



# SUSTAINABILITY NEWSLETTER



March 2025

**Dear ISZL community,**

Welcome to our second Sustainability Community Newsletter.

If you'd like us to highlight something, please contact Zoe Badcock.

[Click here](#) to read our first newsletter from December 2024.

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## SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY

The Sustainability Committee continues to meet every two weeks on the Zug Campus with Stefan Dittli (Operations) and Andrea Gerlich (Admissions and Advancement) from the Leadership Team, Jessie Shannon (non-teaching staff), Zoe Badcock (High School), Mags Faber, Marta Reczuck and Victoria Newman (Primary School), Kathrine Hoffmann and Laura Price (Parents' Association), and a few High School students. If you want to learn more about our progress in developing our ISZL Sustainability Strategy, please contact any team member.

Stefan and Zoe meet with Klima Charta Zug, our sustainability consultants, every month, and they provide us with advice on local legislation and access to free consultations such as the Energy audit provided by the Kanton recently. They also provide an external lens to the strategy being developed.

The meetings focus on keeping all committee members updated and “quick wins” using an action tracker aligned to our four themes: Nature as Inspiration for Wellbeing; Regenerative Learning; Operations (Mobility, Waste, Food, Energy, Purchasing); and Connections, Community and Communication.

Aligned with Regenerative Learning, Zoe has met with teachers in the Middle School to learn more about their innovative interdisciplinary units, as well as a group of Grade 8 students interested in informing the community about the carbon impact of food and food packaging for their Grade 8 Challenges.

## OPERATIONS UPDATE

The operations team have been following up on items that arose in the Padlet created by our community to achieve some "quick wins," making progress visible. The following list provides an overview of those actions — or “quick wins” — where we see progress or even successes already. However, looking at the very long list of things we could (or even should) address ASAP, it is obvious that we are not always moving forward as quickly as possible.

At the same time, I would like to thank all who have been involved and invested their valuable time to advance these topics to the extent possible. And, in addition, anyone who has a calling for supporting sustainability more, please feel free to contact Zoe or Stefan.

Action/Project/Quick-Win	Progress Update
Implementation of the PV system	This was a successful initial step mentioned in the last newsletter already. I am mentioning it here again as it triggered interesting and valuable follow-up projects.
Analyse interest for eCar and/or eBike charging at High School	Using the renewable energy generated by the PV system to charge eBikes and/or eCars would be great. As an integral part of a student project, two HS students, Michael and Yair, have produced a report on demand for e-charging mobility stations at the HS. The results from the report will inform next steps. We will keep you posted.
Analysis of data	The PV system generates renewable energy. Teaching staff started to use the data for analysis with students and the more data we have the more interesting the analysis will be.
High School Energy Consulting	Through the collaboration with our partner “Klima Charta Zug” we were able to work with an energy expert to analyse how we are using energy at the High School. Because of this connection, we were able to benefit from a free report (subsidised through the canton of Zug). We received the report last week and are now prioritising areas where we can reduce our energy consumption and hence our CO2 footprint.
Using Eco-Friendly products for cleaning	Our Facility teams are well aware of the fact that we can make conscious choices when using cleaning products. Whenever possible, we are moving towards more eco-friendly products being used. We are also influencing — to the extent possible — our external partner in a positive way.
Recycling	Members of the Parents’ Association, together with student and Facilities staff at the HS, had two meetings already to discuss options to improve recycling. While it feels the ideas are helpful and implementation will change things quite a bit, experience shows, it is all about educating those who throw things away so that proper separation and recycling can be done. We all (staff, students, and parents) should aim at being role models here.

Action/Project/Quick-Win	Progress Update
Lighting solutions that require less energy	We are looking at replacing old lighting solutions with newer and much more energy efficient solutions (e.g.: LED), inside and outside. However, changes would come at significant costs and will have to be budgeted for the next financial year.
Various small improvements	The teams are trying to identify areas that seem to be small but can still make a difference (e.g.: for our Kiosk at Zug Campus, at what point in time are we wrapping individual pieces of cake in plastic?).
Purchase Management	Consistent procurement for the whole school has enabled various ways to improve sustainability (e.g.: less deliveries; comparing potential suppliers to then decide for the supplier that offers the best package of economical and ecological sustainability).

## STUDENT AND STAFF ACTION IN SUSTAINABILITY

### YFS Initiatives

The YFS initiatives teams held another very successful Parent Climate event as part of the Youth Forum Switzerland events.

Speakers included youth activist, Lesein Mutunkei from Trees 4 Goals; Jaideep Bansal from GHE; and Jane and Martial Zohoungbogbo from Kokrobite Chiltern Centre. There was also a student panel together with our High School Sustainability Lead, Zoe Badcock, where we learned about the many student-led projects that have been inspired by YFS-initiatives, including the Zero Carbon and Zero Waste groups and the Villars Wetland Project.

The Zero Waste Group is currently working with the Parents Association to continue their plan to reduce waste from International Day and have now started thinking more about how to improve recycling at the HS.



## Youth Forum Switzerland (YFS-2025)

We were lucky to host many sustainability focused panels, talks and impact labs during the main event of YFS 2025.

Impact Labs where participants get involved: Equity Sustainability Investment Game, The Conflict Resolution Lab, Searching for the Ecological-Self: an introduction to Vision Questing, Fripouille: An eco-conscious atelier, Warm Data Lab, Storytelling for Change: Film, Climate, and Communities, Regenerative Economics.

Panels and Talks included: Beyond the Tipping Point: How We Can Still Steer the Climate Future, Transitioning to a Circular Economy; Accountability Across Sectors: Government, Industry, and Youth in the Climate Crisis; Innovative Practices for Biodiversity Protection and Sustainable Resource Management; and Jaideep Bansal's Keynote on the progress being made in India through his organisation Global Himalaya Expedition Impact Ventures. Jaideep has attended all our YFS events and made a lasting impact on ISZL.

If you'd like to be involved in future YFS events, particularly the hands-on Impact Labs, contact Fabio Paron.



## EcoSchools Updates

EcoSchools started at ISZL in January 2024 and have been exploring the theme of Sustainable Food. All the divisions, Primary, Middle and High School have EcoSchools groups and who have been actively exploring how they can improve food sustainability at ISZL. The groups are coordinated by a steering committee led by Zoe Badcock. This committee has students, teachers, parents and school leadership representatives. Each group has gathered data through an audit of the issues they care about and then produced an action plan.

We are now in the final steps and are organising a school-wide celebration of plant-based food. If we are to reduce our carbon footprint, as an institution, we need to be eating less meat.

Students, parents and educators are encouraged to submit their favourite vegetarian meal into our tasting competition on Tuesday 1 April. We will have voting slips and the top three on each campus will receive special recognition and be integrated into the school food offerings. We will also be preparing a recipe book with all the entries to celebrate our diversity.



## Sustainability and Leadership Summit in Monaco

Sixteen students applied to be part of ISZL's delegation to this event. Five students were selected, but it was a tough decision and great to see so many 9th and 10th grade students stepping up to be involved in sustainability. The five students, Lumi, Victoria, Giulia, Axel and Leo are now developing a project related to improving access to nature on our HS Campus. They are collaborating with this month's sustainability hero, Victoria Newman, and reaching out to other schools that have similar projects.



They were excited to meet the 60 other students from schools around Europe and Israel, tackling similar problems in different contexts. Asked what was their biggest learning, they said that their understanding of the complexity of sustainability was increased, that collaboration was essential and that we have to work together to solve these wicked problems.

## SUSTAINABILITY HERO

Five years ago during COVID, our Early Years teacher, **Victoria Newman**, began to grow plants from seeds. From reading books and watching documentaries she found herself deeply impacted by what she perceived was happening to our environment and made changes to her personal life, becoming vegan, focusing on a more sustainable way of living, and realising that creating healthy soil was her calling.



Victoria delved into the possibilities of Bokashi composting, gained a certificate followed a year long Permaculture Design Course and undertook a workshop in Sociocracy. Keen to share what she had learned with others she applied for an FFE grant to begin Bokashi composting in the Early Years.

Connecting to work already undertaken by Laurence Trengrove for the Early Years garden redevelopment, they invited interested colleagues in Early Years to be part of the Garden Representatives group. Sharing weekly updates via an internal newsletter on the garden, with information provided by the grade levels reps, they are committed to ensure all of their community are aware of the plans and possibilities to support learning in the garden.

Victoria and the team have inspired and supported students to become knowledgeable composters and active gardeners. Let's hope they continue to grow these roots as they move through ISZL.

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## SUSTAINABILITY IN THE CURRICULUM

This month, we are celebrating the Middle School Grade 8 interdisciplinary unit, "Gemeinderat" developed by Andy Thain (MS subject lead for Language and Literature), Kathy Kirton, Nica Froman and Sophie Mettes.

The team wanted to show that climate change had an immediacy on local environments in Switzerland and wasn't just a problem in other parts of the world. Students looked at the impacts of climate change on three fictional Swiss towns, loosely based on Sattel, Stoos and Zermatt and had talks from the head of tourism in Wengen, Herr Wegmüller, Barry Dequanne on managing big organisations, Maria Voutos on managing change, Ian Martin an award winning snowsports podcaster and Robin Stoney from Glencore on the role of regulatory compliance in promoting sustainability.



The impact on learning for our students was impressive. Here's what some students wrote that they used to think:

*"... climate change was important but it didn't matter to me to make change since I didn't know how to change places in [...] the Alps. I also thought that things impacted the environment but I only knew the main knowledge that many people know about."*

*"...that global warming was just causing the glaciers to melt and the world was becoming warmer. I also used to think global warming was only affecting temperature in certain places. I also believed that the production of energy was the main source of carbon footprint."*

*"...I used to think that I knew a lot about the environment and how small towns in Switzerland were affected because I have seen Wengen throughout the years and it has drastically changed in the weather and the snow quantity and quality."*

And now they think that:

*"... everyone can make change even if it's little things and that almost everything you do can impact the environment that you don't realise. So now I think that it's important to take action and so I don't do things that would be necessary."*

*"...there is still so much I would like to learn a lot more about. I also know now our everyday activities increase our carbon footprint. Before I did not know how much ski resorts could be truly affected so much by climate change. Now after this progress, I strongly agree that something has to be done to slow down climate change. Based on the learning, I believe that each person should become more sustainable such as flying less by plane and travelling more by train and if possible change your car to a electric car to be more ecofriendly."*

*"... there is always more to learn especially after talking to specialists about the field that they are in. The environment will make these small villages stop running because of the amount of snow decreasing per year. This will increasingly become easier to see in years in the future."*

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES AND NETWORKS

**Compass Education Courses / Make the Change / Gaia Education**

**SGIS Sustainability Collaborative Learning Group** co-founded by ISZL – minutes of meetings

**ECIS Sustainability and Regenerative Practices** SIG – webinar #2 on using Warm Data Labs

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Thank you for reading our newsletter and for supporting our initiative.  
Keep you eyes pealed for future newsletters, events, and information.

**We are always looking for contributions to this newsletter!**  
**If you have ideas, please reach out to us.**

*Sincerely, The ISZL Sustainability Committee 2024-25*