

A captivating experience in Pembroke

Cleaning out Environment

The natural environment encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally. As one can clearly see, it is a very important factor in life, but unfortunately not everyone is taking care of it!

Earlier this week, my classmates and I were representing our school, Handaq Middle School, when we visited the Pembroke National Park. This park is a 'Natura 2000 site', which is a community-wide network of natural protection areas. In Malta, one can find 28 sites forming this 'Natura 2000' program. Our class, was helping with the clean-up and the final result surprised us quite a lot. At the beginning, we thought it was quite clean, but after two hours of cleaning, we found out that it wasn't. We picked up several types of waste such as; broken glass, lighters, plastic bottles and even some illegal substances! We were all quite astonished, seeing how some people cannot pull their own weight. The final weight of the amount of trash collected, which left us in surprise-disbelief, was 144.7kg.

Many creatures die because of this type of pollution. One can name; for example turtles, who accidentally eat plastic bags which are blown with the wind into the water from the ground. After a lot of time, the plastic waste starts to melt and toxic substances are absorbed into the soil, killing a lot of inhabitants and finally polluting the water in the water table.

During the clean-up, we carried some interviews with certain people, among which were Miss Eco-Malta, a representative of Nature Trust and the minister of Sustainable Development, Environment and Climate Change, Hon. José Herrera. We discussed how people are taking for granted that when a dirty place, there is always someone to clean up after them. We, as citizens, need to make the world sustainable and not leave things for the government to solve. The students exchanged views on how we can teach people to be more responsible for their actions. We came up with several ideas such as; installing cameras or hiring eco-wardens. It is important that the Maltese community learns of the damages done to the environment and how we can fix them. We also pointed out that instead of using the money to arrange or improve some places, we are wasting this money to clean up after other people. It is important, that especially young people are aware of such situations as we are Malta's future.

The government is allotting a lot of funds in maintaining a beautiful environment, but it is finally on our hands to save the Maltese environment and its inhabitants. The aim behind the clean-up was to inspire and educate others, to heighten awareness and respect for nature.