

The COBIS Eco Film Awards

I. Introduction

It has been both a personal and professional pleasure for those of us involved in viewing, comparing and judging the 43 videos that were submitted for the 2020 COBIS Eco Film Award. The standard was high, and we were impressed with the submissions. Inevitably, final decisions were hard to make.

It was a privilege to be able to see something of the operations of so many schools from across the globe, and to listen to the passionate and knowledgeable young people who featured in front of and behind the lens. We loved the creativity and innovation shown by the projects, and appreciated the range of approaches taken to filming. There was some great use of statistics to illustrate the issues and contextualise outcomes, and there was plenty of evidence of cross-phase working and whole-school involvement. We wish everyone well as you continue to help your schools become ever more sustainable.

We have identified schools in Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe as the 2020 winners and runners up. What characterised these entries was a clear story about an innovative and creative student project that made a change to the operation of the school, and which was well told in an engaging way with students' voices to the fore. In these videos music and images were carefully chosen to add to the story, and data were used with precision to illustrate issues and outcomes.

In terms of the themes chosen, recycling was popular, with the problems of our use of plastics particularly so, but the more successful accounts went beyond the mechanics of collecting, disposing and re-using materials to have a long-term impact on both sustainability and learning.

2. Results

Our brief was to select a winner and two runners-up in each category. Because of the quality of the entries, this was a difficult task to complete and in the end we identified two additional school entries in a *Highly Commended* category. Our overall results are:

| Key Stages 1 & 2 | Key Stages 3 to 5 |
|---|--|
| Winners | |
| DSB International School, India | International School of Bucharest, Romania |
| Runners-up | |
| Start-Rite Schools, Nigeria & The Edron Academy, Mexico | Grange School, Nigeria & Jerudong International School, Brunei |
| Highly Commended | |
| Haileybury Astana, Kazakhstan | Marlborough College, Malaysia |

3. Commentary

3.1 The Key Stages 1 & 2 Projects

DSB International School: paper, water and food projects

We felt that these three combined projects from this school demonstrated perfectly the kinds of impacts that children working together with adults, can have on their school's sustainability. The films demonstrated the learning journey that the participating children had undertaken with simplicity and sensitively. The children's enthusiasm for the projects and for their learning, as well as their delight and pride at the tangible impact that they had been able to make, made these films a pleasure to view.

Start-Rite Schools: from waste to waste bins

This video contains impressive presentations from the student scientists. The idea of sustainable living was clearly explained before then moving onto specific issues. We were very impressed by the idea to make, and the action of making, recycling bins from plastic bottles to put around school. There were clear outcomes in terms of sustainability impacts and what the children learnt from the project.

El Colegio Britanico: the Edron Academy

What was particularly impressive about this film was the way it referenced a whole-school, long-term approach to becoming sustainable, using one example of the many things the school is doing, the school garden, to draw the viewer in. The film made a good job of showing how engaged and enthused the children are about the project.

Haileybury Astana: plastic IS fantastic

This film is inspired by Charles Dickens to use Ghosts of Past, Present and Future to emphasise the need to think differently about the waste we produce through our daily activities. This hook engages the viewer, bringing them into the story of the school's journey towards sustainability and making the film highly engaging and impactful.

In addition to those we have selected for an award, we'd also like to mention Hadi from the International School of New York for his compelling film about his one-man campaign to cut down single-use plastic in his school.

3.2 The Key Stages 3 to 5 Projects

International School of Bucharest: plant a friend

This video highlighted the problem of eco-anxiety which is currently affecting so many young people round the world. It did this using a light-touch and witty approach which was both beguiling and instructive. There was a dramatic start, and a clear story line which highlighted the tensions between economic development and protecting the natural world. We liked the way that the video ended with professional-looking credits.

Grange School: grange goes green

This informative and pacy video uses a variety of techniques, including cartoons, to tell the story of a well thought through campaign to reduce a school's plastic waste. We appreciated the students' enthusiasm for the project and the clarity of their explanations, as well as their engaging manner.

Jerudong International School: the canopy initiative & Hawkspray sustainable business

These two videos, one about the overall efforts of the school's eco-reps to change a number of school practices, and the other focusing in on one of these, honey production from stingless bees as a sustainable business, gave a clear picture of the school's attempts to become more sustainable. This "teaspoons of change" project is a whole-school approach with clearly-stated outcomes and we felt that the films made the innovative nature of this holistic approach very clear.

Marlborough College: I am a bottle cap

This video tells the life story of a plastic bottle cap from its point of view. The cap is rescued from a polluted beach by students from a local school, shredded, and given a second life in novel, usable artefacts. We enjoyed the way in which the story unfolded across the piece, keeping the audience engaged, all the while providing useful educational content.

In addition to those we have selected for an award, we'd also like to mention the *Littering Project*, an imaginative and creatively executed silent film from the Adorable British College, Enugu, Nigeria. This was a piece with high dramatic impact and we feel that its bold style deserves a special mention. We also want to congratulate Green Man on his work to help us all to become sustainable, long may it continue!

4. Postscript

On behalf of the UK National Association for Environmental Education we should like to commend all the schools that took part in this competition and congratulate your students on producing such high-quality videos. We hope that you all benefited from participating, and that this competition has reinforced your determination to address, through both your teaching and the ways in which your schools operate, the environmental and sustainability issues we all face.

With good wishes,

Juliette Green, Elsa Lee, William Scott

The National Association for Environmental Education

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