



## ECO ETHICS KENYA

### Environmental Education and Outreach

**Location:** Mombasa, Likoni and the wider Coast Province

**Timeline:** Ongoing; started in 2002

**Objectives:** Building an environmentally-conscious generation; development of hands-on skills; demonstrating environmental best practice to the community. This project aims at involving youth in and out of school in environmental education and ecological conservation. Since its inception in 2002, the Eco-Club network has grown to include 50 primary and secondary schools and youth groups in the Mombasa, Kwale, Kinango, Kilifi and Kilindini districts. It works by interested teachers or students forming a group - usually an after-school club - under the management of a schoolteacher or youth worker as patron. Clubs pay a registration and annual fee to cover administrative costs and to fund initiatives. After registering, they receive a familiarisation visit from Eco-Ethics. We also organize several follow-up visits to check on progress and give talks on an environmental theme.

#### **About the project:**

Eco-Clubs focus on the following areas in response to the environmental challenges common to the region, with its busy port city, slum districts and small-scale fishing villages:

Environmental degradation

Sustainable solid and liquid waste management

Climate change and atmospheric pollution

Food security and poverty alleviation

Water and sanitation

Health and safety

Biodiversity conservation

Responsible resource use and conservation

Clubs' activities are guided by the club patron and may be tied in to the school's curriculum. They include activities in the classroom as well as outdoor activities such as tree planting. In addition, Eco-Ethics' environmental education and outreach programme also organizes events throughout the year.

## **Eco-Forums**

Our Eco-Forums bring together Eco-Club members from different schools to discuss an emerging environmental issue such as climate change or endangered species. The day might involve an environmental debate, talk or video show to raise environmental awareness and encourage action.

## **Eco-Tours**

Tours to some of Kenya's exciting and attractive ecological sites provide Eco-Club members with opportunities for learning, fun and interaction with nature. Some of the sites that we have visited include national parks, forests, beaches and historical monuments. Students and their teachers also get a chance to tour areas of environmental concern such as dumpsites, eroded valleys and pollution hotspots.

## **Eco-Schools and the Green Flag award**

Each year, our organization, in partnership with the Kenya Organization for Environmental Education (KOEE) and the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), assesses Eco-Clubs on their schools' green policies. Schools with good policies in place graduate as 'Eco-Schools' and are awarded a Green Flag, which is an international recognition that the school is environmentally-friendly. Having a green flag can help schools to access environmental grants and access networks.

## **Training workshops and seminars**

We hold training workshops for Eco-Club patrons to equip them with information, skills and ideas for environmental solutions in their schools and communities.

We have found that Eco-Clubs offer a platform for children to share ideas, concerns and insight about their environment. They also help to ensure participation of young people in national and global environmental management. Other benefits:

Some Eco-Clubs have prompted their schools to put an environmental policy in place and improve how they tackle problems such as waste management and water supply. 'Greening-up' campaigns have removed rubbish and changed the appearance of some schools completely. Eco-Clubs are helping to raise a young generation who are more aware of than their elders of the environmental impacts of destructive fishing practices, deforestation and the burning of chemicals.

In addition, the project is spreading awareness among parents and community members of the value of their natural resources and the damaging impacts that some of their activities may be having.

Participating schools report benefits of greater networking and partnerships. Exchange visits allow schools to share ideas on environmental management. During joint discussions and events such as World Oceans Day, schools are able to exhibit some of their products and activities, which are replicated in other schools. Networking has even extended beyond Kenya: in 2008, Star of the Sea and Mkokoni primary schools were visited by King's School from Kwazulu Natal, South Africa under the sponsorship of Kenya Airways.

## **What's involved?**

Running an Eco-Club encompasses the following areas:

Mobilizing the support of the school's administration and other members of the staff

Recruiting club members

Developing a good leadership structure for the club  
Formulating club activities in the school  
Developing a long-term plan of activities for the school  
Implementing your school's action plan  
Taking part in activities organised by Eco-Ethics  
Reporting club activities to the school staff, administration and Eco-Ethics

**What are the benefits?**

An initial familiarisation visit by Eco-Ethics  
Invitation to Eco-Club events  
Participation in World Oceans Day  
A chance to compete for prizes in events such as the Inter-School Eco-Challenge  
Training and support from Eco-Ethics for club patrons  
Students improve their environmental education  
Students are more engaged in environmental management at the school