Playing can be the simulation of life. For a child it is a means for learning by re-living and repeating daily experiences and situations in a risk averse, safe environment. Environmental games though have an added value when environmental awareness and attitude development is concerned.

The research conducted explored the potential that environmental games – playful learning have on developing environmental awareness and action to young children. Research was conducted using a group of 15 kindergarten children which were subjected to an educational intervention (12 lessons) based on environmental playful/educational activities. The children’s attitudes and knowledge on simple issues of solid waste were explored prior and after the intervention.

The key outcomes of the research highlight the value of environmental games as:

1. an active and participative learning which attracts children’s attention and interest
2. an effective educational tool for constructing young children’s eco-literacy
3. an effective approach to developing environmental awareness and attitudes
4. an activity that promotes and encourages environmental action

According to the above, environmental games constitute a valuable tool for achieving the aims and objectives of environmental education in pre-primary education. For its promotion we suggest:

1. Practical training of kindergarten teachers on environmental games and the educational methods used,
2. Preparation of useful teaching / practical material to support environmental
games in the kindergarten
3. Space modification of school grounds to enable and enhance environmental
games.

The following photos illustrate some of the activities that took place during the
implementation of the research:

1. Cleaning the nearby park.

2. Putting signs: Keep park’s grounds tidy.
3. Modelling: Clean and polluted nature.

4. Our model.
5. Masks for theatrical games.

6. Jigsaw games (with story telling)