

A Program of Caring for the Future

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The philanthropic ALCOA Sustainability and Conservation Program for Russia scheduled for 2007-2008 and entitled “We Are In Charge of the Future” was launched in February 2007 by the Fund for Sustainable Development, a Russian NGO that has designed and is currently managing this program, which consists of 3 components: needs assessment and stakeholder engagement; development of educational programs for selected schools and local NGOs; and grant competitions for local NGOs in cooperation with selected schools.

Special attention in this Program is given to training primarily school teachers and students in the principles of sustainable development and conservation based on curricula tested in 1996-2006 in a number of Russian regions in the framework of the children’s telecommunications project “Environmental Commonwealth” (implemented by Moscow State University Institute of Soil Sciences) and the project “Clean City for Children” (implemented by the Education and Youth Departments of Pushchino City Administration, Moscow Region).

During the first phase of the Program that will last for one and a half years, support will be provided to projects aimed at promoting sustainable development, including environmental and natural resources protection, and carried out in three selected municipalities of different levels: the cities of Samara and Belaya Kalitva (Rostov Oblast) and Lubuchany settlement (Moscow Oblast). Teachers and students will use new their knowledge to develop and fulfill 10 conservation research projects in 10 subject matters. The topics of these projects will be identified as a result of polls conducted in the communities.

The Program was officially started in February 2007 in Belaya Kalitva, where a presentation of the Program and its first seminar for teachers (elementary school, biology, geography, computer sciences, and chemistry) were held that were also joined by heads of children’s biology and creativity hobby groups. The seminar attendees discussed, among other questions, how to work out and implement conservation programs at schools and how to

involve larger numbers of schoolchildren in the national movements “Environmental Commonwealth” and “Friends of Wildlife Islands”. Similar presentations were also held in late February – early March of 2007 in Samara and Lubuchany; and in March-April 2007, master classes were conducted in all participating schools of the three municipalities. The master classes were devoted to the following topics:

- School and teacher participation in sustainable community development and waste management (facilitator – G.N.Sapozhnikova PhD, member of Pushchino Public Council);
- Biodiversity preservation, rare species protection, student participation in conservation activities under the following projects: ““Early Spring Flowers”, “Rare Plants of My Region”, “Insect Planet”, “Birds Are Our Friends”, and “The Reserve is Asking for Help” (facilitator - Dr. Rykhlikova, Moscow State University Institute of Ecological Soil Sciences);
- Water body study and protection; water quality standards and primary pollutants and their impact on human health; chemical and biological water body control (facilitators - A.R.Lyanzberg and D.D.Nikulinsky, City Youth Creative Center);
- Soil study and protection; prospective topics for studying soil sciences at schools; conservation of soil resources (facilitators - Dr.Rakhleyeva and I.A.Martynenko, Soil Sciences Department, Moscow State University);
- Organizing the work of schools and additional education centers in the framework of the national telecommunications project “Environmental Commonwealth” (M.E.Rykhlikova);
- Conservation and education for sustainable development;
- Organizing practical activities for schoolchildren: studying and protecting biodiversity; and soil and water bodies on nature areas and areas affected by anthropogenic impacts;
- Forming a waste-handling culture, and school participation in separate waste collection.

All the participants in the master classes received the following manuals: “First Spring Flowers”, “Rare Plants of my Region”, “Field Index of Freshwater Invertebrates” and “Adopt a Nature Reserve”; while the following books were donated to school libraries: “Route Methods of Bird Counting”, “Eco-Entomological Research”, “Ants of Moscow Region”, and “Ecology Research Methods”. The schools participating in the program were provided with knapsack chemical field laboratories for assessing the quality of water and soil and the teachers and students were taught to work with test kits included in the laboratories. Plans for May-September include planting trees and shrubs; cleaning the banks of water bodies; removing trash and dead trees from parks and other nature sites in the communities. In June-August interaction will be established between participating educational institutions and

neighboring specially protected nature areas; and summer environmental camps will be opened for schoolchildren. From April through November, Internet consultations will be offered to teachers and students during which the participants in the Program will have a chance to share their experience with environmental education organizations from other regions of Russia using guidelines developed by the project “Environmental Commonwealth”. In November-December the best works created by students from Belaya Kalitva, Lubuchany and Samara will be presented at the 9th National Teleconference “Children Will Preserve Nature”. A collection of these works will be published in January – February 2008, while in March of the same year the winners in a contest conducted as part of the teleconference will come to Moscow to present their works and receive awards.

The Program actively utilizes the experience of the well-known educational project

“Environmental Commonwealth, the first national children’s Internet project (coordinator – M.E.Rykhlinkova) that unites over 200 environmental education organizations from 52 regions of Russia, Byelorussia, Ukraine and Kazakhstan. Since 1997, this project has been engaged in environmental education activities intended for teachers and students, has put out a series of teaching guidelines, and also sponsors contests of children’s environmental research works, stories and drawings. Project participants exchange information via its Internet site on an on-going basis. The following integrated subprograms are carried out each year: ““Early Spring Flowers”, “A Sip of Life”, “Galactic Experts”, “We Shall Save the Earth”, “They Must Live”, “Birds Are Our Friends”, and “The Reserve is Asking for Help”. Over 850 environmental activities were carried out in the regions, such as planting trees and shrubs, obtaining certificates for nature monuments, cleaning unauthorized dumps, protecting first spring flowers, feeding birds in winter, and studying and protecting water bodies. Eight environmental teleconferences were organized. This project was awarded the title “Best Internet Project” at the 2000 Russian Ecology Contest.

“Clean City with Children and for Children” (G.N.Sapozhnikova) – this project summarizes experience accumulated by environmental hobby groups and Pushchino city Administration in developing and introducing programs to train children in modern waste management and energy-efficiency practices. In the course of this project the following manuals on waste management were written and printed: guidelines for teachers and manuals for 3rd and 4th grades (“Our Clean Home”) and 6th - 9th grades (No to Waste!). For ten years now, this project has been promoting a model of inter-sector cooperation in separate waste collection in the city. All schools of Pushchino are taking an active part in the “Collect 4!” movement devoted to the separate collection of four types of waste: bottles, cans, paper and batteries.

“We Are Responsible for Our City!” (Youth Center, Pushchino) – the goal of this project is to create a mechanism for year-round youth participation of school teams in monitoring energy-efficiency at residential buildings and working on small energy-saving projects.

As a result of project contests held at the end of May, grants will be provided for funding 12 projects: 4 in Samara; 5 in Belaya Kalitva, and 3 in Lubuchany. Most of these projects are devoted to improving areas around schools and adjacent streets; studying and monitoring nature monuments and building environmental trails; involving schoolchildren in volunteer work and training in summer environmental camps; and organizing separate waste collection in schools.

All the participants in “We Are in Charge of the Future” are trying to make their own contribution to forming new conservation attitudes and approaches in their communities.

ALCOA, one of the world’s largest producers of aluminum, employs 130,000 people at its plants in 44 countries. Five times during the past eight years this company was ranked global leader by the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI), which in the West is an accepted criteria of corporate social responsibility based on the promotion of sustainable development (primarily in such areas as conservation, rational use of natural resources, and environmental education). Such a high rating attests not only to impressive economic results of this company, but to its environmental and social achievements (ALCOA’s development plan for up to 2020; the consolidated report on sustainable development for 2005; and nine regional reports on specific areas of the company’s activities may be found at alcoa.com/Ink/sustainability. Detailed information about DJSI may be found at sustainability-indexes.com).



Samara. A master class on the study and protection of water bodies



Belaya Kalitva. A master class on the study and protection of soils



Lubuchany. A master class on the study and protection of soils

The Fund for Sustainable Development (FSD) is an independent, nongovernmental, nonprofit Russian foundation created to support environmental solutions and socially responsible development throughout the Russian Federation. The main objective of FSD is to foster multi-sector collaboration in concrete projects focused on regional and community sustainable development.