

LEAF programme award

The aim of Learning about Forests (LEAF) is to increase knowledge of forests and all their benefits and deepen the understanding of it among young people. To stimulate activities that will help children achieve an increased level of environmental maturity irrespective of age and previous knowledge.

The programme looks at all the functions forests provide for humans ranging from providing food and clean water to jobs.

The functions of forests can be seen in 4 perspectives:

- Cultural (how do people interact with forests)
- Ecological (how forests provide for rich biodiversity, clean air, improved soil quality and much more)
- Economic (forests provide lots of resources and jobs)
- Social (how people use the forest in a social context)

This knowledge is achieved through environmental education relating to forests and all their values. The LEAF programme organizes periodic themes to focus at issues relevant to discussions in society. Within the themes, LEAF has relevant materials and methods available at the websites.

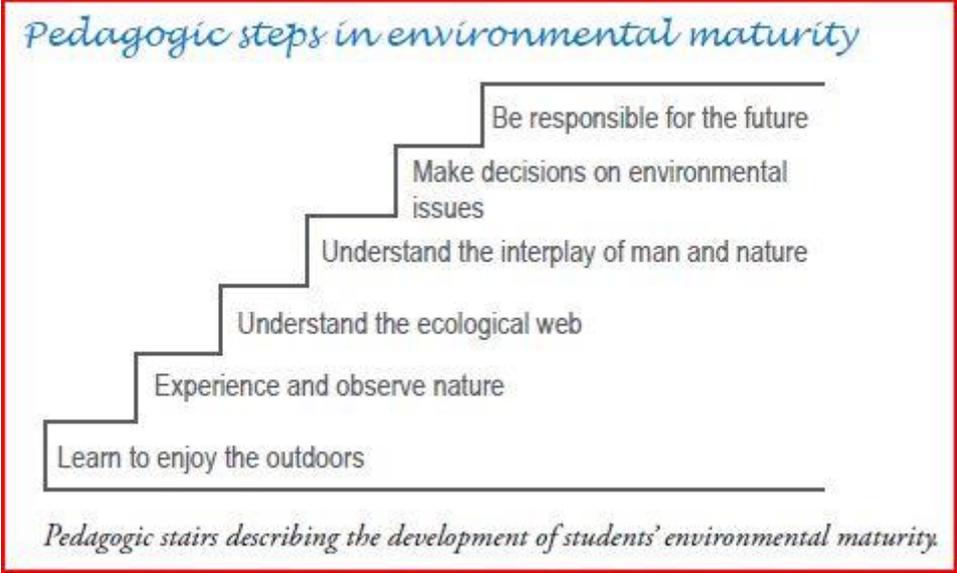
Schools carry out activities of own choice to gain a greater understanding about their forests and the valuable services they provide. In a number of countries, schools are awarded a certificate of participation as recognition of their work. Another option is to fulfil all goals in the programme to achieve the LEAF award. The national coordinator is responsible for assessment and delivery of certificates and awards. All activities, teacher training, materials for students and teachers are in accordance with the LEAF programme aim and philosophy.

The LEAF award is optionally for each participating country.

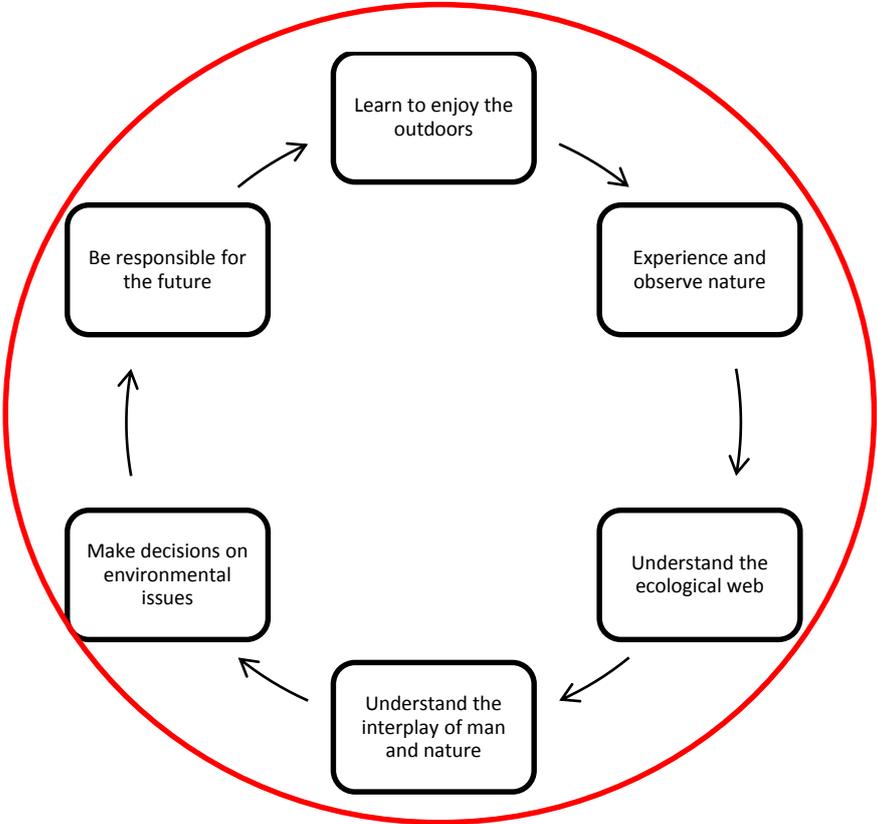
For schools to achieve the prestigious award, the first step for schools is to register for participation. Then they can start planning the necessary activities. The Activity Plan (appendix 1) must be approved by a LEAF officer before the programme commence.

Once a school has successfully completed all phases and the steps of the programme the school applies for the award (see Appendix 2). If a school is successful and meets all the criteria listed below it will be awarded a plaque, this **plaque will be the shape of a tree** (The LEAF logo). For every year a school submits a report and if successful it will be awarded a new leaf, the year the school is awarded will be written on the leaf, this leaf can then be added to the plaque. Each leaf will symbolize a schools commitment to the life learning ethos of the LEAF programme.

LEAF activities should always follow the pedagogic steps in environmental maturity;



The steps can be repeated several times, but for each time the experience will advance, the knowledge increase and the horizon expand.



Step 1: Learn to enjoy the outdoors

To learn to enjoy outdoor activity is a practical sensitivity training. This means to have positive experiences and to develop a positive attitude toward the environment. This step is the most important level to start tuning your heart and feelings towards outdoor activities and to gain a general curiosity about nature, nature processes and human interaction with forests.

Step 2: Experience and observe nature

To experience and observe nature is important to become familiar with nature's systems and different species. When doing observation activities in forests you will also get experience and personal relations to these issues. This knowledge does not change behaviour, but provides us with a better basis for reflections and personal adaption of behaviour.

Step 3: Understand the ecological web

Learning about the ecological web is of importance to understand the interplay in forests. The knowledge and understanding of ecological interplay between single species, within different ecosystems and within bigger areas with many specific structures leads to a better understanding of nature's processes.

Step 4: Understand the interplay of man and nature

Understanding the interplay between humans and forests is crucial for understanding the potential conflict of interests that exist between different stakeholders. That is why the LEAF programme works with all aspect of the relationship between nature and people. The programme reflects all the functions forests fulfil for people; cultural, ecological, economic and social. Understanding the balance between these perspectives is crucial when studying how humans interact with forests.

Step 5: Make decisions on environmental issues

When understanding the interplay between forests and humans we can identify topics where there are conflicts of interest. To work towards an understanding of the background on different views gives the possibilities to make better decisions and take alternative actions. Skills for asking good questions are crucial to collect knowledge and reliable information. With a wide range of knowledge covering different perspectives it is possible to work seriously with the conflict of interest between different opinions and to make up one's own opinion based on reliable information.

Step 6: Be responsible for the future

In order to increase environmental awareness it is crucial to have an understanding of what sustainable development actually means, and what one self can do about it. Each and every individual are responsible for their own actions. Based on education and knowledge, modern citizens can make well-founded decisions to maintain and improve on a sustainable living. Working on responsibility issues spreads knowledge and attitudes to support future consumers and decision makers to make better choices.

Phases to set up LEAF programme

1. Set up a Forest Team

The establishment of a committee is the most important driving force for successfully implementing the LEAF programme. A school may wish to use an existing committee within the school. Students have to be member of the committee. The committee is responsible of the programme implementation in the school and shall be the driving force towards achieving the LEAF award. The committee shall decide how the program shall be implemented in daily activities and to support and advice teachers in this process.

2. Activity Plan

The activity plan is a form you fill in and send to the LEAF officer for approval before you start your work.

- Choose one of the following aspects

Conservation and protection of our native forests and afforested areas/ Instilling love for trees in urban settings/ Making responsible choices to save and protect forests of the world/ Planting more trees

- Identify educational activities related to the six steps of the programme

You must have at least one activity for each step. The four perspectives (Cultural – Ecological- Social- Economic) do not have to be used for each step, but at least once each during the six steps.

- Look at the existing curriculum and identify in which subjects it is suitable to adapt LEAF activities

The LEAF work shall be as integrated as possible to current curriculum. It shall not function as a new subject.

- Identify activities that can be done outdoors.

You have to be outdoors to complete step one and two. Identify how this can be done if your school is not within walking distance to a forest. Perhaps you can rent a bus or visit a nearby park.

3. Informing and Involving

Schools have to set up a LEAF notice board preferably in a prominent area within their school. This notice board should be updated on regular basis. All students and staff should be made aware of the LEAF programme and what activities are taking place. Schools are encouraged to establish links with other school in a LEAF country but this is not mandatory.

4. End of year report

At the end of the year you must report your activities when applying for the award. Write the report as described in the application form for the LEAF award. For continuous improvement we would like you to inform of any obstacles you may have come across, what worked well and what did not. The report shall be sent together with the application for the award.

5. Applying for the award.

- Fill out the application form below and send it to the LEAF Officer.

Appendix 1

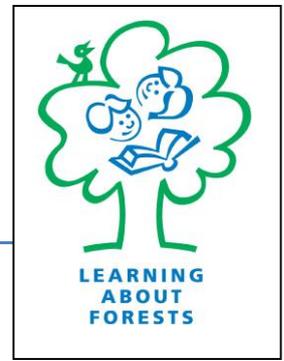
Activity Plan

Use this form (or as a template) to plan your activities. Please note that the plan must be approved by your LEAF Coordinator before you commence.

Title of Project :								
Class	Activity	Step 1-6	Perspective: <i>Cultural</i> <i>Economic</i> <i>Ecologic</i> <i>Social</i>	Subject	Duration of activity	Indoor/ outdoor	Time of the Year	Remarks

Please send the completed form for approval to the LEAF coordinator at js.gatt@mail.com

LEAF programme award



Application Form

You must answer all questions of this application form in full. Please ensure you have read the questions thoroughly and that you have met every requirement outlined in the checklist below before you send us in your application.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, do not hesitate to contact your LEAF Coordinator.

Checklist

Please ensure that the following requirements are in place before you submit this application form for the LEAF Award

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have established a LEAF forest team.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have an approved Activity Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have completed the activities described in the Activity Plan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have made a report of the project and none of the information is plagiarised. Where necessary kindly quote source.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• You have an updated LEAF noticeboard

Application for the LEAF Award

Please fill in all of the below fields:

School Name:

School Type:

Number of classes in school:

Address 1:

Address 2:

Telephone:

Email:

Number of classes working with LEAF:

Number of Teachers working with LEAF:

Number of Students working with LEAF:

We, the undersigned, declare that the enclosed is a true record of our LEAF experience, and wish to apply for the LEAF Award on behalf of our school.

Name of Head of School:

Name of LEAF link teacher:

Name of Forest team leader:

Date of Submission:

Head of School

LEAF link teacher

Forest team leader

School Stamp

Please answer questions 1-4 below in relation to your LEAF Project:

1: Forest Team

- **Who sits on your Forest committee? List each member and their respective role. (include a picture of the LEAF forest team)**
- **How often does your committee meet?**
 - Weekly
 - Fortnightly
 - Monthly
 - Other Please Specify
- **Please include an example of minutes taken from two of your LEAF committee meetings**

2: Project Report

- **Project title :** _____
- **In not more than 150 words briefly give a general overview of your project.**
- **Attach a soft copy of your project report here including any relevant documents.**
- **Present a copy of your approved Activity Plan.**

Class:							
Teacher:							
Step 1-6	Activity	Subject	Perspective: Cultural Economic Ecologic Social	Time spent	Indoor or outdoor?	Spring, summer, autumn or winter?	Remarks

- **Please attach at least two good quality images of your outdoors activities**

3: Informing and Involving

- Is the noticeboard set up? (include a picture of your LEAF noticeboard)
- How often is the noticeboard updated?
- Have you had any contacts with the wider community (for e.g., using outside help, consultation, involving parents, publicity gained, industry links, speakers)? If so, please specify.

4: Report evaluation

- Explain how the ecological/ socio-cultural/ economical dimensions have been explored through your project.
- Briefly describe how the participating students experienced the programme?
- What makes you think that your project was effective?
- Can you provide any evidence that supports this?

Feedback

- Would you like to highlight any positive or negative aspects you encountered while working on the programme?
- Any suggestions or recommendations you would like to make to the LEAF Coordination?

Remember to display ALL additional work to the LEAF assessor/s when they visit your school.
