)



Getting rid of plastic bottles is just a start

By Mija POGAČNIK

'Ekologi brez meja' (Ecologists without borders) is a Slovenian non-profit environmentalist organization. They have proposed that we take drastic measures in order to reduce the usage of plastic bottles in shops and other public places. They are going to issue certificates to businesses and organisations who would commit to getting rid of plastic bottles.

I undoubtedly support their proposal. Not just that, I also believe that it is necessary. Plastic is a huge environmental problem. In principle we could recycle it, but the reality is very different. Just under 10% of all plastic gets recycled. Another big problem is that it takes at least 80 years for plastic to decompose. That way, used plastic is piling up in nature and spoiling the lives of not just people but also other organisms.

On the one hand, I understand that it would be a big change for factories to switch from plastic bottles to other reusable or easily decomposable containers. It would also be a huge investment. Alternative materials are more expensive than plastic. Consequently, drinks would become more expensive for us to buy.

On the other hand, we have to understand that we need to invest in restoration of nature. Humans can't exist without nature. If we destroy it, we destroy ourselves.

On that note, I would like to add another suggestion. I would like to expand the Ecologists' proposal on to plastic bags. They present another big problem that we could easily fix. The change is necessary and I strongly believe that we still have time to save our planet.



Lisjak olive mill and olive oil manufacturer, all-out zero-waste

By Kristjan URANKER, Andreja ZUPAN & Klara POVALEJ

Lisjak is the most well-known olive mill and olive oil manufacturer in Slovenia. The company is located by the sea, near the town of Koper. They have a lot of olive trees and, most

importantly, fresh air and land. They are proud to be a zero-waste company, reportedly the only zero-waste olive oil manufacturer in the world. This means they use all parts of the plant from

olives to wood, in different ways. For example, olives are ground into an olive paste from which oil is extracted. The paste is further used in production of cosmetics and animal food. The packaging is mostly made of glass and wood. Stones are used as heating in the mill and since there are so many, they can even be sold as heating fuel. Olive tree wood is made into lovely kitchen and home decor items such as cutting boards, bowls and souvenirs.

The company uses olives from local farmers and in return makes olive oil for them. They produce a variety of different oils (some with lemons, oranges, chilly peppers and truffles). Some of the company products are sold in chain stores like Hofer, and exported to Switzerland.





A lovely zero-waste glamping resort in Ribno

By Nina ZAPLOTNIK & Špela ROŽIČ



The Ribno Alpine Resort is a family run resort located near Bled with a forest, a river and mountains at its doorstep. It consists of a hotel and a recently built glamping village targeted primarily at cyclists, and promotes sustainable travel and living. The guests usually drive there by car but rent bikes for exploration and guided tours. The owners decided to go zero waste

in 2014. Four years later they obtained a zero waste hotel certificate and they are the first and only hotel and glamping resort with this title in Slovenia. They separate ninety percent of their waste and replace plastic with glass, metal and paper. They made their own trash cans out of wood. Most waste is organic. Furniture and other equipment is made from old, Slovenian wood.

Pretty much everything is custom-made and unique. Glamping huts are built from Slovenian larch and the furniture is made from recycled wood. Instead of chemicals they use plants to clean the water in the pond. There is very good feedback coming from guests. They love the idea of a zero waste hotel. And we loved it there, too!





Plastic-free glamping at Garden Village, Bled

By Žan KELIH

Garden village is a sustainable tourist resort located at the heart of one of Slovenia's most visited tourist desti-

nations, Bled. Even though the tourists are in abundance, it is not their primary focus. However, unlike most high profit

hotels and resorts, it has a great ideology and story behind it.

A 'hotel' in the wild

The main idea is not only being green, but doing it in a way that tourists feel like they really have gone camping into the wilderness while they do not have to risk a bad experience or even give up the luxury of a hotel. Nowadays, many people have grown tired of hotels as every one of them is more or less the same, being just a fancy accommodation to spend the night in. What tourists are looking for is a memorable experience. The only problem likely to occur is that they are used to the luxury and Garden Village provides a perfect balance between the two. The most common tourists there are young families, who would like to give their children a holiday they would never forget, be it in a luxury tent or a treehouse.

No-plastic project

Nowadays, our planet is struggling with pollution and, consequently, global warming. It has become a big problem and people have really started to notice its effect on weather, wildlife and themself-



ves. The big elephant in the room is definitely all the plastic products and packaging that we are constantly throwing away. It is true that plastic products are in some cases a necessity, for example in medicine where everything has to be sterile, but to buy a plastic water bottle or even a phone charger with abnormally extensive plastic packaging is ludicrous. Yet, conscious consumers find that wrapping and packaging is often hard to avoid. There are many organisations that help battle the problem of plastic but each and every one of us has to do something about it if we want a change.

Growing your own fruit and veggies can take you a step further

In Garden Village a big effort is put into combating the excessive plastic. A great example is the restaurant. While normal plastic straws could be used, a switch has been made to paper ones. While people may not be used to those, it is a big step in saving the environment. It's a small thing, but we need to appreciate every detail. One could argue that the straws aren't even a big deal, but even if that is true, plastic bottles surely are. You will not find a classic plastic bottle in Garden Village because all the drinking water and syrups are stored in glass bottles.

Another thing are yoghurts and juices. While it is impossible to get rid of their plastic packaging, Garden Village strives to minimize it as much as possible. They make a great effort to promote their home-made syrups which are made from fruit grown at the resort. This helps a great deal with juice packaging that usually fills up our trash cans. Excess fruit is used to make jam or served on top of the dishes in the restaurant.

Alternatives matter

While we cannot reject plastic completely it is important to seek out alternatives. The main one being paper and cardboard. They try to use that kind of packaging as much as possible or in cases where this can't be done, even use wooden boxes made by the employees.

Being a green resort, Garden village puts self-sufficiency and sustainability



at the top of their priorities. By minimizing the plastic and replacing it with paper, cardboard, glass or wood, using fruit and vegetables grown at the resort, and extensive recycling they look

after the environment while providing the guests with the feeling of nature and luxury. That really makes a great overall experience for whoever is seeking an unforgettable vacation.



Moving from Peru to South Korea, Spain and the UAE ... for work!

Irena ŠUBIC JELOČNIK with 4BD 'talked' to Marie SAER

I met Marie in a teacher-training seminar in Tenerife in February this year. Considering her young age I thought my students would be impressed with how many countries she had visited and lived in. And indeed they were! They came up with some questions that she answered via email, for now, but we agreed we would definitely do a Zoom session in the autumn!

So, how many countries have you actually lived in, which ones and why?

I have lived in 6 countries so far: Brazil, Peru, South Korea, Tunisia, Spain and now the UAE. I lived in Brazil and Peru due to my parents, that's where they are from and where their careers took them. I then moved abroad in 2018 to South Korea, in 2019 to Tunisia, in 2021 to Spain and this year 2022 to the UAE, all of these moves were for work. However, I have visited over 30 countries so far.

In your experience, is moving house so often more of a benefit or more of a drag? How do you pay for it?

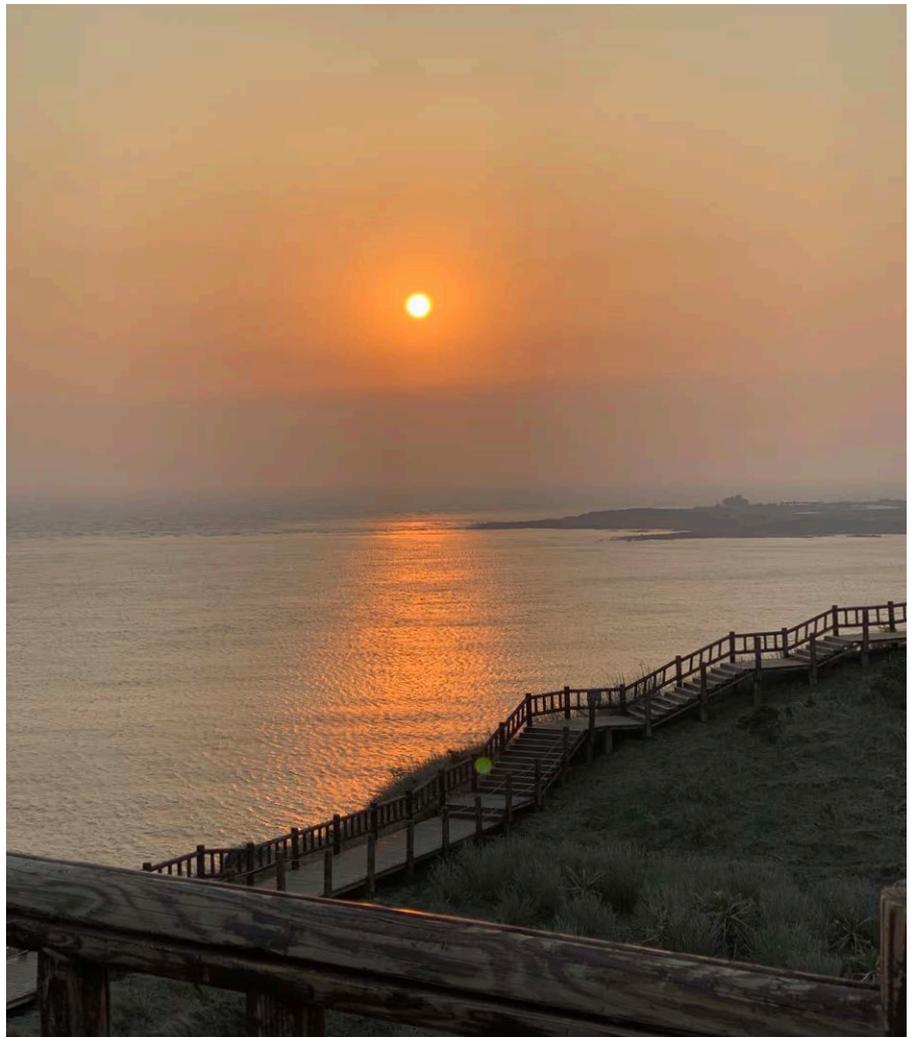
I've always enjoyed the thrill of moving somewhere new, although I dislike packing, I love unpacking and setting things up in my new home, wherever that may be. It does have a downside, it's exhausting and time-consuming to move to a new home. Since being abroad, my job has paid for my housing, except in Spain, as my contract didn't include that, so I paid for it myself.

What do you do and what is your education?

I am an elementary school teacher, I work in international schools. I have a BA in education, a post-grad in International Education, a Masters in Education, and I'm currently pursuing another Master's in Psychology in Education.

Your favourite place so far is ... ?

That's a very hard question! My favorite place to live in so far is probably South



Korea. It's a beautiful and authentic country, with so much to offer, I spent one of the best year's of my life there

and would move back in a heartbeat. However, my favorite place to visit has got to be Bali, Indonesia!





And now, to the point. We are very much concerned with environment conservation here, especially (reducing the amount of) plastics. Can you recall and briefly describe some of the best environment conservation practices you have come across?

Yes! South Korea had the best practice by far. Recycling is mandatory there and if you don't, you get hefty fines. For example, there are recycling centers all around the city, you don't find regular trash cans all around the city. Each recycling center has cameras, therefore, if you put waste items in the wrong bin, you can get fined around 75 euros each time. This forces people to recycle so the system works very well and it also means the cities are clean! They have a lot of green initiatives in the city

and using solar power is big as well, we had a few solar-powered buildings on my school campus. I would say Spain tries to recycle and 'be green' but fails at it because there are no regulations for disposing of trash, so people do not recycle properly.

Do we need to hear about the worst?

Tunisia for sure! No recycling, no initiatives, trash is disposed of on the streets, etc. The UAE isn't doing a good job either. Considering how rich it is, it could definitely do better in many ways.

What are your hopes for and concerns about the future of the planet?

Hopes: that green initiatives continue to grow and start to actually work, that people reduce the amount of meat and

poultry they consume, considering how harmful it is for the planet; that more innovative ways to be green get designed, created and implemented. Concerns: that we won't do enough in time, that people's selfish ways and disregard for the planet continue.

What do you desperately want to share with young people in Europe?

Don't limit yourself to what is around you and what you are familiar with. There is so much out there to explore, and so many incredible innovations being created around the world, if you have the opportunity to go abroad, do it! Lastly, be mindful of our wonderful planet and all it can offer, there is so much we can do to help, and it starts with our daily habits.



New Year's resolutions revisited

By 2N+



This is how we planned to reduce the use of plastic in as many areas of our life as possible in 2022. And after six months we can actually say we have made a change! Below you can see how. Among other things, we managed to get rid of plastic bottles in our school shop and all students and staff members received reusable glass bottles to encourage us to drink tap water instead of buying flavoured water and soft drinks.

Instead of buying new plastic bottles I save them. When I go training I take a bottle from home and bring it back for further use.

Simon



Instead of using plastic plates, my family and I are going to use plates made out of paper. And instead of using plastic hair brushes we will use wooden, bamboo hair brushes.

Anonymous



We decided that we want to buy more food from local farmers instead of buying it in the store. We also decided that we are going to plant and grow more food at home.

Anonymous



We have a family business and the New Year's gift for employees and family will be glass water bottles. I hope they all stop using plastic ones!

Marjana



In our shop at home we sell milk in plastic bottles. I will make sure that they are replaced with glass bottles.

Jerneja



I'll buy my family bamboo toothbrushes. I think it will be better for the environment and I also heard that they are better and healthier for our teeth. I hope this works out!

Tina



For my New Year's resolution I decided to replace plastic toothbrushes with bamboo toothbrushes. I did so by giving all my family members bamboo toothbrushes as a Christmas gift. The first impressions when they opened their gifts were not as good as I expected but as time went by they accepted them. In a week, they all loved them!

Tina



I am going to use plastic bags less and use more paper bags or bags made out of fabric when shopping for greens and fruit.



Nika

My family and I agreed to stop using plastic straws and replace them with paper ones. My mom bought paper ones and now we only use those. They are more expensive than plastic straws, though. My brother doesn't really care what kind we use so he had no complaints. From now on we only use paper straws and we are happy that we can help the environment.

Zoja

In our house we decided that we wanted to reduce the amount of plastic so we made some changes. We stopped buying milk and eggs in the supermarket and started getting them from local farmers. We always take our own reusable containers when we go to get them. We haven't bought any new plastic bags since New Year and the amount of plastic trash has decreased by about a quarter.

Saša

Apart from switching to reusable shopping bags we try to use sustainable ways to travel around, for example a bike to get around town and public transport to get to school. So from now on, I go to my climbing training by bike twice a week and I really enjoy it.

Teja

I will buy less flavoured bottled water and try to replace the water with tea or compote.

Anja

I decided to cut down on buying plastic bottles. I explained it to my family members and forbade them to buy any. We managed to stick to the plan and together we have reduced the number of bottles we buy to about one third of what we used to buy. We no longer buy flavoured water and Coke. Instead, we cook compote and drink plenty of home-made elder flower syrup with tap water.

Anja

My New Year's Resolution this year is to buy an environmentally friendly car which runs on natural gas. With a gas-powered car, I will go to school and on trips. With that I will save a lot of energy. I was inspired by my boss because he also bought it himself.

Apolonija

I decided to use fewer disposable plastic bottles and try and use more reusable stuff like thermal bottles when going hiking, and paper bags when going shopping.

Nik

My New Year's resolution was to use as little disposable plastic as possible, so now when we buy fruit and vegetables, we don't take a plastic bag and for other products we use reusable bags. The result is that we don't have as many plastic bags at home as we used to have. My mum is very grateful because there is less junk.

Pia

Getting rid of plastic & greening our daily lives

By students & staff



My sustainable thermo bottle

I really like tea but cannot always get hot water at school, for example. I was wondering what to do about it for a while but then my boyfriend bought me a really nice thermo. It was actually a Valentine's Day gift and I was really happy to get something nice and sustainable instead of plastic junk. I use a lot of hand-picked herbs to make tea and that's really good for my health.

Larisa



My sustainable holiday

Osilnica, a remote tiny village near Croatian border, is a green holiday destination. We concluded this was the case after we had considered all the aspects. First, we focused on the transport: you can get there by public transport, that is by train and bus. Then we made sure all the attractions and accomodation facilities are run by locals. The activities and attractions you can choose from vary from hiking to visiting an old forge turned into a museum.

Ajda



My sustainable life

I buy wisely and choose products with less packaging or more environmentally-friendly packaging. I reuse some waste such as organic waste for compost or glass storage containers. I recycle other waste and sort it in the appropriate bins. I make sure the water does not leak. I turn off the water while brushing my teeth. To reduce my electricity consumption, I turn off the lights behind me and unplug my computer and other devices when not in use (mobile chargers, computers, TV, etc.). Instead of taking the lift, I walk up the stairs. I buy my fruit and vegetables from the local market or a nearby farm. I also try to buy the rest of my products locally to support local businesses.

Teja



My sustainable lunch bag

I use a cute cotton bag that my children played with some fifteen years ago – as a lunch bag. I put my cereals, sliced fruit or veggies, buckwheat or lentils in a glass jar and bring them to work in the bag. I sometimes cheat by bringing a sandwich or some solid leftovers in a tupperware but that is also over twenty years old so I still feel very sustainable!

Irena



My sustainable 'meat'

Meat production is one of the most energy, water and space consuming human activities and causes severe environmental problems. We might have a solution for the problem as EU declared insects to be appropriate food for people that can be added to foods or sold separately. Mealworms can be bred in plastic containers in a dark place, they need low maintenance, get all the water from their food and we can feed them with organic waste – peels of potatoes, carrots and similar vegetables. Their protein content is even higher than in usual meat and they can be used as dried powder in many ways – for example in protein bars and biscuits. You wouldn't guess, would you?

Jure



SERIOUSLY SUSTAINABLE



My sustainable home

This year we haven't mown part of the lawn around the house to let flowers bloom and provide nectar for pollinators. We are meticulous in separating waste, saving water (we've stuck water drop symbols as a reminder), shopping less, sewing torn clothes, growing as much food at home as possible and using natural cleaning products like white vinegar.

Simona



My sustainable commute to school



Ela, Zala, Meta

Our sustainable compost heap

Zero waste is a set of principles focused on waste prevention. We try to help this idea by composting. This is how we dispose of most food waste and leaves in our garden.

Jerneja





Wordsearch puzzles

3Rs+

By Marija Zofija BOHINC, Tereza ZMRZLIKAR,
Nastja GREGOREC & Benjamin KAZIĆ

PLASTIC FANTASTIC

By Tinkara FLEISCHMAN, Tanej CERAR,
Nika JEVŠEK & Neja POGAČNIK

Down: PLASTIC, LDPE, RECYCLING

Across: POLYMER, MONOMER, MOLECULE, BOTTLE,
GASE, LOWDENSITY

R	E	P	L	A	C	E	R	M	G
E	W	A	T	E	R	N	E	Z	N
U	P	L	A	S	T	I	C	S	I
S	H	O	E	S	B	A	Y	D	G
E	C	O	R	N	I	T	C	N	A
S	H	I	R	T	O	S	L	A	K
C	U	S	T	O	M	U	E	R	C
B	R	A	N	D	A	S	I	B	A
H	C	R	A	T	S	W	R	A	P
B	I	O	B	A	S	E	D	L	U

Down: REUSE, BIOMASS, SUSTAIN, PACKAGING,
RECYCLE, BRAND

Across: REPLACE, SHOES, STARCH, WRAP, BIOBASED,
CORN, WATER, PLASTICS, ECO, CUSTOM

R	E	T	H	I	N	K	A	M	R
E	P	U	R	E	P	A	I	R	E
F	O	R	E	C	Y	C	L	E	I
U	L	O	I	S	R	E	M	P	T
S	Y	Q	R	W	E	Z	I	U	O
E	E	R	E	U	S	E	L	R	M
C	S	S	D	X	P	M	K	P	E
O	T	E	U	Y	E	C	R	O	T
R	E	A	S	R	C	L	B	S	U
N	R	R	E	S	T	O	R	E	O

BIOPLASTIC

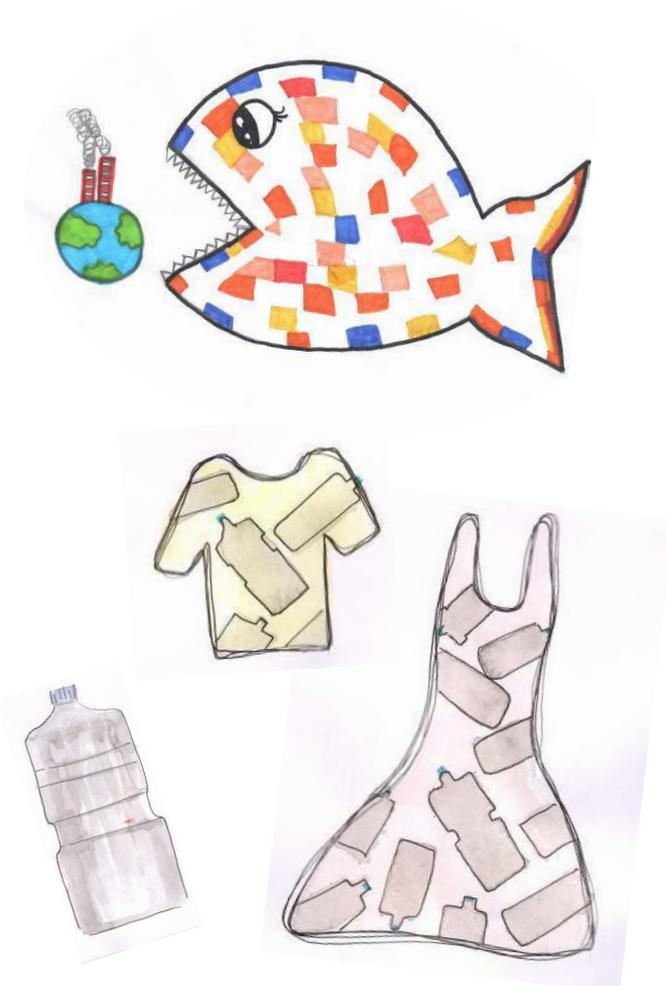
By Maša BERTONCELJ, Meta ILC,
Matevž KRIŽAJ & Zala ZEC



Down: REPURPOSE, RESPECT, REFUSE, REUSE,
POLYESTER, CORN, MILK, SEA

Across: RESTORE, RETHINK, REPAIR, REUSE, ROT,
RECYCLE

P	O	L	Y	M	E	R	G	H	F
L	M	O	N	O	M	E	R	S	C
A	L	M	O	L	E	C	U	L	E
S	E	P	C	D	K	Y	L	V	L
T	A	F	I	P	S	C	A	A	I
I	S	A	C	E	O	L	D	P	E
C	L	P	E	K	O	I	L	A	Z
B	P	T	T	E	L	N	V	E	K
A	E	K	L	P	C	G	A	S	E
L	O	W	D	E	N	S	I	T	Y



Recycled art

By Boris URH



Do you collect plastic bottle caps? Have you ever asked yourself, why? Is it the cause or consequence of the consumer society we live in? Do you collect them for a good cause? Do you take part in humanitarian and environmental initiatives? Or are you one of those who do not collect them at all? Instead of buying bottled water, pour yourself tap water (still potable all over our country!), in your traditional glass bottle. When shall we realise that water is being filled in plastic bottles and sold simply because – we buy it? Heaps of plastic packaging waste are, in fact, our own fault and responsibility and they are produced utterly unnecessarily. Wouldn't it be better to prevent than to heal?



In our art classes we take up various art assignments that follow the principle of reusing waste materials. We have made a chess board from used computer cases, and cardboard pieces. With Covid (even if temporarily) gone, the students are keen to play it in the breaks!





We have painted fruit and vegetables on wooden crates to decorate our dining room, and made huge pop-art style images of Marilyn Monroe from plastic bottle caps. Wood, straw and old clothes were used to make scarecrows – our agriculture students had great fun making them. It is not necessary to buy materials for art classes. What we do need, however, is creativity and an open mind.





BIOTEHNIŠKI
CENTER NAKLO
SREDNJA ŠOLA



LOVE ME OR
LOSE ME!



RELEARN PLASTICS

FOR PICNICS BUY
WOODEN CUTLERY
AND PAPER PLATES