

Primary school programmes under the RePurpose Horizon Europe project

23rd and 25th of May, 2024

The Institute of Aquaculture and Environmental Safety of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (MATE), partner in the RePurpose Horizon Europe project (<https://www.repurposeproject.eu/>), successfully conducted a dissemination event at the end of April. The RePurpose project aims to develop a *Safe-and-Sustainable-by-Design* platform to produce a new functional REP polymer from local consumer waste for the high-value thermoplastic elastomer market. The Institute of Aquaculture and Environmental Safety will investigate the environmental testing of new materials and the environmental risks of their degradation products in the project.



MATE's colleagues visited the lower and upper grades of the Fabriczius József Primary School in Veresegyháza, the largest primary school in the country, on two separate days as part of the so-called "Theme Week" programme. On 23 April, the lower school (6-10 years of age) and on 25 April, the upper school (10-14 years of age) held successful presentations. The program taught students about composting, waste recycling and how to reduce environmental impact. Through thematic activities, the

children learned about the role of bacteria in the environment and about different aquatic organisms, from *Daphnia magna*, a small planktonic crustacean, to farmed fish. They were introduced to the body structure of fish and the function of their organs through an imaginative demonstration. But they were also given information on the environmental risks posed by microplastics and on water quality testing, according to their age and background knowledge. The programme was accompanied by presentations and a screening of the ecological documentary "*In the Name of the Tisza*".



As part of the programme, children in the lower grades took part in a **drawing competition** on waste recycling, which was launched a month before the on-site demonstration. The competition, a testament to the students' creativity and understanding of the topic, attracted nearly 300 entries from more than 800 primary school pupils, giving the organisers a tough task in judging the entries. The best drawings from each year group, showcasing the students' commitment to environmental sustainability, were awarded valuable books and art packs by the jury.



At the upper secondary level, nearly 180 children in teams of 3 entered the waste recycling **competition**. The students submitted various entries - video, PPT, and text descriptions of ideas - which will be evaluated, and prizes will be awarded in May due to the extended deadline for submissions. The great interest and the high quality of the entries encourage the researchers to continue the series. The competition winners will be invited to visit the Institute of Aquaculture and Environmental Safety to get an even closer look at the topics they heard about and learn more about the university's programmes and research.



The Institute's colleagues also set up composting bins in each of the two schools, encouraging children to be environmentally conscious and recycle waste.

