

the STATE we're IN



Introduction

This resource pack has been designed for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to accompany their series of video programmes entitled "The State We're In". The resource pack is based on six of the video programmes. It provides a set of student tasks and photocopiable worksheets based on each of the programmes. The six video programmes deal with the key environmental issues facing Irish society at the start of the new millennium.

- ◆ Programme one "A Tiger's Tale" acts as an introduction and overview of all the key issues.
- ◆ Programme two "Crystal Clear" deals with water quality and water pollution.
- ◆ Programme three "Traffic" deals with the growth of traffic congestion and examines some solutions and traffic management strategies.
- ◆ Programme four "A Climate of Change" looks at the problem of climate change and global warming.
- ◆ Programme five "Waste Land" focuses on the issue of waste management and some alternative strategies to land filling.
- ◆ Programme six "Green Power" examines the problem of burning fossil fuels and looks to alternative energy sources.

The pack, in combination with the video programmes, is designed as a unit for transition year students. It uses an interdisciplinary approach and can be used particularly within the Geography or Science subject areas. The six units of the pack can be approached individually or all six could be studied as a full **Transition Year Environmental Education Module**.

Student Activities

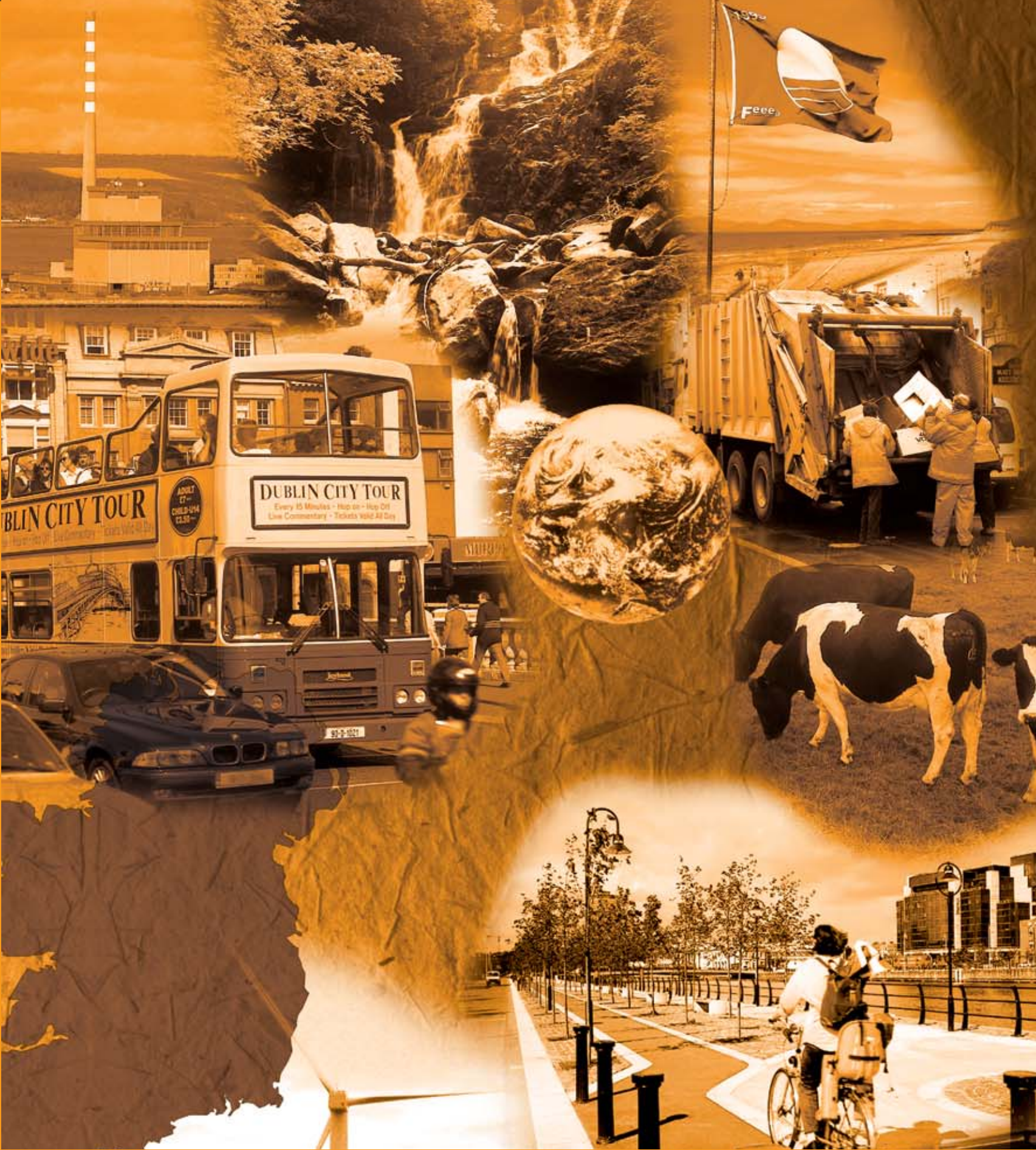
The pack provides three different groups of tasks:

- ◆ Short questions are provided for completion after each programme. This will demand careful viewing by the student and should ensure a full understanding of the issues.
- ◆ Teachers and students are then provided with activities which will allow for further exploration of the issues. These activities include groupwork, brainstorming, map work and individual research.
- ◆ Teachers are also offered the opportunity to extend the depth of study through individual and group fieldwork investigations. Templates for questionnaires and the research methodology is provided.

This resource pack suits the transition year philosophy and guidelines. It is skills based and allows the student to extend their interests and research skills through a range of different methodologies. It will engage the student in active learning strategies based on issues and activities largely within in the local community.

The resource pack also looks forward to the New Leaving Certificate Geography Syllabus. It uses the Fieldwork Investigation techniques which are proposed within the Geographical Investigation unit of the new syllabus. These student activities will provide an ideal preparation for the investigative skills proposed within the new Leaving Certificate syllabus.

The resource pack should also provide an interesting and stimulating way of informing and empowering students towards the environmental issues that face all of us.



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Environmental Protection Agency
An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil
P.O. Box 3000, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford, Ireland.

Telephone : +353-53-60600 Fax : +353-53-60699
e-mail: info@epa.ie Website: www.epa.ie

Environmental Protection Agency

Establishment

The Environmental Protection Agency Act, 1992, was enacted on 23 April, 1992, and under this legislation the Agency was formally established on 26 July, 1993.

Responsibilities

The Agency has a wide range of statutory duties and powers under the Act. The main responsibilities of the Agency include the following:

- the licensing and regulation of large/complex industrial and other processes with significant polluting potential, on the basis of integrated pollution control (IPC) and the application of best available technologies for this purpose;
- the monitoring of environmental quality, including the establishment of databases to which the public will have access, and the publication of periodic reports on the state of the environment;
- advising public authorities in respect of environmental functions and assisting local authorities in the performance of their environmental protection functions;
- the promotion of environmentally sound practices through, for example, the encouragement of the use of environmental audits, the setting of environmental quality objectives and the issuing of codes of practice on matters affecting the environment;
- the promotion and co-ordination of environmental research;
- the licensing and regulation of all significant waste disposal and recovery activities, including landfills and the preparation and periodic updating of a national hazardous waste management plan for implementation by other bodies;
- implementing a system of permitting for the control of VOC emissions resulting from the storage of significant quantities of petrol at terminals;
- implementing and enforcing the GMO Regulations for the contained use and deliberate release of GMOs into the environment;

- preparation and implementation of a national hydrometric programme for the collection, analysis and publication of information on the levels, volumes and flows of water in rivers, lakes and groundwaters; and
- generally overseeing the performance by local authorities of their statutory environmental protection functions.

Status

The Agency is an independent public body. Its sponsor in Government is the Department of the Environment and Local Government. Independence is assured through the selection procedures for the Director General and Directors and the freedom, as provided in the legislation, to act on its own initiative. The assignment, under the legislation, of direct responsibility for a wide range of functions underpins this independence. Under the legislation, it is a specific offence to attempt to influence the Agency, or anyone acting on its behalf, in an improper manner.

Organisation

The Agency's headquarters is located in Wexford and it operates five regional inspectorates, located in Dublin, Cork, Kilkenny, Castlebar and Monaghan.

Management

The Agency is managed by a full-time Executive Board consisting of a Director General and four Directors. The Executive Board is appointed by the Government following detailed procedures laid down in the Act.

Advisory Committee

The Agency is assisted by an Advisory Committee of twelve members. The members are appointed by the Minister for the Environment and Local Government and are selected mainly from those nominated by organisations with an interest in environmental and developmental matters. The Committee has been given a wide range of advisory functions under the Act, both in relation to the Agency and to the Minister.

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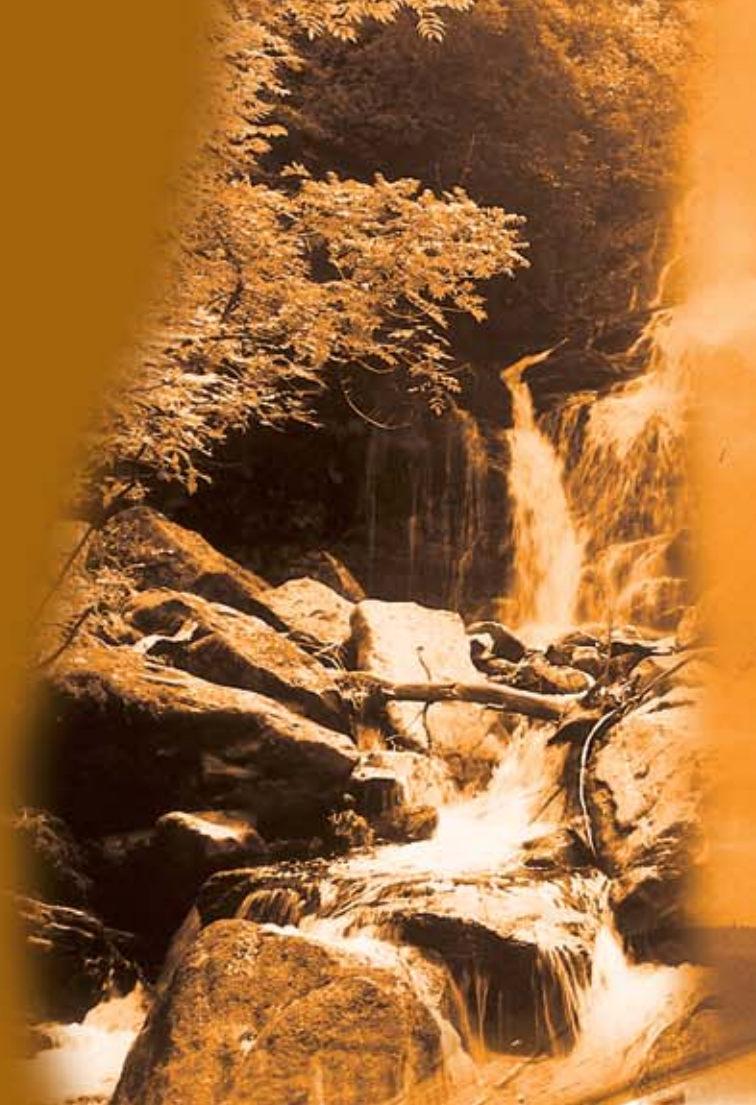
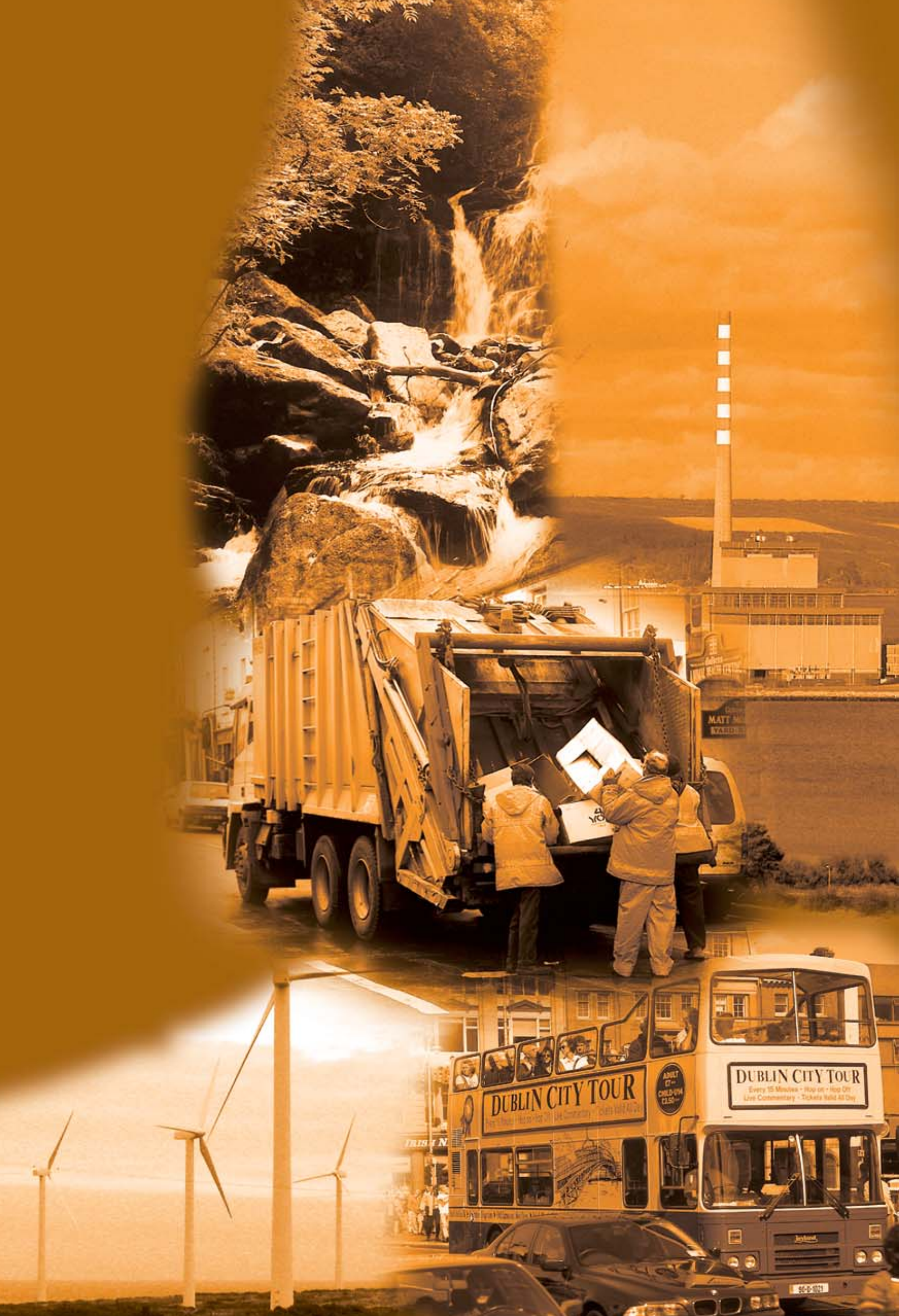
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This resource pack was developed with the assistance of **Domnall Fleming**, Geography Teacher.

Concept, Design and Print
creative design & print, Wexford

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An Ghníomhaireacht um Chaomhnú Comhshaoil

P.O. Box 3000, Johnstown Castle Estate, Co. Wexford, Ireland.

Telephone : +353-53-60600 Fax : +353-53-60699
e-mail: info@epa.ie Website: www.epa.ie

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