

OMAN GREEN AWARDS

Moulding Green Generation

Teaming up with Oman Green Awards, Nomac Oman has embarked on a new green initiative to collect used papers from schools in order to send them for recycling

As a sequel to Oman Green Awards (OGA), the first Environmental Awards in the Sultanate, a new initiative for paper recycling at schools was launched recently in Barka by Nomac Oman, a subsidiary of ACWA Power International. In keeping with OGA's established goal to motivate behavioural change and increase awareness to protect and preserve the environment, the initiative seeks to encourage students to make use of recycling as an effective way to reduce their carbon footprint.

As the first step of the initiative, Nomac Oman handed over recycled drums to Al Amal Secondary School in Barka in order to collect used papers from the school premises. The company will replace the drums once it is filled to the capacity, and send the waste papers for recycling. The recycling will be done from Dubai through Muscat-based Aman Company. Around 50 students accompanied by two teachers from the school visited ACWA Power Barka's power and desalination plant phase one. This was followed by two informative presentations for students on desalination and paper recycling led respectively by Talal Al Mabsali, Operation and Maintenance Engineer, Nomac Oman and Fahad Ibrahim Al Kindi, Team Leader HSE, Nomac Oman. The initiative not only seeks to get the school rid of used papers getting accumulated in large quantities every day at its premises, but also envisions to mould a new generation of students deeply informed and conscious about environmental issues.

"Recycling is one of the best ways for us to have a positive impact on the world in which we live. Recycling is important to both the natural environment and us. We must act fast as the amount of waste we create is increasing all the time," says Fahad. "Since we do not have recycling facilities in Oman right now, we need to send them to Dubai. Nomac Oman will replace the drums once they are filled and take them to Aman Company which will get it recycled from Dubai. If the project proves to be successful we are looking to expand it to other schools and to the society as a whole," he explains.

During an interaction with students he stressed the importance of making the new generation more serious about the enormous ecological impact of rampant manufacturing of paper on an industrialized scale. "The procurement and processing of



HM's Environment Protection Prize awarded

The Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environment Protection 2011 was presented recently to the representative of the Nigerian Institute for Forestry Research by Dr Madeeha bint Ahmed al Shaibaniyah, Minister of Education. The ceremony was attended by representatives of the Unesco, Omani dignitaries and prominent Arab and international officials. The event took place on the sidelines of the Unesco's World Forum being hosted by Hungary. The participants hailed His Majesty the Sultan's continuous support to environment protection efforts, locally and internationally. They valued His Majesty's great concern for nature conservation against all sorts of hazards. The two-yearly prize was first announced by His Majesty Sultan Qaboos when he visited the Unesco's premises in 1989. The decision of the Director-General of the Unesco which announced to offer the 11th version of the prize to the Nigerian institute was based on the recommendations of the International Organisation's Co-ordination Office, the arbitration panel of the Prize. This comes in recognition of the Institute's major achievements in managing forests, environment, preserving bio-diversity, sustainable production for food security and providing the industrial raw materials and employment opportunities. The MAP Office's recommendations came within the context of the UN General Assembly's 2011 International Year for Forests.





raw materials have a variety of negative effects on the environment. Denudation of woodlands and exhaustion of water supplies are some of these effects. As the demand for paper has increased, more timber has been needed to meet the demand for wood pulp. In some cases this has meant the loss of valuable wildlife habitats and ecosystems, as old forests have been replaced by managed plantations, usually of fast-growing conifers. The lack of tree species diversity in managed forests has a direct impact on the biodiversity of the whole forest," he added.

Zainab Ahmed Al Balushi, teacher at Al Amal School Barka, said that she was very optimistic about the initiative because it could collect the papers and the plastic the school throws out each day and send them for recycling. In addition, it will help create awareness among the students and inculcate the habit of recycling among them. "Being part of UNESCO Associated Schools Project – ASPnet, our school already has different plans to educate students on issues related to UNESCO's overarching goal of promoting peace and international understanding," she said. "It includes several initiatives for sustainable development such as preserving water for the next generation. We are also part of an initiative for preserving water by Life-link Friendship School. They sent us guidelines and we gathered information on household water consumption in our area and sent the results. We also went to Jordan to do the presentation and discuss the results. It is aimed at making the students aware of water consumption and encourage them not to waste the water."

The students from Al Amal School consider this initiative as a good beginning towards awakening the eco-consciousness of the students. Maryam Saud exuded confidence saying that the new initiative will set the tone for a good behavioural change in treating used paper and plastic not only among the students but also in the society as a whole. Nada Ahmed and Mathar Mohammed, students from the same school, said youngsters can do a lot of things to make the society more informed about environment conservation.

Panasonic's Green Diary

- **Bio degradable bags:** Panasonic uses bio degradable bags in all its retail outlets. The third batch of the bags was sent out to Salalah recently.
- **Eco Diary:** This activity was launched as part of Panasonic's group-wide global commitment to drive eco-innovation by 2018, the 100th anniversary of its foundation. In this year Panasonic has received 350-400 diaries back and the international contest will be held in Paris in December. The contest promotes environmental awareness, creativity and expression for students who added to their diaries every day.
- **Kids Witness News:** This is a hands-on video education programme developed and supported by Panasonic. Children will be given equipment to shoot a short movie on how they are helping to preserve the environment.
- **Eco Quiz:** This event happened this year during Ramadan. There were hundreds of winners as anyone who got the answers right were given gifts.
- **Recycling:** The Panasonic office recycles used papers at its offices; over 450kg of waste paper were collected till date for this paper.
- **Eco Drive:** This has been conducted in 2011. About 10,000 energy saving bulbs have been distributed free of cost by all the outlets of Panasonic. The bulbs which can save 80 per cent of energy were also distributed during Ramadan to customers.

ESO joins UN's Billion Tree Campaign

In collaboration with the Emirates Environmental Group, Environment Society of Oman (ESO) contributed to the UN's Billion Tree Campaign. The ESO partnered with Al Oukdeen Primary School in Salalah where students helped plant 10 trees and were taught the importance of planting native trees in order to conserve water. Dr Mohsen Al Amri, ESO Board Member, who is helping the school create a native garden, said "It is wonderful that Al Oukdeen School is partnering with us. The Society has always been active in Salalah and we hope to work with more schools in the future."

