

2020 VISION



PROTECTED SOIL & BIODIVERSITY

Ireland is renowned for its outstanding natural beauty including habitats, ecosystems and wildlife species that are scarce across Europe. Our landscape, soil and biodiversity are also important to our economy through activities like farming and tourism. A number of native Irish species and their habitats are under threat from factors like intensification of agriculture, drainage of wetlands and climate change. Eco Eye takes a look at the biodiversity of our forests, sea, bogs and the unique landscape of the Burren, the threats our biodiversity faces and the importance of protecting and managing our natural heritage.

2020 GOAL – THE SOIL OF IRELAND WILL BE PROTECTED FROM CONTAMINATION AND LOSS AND WILL SUPPORT DEPENDENT PLANTS AND ANIMALS. OUR BIODIVERSITY WILL BE PROTECTED AND MANAGED FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS TO ENJOY.

SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES

We all use a range of resources everyday from the energy we use in our homes to the food we eat and the raw materials we consume. We need to be more sustainable in the way we use these resources by reducing the waste we generate, being more efficient in the way we use energy and looking at new ways to meet our needs with renewable resources. Eco Eye looks at recycling, the potential of wind energy and how Dublin City Council is composting the waste food from our brown bins to produce a new resource.

2020 GOAL – MORE EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES (WATER, ENERGY AND MATERIALS). WASTE WILL BE PREVENTED AND MINIMISED, WITH THE BALANCE RECYCLED OR RECOVERED. FINAL DISPOSAL WILL BE COMPLETED IN A WAY THAT DOES NOT HARM THE ENVIRONMENT.

INTEGRATION & ENFORCEMENT

Two of the key environmental challenges facing Ireland are to improve enforcement of environmental laws and to better integrate environmental considerations into all policies, plans and actions across our society.

To work toward a sustainable society we all need to behave in a way that minimises our negative impact on the environment and here we see how primary school children involved in Green Schools bring the message to their communities through the Green Homes initiative.

The second topic in this section of the resource is enforcement of environmental laws. Students can see that there are consequences for flouting laws and review real examples of prosecutions and the resultant penalties.

2020 GOAL – ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS WILL BE AT THE HEART OF POLICY-MAKING AND DECISION-MAKING. RESPONSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL BEHAVIOUR WILL BE THE NORM ACROSS ALL SECTORS OF SOCIETY AND THOSE WHO FLOUT ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS WILL BE HELD TO ACCOUNT.

USEFUL WEBSITES

- » ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY WWW.EPA.IE
- » SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY OF IRELAND WWW.SEAI.IE
- » WWW.ASKABOUTIRELAND.IE
- » NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DATA CENTRE WWW.BIODIVERSITYIRELAND.IE
- » NATIONAL PARKS & WILDLIFE SERVICE WWW.NPWS.IE



LOG ON TO WWW.EPA.IE FOR LOTS MORE INFORMATION ON ALL OF THESE TOPICS & INTERACTIVE MAPS WITH CURRENT ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION

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WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY? The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] is to protect and improve the natural environment for present and future generations, taking into account the environmental, social and economic principles of sustainable development. Sustainable development means using resources [like energy, water and food] in a way that meets our needs while protecting the environment so that future generations will also be able to meet their needs.



WELCOME TO 2020 VISION — A CLOSER LOOK AT IRELAND'S ENVIRONMENT

This resource pack and the accompanying website have been developed by the Environmental Protection Agency to support teachers and students in exploring the Irish environment, in the context of the second level curriculum. By using a combination of clips from the Eco Eye TV Series, support materials and up to date information on the Irish environment teachers and students can explore the key environmental issues that we face today.

WHAT IS 2020 VISION?

2020 Vision is the EPA's strategy to protect and improve Ireland's Environment into the future. The strategy outlines six environmental goals for the period 2007 to 2020, based on the key environmental challenges we now face in Ireland. The EPA will work with other government departments, local authorities, environmental groups and individual citizens to achieve these goals. >>

>> LIMITING & ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE



>> CLEAN AIR



>> PROTECTED WATER RESOURCES



>> SUSTAINABLE USE OF RESOURCES



>> PROTECTED SOIL & BIODIVERSITY



>> INTEGRATION & ENFORCEMENT



WHAT'S IN THIS PACK?

» A DVD WITH CLIPS FROM ECO EYE, THE POPULAR TV SERIES PRESENTED BY DUNCAN STEWART. THE CLIPS ARE GROUPED BY TOPIC.

» A DISK WITH RESOURCE MATERIAL INCLUDING LESSON PLANS, COMPREHENSIONS, IDEAS FOR PROJECTS AND OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES.

» THESE MATERIALS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT: WWW.EPA.IE/EDUCATION

WHO CAN USE THIS RESOURCE?

THE TOPICS OF ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SPAN VARIOUS AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM. THIS RESOURCE IS PARTICULARLY SUITABLE FOR USE WITH A RANGE OF CLASSES / SUBJECT AREAS.

TRANSITION YEAR

This resource pack suits the transition year philosophy and guidelines. It is skills based and allows the student to extend their interests and research skills through a range of different methodologies. It will engage the student in active learning strategies based on issues and activities largely within the local community.

The units of the pack can be approached individually or all seven could be studied as a Full Transition Year Environment Module with strong links to Geography or Science subject areas. The units consist of:

- Comprehension exercises [using various approaches] for completion after viewing of the Eco Eye clips to encourage careful viewing and assist in building an understanding of the issues.
- Suggested activities allow for further exploration of the issues and include groupwork, brainstorming, map work and individual research.

- The depth of study can then be expanded through individual and group fieldwork investigations. Templates for questionnaires and a guide to research methodology are provided.

CSPE

With strong links to the concepts of Stewardship, Rights and Responsibilities and Interdependence, the topic of environment presents opportunities for looking at the individual, local, national and global aspects of a range of issues. The resource consists of a series of lesson plans for use with CSPE classes including comprehensions, research / discovery / simulation / discussion exercises based on the Eco Eye clips and ideas for action projects and homework.

JUNIOR CYCLE GEOGRAPHY

As the Environmental Protection Agency already has a resource for Leaving Certificate Geography this resource is aimed at Junior cycle classes.

A set of Geography lesson plans, including comprehension exercises cover topics like climate change, wind energy and water quality. The lessons provide opportunities to explore the themes in a curriculum relevant way using group and individual work, and on-line map work.

SCIENCE

A series of lesson plans on sewage treatment, drinking water and climate change have been developed for the EPA as part of the Science and Technology in Action resource. These can be used on their own or after viewing of relevant clips from Eco Eye as an introduction to the topic at hand. Each lesson consists of activities, an on-line quiz, sample exam questions and a glossary of terms. The specific links to the relevant junior or senior cycle syllabus are listed in each lesson.

WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES WE FACE?

CLIMATE CHANGE

Human-induced climate change is an urgent global issue and is the primary environmental challenge of this century. Increased levels of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide from transport, energy production, agriculture and industrial processes are enhancing the natural greenhouse effect and speeding up irreversible changes in the climate. Irish per capita emissions of greenhouse gases remain among the highest in Europe. Through a range of clips your class can explore the local and global effects of climate change and what we as individuals can do to reduce our carbon footprint.

2020 GOAL — ACHIEVE MAJOR REDUCTIONS IN GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND PREPARE FOR THE UNAVOIDABLE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE.

CLEAN AIR

Each of us is entitled to clean air and to know that the air we breathe is not going to cause us harm. By international standards, air quality in Ireland is very good but pollutants from road traffic, especially in urban areas pose the main threat to air quality in Ireland. While improved technologies have resulted in cars and other vehicles being cleaner there have been increases in numbers of vehicles and engine sizes. By seeing what schools or employers like the hospital featured in the clip can do to encourage more sustainable ways to travel students can get to grips with the causes, effects and possible solutions to the traffic issue.

2020 GOAL — OUR AIR WILL BE HEALTHY AND CLEAN. IRELAND'S EMISSIONS TO THE ATMOSPHERE WILL MEET ALL INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL TARGETS.

CLEAN WATER

Ireland has an abundant supply of fresh water but the quality of this resource can be an issue. We depend on surface and groundwater sources for our drinking water but water is also important as a habitat for freshwater and marine plants and animals and as an amenity for us to enjoy. The most widespread threat to water quality is pollution from municipal sewage and agricultural activities. Through the Eco Eye series your class can consider the issue of drinking water supplies being contaminated by bacteria or beaches losing Blue Flag status because of pollution.

2020 GOAL — OUR SURFACE WATER AND GROUNDWATER WILL NOT BE DEPLETED AND WILL BE OF EXCELLENT QUALITY, MEETING ALL NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS.

