

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY 2010
EGYPT FOR NORTH AFRICA
SECOND CELEBRATION: LET'S TAKE CARE OF EGYPT

Outline

- Preface
 - Objectives
 - Opening Ceremony
 - Activities and workshops
 - Outcomes
-

Preface

The national conference, Lets Take Care of Egypt, took place on the 2nd and 3rd of April 2010. We had the vision of bringing together more than 250 young people from schools and universities all around Egypt to learn and share their experience about maintaining environment, and especially biodiversity. The process of carrying out the national conference started with contacting the most environmentally-active educational institutions in Egypt and asking them to join. After that, we held a 2 days conference discussing biodiversity and the other relevant environmental issues like climate change, water pollution, and waste management. The Conference included presentations, workshops, and action groups aiming to introduce the young people participating to biodiversity and providing them with the knowledge required to take action. The participants –in the form of action groups- were asked to come up with recommendations to be addressed to the national authorities responsible for environmental issues and to be presented during the international conference, Lets Take Care of our Planet, in Brazil.

Objectives

- ✓ Providing environmental awareness on biodiversity and raising the sense of responsibility towards environment.
- ✓ Providing the chance for young people to share experience on the environmental issues affecting biodiversity in Egypt.
- ✓ Workings through different perspectives: artistic, legal, and environmental, with a variety of organizations to help maintain Biodiversity in Egypt.

Opening Ceremony

On Friday, 2nd of April 2010, Students, professors, volunteers, organizations, and educational institutions from around Egypt were gathered in the opening of the national conference; the opening took place in Pharos university and introduced the audience to the vision of the International Year of Biodiversity and the activities planned to be done throughout this year targeting the theme of biodiversity and climate change.

Guest Speakers

- ✓ Dr.Amal Hosney, UN-Egypt projects coordinator & IYB21010 Egypt Celebration coordinator
- ✓ General Adel Labib Governor of Alexandria
- ✓ Dr.Said Sabry, Climate change consultant, ministry of environment affairs
- ✓ Dr Mounier Wahba Biodiversity consultant ministry of environmental affairs
- ✓ Mr.Khaled Abu Al-Naga, Egyptian actor, and Goodwill *Ambassador for UNICEF*
- ✓ Eng.Mohamed Abd Al-Zaher general secretariat of Alexandria governor
- ✓ Mr.Fouad Megahed, Media consultant, ministry of environmental affairs
- ✓ Eng. Abd Elfattah Ragab – Ragab Group host

At first, there was an environmental and Biodiversity work exhibition that included many partitions of different organizations:

- ✓ Alexandria University, Fin Art Faculty
- ✓ Riada American School (RAS)
- ✓ Ministry of environmental affairs Cairo – Alexandria
- ✓ Art Miles Mural Projects – UNESCO
- ✓ Gold's Gym – sponsorship
- ✓ Friends of Environment – NGO'S
- ✓ Pharos University
- ✓ French School in Hurghada

After that, three videos were presented; the first one was showing the message of UN general Secretary, Ban Ki Moon, to the world about the International Year of Biodiversity. The second video, prepared by UNEP-Egypt volunteers, discussed biodiversity: definition, impacts of other environmental issues and what are we going to do? The third video, prepared by Riada American School, was showing the obstacles facing our country, under the theme of “Let’s take care of Egypt”.

Activities and Workshops

The conference included 12 workshops on a variety of topics about Biodiversity and other Environmental issues. The workshops were conducted by many academic and environmental institutions. Attendees were at maximum 15 participants in every workshop, average attendance was 8 participants in every workshop.

1- Art Miles Murals workshop (UNESCO, Culture of Peace project)

The workshop aimed at addressing the environmental issues through teaching young people how to draw and how to make murals that express their ideas of protecting our environment.

2- Recycling Paper workshop (Ministry of Environmental Affairs, Cairo office)

Carried out by the Ministry of Environmental Affairs, the workshop taught participants how to use simple resources found in their home to recycle their daily use of paper. Also, they were taught how to make artistic works with recycled paper.

3- Recycling Fabric and Printing (Ministry of Environmental Affairs, Alexandria office)

The workshop discussed the process of recycling and colouring fabrics. Also, it gave practical solutions to participants to help them reduce their consumption of paper in printing and paperwork.

4- Discover medicines with biodiversity (Faculty of Medicine, Alexandria University)

Moderated by doctors and pharmacologists, the session discussed the usage of natural herbs and elements naturally found in the surrounding environment to cure many diseases. In addition, the participants were asked to form action groups and think of an element of the environment that is being destroyed by human activities and can help in curing diseases.

5- **Climate Change and your skin** (Faculty of Pharmacy, Alexandria University)

The workshop explained the unhealthy impacts of climate change on our skin and the living organisms exposed to sun light. Also, it gave participants practical solutions on protecting their skin from the harmful effects of sun light.

6- **Let's make a wooden Car!** (UNEP volunteers)

In this workshop, UNEP volunteers taught participants how to reuse the wooden useless leftovers to make a wooden toy car and other shapes that can be used to decorate their houses and classrooms.

7- **Waste Workshop** (Riada American School, Alexandria)

Participants were introduced to the problem of waste in Egypt, how big the problem is and the future scenario expected. They were asked to think of possible to the problem and think what everyone of them can do to help solve the problem himself.

8- **Global warming and acid rain workshop** (Riada British School, Alexandria)

The workshop introduced participants to the effects of gases polluting the Air and how acid rain contributes to the extinction of biodiversity on earth.

9- **Water management of the Nile river** (Pioneers School, Alexandria)

The workshop discussed the problems facing water resources in Egypt, especially Nile River which is the major source of water. The workshop gave participants tips on managing the usage of water in their homes and schools.

10- **Ozzy Ozone game** (UNEP volunteers) UNEP France

Ozzy Ozone is a cartoon character made by UNEP to symbolize the problem of the Ozone Layer to people around the world. The workshop was discussing the

problem of the Ozone layer and how to solve it. The workshop encouraged participants to come up with a song urging people to take action.

11- **Photography** what is the relation of the Environment (Faculty of Fine Arts)

The workshop taught participants how to take photos and use them to deliver their message. They were shown photos of behaviours unfriendly to the Environment and given the chance to go out and take photos like them.

12- **Water Pollution** (Sedi Gaber Language School, Alexandria)

The workshop discussed the problem of water pollution in Egypt and how it is affecting humans, living animals, and plants. The participants became aware of the role Water Pollution is playing in hindering human efforts to save plants and animal species from extinction and our efforts to provide a healthy atmosphere for humans to live in.

Following the workshops, each workshop gave a presentation to all participants on its outcomes and how they reached their recommendations of maintaining biodiversity.

Outcomes

- 1- Throughout both the opening and working day of the conference, we managed to aware more than 650 students around Egypt about Biodiversity. Through our cooperation with environmental organizations and authorities concerned with environment, encouraged them to take action.
- 2- Hold and organize exhibition for the public on biodiversity issues.
- 3- Each workshop came up with recommendations to be sent to the Egyptian authorities responsible for Environmental affairs.
- 4- Art Miles workshop invited participants to join them in drawing a Mural on Environment. They drew a mural showing the different environmental issues: air pollution, water pollution and waste problem and also showing the beautiful side of nature.
- 5- Ozzy Ozone workshop made a song on protecting our Ozone Layer and invited the audience to sing with them.
- 6- Students from the recycling paper workshop made decorations using recycled paper and taught participants from other workshops how to do it.
- 7- Participants had an open discussion on the issues of environment in Egypt; featuring a young student at Riada American School who invented a car totally powered by electricity through wind turbines.

Done by:

Dr Amal Hosny
IYB2010 Egypt celebration Coordinator
Email: amalhh2003@gmail.com
Dr.amal.unepegypt@gmail.com
Cell: +20107383545
Cell: +20113444178

