Question 1:

Give examples of tools for a sustainable school:

1. Environmental auditing
2. Environmental policy
3. Greening the curriculum
4. Project-based learning
5. Extramural activities
6. Integrating indigenous knowledge
I know schools are important, but what are they actually?

A school can simply be defined as an institution for learning. For a school to succeed, these important stakeholders play a big role.

In schools we are equipped with knowledge and awareness which we use to take action in our daily lives or later in the world of work. Schools therefore need to prepare learners on how to be active citizens that can contribute to Namibia’s sustainable development. A “whole school approach” can be used to do this.

What is the connection between a whole school approach and sustainability?

In a whole school approach, sustainable development is not taught out of a book alone. Rather it is taught across all subjects and is part of a school’s policy, management and infrastructure.

“This gives schools a chance to practice what they teach, values are reinforced in actions and as a result caught, rather than taught” - UNESCO.

So how sustainable is your school?
A Sustainable School

Here is my school! We have worked hard to become more sustainable. "Play the 'Spot it' game to find out why!".

- Giving a clear school policy
- Providing shade
- Our mission: To be a healthy & sustainable learning environment
- Building skills through sports
- Water harvesting
- Reusing
- Using direct solar power
- Fuel-efficient cooking
- Researching water-wise, local plants
- Growing healthy food
- Applying maths to water saving
- Making good soil by composting organic waste
- Recycling

Bush Telegraph
Tools: Environmental Auditing

To make your school sustainable, you need to start by building a foundation that will guide you into the right direction. A useful tool is the environmental audit.

School’s environmental audit

An environmental audit is a way used to assess the current environmental performance of a school. It helps to realise where to focus more attention and to demonstrate when a good job has been done. Directions: Complete this pre-audit questionnaire to help you get started by circling Y (yes) or N (no).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Does your school have an</td>
<td>Are there water leaks?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmental policy? .............Y</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there water meters?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Curriculum</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are environmental days</td>
<td>Are there rubbish bins?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in the curriculum? ..........YN</td>
<td>Y N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Action projects</td>
<td>Does the school recycle?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do lesson plans link to</td>
<td>Y N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>action projects? ..................YN</td>
<td>Are the lights turned off?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Indigenous knowledge</td>
<td>Y N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do learners draw on</td>
<td>Does the school have:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community knowledge? ........YN</td>
<td>A playground ...................Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Extramural activities</td>
<td>Studying areas ..................Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does your school have an</td>
<td>Arts areas ......................Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environmental club? ........YN</td>
<td>Sports fields ....................Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vegetable garden ...............Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What other questions should be</td>
<td>Weather station ................Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>included? Share your results with</td>
<td>Are there broken windows,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others and form an audit team to</td>
<td>doors, chairs? ................Y N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investigate further.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In our maths class one of the learners complained that maths was boring. Our teacher challenged us to come up with a fun use for maths. We decided to set up an energy auditing system. Using the electricity bill, we have over the months been able to compare when we wasted electricity and when we saved it. Now with the audit in place, we started saving so much energy, for example by switching the lights off when not needed.

SPOT IT! Everytime you see SPOT IT, go back to page 3. Find and write down the colour that matches each item on the list. The first one is done for you:

1. Glass recycling ........................................RED

2. Water tank..............................................
Tools: Environmental Policy

What should a policy include?

A school’s environmental policy is similar to a school’s mission statement. It shows the school’s plans for becoming more sustainable by giving it a foundation for action.

A policy is a plan of action adopted by an organisation or individual.

An environmental policy should answer these questions:
1. What are your long and short term environmental goals?
2. How will the environment be incorporated into teaching and learning?
3. How are you going to practice good environmental management?
4. Who will carry out these activities?

A school’s sustainability is measured by the actions it takes for the environment. It is equally important to consider all aspects of sustainability, including social and economic issues. Keep this in mind when you develop your policy.

OUR SCHOOL’S ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

It is very important for the learners, staff and the community to be aware and have an understanding what impact their actions has on the environment.

This Environmental Policy will help guide us to take more action.

At all times we will:
1. Respect each other
2. Switch off all lights when they are not in use
3. Turn off taps when they are no longer needed
4. Print test papers double-sided
5. Promote cycling to school
6. Set up a recycling system for our school
7. Clean our school grounds every Monday, Wednesday and Friday
8. Reuse all materials that are still in good shape
9. Plant more trees in our school yard

We want our school to be the most sustainable in the region.

In our English class our teacher wanted us to practice our writing skills. As a class we decided to work together to write an environmental policy for our classroom. It was fun to be able to make decisions and now we also have a cleaner classroom.

SPOT IT!

1. Plastic recycling
2. Pumpkin
3. Maths book
4. Fence pole
5. Solar oven

Bush Telegraph
**Tools: Connecting to Real World Issues**

The **way** information is delivered is key to achieving a sustainable school.

**What can teachers do to help us learn differently?**

There are lots of fun ways to teach and learn such as:

- Experiential learning
- Values education
- Future problem solving
- Storytelling
- Enquiry learning
- Community problem solving

These methods require you to be on time for activities, pay attention to the teacher, ask questions when you do not understand, participate and discuss, do your homework and help others if they do not understand. Just as important as HOW things are taught is WHAT is taught. The real world provides a living dynamic classroom.

**PROJECT BASED LEARNING - Experiential learning**

Learners want to be given an opportunity to figure out solutions to problems themselves through learning. This means that they should be allowed to identify, research, propose and implement solutions to real needs in their school or community as part of their curriculum. This teaching strategy therefore links experiences with classroom learning and the curriculum.

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In our science class, we decided to test the water quality. We used the pH test strips to test for acidity and alkalinity. Surprisingly we found out it was too salty. As we do not have enough resources to purify it, we researched traditional ways of purifying water. We shared this information with everyone and now all community members boil their water to purify it.

---

**SPOT IT!**

1. Compost bucket .......................... 2. Hostel door ........................................

3. Tyre swing .............................. 4. Aloes’ flower ........................................

5. School shirt .............................. 6. Metal recycling .................................
Tools: Extramural Activities

What can I do to contribute to my school’s sustainability?

There are different things that you can do outside school hours that can help you to contribute to your school’s sustainability.

- Do you do sports?
- Do you participate in the school’s science competitions?
- Do you enjoy debating?
- Do you like to help others out when they are in need?
- Are you involved in a cultural group?

These are called extramural activities. They give you the opportunity to learn new skills, work as a team and express yourself outside of the classroom. This helps you build confidence and a sense of responsibility. Find out what is offered in your area and ask your parents to help you enrol.

Environmental Clubs

In our school’s environment club we are the driving force behind all environmental and sustainable activities at the school. Our club is dedicated to ensure a sustainable school community. We are only successful though if everyone participates. Some of our activities include: leading environmental days, ensuring that our school grounds are clean, and therefore promoting good waste management, as well as tree planting and gardening.

Sports

Participating in sports events has created so many opportunities for learners at my school. It is great for your physical and your mental health. Exercise gives you more energy and helps focus your mind. Sports help develop community networks by providing positive activities for young people and creating competitiveness among ourselves. Above all, it is FUN!

Offer extramurals at your school

There are many programmes that are designed to help learners develop personal, social and employability skills. These skills are key in making you become a well-rounded individual to be able to better adapt to change.

SPOT IT!

1. Water meter
2. Paper recycling
Taking Action: Grassroots Level

A lot of schools in Namibia are taking the initiative to contribute to the sustainability of their schools and communities. These schools found that the best way to succeed in their programmes is to stay focused and encourage other people to join in.

REAPING WHAT WE SOW!
In 2011, we established a sustainable garden project where we, depending on the season, plant, grow and sell cabbages, onions, carrots and spinach to community members. We ultimately want to create awareness and educate the community on how they can improve access to healthy, inexpensive food, therefore reduce food insecurity and poverty. We also grow and sell tree seedlings and keep a small poultry farm. Learners involved in the school garden project learn many useful skills, including how to set up and run a business. These projects are solely run by learners, with support from the school management. The money generated from selling contributes to the school’s transport fund for school excursions!

Mr Ismael Elakalapwa, Combined School, Ohangwena Region

CARBON FOOTPRINTING
Living in an ever-changing world with visible climate change effects, we decided it is important to make people aware of how we can reduce these impacts. Following our motto ‘every human being is an agent of change’ we published a handbook called ‘my carbon footprint’. It is a tool that we use in all our awareness campaigns. We also try to engage the public, especially during important environmental events, to reduce their carbon footprint.

Ms Ester Nuuyoma, Hochland High School, Khomas Region

SPOT IT!
DID YOU SPOT IT?

Solve the mystery!!! Throughout the pages you have been spotting different colours from page 3. These colours represent different letters as indicated by the key on the right.

Directions:
1. Use the key on the right to find out what letter matches the colour.
2. Write down each of each of the colours you spotted
3. The number of colours you spotted per page is the number of letters in the word. These are four separate words. The first letter of the first word has been done for you.

THE KEY TO A SUSTAINABLE SCHOOL IS TO:

KEY
A - Red   C - Purple
D - Green  E - Grey
H - Orange  K - Black
O - Yellow  R - Brown
S - Blue   T - White
Taking Action: International Level

Many organisations around the world are supporting schools to help them become more sustainable. One such organisation is the Foundation of Environmental Education (FEE). FEE promotes sustainable development through environmental education on different programmes including the Eco-Schools programme.

What are Eco-Schools and why should we become an Eco-School?

We already have an environmental club.

The Eco-Schools is a globally certified programme aimed at empowering learners to be the change our sustainable world needs through fun, action-orientated learning. Being a recognised Eco-School will help create global networking opportunities!

Follow a 7 step programme

www.eco-schools.org

1. Establish a working group. This is a committee that directs the operations of a school’s Eco-Schools programme and is student-led.

2. Review environmental impacts of the school, to help you set realistic targets and measure success.

3. Develop an action plan which will be the core of the school work. It is developed with information from the environmental review.

4. Continue to monitor and evaluate. This will allow you to judge the progress and success of your activities. It helps to ensure that targets are met.

5. Integrate the Eco-Schools programmes with curriculum work.

6. Take action and ensure that everyone in the community is involved. For example, pupils should take home ideas to put into practice.

7. Get an eco-code which outlines the school’s commitment to this programme. It should list objectives of the action plan that will be carried out.

Dr Vicky Ahlmann - Riverine Rabbit Node - King’s School, South Africa: "I think the school’s involvement in the Eco-School project has made us question and examine many of our common practices, and that in turn has stimulated process of change."

www.wessa.org.za

<table>
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<tr>
<th>LEARNERS’ PROGRAMMES</th>
<th>Young Masters Programme</th>
<th><a href="http://www.goymp.org">www.goymp.org</a></th>
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<td>Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_c.html">www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/mods/theme_c.html</a></td>
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<td>Environmental Education Association of South Africa</td>
<td><a href="http://www.eeasa.org.za">www.eeasa.org.za</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Namibian Environmental Education Network</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| OTHER RESOURCES |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                 |                 |                 |

Bush Telegraph
**Personality in Conservation**

**Name:** Martina Namutenya  
**Organisation:** Ministry of Education (Okalumbo Combined School)  
**Job title:** Mathematics teacher  
**Number of years on the job:** 15 years

**What does a sustainable school mean to you?**
It is a school that strives to integrate environmental and ecological aspects into all its spheres of the curriculum.

**As a mathematics teacher how do you link sustainability into your subject?**
Using mathematics skills, we have tried to improve the school ground to become a learning resource. We have established different projects such as: the usage of water in relation to our water bill; the usage of electricity in relation to the electricity bill and the usage of papers and waste production.

**What other activities do you do to ensure your school is sustainable?**
To enhance sustainability practices, understanding and skills, my school plans and implements on-going action projects, where learners and teachers are involved. Action projects that a school can easily execute are the ones that are most relevant to the learners’ learning and local context. For example: gardening, tree planting and seedling raising, water and energy conservation, establishing an eco-club, indigenous knowledge, rain water harvesting and solar cooking activities.

**How do you get learners and teachers to participate?**
Through a whole school approach our school can get not only learners, but parents and teachers alike involved. The whole school approach strategy strengthens collaboration between community and the school. A school chooses a committee that includes parents, learners and teachers. This committee plans environmental activities before presenting them to the larger group for more inputs. A school environmental statement can support the overall school environmental plan calendar.

**Is the curriculum doing enough and are teachers teaching sustainability?**
The curriculum highlights sustainability issues, but it will never be enough. Adjustments are needed as we live in a changing society. The challenge lies with implementation as most educators are not well vested in sustainability issues and environmental learning approaches. More professional development workshops to enhance teachers knowledge in sustainability and environmental learning need to be conducted at a grassroots level. Teachers should be encouraged to register with online courses or to attend attachment courses in Education for Sustainable Development for professional growth and development.

**What is your message to the youth?**
Work hard, because the future of a sustainable Namibia depends on your hands.
Holden Mole is the name. NaDEET’s my hangout spot. I love Namibia. My number one job is to get the basics - my food, water and shelter. “Education is the key”- I know everyone says it, but it is true. So if you don’t know, ask me.

Holden Mole, NaDEET, PO Box 8702, Swakopmund
email to: admin@nadeet.org or post them on NaDEET’s Facebook page

What is the closest star to planet earth? Janito, Rehoboth

Dear Janito

The closest star is called Proxima Centauri. It is located in the constellation Centaurus, a triple star system also known as the pointer to the Southern Cross. Look in the Night Sky Bush Telegraph to learn more.

Why should we keep our environment clean? How? Shunne, Rehoboth

Dear Shunne

Simple, because our livelihood depends on it! A clean environment benefits all living things in so many ways. Keeping our environment clean contributes to good health and it helps us preserve the environment for future generations. How do we keep it clean? Well, do not litter! And if there is litter, pick it up, but most importantly, practice the 3 important R’s of waste management: REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE!

Holden

Updates from Last Issue

Page 3: Flows and Cycles in the Ecosystem

Page 4: Succession in the Ecosystem

Page 5: Answer on how ecosystems can break down may vary. Here are two possibilities:
1. Aquatic animals die
2. Multiplication of alien invasive species, increased competition for resources for indigenous plants

Page 5: Follow the Arctic Tern’s 70,000km Migratory Route

Page 8: Succession within our human communities

Bush Telegraph
1st place winner: Eco Media Awards “Publishers House” category 2010
Official youth magazine of the Roan News

Written by: Viktoria Endjala
Illustrations: Ida Blauw, Innovative Design Arts
Edited by: Viktoria Keding
Proof reader: Jessica Kemper

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NaDEET Centre: A Sustainable Living Experience

NaDEET Centre offers week-long programmes for school, youth, educator & adult groups in the Namib Desert.

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