



TETHYS RESEARCH INSTITUTE



## Green policy

On board our research vessel "Pelagos", we do our best to protect the environment through a series of simple actions and behaviours, which you can also adopt back home.

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## GREEN TIPS

- Recycle!
  - Use water sparingly when washing dishes
  - Do not leave the tap running when brushing your teeth
  - Shop mindfully: buy organic, eco-friendly, locally-grown and seasonal products; avoid overly-packaged goods
  - Bring and reuse your own shopping bags, preferably cloth ones
  - Reduce meat and fish consumption
  - Use eco-friendly, biodegradable cleaning and cosmetic products
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Some of these behaviours, such as using water sparingly when washing dishes and brushing teeth, are motivated by the sheer nature of living on a boat with limited water supplies. Yet these actions should be performed everywhere. We hope that people participating in a CSR cruise will go home with an increased awareness of what we can all do for our environment, with little effort.

Let's start with one of our basic needs: food. During the CSR season, we only shop once a week, right before the start of the cruise, and must therefore be mindful of what we buy. Most of our shopping is done at Coop, which is a cooperative market that sells a lot of organic or eco-friendly products (<http://www.e-coop.it>, in Italian). We try to buy only seasonal, and preferably local, fruits and vegetables, and buy exclusively organic, free-range eggs. We have one meat-based meal per week only, because we believe that, aside from being healthier, eating less meat is also important for preserving the environment. It is a fact that most of the land used for agriculture around the world is occupied by livestock foraging, and that meat production is much more energy consuming than plant production. This being said, we are not all vegetarian, and will not compel anyone to be. We simply try to be as sustainable as we can, and buy mostly certified organic free-range meat from the Coop market. More information about conscious meat consumption can be found on these websites

<http://www.sustainablemeatindustry.org/>

<http://www.globalchangeblog.com>.

Working for the protection of cetaceans, we have an even stricter policy about fish consumption. We generally do not buy fish, especially not tuna, a group of fishes including some of the most endangered and exploited species of fish in the world. Moreover, the techniques used to fish tuna - as well as swordfish - are often quite dangerous for marine mammals, which can be trapped in nets for example. However, there are some species of fish that can be included in an environmentally friendly diet. They must be fished using non-invasive techniques, and must be very abundant, ensuring that a limited consumption will not cause the collapse of the stocks. Some forms of aquaculture, where fish are reared sustainably without impacting on the quality of the environment they take place in, are also an option. A detailed list of such species and general information on ethical food consumption can be found on the slow food website <http://www.slowfood.it>, <http://www.slowfood.com/>.

Another great problem about the food and products we buy and consume in our day-to-day lives is that

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they come in heavily wrapped packages. The best thing to do, aside from (re)using your own shopping bags (those made from cloth are more durable), is to buy unpackaged items, or to privilege wrappers made out of recyclable material, such as paper and glass. In some supermarkets, in addition to fruits and vegetables, you can also buy unpacked products such as coffee, pasta, or on-tap milk, soap and wine. You just go with your bottle or box and you fill it with the quantity you want, then you pay the price of the amount in grams or litres of the item bought. In Italy those places are unfortunately still quite rare but you can find some information about this initiative here

<http://www.biologicosfuso.it> (in Italian) or

<http://beunpacked.com/>.

Then, if you still need to dispose of packaging, a very simple action that you can easily incorporate into your lifestyle is recycling, or separate collection of rubbish. Onboard Pelagos, we have different types of bins to make separating rubbish easier. We have generic trash bins in every toilet and in the kitchen, where all the non-recyclable material is collected. Then we have a bin for plastic material, a bin for glass and cans, and finally a paper bin. When they are full we unload them in specific trash cans in the harbour, from where the materials are collected and brought to recycling plants.

Another important aspect of our daily routine that, if not ecologically performed, heavily affects the environment, is cleaning. The pollution derived from phosphates and surfactants, the main ingredients of detergents, is dangerous for the aquatic environment. In fact, such compounds are not only directly toxic for fishes and other organisms, but they also alter the characteristics and processes that take place in the water. For those reasons, when at home, and especially when at sea, it is best practice to use ecological products, both for general household and for personal hygiene that are at least for the most part biodegradable. All the detergents we have on board, like the dish soap and floor soap, belong to this category. Regarding personal hygiene and other biodegradable detergents, for 2010 and 2011 we've been sponsored by the organic farm "Zefiro"; from 2012 "Biolu" has supplied us with shampoos and soaps (which we make available to all volunteers), and cleaning products for the boat.



Of course, as said before, try to save water when cleaning! Water is our most precious resource, and it's very important not to waste it. Try to become familiar with behaviours that will reduce the amount of water you consume/use every day, such as turning off the tap while you soap the dishes or brush your teeth. Keep in mind that for every minute a tap is left running, you consume about 20 litres of water. On board, this concept is more important than ever, as we only have a limited supply of water, so whenever possible, we even use sea water for washing dishes or our hair.

The examples of negative behaviours listed above are only a brief illustration of the many actions that, if done un-consciously, could have a negative impact on the environment. In the CSR project we try to do

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our best to behave in an environment-conscious manner, and we hope that after sharing a week with us, if you do not already incorporate environmental behaviours (such as those mentioned above) into your daily life, you will feel more able to do so, and indeed, once back home, we hope you will share these with your friends.

Remember that every action performed by individual people is important to preserve the Earth, and we only have one Earth.

