



ECO-NEWSLETTER

Green Section

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ECOSIA: as an alternative to Google, use this search engine, which plants a tree for every search!
Install it on your PC/phone/device!

Introduction

Welcome to the first edition of the Green Section of the Amicale's Eco-Newsletter!

This publication, which aims to function on a bi-monthly basis, has the goal of educating staff members of the Council of Europe on environmentally-friendly and sustainable initiatives and good habits which can be adopted both at work and in general. It will also inform readers on past and

upcoming events and activities, whether organised by the Green Section in the context of the CoE, in Strasbourg / Alsace, and in the wider world. Relevant local and international news will also be summarised here.

The Green Section of the Amicale was re-launched at the end of 2016, and several successful activities were initiated throughout 2017.

Now, in 2018, we have ambitious plans, and hope to organise many wide-ranging, thought-provoking activities, participate in progressive events in Strasbourg, and encourage colleagues and the Administration to adopt sustainable practices.

You will see below some of the planned and past activities.



BEFORE THE FLOOD
[Documentary](#), 2016

"I remember the anger that I felt, reading all these stories about explorers and settlers who would wipe out an entire species and, in the process, decimate the eco-system forever. The difference now is: We're knowingly doing this. It's just on a much larger scale."

Leonardo Di Caprio, quote from the documentary.



Green Section activities / events



PAST EVENTS

8th February, 1st veggie lunch

18 colleagues joined in the Agora to enjoy a vegetarian/vegan lunch, discuss benefits of such a diet, and chat about environmental matters. It was considered very enjoyable by those colleagues who joined,

and many asked to reconvene again very soon!

Although our next Green Section organised Veggie Lunch will probably take place later in the Spring, there is no reason why interested colleagues cannot organise such lunches on a more frequent basis! We are ready to support you in this!

UPCOMING EVENTS

5th- 9th March, CoE Eco Week

A big week for the Green Section (and we hope for the Council in general): during this week, which coincides with UN World Wildlife Day (3rd March) we are organising several events and awareness stands including the following:

5th: Zéro Déchet association

in Strasbourg will host a Stand, presenting their activities and informing colleagues on ways to reduce their waste at work and home.

6th: Screening of the documentary “Emptying the skies” in cooperation

with the Bern Convention during the lunch break, a film which takes a stark view at illegal bird killing in Europe- a phenomenon which is not well publicised, and thus should be given more media attention.

7th: Conference on “My health, my planet, my budget”

during the lunch break, presented by Clémence Pouclet, co-founder of “L’Avis en Vert”, on links between environment and health, and everyday tips and solutions.

9th: ECOncert to raise funds for a local Strasbourg eco association during the lunch break in Parliamentarians Bar.

Eco-themed songs performed by CoE staff members, accompanied by a glass of organic wine or bio beer! Donations appreciated!



“Climate change is the single greatest threat to a sustainable future but, at the same time, addressing the climate challenge presents a golden opportunity to promote prosperity, security and a brighter future for all.”

Ban Ki-Moon,
Secretary General,
United Nations
11 April 2014



25 March (tbc), Cleaning of the river:

In cooperation with the Kayak club, we are looking for volunteers to help clean the banks of the river near the CoE! Keep an eye on the website for further info.

Fun fact!

Queen Elizabeth II has [banned](#) plastic straws and bottles on royal estates after having watched a David Attenborough documentary. Let's hope that many commoners will follow this royal example ☺

Sustainable tips at work*

1. **Always bring your own mug** when getting a drink at the canteen/vending machine. You should receive a 5 cent reduction at canteens, and will help to reduce waste. Also avoid disposable cutlery/plates, etc.
2. An alternative to using coffee machines which generally use non-recyclable capsules, **is to use a cafetière** (French press) at work, reducing much waste.
3. **Turn lights off in office** at end of day, and also when leaving the office for a lengthy period (e.g. at least 30 mins); work by lamplight when full lights are not needed.
4. **Turn computer off at end of day**, BUT, during other shorter breaks such as coffee, lunch, or meetings, put on standby (switching computer on and off too much uses more energy).
5. **Print less**, and when you have to, print recto-verso, and ensure to always collect what you have printed. Avoid printing emails unless completely necessary. For less official, long documents, try increasing the margins, which may reduce the number of pages.
6. Make sure to **recycle correctly in the office**. Recycle correctly throughout the buildings, ensuring to use the correct bin. There are also special bins for used batteries.
7. **Do not have the window open** when A/C or heating is on.
8. **Use the stairs** instead of lifts- environmental and health benefits (*Some new eco-friendly [lifts](#) have been installed in the CoE buildings*).
9. Ideally **walk or cycle to work**, if not use public transport, and if you must take the car, try to **carpool** when possible. Keep an eye out for the upcoming Spring activities "Au Palais à Pied"- a walking challenge, and "[Au boulot à vélo](#)"- a cycling to work challenge.
10. Use only as much water as you need in the WC. Instead of drinking from bottled water, **use a filter jug in the office**.
11. When sending post at work, if possible, use the "**Courrier Vert**" option, which guarantees that the post will not be delivered by airplane. This is best used for non-urgent correspondence, especially within Europe.
12. In restaurants and canteens, **support organic, local foods, and consider trying vegetarian options**. The more support we give to these, the more choices should become available overtime. Also, where possible, reduce food waste by specifying the portion size you would like.

Sustainable tips in everyday life

1. When not using your **phone** in general, **put it on low-battery mode**. Then when not using it at all for extended periods of time (e.g. at night), **put it on airplane-mode**, or if you are expecting calls, at least switch off wifi, bluetooth and other battery-draining resources. You will need to recharge your phone far less often, benefitting both you and the environment!
2. **Reduce food waste**, energy and save yourself time by cooking meals in large quantities, then refrigerating, or freezing the left-overs for future consumption.
3. When shopping, **bring a reusable (hemp) bag**. Avoid taking unnecessary plastic or paper bags for food (e.g. fruit and veg) as much as possible. If you must take a shop bag, you can reuse it at home, or when shopping.
4. Use **Ecosia** as your default search engine. They plant trees for every search!
5. **Shop and dine at eco-friendly establishments in Strasbourg** and around. There are many- and increasingly more and more- such places which promote zero waste, local/organic foods, etc.
6. **Choose to receive correspondence**, i.e. electricity bills, bank forms, loyalty coupons and newsletters, etc, **by email** instead of regular post.

*See also DGA's "My 10 steps for the environment [campaign](#)"

Strasbourg events / news

International Straw-free Day:

February 3rd was international straw-free day in Strasbourg and around the World. The Straw has become a common item when ordering a drink and is destroying our beautiful planet. In France more than 8.8 million straws are used and thrown away each day! It is an item that **we use for less than ten minutes** but ends up in our parks, waterways and oceans where they never break down and have become one of the

top ten items found in beach clean-ups.



International Straw-free Day along with Bas Les Pailles and The Last Straw campaign aim to reduce the use of plastic straws throughout the world by

encouraging everyone to use eco-friendly alternatives.

Here is how you can help to stop the use of plastic straws:

1. Say no to plastic straws whenever ordering a drink and politely request "no straw".
2. Encourage your friends and family to do the same.
3. Use your own paper, glass, bamboo or stainless steel straw instead.

Bio-sourced gas in Alsace:

It is a first in France and maybe worldwide. Last month, Butagaz sold its first 20 bottles of bio-sourced gas. This is great news for our planet's energy transition since bio-sourced gas is composed of plants, such as sugar beetroot wastes, straw and wood shavings. And guess where you can buy these bottles? In Alsace of course!

Strasbourg eco-associations



Zéro déchet- Ambassador training, 24 February. Learn how to become an ambassador of zero waste.

Alsace nature- We coordinated with them last November 2017 during the clean-up of the banks of the River Ill.

"Les Ciné-Climat"- In the framework of its Campaign "[Plan Climat 2030](#)", the Eurométropole of Strasbourg is organising several screenings of documentaries followed by live debates, on the issue of climate change. The next one will be held on Friday 16 March- "I have a dream. Africa".



Contact Information

If you have enjoyed this Eco-Newsletter and wish to stay informed about Green Section activities, please visit our [webpage](#), and do not hesitate to contact us:

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Finally, many thanks to the Contributors!

Tania Braulio, Stephanie Denton, Anastasiia Nohovitsyna, Anne Van Es and a **big MERCI** to Elodie Arrighi for the excellent French translation!

Local tips!

EKYOG

ETHICAL FASHION

Ethical, eco-friendly French fashion [brand](#)



[Café](#) emphasising organic, vegetarian produce, and sustainable practices.

We are always looking for new contributions, and also for any "green tips" you may do at home or work. We strongly encourage you to share your experiences!

We are looking for volunteers to help out during the CoE Eco week, specifically to assist at the stands during the lunch breaks. Please let us know if you wish to volunteer ☺

