

HOW TO EDUCATE PEOPLE FOR A BETTER ATTITUDE REGARDING THE BIO-ENVIRONMENT

[Dr. Pia Elena Mihnea](#)

Romanian Marine Research Institute
Romania

After centuries of development, humanity has become fully aware of the damage it has caused to nature. Unfortunately, people's attitude about the environment remains unchanged. Severe measures must be taken to save nature before it dies. The idea of offering people a sensible education on the need for responsibility towards the bio-environment is very timely, but how do we proceed to implement this?

The first step is to 'educate' the teachers. We need a forum that would take charge of organizing courses and symposia for ecologists on a worldwide basis. They must be knowledgeable on how to achieve a real ecological movement on how to manage nature in their own country.

Who are the ecologists and how can they contribute? Successful contribution could be obtained from every responsible citizen, but the effect could be greatly enhanced if 'ecologically-educated' people are involved. Ecologists must be responsible in making their own decisions and could include young and old people as well as scientists, teachers, engineers, farmers, priests, and students.

The leaders of all nations could be invited to be members of our Biopolitics International Organization. All countries without an Environment Department should be encouraged to form one, whose minister could be invited to become a member of the B.I.O. The department on the environment should have a network of institutions under its administration with the duty of supervising the observance of environmental integrity.

European or worldwide environmental legislation is necessary. All specialized scientific institutions will be asked to establish the following:

- new and correct standards for threshold concentration of each category of waste input;
- measures to amend the present state of pollution;
- new non-polluting technologies for resource operation, industries, agriculture, etc.
- new technologies and methods for the destruction, control, dumping or disposal of wastes;

The results of all these studies will be the integral part of the environmental protection legislation to be implemented by all countries. The knowledge obtained on pollutant effects on environmental conditions, the development of efficient monitoring programs, new technologies for the salvation of the present state of our environment, as well as the correct implementation of environmental protection legislation will be rewarded by national and international B.I.O.prizes.

A special department within the national police force of every country, to be called Environmental Police, needs to be established. This department must have control over every infraction upon the environmental legislation.

The education process

The education process will be organized depending on the age and grouping. For children of pre-school age, it is advisable to introduce rudiments on nature, plants, useful or harmful insects, and on the necessity to protect all living creatures. At this age, as well as in the very first years of school, one or two days a week, children can be drawn into different sorts of social actions such as 'to give medical advice and take care' of trees, birds and little animals living in parks, zoos or forests situated not far from their towns. Children must get the understanding of cleanliness as the means to fight every kind of illness.

The state can provide children with a limited natural area for their own use, such as 'breeding farms' of hares, silkworms, guinea pigs, singing birds, fish, etc., that will make them sensitive to bios and would provide knowledge on plant and animal ethology. Aside from lessons on botany, zoology, anatomy, general biology and ecology, knowledge on pollution, its consequences and ways of fighting it, must be introduced into school. Movies and cartoons will be another way to sensitize children to love and feel responsible towards nature. Rewards, such as excursions and national or international camps for young people may be offered to all those that contribute meaningful results.

During the university or polytechnic studies, no matter what faculty, students must get basic knowledge on environmental protection. Depending on the speciality, they have to be knowledgeable on the essentials of non-polluting technologies and the methods to alleviate the

present situation of environmental degradation, as well as the needed legislation.

For those that are destined to become teachers, a very serious revision of the curriculum has to be undertaken. The future teachers will need to be trained to teach children in this new concept.

Mature people finished with their formal instruction should receive a bioenvironmental education in associations, clubs or conferences presented by specialists or specialized media. By all means they should be integrated into the pertinent trend of opinion in matters concerning the preservation of bios.

The old, retired people can also be charged as volunteers to care for trees, flowers, historic monuments, to be on the watch regarding the discharge of wastes, and, in a word, to help the Environmental Police.

Newspapers and reviews would help to a better understanding of the fate of our planet. We have a wonderful example, the "Sherkin Comment", published by Matt Murphy in Sherkin Island, Ireland. This accomplishes the mission of spreading all news regarding the actual pollution of the sea, the decreasing of the total fish population, the right time to fish, the behavior of marine animals, and their importance as natural resources or as a link in the life chain. The most important daily newspapers could offer a page about the policies that must be used in different aspects of pollution protection.

The B.I.O. should make an appeal to great and world-famous artists from all countries to present shows whose revenues are to be spent for the benefit of bios salvation. This money will be directed to movie production, book printing and generally for education on the bio-environment. Financial support could also be obtained from great industrialists interested in non-polluting technologies.

In addition, a special calendar may be dedicated to environmental salvation and may be called "Life Salvation Day", "Thanksgiving to Mother Nature Day", or "The Awakening to Reality Day", when social activities such as planting of trees, bushes, flowers and restoration of monuments may be undertaken.

Dr. **Pia Elena Mihnea** holds a Ph.D. in biological sciences and is a researcher in marine biology at the Romanian Marine Research Institute. Author of seven books and 47 scientific papers on the effects of pollution on the Black Sea, Dr. Mihnea specializes in ecophysiology-ecotoxicology and natural marine monitoring against pollution. She contributed six chapters to the Algological Treatise being edited for the first time in Romania, for whose elaboration she received the Emanoil Teodorescu Prize in 1983. She is a member of the International Commission for the Scientific Exploration of the Mediterranean, a member of the Biological Society of Romania, and the vice-President of the Society for cellular Biology and Pathology.