



The Finnish Association for Environmental Education is the only organisation in Finland which concentrates solely on furthering and supporting environmental education.

Our association, founded in 1990, is politically and religiously independent. Our members consist of individuals and organisations working with environmental education.

Our aim is to have an increasing number of educators in Finland with the will and skills to help children and youngsters to get the knowledge, skills and values that promote sustainable development.

Our work covers ecological, cultural, social and economic aspects of sustainable development.

Our work consists of

- Lobbying for improved conditions for environmental education
- Improving the cooperation between different actors within environmental education
- Providing information about environmental education to policy-makers, our members and the wider public
- Supporting the work of the educators and improving the quality of environmental education through the Eco-Schools / Green Flag environmental education program

Our most important mediums are

- The international Eco-Schools / Green Flag environmental education program for kindergartens and schools as well as learning institutions and leisure operators
- The national Environmental Education Days ("Ympäristökasvatuspäivät", read more in Finnish)
- The magazine Ympäristökasvatus ("Environmental Education", read more in Finnish), the only magazine in this field in Finland

Annually we also award the Rose of Environmental Education ("Ympäristökasvatuksen Ruusu") to a person, organization or project that has developed environmental education in an exceptional or ground-breaking manner.

Additional information:

Suomen Ympäristökasvatuksen Seura ry

Pohjoinen Hesperiankatu 15 A, 5th floor, 00260 Helsinki

tel. +358 9 4541 8151, e-mail: toimisto(a)ymparistokasvatus.fi

"Green flag" is a straight translation for "Vihreä lippu". Internationally it is called "Eco-Schools".

Environmental Management

The Eco-Schools Programme aims to raise students' awareness of environmental and related sustainable development issues through classroom study together with school and community action, and provides an integrated system for environmental management of schools based on an ISO14001/EMAS approach.

As a process of facilitating sustainable development at a local level, pupils are encouraged to take an active role in practical steps to reduce the environmental impact of the school. Eco-Schools thus extends learning beyond the classroom and develops responsible attitudes and commitment both at home and wider in the community. The Eco-Schools Green Flag, awarded to schools with high achievement in their Programme, is a recognised and respected eco-label for environmental education and performance.

Participation

The Programme incorporates seven elements which schools at any level can adopt as a methodology. These elements have been designed to be the core of the Eco-Schools process, yet the structure is flexible enough to be adopted in any country, and at any level of schools' previous environmental achievement. Pupil involvement throughout the process is an integral and essential factor. The participation of other stakeholders in the school and community in the decision-making process is an important step towards dialogue and cooperation, providing a good basis for citizenship education. This flexible system, with its pedagogic and practical elements, has made Eco-Schools a very successful programme with clear and tangible benefits to schools and communities, and of course to teachers and young people.

International Dimension

The programme is now being implemented in several countries in Europe, Africa, Asia and South America. The number of Eco-Schools is growing, and at the moment there are more than 32 000 participating schools in 47 countries. Eco-Schools programme may be known by different names in different countries, though they share the same methodology and concept, and are identified by the Eco-Schools logo and Green Flag.

Support and Communication

A number of activities, events and materials are available to support young people in their work, and training for teachers and others, both at the national level for country and region-specific support, and at the international level. National programmes count on Partnerships with Institutes, Organisations, Public Entities and Corporate sponsors to provide appropriate support to participating schools.

Eco-Schools in Finland

In Finland, the program is run under the name Vihreä lippu (Green Flag) by the Association for Environmental Education in Finland. The program is available for Finnish kindergartens, schools and trade schools. Since the initiation of the program in 1998, the number of participants has risen from six to over 200, reaching more than 65 000 children, youth and grown-ups. The program is based on the international principles and criteria, but the implementation and the materials have been specifically developed to apply to our schools system and culture.

Green Flag and City of Lappeenranta

City of Lappeenranta actively participates in this program.

Schools in Lappeenranta with Green Flag –status in 2015:

- Lappeenrannan Steinerkoulu (Steiner school)
- Myllymäen koulu (school)
- Lavolan koulu (school)
- Sammonlahden päiväkoti (day care)