

Enlighten the future

Save the environment by saving energy



Resolution 17th March 2008

The global context and the challenge of values

We, boys and girls of the regional Assembly of Tuscan Students, intend to contribute with all our efforts and our ideas to the “challenge of values” imposed to our responsiveness by the environmental situation emergency.

It is no longer a matter of theoretical conflicts between schools of thought, but it is a matter of what we are living and experiencing on our own skin. Day by day we are assisting to the progressive increasing of the Earth temperature as a result of the atmosphere pollution caused by human beings.

From some years on, even in the privileged part of our planet, the areas where we live, terrible symptoms are coming out, signs, in every likelihood, of a global environmental

perature of the Earth and oceans is increasing year by year, and the glaciers are retreating. The same thesis has been confirmed by the last research of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change), the International Council of the UN for the global warming to which has been assigned the Nobel Prize for Peace 2007.

In Italy, during the last two centuries, temperature had increased for an average of 1.7 °C, while in the last fifty years it increased of 1.4 °C. Climate conditions are changing more and more quickly; and the global water resources, on the other hand, are decreasing. The Mediterranean Sea shows some anomalies: its water level is decreasing,

maybe because of a higher evaporation due to the global warming and the slight rivers' contribution, while the water salinity is increasing, compromising the maritime flora and fauna and threatening the ecosystem and whole sectors of the economy.

Starting from these forecasts, many people imagine, probably being right, apocalyptic scenarios for the future. If a radical reversal will not intervene, our Earth will take the risk to reach a

catastrophe, almost certain and imminent if we will not intervene on time.

This is the reality, it is not alarmism, Greenhouse effect: polluting gases, concentrated in the atmosphere, create a layer reflecting, just like lens, infrared radiation and send it back to the Earth. That is the reason why the tem-

perature of the Earth and oceans is increasing year by year, and the glaciers are retreating. The same thesis has been confirmed by the last research of the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change), the International Council of the UN for the global warming to which has been assigned the Nobel Prize for Peace 2007. In Italy, during the last two centuries, temperature had increased for an average of 1.7 °C, while in the last fifty years it increased of 1.4 °C. Climate conditions are changing more and more quickly; and the global water resources, on the other hand, are decreasing. The Mediterranean Sea shows some anomalies: its water level is decreasing, maybe because of a higher evaporation due to the global warming and the slight rivers' contribution, while the water salinity is increasing, compromising the maritime flora and fauna and threatening the ecosystem and whole sectors of the economy. Starting from these forecasts, many people imagine, probably being right, apocalyptic scenarios for the future. If a radical reversal will not intervene, our Earth will take the risk to reach a “point of no return” beyond which damages will be irreversible (“Earth is not a gift from previous generations but a loan from future generations!”). This involves the necessity to immediately catch the challenge of values to which everybody should give the higher priority.



The challenge and the commitment

We Students of Tuscany, are convinced that all we mentioned above could be avoided, and we trust in the public commitment for the environmental protection, in the spread up and extension of renewable energies, in the relative scientific research and, particularly among young people, in the raising of the attention and interest towards an eco-sustainable lifestyle focused on the first and most important among the renewable kinds of energy: energy conservation!

The **big challenge** represented by the protocol of Kyoto in 1997 (took into consideration first by the World Conference of Bali, than by recent National, regional and European laws) foresees strict parameters to which each country should uniform itself in its fight against pollution. Europe particularly applied its commitment to reduce, with reference to 1990 figures, 20% of gas discharges causing the green house effect, and fixed for 2020 the final term to achieve its objective.

The Energy Policy Plan of the region Tuscany - recently approved by the regional Government, and to be soon discussed in a session of the Regional Legislative Assembly - foresees two relevant main tasks. The first one consists in producing, by 2020, about 40/50% of Electric Energy, through the implementation of renewable energies such as: geothermal, and wind power, photovoltaic, biomass energy, decreasing in this way discharges of gas causing the greenhouse effect and the dependency by oil. The second objective concerns on the contrary the decreasing of energy consumption in public and private buildings through conservation and optimization interventions.

The challenge of concrete actions

As Tuscan students, first of all we decided to show our firm commitment to make the other Tuscan citizens of our same age aware of all the big environmental problems and of all the relative possible solutions. For this reason we carried out a pathway for our personal education, which started with a study-workshop about buildings and went on through meetings with experts and visits to information centres focused on Energy and water conservation in the National Park of Gran Sasso.

We consider of great importance that the Institutions become aware of these environmental issues and we are convinced that it could be possible to build together a pathway made of knowledge, awareness and co-operation.

The challenge of commitment in favour of a new ecological culture, can be won if we succeeded in fascinating and convincing all the people who are ignoring or under-valuating the negative effects we are causing on our planet; we



need that everybody of us feels deeply involved and become, in both schools and territory, a point of reference for a new awareness and attentiveness. It is a necessity to speak about concrete matters and to show and proof what it is possible to realize, right here right now!

For the above-mentioned reasons, we feel supported by a strong hope...We, students of the RSP_T, think that each temptation to passivity should be defeated and that time for action has already come!

We firmly believe that **making students aware** about these big issues has a great importance and we intend to implement this process through a "Week for the eco-sustainability" during which we will distribute leaflets and information material and we will organize environmental educational meetings in the schools.

There are really good possibilities and perspectives to re-qualify the schools Energy plan, but it is absolutely necessary to intervene immediately and in an active way!

Our proposals

a) Improving the knowledge basis from which we started

- Thanks to the contribution of school construction experts, we believe that it is appropriate to define a specific diagnosis able to offer reliable data concerning the consumption of: thermal, electric and water systems. The diagnosis should also accurately analyze the schools architectonic structure. Schools have not always these data at their disposal, even if they are a very useful instrument to evaluate buildings' conditions, to improve the eco-sustainability, and to realize rooms devoted to the study that can offer both comfort and environmental respect. From our part, we offer our co-operation to the institutions (in ways that still have to be defined) in order to collect, up-date and monitor all data.

b) Adopting a school for each Tuscan ProvincE

- School maintenance and secondary school education are delivered by the Provinces. Therefore we propose that each of the ten Tuscan Provinces pick out a **sample school** and promptly present a project for Eco-sustainability in order to achieve regional funds.

- Moreover, we ask that in the regional Energy Policy Plan a high priority could be assigned to all the above-mentioned projects and we also ask the Regional Assembly of Tuscany to have the possibility to listen the debate during the hearings convoked by the appropriate Commission;

c) Making people aware of good practices through a Protocol of common valuesi

- To all territorial institutions, and first of all to the Members of the Regional and Provincial Government, we ask to support all our efforts tended to make people aware about environmental issues, in particular we ask them to adhere to our **Protocol of common Values**, which we are going to propose, spread and extend to the schools.

Pessimism is today a luxury that young people cannot effort! That the reason why the Parliament of Tuscan Students intends to promote a great activity in the schools of the whole Tuscan territory concerning environmental matter! Enlighten the future, without wastes, can be possible, but it depends, first of all, by enlightening behaviours which all citizens and Institutions have to adopt starting from now.



PROTOCOL OF VALUES

Virtuous Actions and good practices

We, students-deputies, in order to contribute to enlighten our future and the future of next generations, want to propose to all schools and institutions in Tuscany, to adhere to this protocol of values in which we firmly believe. From this values will stream both virtuous actions - well structured and to be implemented in the long term - as well as "good practices" to be realized in the short term.



TAKING CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

An enjoyable and healthy environment for your study and life is a right and a need for every citizen. In order to preserve the inestimable heritage we received from the previous generations, each intervention is relevant: prevent the oil leakages from tank ships - linkages that kill the oceans and their inhabitants - eliminate the garbage heaps on the beaches and on the rivers' banks; abolish at any cost all the crimes against the environment, but also carry out small gestures such as plant a tree in every garden



WASTES ELIMINATION

Energy waste reduction is a value not only because it reduces the energy consumption and consequently the relative expenditure, but also because it preserves our resources - more and more precious and rare - keeping them also for the future generations. An electric motor generator, put on the "energy conservation level", consumes fewer resources and produces fewer emissions, providing the same service to our schools. Also taps with a timer, or fluorescent lamps contribute to the reduction of Energy waste..

CONSUMING LESS AND MORE WISELY

Let's think about the impact our actions produce on the environment: when we go shopping, for instance, we should remember that all processes of production and transportation for any material always have an impact on the environment. Then, we should choose those items able to produce fewer damages as possible, and avoid the polluting ones, with a non-recyclable package. We should try to buy only what we really need, and prefer items producing easily disposable waste.



Virtuous actions

Since we are students, we deeply want to stress the situation of Tuscan schools. They all need prompt interventions in order to be adapted to the above-expressed values. We firmly believe that the following actions are virtuous, and that they should feature the higher priority in the process for schools requalification..

- **Save thermal Energy**, through interventions on the building shell: substitution of window shutters, installation of thermostatic valve able to regulate the power on and off for the heating system in each single room, the application of heating systems using renewable Energy (solar energy and micro-wind power) and of low temperature heating systems.
- **Save electric potential Energy** through the installation, inside the school buildings, of automatic systems able to regulate the lighting systems (light-power sensor for survey people presence) and through direct appliance of natural energies (light and ventilation).
- **Carry out solarisation process** in the schools through the installation of photovoltaic systems, able to achieve the progressive coverage of Energy needs.
- **Save water** through the installation of breakwater and other tools for checking the taps' supply and the diversified drainage for hygiene services.
- **Promote conscious eco-fair behaviours** without any sort of wastes in our schools.
- **Improve the quality of school life** through:
 - Room classes painted in bright colours to turn them warmer and cosier;
 - Spaces creation, in the atrium or in the garden where the students can meet and stay together (places decorated directly by the students);
 - Building and re-qualifying pavements, cycle paths and open garden in the schools' proximity.



Good practices

All these small gestures give us, immediately and without any expenditure, the possibility of conserving the environment making everybody aware about an “eco-fair lifestyle”.

Here follows a series of proposals to all the schools. We propose all schools to appoint a group of students and teachers responsible for monitoring the implementation of the following practices::

- **Turn off** the led of electronic equipments usually staying in stand-by;
- **Turn off** the lights in rooms where there is nobody in or every time natural light allows it;
- **Hang** instructive and awakening signs in every place where one is called to make “environmental choices” (e.g. turn off the light; close the tap);
- **Decrease** of 1 °C the winter temperature and increase of 1°C the summer temperature in work and study rooms;
- **Operate** the Waste sorting for paper, cans, and plastic in order to allow their recycle;
- **Buy** items made from paper, recycled materials, and biodegradable materials for interior cleaning;
- **Replace** all the incandescent light bulbs with the Energy conservation ones;
- **Propagate** information concerning the environment in order to make students teachers and the managerial class aware of this issue.





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