



International
Dialogue for
Environmental
Action

ACTIVITY REPORT 2012



ONE Earth Future



«*Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children*»

– Native American proverb



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THE FUTURE IS IN OUR HANDS

I have often commented on how fortunate we are in Azerbaijan to have not just a fascinating history and culture, but also one of the richest biodiversities in the world: snow-capped peaks, rocky inclines, rich forests, sloping meadows, steppes and semi-deserts of the lowland east. Beautiful and picturesque, these natural features are increasingly vulnerable to human impact.

Our responsibility towards future generations is mediated by the quality of life on the planet which we shall pass on to younger generations. With this in mind, last year we launched International Dialogue for Environmental Action — the IDEA campaign — in Azerbaijan, collaborating with young people in order to put environmental awareness and action at the heart of family, community and national life. IDEA is based on the principles of dialogue, action, leadership and education — all essential ingredients for equipping a generation to create positive and sustainable environmental change.

We have established partnerships with young environmentalists from all around the world with one purpose — to create an opportunity for the young generation, eager to claim personal responsibility and take action, to make a real change. We have paid special attention to the conduct of trainings, lectures, debates and cinema sessions in local schools, universities and the new venue for environmental discussions — IDEA Resource Center. These steps will empower future leaders with the knowledge and tools necessary to relate to a 21st century environment — an environment under enormous stress from human activities, yet one that is still the foundation of every aspect of our lives.

The future depends on how we live today. This is a reality that needs to be embraced by younger generations across the globe. We need to take responsibility for our environment and admit that our actions today are the seeds we sow that will bear the fruits to be reaped tomorrow. It is time to sum up the achievements of the recent year, plan for tomorrow and unite for ONE EARTH, ONE FUTURE.

— Leyla Aliyeva, IDEA Founder





INTRODUCTION

Rapid development and swift industrialization of the South Caucasus region has brought about environmental concerns and raised many ecological issues in recent years. Azerbaijan, as a country blessed with natural oil and gas reserves and located in an environmentally challenging region, has also been active in solidifying and focusing society efforts to thwart the dangers posed by ecological challenges. To that end, the year of 2010 was announced the «Year of Ecology» in Azerbaijan. Despite its young age, the country managed to reshuffle and refocus on environmental-friendly industries and businesses, while engaging younger generation in awareness-building and empowering each member of its community to become the leader for local environmental action. The first ever Center for Restoration and Rehabilitation of Wild Nature in the South Caucasus was established in Azerbaijan. The country is also a proud host to nine of eleven existing climatic zones in the world and is well known for its subtropical palm trees and pineapples in the south and alpine glaciers in the north. This factor also provides for incredible diversity of flora and fauna in the wild nature of the Caucasus. The young generation in Azerbaijan understands the difficulty and urgency of the environmental burdens of the time and shares a common passion for the environment.

IDEA IN AZERBAIJAN

International Dialogue for Environmental Action is an international campaign launched by Ms. Leyla Aliyeva on July 12, 2011 in Baku. Ms. Aliyeva saw quite clearly, through her youth work, that the environment was a key cause of concern for young people in Azerbaijan as it is in the region and the world. The concern was real, but the path which young people could take to find out more, to network with others, and to mobilize for action was far from clear.

Children in Azerbaijan and throughout the Southern Caucasus grow up proudly learning that they live in a region which boasts nine of the world's eleven climate zones. It has more than its fair share of environmental wonders. But it also is a country and a region with serious environmental challenges, from endangered species to industrial pollution to basic issues of water supply and safety. The beginnings of a government-led environmental investment programme are beginning to be seen in Azerbaijan, with industrial clean-up, a strong National Parks project, mass tree planting, and the first moves into renewable energy.

WHAT IS OUR IDEA?

IDEA is based on the principles of dialogue, action, leadership and education – all essential ingredients for equipping a generation to create positive and sustainable environmental change.

LEADERSHIP

Encouraging and recognizing young leaders, who can effectively spread the word and lead others in our environmental endeavors.

ACTION

Participation in youth camps, events and specific environmental projects around the region.



EDUCATION

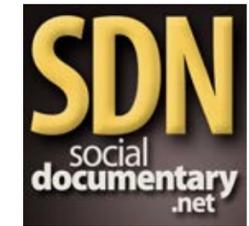
Providing resources to schools, groups and communities, to empower them to protect their environment better.

DIALOGUE

Exchange of ideas through regular forum events and local groups – both in Azerbaijan and internationally.

IDEA aims at holding a number of environmental actions to draw attention of young people to the necessity of protecting our fragile planet. It also envisages empowering the youth working towards sustainable future.

OUR PARTNERS



YOUTH POWER FOR ENVIRONMENT: MOBILIZING AZERBAIJANI YOUTH FOR RIO+20



On October 21, 2011, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the United Nations Development Program signed a Cooperation Agreement on «Mobilizing Azerbaijani Youth for Action in Preparation for the Rio+20 Summit in 2012». By signing this agreement, Azerbaijan got an excellent opportunity to be involved in global movement of sustainable development. Rio+20 or Earth Summit is a very big project that had been held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and in Johannesburg in 2002. Once in ten years global leaders come together to define a sustainable development pathway that secures a reasonable standard of living for the global population whilst preserving our ecosystems and resources. This one-year project had

aimed to encourage young people to participate in the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio-de-Janeiro, Brazil, in 2012. It had also aimed to help young people share their views and ideas on how to tackle the challenges of sustainable development in Azerbaijan. For this purpose, within the framework «Mobilizing Azerbaijani Youth for Action in Preparation for the Rio+20 Summit in 2012», on IDEA held an essay competition «Send your message to Rio+20» among Azerbaijani and international students from different universities of Baku, and «Young tree for young spirit» project.

*We will go to schools and universities;
we will knock on every door; and we will
make sure that those who are unaware of
the ecological downturn of our century get
enlightened and acknowledged.*

— Leyla Aliyeva at the launch of IDEA Campaign,
12 July 2011



INTERNATIONAL VOICE OF IDEA: INTERNATIONAL CAMP OF YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALISTS

85 environmentalists from 35 countries participated in the International Camp of Young Environmentalists, held in Gabala, in November of 2011. The Youth Camp was held for three days through an opening ceremony and three different workshops. Participants adopted «Gabala Declaration» – calling on the people around the world to take personal responsibility on ecological problems and urging to bring environmental action and thinking into their daily lives. The main objectives of this camp were to promote active participation of the young environmentalists in public life of the region, to reinforce the role of young environmentalists in their own communities and encourage them to become an ambassador for local environmental awareness, and to nurture communities through an open dialogue, while ensuring the emergence of a new generation of independent young experts in the field of environmental studies.

*The
environmental
protection knows
no boundaries.
It is our common
task and each step
taken to protect
the environment
will be our shared
success.*

— Leyla Aliyeva



IDEA AND ECO-HISTORICAL PROJECT: MAIDEN TOWER BIRDBOUSES

During renovation works at the Maiden Tower, in spring 2012, – the main landmark of Baku and a 12th century cultural monument, - workers came across numerous bird nests. Flocks of swifts, highly aerial birds, had built approximately 200 nesting sites on the monument. The reconstruction work could not be ceased, but the start of the conservation process on the Maiden Tower threatened the existence of these nests. In order to save birds' nests and ensure their safety, IDEA campaign, together with the «Ichari Shahr» State Historical and Architectural Reserve, launched the project on creating special simulated nests for these birds, while the renovation works continued on the Maiden Tower. These human-made nests will be shelters for birds for many years.



IDEA AND EDUCATION: LECTURES AND ENVIRONMENTAL DEBATES

In 2012, IDEA gathered all environmental non-governmental, governmental and international organizations together for the discussion of environmental issues and the importance of cooperating in order to reduce their affects on the planet. In these meetings, the main objectives were general environmental state of the country and sustainable development issues that were discussed in detailed way since these issues should be the very points in both national and international levels.

Environmental education of young generation is a guarantee for sustainable future. For this reason, IDEA organizes different social activities on ecological field, and treats new generation in ecologically responsible way. These awareness-raising programs of IDEA have been welcomed by chance to students to be engaged not only in studies but also in social activities.



AWARD FOR IDEA CAMPAIGN FOUNDER: INEPO-AVRASIYA COMPETITION IN BAKU

BAKU DEBATE FORUM

The Baku Debate Forum, organized by the IDEA campaign, «Tamiz Shahr» JSC and «Debate in Civil Society» Public Union, was launched in March 2012 and included trainings, debate contests and expert meetings for the students of 15 universities in Azerbaijan. During these trainings the theory of «3R» (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle) was discussed in order to develop progressive green thinking in the society. The participants were divided into different groups that were competing with each other. This debate project was very successful because young citizens of Azerbaijan gained a lot of information in ecological field in order to prove their standpoints. In the award ceremony, held in May 21, 2012, the winner team got Green Thinking Cup.



The sixth «Inepo-Avrasiya» competition was held in Baku on 6-7 April with the support of Azerbaijan's Education and Ecology and Natural Resources ministries, State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR), the «Çağ Öyrətım» company and the «Inepo-Avrasiya» environmental public union with the information support of the Public TV & Radio Broadcasting Company. During this event, the organizers and juniors of the competition presented the Special International Honorary Award for Environmental Protection to Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva in her capacity as a founder of IDEA initiative. The competition aimed to make the younger generation aware of, and sensitive to, environmental problems and environmental protection, to develop an environmental outlook, to nurture enthusiasm to protect the natural, cultural and aesthetic heritage and to involve children in different projects to tackle environmental issues. «Inepo-Avrasiya» was first held in 2007 and involved schoolchildren from 17 countries. It has since become a regular event with some 400 schoolchildren from 42 countries winning the right to take part in the competition. Jurors praised 130 out of 350 projects from foreign countries, and 60 out of 294 Azerbaijani projects.





YOUNG TREE FOR YOUNG SPIRIT

IDEA participants launched a special campaign with the motto of «Young tree for Young Spirit», according to which, 300.000 trees were planned to be planted until the UN conference «Rio+20 on Sustainable Development» to be held in June 2012, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Volunteers – students from different universities of Baku, government workers, and representatives from different organizations – have already made a huge progress and initial mass tree-planting took place on the «Greening Department 2» located on the 17th km of the highway from Heydar Aliyev Airport towards the city center, in Zikh highway. On April 22, 2012, International Earth Day, Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan Huseyngulu Bagirov participated at one of these tree-planting events. More than 20 thousand of trees and decorative plants have been planted within the action.



EARTH HOUR IN AZERBAIJAN

One hour without power – «Earth hour» brought hundreds of millions of people across the world together at 20:30, 31 March, 2012. 5000 cities from 147 countries joined the campaign this year. Azerbaijan joined this global movement for the first time in 2011 and entered the list of 120 countries which support global environmental campaign.

In 2012 «Earth Hour» campaign was held in 4 cities of Azerbaijan with the support of IDEA Campaign. In a sign of support for planet's protection, the biggest «Earth Hour» campaign in the country took place with the support of IDEA Campaign by switching off the lights of symbol of Baku - Maiden Tower at 20:30, 31 March. Meanwhile, the lights of Shirvanshahlar Palace, Park Boulevard, Hilton Hotel, Bridge Plaza, ZQAN Holding headquarters, Azerbaijan Technical University were also switched off for an hour. Besides the capital city Baku, Ganja, Lankaran and Lahij also participated in this initiative.

IDEA AT UN CONFERENCE: YOUTH 21 GLOBAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP FOR CHANGE FORUM

On March 15-18, 2012, the United Nations organized «Youth 21: Global Youth Leadership for Change Forum» in Nairobi, Kenya. This high-level event was attended by prominent leaders of national and international youth NGOs, UN agency representatives, Member States, private sector and foundations. The main purpose of the forum was the discussion of youth engagement in sustainable livelihoods, economic and political governance and assessment of perspectives on global youth issues. IDEA delegation represented Azerbaijan at Youth 21- Building for Change. In the panel on «Leadership of youths in sustainable development», representative of IDEA campaign gave detailed information about the campaign and shared her experience on the topic with the forum participants. Cooperation opportunities between representatives of organizations of different countries and IDEA campaign were discussed and an agreement on joining efforts in the future to tackle international ecological problems was reached during the forum.



IDEA CAMPAIGN PRESENTATION AT THE HOUSE OF LORDS

An official reception has been held by member of the House of Lords Mohammed Sheikh in honor of Vice President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva for presenting IDEA international environmental campaign at the House of Lords of the UK Parliament. The presentation of IDEA campaign was opened by Executive Director of EcoMuslim ecological organization Omar Faruk. During the official reception at the House of Lords on March 23, 2012, the members of British parliament, as well as representatives of diplomatic corps in Great Britain got acquainted with the recent activity of IDEA Campaign. The initiator of the campaign Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva gave detailed information about environmental projects realized by IDEA in Azerbaijan. The event involved British MPs, representatives of accredited diplomatic corpuses in the country, different ecological organizations, as well as Azerbaijani Ecology and Natural Resources Minister Huseyngulu Bagirov, Chairman of the political analysis and information department of the Presidential Administration Elnur Aslanov and Vice President on ecology of the Azerbaijani State Oil Company Rafiga Huseynzade.

In the next few years we will be able to create an effective environmental community in the region and make a real change.

— Leyla Aliyeva





IDEA AND THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS: SEND YOUR MESSAGE TO RIO+20

The essay competition for students «Send your message to Rio +20» had its aim to mobilize Azerbaijani youth to the «Rio+20» summit and to encourage them to think about the current global environmental problems. IDEA essay competition attracted new people to our initiative and significantly strengthened our position among young people in Azerbaijan. The participants sent their essays according to the given topic; the winners of the competition were announced at the award ceremony of winners on April 27, 2012 that was organized at Hilton Hotel in Baku. In his speech at the event Deputy Economic Development Minister Mr. Niyazi Safarov stressed the importance of forming the green thinking and psychology among young people.



THE OPENING OF IDEA RESOURCE CENTER

The opening ceremony of the new IDEA Resource Center was held at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Azerbaijan on May 19, 2012. The center is aimed at hosting short and long term training courses, seminars, roundtables and lectures on environmental topics both for students and specialists in this field. The well-equipped resource center includes designated areas specifically for reading, researching and discussions, as well as for getting some rest. It will also subscribe to a number of international journals and bulletins in order to secure up-to-date information on environmental matters and make a difference through innovation, leadership and proactive actions. In the last months, IDEA Resource Center also hosted a number of students who were willing to have their internship in ecological field. On June 12, 2012, the Minister of Education of Azerbaijan, Misir Mardanov visited IDEA Resource Center and in his speech emphasized the significance of ecological studies for young generations.



IDEA CALLS FOR GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENS: THE FUTURE YOU WANT

On June 5, 2012, IDEA Campaign and the Student Youth Organizations of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan hosted the Award Ceremony of the «The future you want» problem-solution project that had been announced open in May 2012. The purpose of the competition was to draw youth's attention not only to environmental problems but also to the ways of their solutions. Participants are expected to prepare and conduct presentations, in which they will explain and demonstrate the importance of the environmental problems they introduce, and suggest tangible solutions. The Award Ceremony was held in IDEA Resource Center based at the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.



ECO-SUMMER SCHOOL IN SHEKI, 2012

On July 5-10, 2012, IDEA together with Tamiz Shahar JSC held Sheki Summer School with the motto of «For the Sake of Clean City!». 60 students were selected out of 1500 applicants; the main objectives of the camp were to strengthen environmental awareness among youth in Azerbaijan, to form green thinking among them, and train new qualified specialists in this field. In this 5-day camp, each of the students attended lectures on ecological field and used it in practice. During the 5 day summer school the participants got main information about solid waste management and different types of solid waste, and learned about methods of solid waste management and utilization. Trainers from «Tamiz Shahar» JSC and IDEA Campaign delivered special session on «Economic growth impact on environment».

IDEA AND WILD NATURE PROTECT THE CAUCASUS BIG FIVE

IDEA identified the «Caucasian Big Five» – five animals: brown bear, imperial eagle, grey wolf, goitered gazelle and Caucasian leopard, - the symbols of the Caucasus and the main alive beauty of the region that are under the threat of extinction. With the aim of protecting and enlarging a number of these animals, IDEA together with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Heydar Aliyev Foundation launched a new project and started with protecting and resettling gazelles in their natural habitat. Within the program gazelles were provided with special sensors that allowed the movements of these graceful animals to be monitored. Through these sensors it is possible to record the illegal hunting of gazelles and to take proactive measures to protect them. In the near future, the same actions will be taken towards other Big Five's animals.

FROM ENVIRONMENT TO ART: THE BIG FIVE EXHIBITION

As the part of the «Caucasus Big Five» project, IDEA jointly with Baku Museum of Modern Arts, the «Qiz Qalasi» Art Gallery, Baku Magazine and «Ichari Shahar» State Historical and Architectural Reserve organized the «Big Five» exhibition of gazelle models in May 2012 in the framework of the Third International Maiden Tower Festival. Correlating with the IDEA Campaign's «One Earth – One Future» slogan, the gazelle models had been painted by different artists from 23 countries of the world. This way, one of the beauties of The Caucasus, gazelles, were promoted through being painted and kept among the mater pieces of famous painters. Exhibition will be performed in Istanbul, Rome and London and some other cities around the globe in the upcoming months.



All of the artists participating at the exhibition from different countries had one message—the importance of peace, love and mutual understanding in the common house we are living in. This idea uniquely correlates with IDEA's main slogan: «**One Earth — One Future**»

— Leyla Aliyeva



IDEA FOUNDER MS. LEYLA ALIYEVA HOLDS MEETINGS AT UNEP AND UNICEF

IDEA Campaign Founder Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva visited Geneva on June 11, 2012. During the visit, she held meetings with the Deputy Secretary-General of UN, Director General of the UN office in Geneva Mr. Kasim-Zhomart Tokayev. The sides exchanged views on various projects implemented by the UN Geneva office, especially in the area of environmental protection.

Then Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva met with UNICEF Deputy Regional Director Kirsi Madi and Mr. Jan Dusik, Deputy Director and Officer-in-Charge of UNEP Regional Office for Europe. During the meeting, Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva and Mr. Jan Dusik discussed the environmental aspects of the Caspian Sea, in particular, issues of reproduction of sturgeon, raising awareness of local fishermen about the breeding of this rare species of fish in artificial conditions, the relevance of the «green economy» and «green economy» project being implemented in Azerbaijan. This project is a first in Europe pilot program, which is implemented by UNEP in partnership with Azerbaijan's National Academy of Sciences and Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

The sides also discussed issues of protection of health and environment. The two sides said it would be important to hold a joint conference of IDEA and UNEP in Geneva, which would embrace some of these aspects. Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva spoke about IDEA's recent activity, in particular joint project of IDEA and National Geographic photographer Mr. Reza Deghati for the international children's contest on the theme of ecology. Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva also informed about the opening of new branch offices of IDEA in Russia (Moscow), Moldova, Georgia and Lithuania. In conclusion, Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva presented Mr. Jan Dusik gifts on behalf of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the IDEA.



Environmental education will empower future leaders with the knowledge and tools necessary to relate to the environmental challenges of our time. Our actions today are the seeds we sow that will bear the fruits reaped tomorrow.

— Leyla Aliyeva



NEW LEADERS FOR TOMORROW MS. LEYLA ALIYEVA AT CRANS MONTANA FORUM

IDEA Campaign founder Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva attended «New Leaders for Tomorrow», the special of Crans Montana Forum held in Baku on June 30, 2012. Mrs. Leyla Aliyeva made a speech on ecological tension in the Caucasus region touching on the active role of the IDEA Campaign by raising awareness and trying to solve these problems. The session moderated by Prof. Daniel Warner saw presentations on «the Role of Future Leaders in a Changing World» and «the Impact of Globalization on the World Environment.» The event was also attended by First Lady of Azerbaijan, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mehriban Aliyeva; Mr. Larry King, former Host Larry King Live, CNN; Nirj Deva MEP, Committee on Development & Human Rights; Boualem M' Rakach, President, Confédération Algérienne du Patronat, Algeria; Elnur Aslanov, Head of political analysis & information provision Department, Office of the President, Azerbaijan and Mr. Siriman Traoré, New Leader 2010, President, National Council for Youth, Mali.



GREEN CORPS SUMMER SCHOOL

IDEA's September activity started with the launching of the International Summer School «Green Corps» in cooperation with the OSCE office in Baku, «Debate in Civil Society» Public Union, Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan and «Tamiz Shaha» JSC. The trainings were held in Azerbaijan's southern region Lankaran and continued from August 31 to September 5.

IDEA experts, Ms. Lina Sleinotaite, IDEA Representative in Lithuania, PhD in Environmental Sciences and Mr. Ramiz Babayev MA in Environmental Management and Planning contributed to the school as trainers. Mr. Babayev conducted a training session on «Environmental behavior change» and Ms. Sleinotaite delivered training session on «Youth engagement with environmental issues».



IDEA FOR GREEN AZERBAIJAN

The IDEA campaign is aimed at working with young people to put environmental awareness and action at the heart of family, community and national life. Environmental education is one of the core elements in this activity.

In this regard the project «IDEA for Green Azerbaijan» envisages the organization and conduction of seminars for schoolchildren in 20 cities and regions of Azerbaijan. The seminars will be dedicated to the discussion of three main topics: «The role of youth in the struggle for clean world», «Water means life» and «Wonderful future comes with greening».

The implementation of the project is scheduled for September-October of this year with the involvement of 20 volunteers to hold the seminars in the regions of Azerbaijan.



ENVIRONMENTAL TEXTBOOK COMPETITION

In 2012 the environmental textbook project was launched by IDEA, jointly with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The project is aimed at developing the book that will address the most important and challenging environmental issues and the basic concepts of environmental sustainability. Publication of the book is scheduled for early 2013.



BIRDHOUSES DESIGN PROJECT

In observance of the World Migratory Bird Day, IDEA, in collaboration with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, announced a «Birdhouse Design» tender. The goal of the project is constructing a number of birdhouses in and around Baku to provide nesting birds with safe shelters to lay eggs and raise fledglings, and to shelter birds from harsh weather conditions when they are not raising young birds. The winners of the tender will be announced in October 2012.



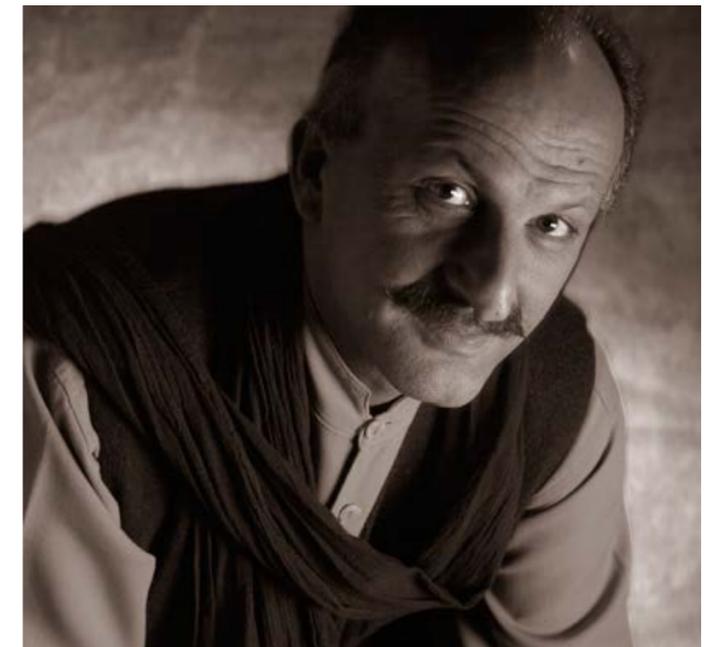


CHILDREN'S EYES ON EARTH

PHOTO CONTEST

IDEA campaign, in cooperation with a famous photographer and humanitarian Mr. Reza Deghati, initiated the International Children and Youth Photo Contest «Children's Eyes on Earth» that will give young people a platform to show how they see the natural world, and the chance to discover some of the challenges currently facing our planet. By seeing through their eyes, it's our hope that adults will also be inspired to take action, too.

IDEA is the sponsor of «Children's Eyes on Earth» initiative, which is also supported by WPO (World Photography Organisation), National Geographic Kids UK, SDN (Social Documentary Network), Azerbaijan Ministry of Youth and Sports, FotoEvidence, Aina World and Webistan Photo Agency. The Festival and Exhibition will begin on the last week of October 2012 in Baku, Azerbaijan and thereafter will visit major cities around the world.



Mr. Reza Deghati

ECO CINEMA PROJECT

On June 14, 2012, IDEA started first and unique in Azerbaijan project named «Eco Cinema». Being have already caused great interest by a wide range of students, «Eco Cinema» project, which biweekly takes place at IDEA Resource Center, devoted to environmental issues is intended to demonstrate documentary films on environmental topics. The most popular environmental movies are shown to students with a 45-minute discussion afterwards.



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