

# Eco-Committee Manual



## High School Students

**Step 1 of 7**

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# Introduction



## What is an Eco-Committee?

An Eco-Committee is a group of mostly students that are concerned about the environment and are committed to learning, raising awareness and taking action for environmental and sustainable issues.

The Eco-Committee is the driving force of the Eco-Schools program, making sure the themes are chosen well and the seven steps are carried out. You may feel small, but you are part of a global community of over 20 million other Eco-Students!

The most successful Eco-Committees have a mix of:

- Students from most grades making up 50% (Eco-Students)
- Teachers, to help and guide students and implemented learnings into the curriculum (Eco-Teachers)
- Non-teaching staff, such as your G.A.
- Some parents or community representatives
- Endorsement from your Principal or Deputy Principal

This manual will cover how to start your Eco-Committee, get people involved, run meetings and make sure things get done!

## This is Step 1 of your 7 Eco-Steps

# Introduction



## How to start your Eco-Committee

You probably heard about Eco-Schools from a teacher, who has spoken a little bit about the program and you are interested. We will call teachers who help you with the Eco-Schools program "Eco-Teachers". Hopefully more than one teacher is an Eco-Teacher at your school, and you can always ask your classroom teachers to help as well!

Remember that Eco-Teachers are here to guide you, but it is for students (YOU) to drive! When you are ready to start:

1. Find your Eco-Teacher(s), and ask them to find a base for your Eco-Committee meetings i.e., spare classroom, garden, hall, library.
2. Advertise that you will be holding a meeting for people who may be interested in joining at assemblies, in newsletter, on posters around school, asking all students, teachers and school staff to attend. You will find graphics for this at the end of this booklet.
3. At this initial meeting, present what you want to achieve with Eco-Schools to the group, and use the presentation from your Eco-Teacher to explain the program.
4. Let everyone know what your regular meeting time will be, and for everyone who is interested to leave their name and class with you. You can use the sheet on page 9.
5. In the next meeting, you will discuss roles. You may want to choose your theme in the second official meeting.

# Introducing Eco-Schools



## Meet to recruit Eco-Members

**1.** This is an informal meeting, just to talk about Eco-Schools and why people should join. Before you start, write down what you want to talk about, maybe with your Eco-Teachers help. This meet should be about 15–20 minutes long.

Talking points:

- What the Eco-Schools Program is, and why you want people to join. You can ask your Eco-Teacher to share the PowerPoint presentation with you to use, or write a speech.
- The different positions students and teachers will have. Use pages 6 & 7 as a guide

**2.** Ask all students who are interested in joining to write down their names, and any positions they are interested in doing. Use page 8. If you find that too many people want the same position, you can ask everyone to vote in the next meeting.

**3.** Thank everyone for coming and tell them when and where the next meeting will be.



# Meetings



## Your first official meeting

1. Before the meeting, write down what you are going to talk about. This is called your "meeting agenda" For this meeting, it would be good to talk about:
  - The different positions students and teachers will have. Use pages 6 and 7 as a guide.
  - What your next steps will be.
2. Welcome everyone and acknowledge country.
3. Ask your Eco-Teacher to take minutes for this meeting, until positions have been assigned.
4. If too many people asked to be in in the same position, you can discuss who would be best or take a vote.
5. When everyone has their positions, write them up, using page 16. Sometimes, Eco-Students will have more than one position.
6. If you can, take a photo and use this position list to write an article for your school media / newsletter.
7. Let everyone know when the next meeting will be, and that you will be deciding which theme you will be working on.

# Meetings



## Your second official meeting

1. Before the meeting, write down your meeting agenda. For this meeting, it would be good to talk about:

- Deciding your theme
- What your next steps will be

2. Ask the Minute Taker to take notes and write down who is there. Welcome, thank everybody for coming, and acknowledge country.

3. If you know which theme you want to cover, introduce this to the group. If not, do the environmental review to help you decide. Your Eco-Teacher can pull this up on the website for you.

4. When your theme is decided and talked about a little, brainstorm and research some things you would like to do. Your Eco-Teacher may have some guidance here.

5. Write down what your next steps will be (actions), and who is responsible for each action.

6. Make sure everyone understands what they will need to do before the next meeting, thank everyone for coming and keep the minutes.

You can take it from here for all your meetings now! Just remember to always write down actions and who is responsible in all meetings, and read through a summary of your last meeting at the beginning of every new meeting. Use copies of pages 13 to 16 to keep these minutes if you like, or create your own on a computer/ notebook.

# Positions explained



## Chairperson:

The chairperson is responsible for keeping the meeting on topic and running. They are not "in charge", as no-one in a committee is in charge, you are all working together using your different skills. They also make sure people can get the tasks assigned to them done, and finding other people to help if they can not.

## Deputy Chairperson:

The deputy chairperson helps the chairperson keep the meetings and tasks on track, and will step in to run meetings when the chairperson is unavailable.

## Treasurer/s:

You may require funds to help with some initiatives. One of your Eco-Teachers will let you know how much there is, and you can work on where the money would best be spent. The treasurer/s may also calculate how much money your Eco-Initiatives have saved the school!

## Minute Taker/s:

You only need one minute taker per meeting, but it would be good to have a couple of designated minute takers in case someone can't make a meeting. Their task is to write down what is talked about in meetings next to a copy of the agenda- there is an example of this on pages 10 & 11.

## Communications Team:

The comms team will be responsible for advertising Eco-Schools meetings, projects and successes to the school and wider community (parents, caregivers and other interested people) They may create posters, write and take photos for the newsletter or social media and talk at assemblies.

# Positions explained



## Eco-Students:

Eco-Students will make up the majority of your Eco-Committee. Eco-students help with all of the above tasks when needed and all of the Eco-initiatives around the school. This includes any audits, building or putting in infrastructure, explaining to other students, teachers and parents how the new systems work.

## Eco-Teachers:

Eco-Teachers are here to help and guide the Eco-Committee, but not to lead it. Eco-Teachers will talk to the National Eco-Schools Operator, submit your surveys, audits and reports to the national operator as you go through the seven-steps and obtain different awards.

They should be present for meetings, help find a location for meetings, with projects in the school and most importantly, incorporating Eco-themes into their teaching. If possible, they will help find funding and grants.

Remember, you the students are the driving force. Eco-Teachers are amazing people who are here to help you.





# Committee award criteria



## Bronze Award Eco-Committee

Your school has an Eco-Committee that meets at least once a term, and members include:

- Students
- Teachers

Minutes are kept of meetings and progress are reported back to the school.

## Silver Award Eco-Committee

Your school has an Eco-Committee that meets at least once a term, and members include:

- Students
- Teachers
- Parent or P&C representative

Minutes are kept of meetings and progress are reported back to the school. Students share responsibility with adults running the committee.

## Green Flag Eco-Committee

Your school has an Eco-Committee that meets at least once a term, and members include:

- Students from a range of year groups
- Teachers from 3 or more classes or departments,
- The Principal or Deputy
- Parent or P&C representative
- School facilities staff member (e.g. G.A.)

Minutes are kept of meetings and progress are reported back to the school. Students take significant responsibility for running the committee.

8.

**It may seem like a lot, but remember, one step at a time.  
You can do it!**

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## Position/s you are interested in

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal green lines. A vertical red dashed line runs down the center of the page. In the top left corner, there is a green paperclip. In the bottom right corner, there is a small logo that says "Keep Australia" next to a yellow star.

# First meeting agenda



## Topic 1: Eco-Committee Positions

Chairperson:

Deputy Chairperson:

Treasurer/s:

Minute Taker/s:

Comms Team:

Eco-Students:

Eco-Teachers:

These positions will be decided by:

## Topic 2:

What we are going to do in the next meeting: decide on which theme we are going to do.

Before the next meeting, everyone needs to:

# First meeting minutes



Date:

Country:

Members present:

Topic 1: Eco-Committee Positions

Chairperson:

Deputy Chairperson:

Treasurer/s:

Minute Taker/s:

Communications person:

Recruitment person/s:

Eco-Students:

Eco-Teachers:

These positions were decided by:

# First meeting minutes



## Topic 2:

What we are going to do in the next meeting: decide on which theme we are going to do.

## Actions:

Before the next meeting, everyone needs to:

# Meeting Agenda



Date:

Country:

Members present:

# Meeting Minutes



Date:

Members present:

Country acknowledged:

Apologies:

(people who couldn't make it)

Reflection:

(Look at the last meeting minutes, what got done, did people get to do the actions assigned to them?)

# Meeting Minutes cont.



## Agenda:

(List what you will be discussing in this meeting and note what was said)



# Meeting Minutes cont.



## Actions:

(What actions did you decide in this meeting, who will do them and by when?)

**Action:**

**Person responsible:**

**By when:**

## Next meeting:

Date, time and location of your next meeting.

# Our Eco-Committee!



**Name**

**Position/s**

**Our Eco-Teachers:**

# Next Steps



It may seem like a lot, but remember, one step at a time.  
You can do it!

# We are looking for Eco-Students to join!



## Meeting Time and Place:



[eco-schools.org.au](http://eco-schools.org.au)

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**Looking for student  
leaders who want to  
help the environment!**



**Meeting Time and Place:**

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