



EDITORIAL

EARTH

Earth and sky, woods and fields, lakes and rivers, the mountain and the sea, are excellent schoolmasters, and teach some of us more than we can ever learn from books,' said British statesman John Lubbock. University of Malta researchers have also learnt from our planet; this special EARTH focus packs 31 pages chock-full of studies that could transform the Maltese Islands.

While research into concrete is investigating new ways of sustaining development by adding plastic and waste limestone into the mix (page 26), the LifeMedGreenRoof project plans to make Malta's buildings green, revitalising aerial views of the islands (page 20). The seas around Malta also hold another bonanza, with pockets of fresh water beneath the saltwater that could be tapped (page 32). And speaking of ambitious projects, new microgrid networks could see Malta become the EU's first green island (page 36).

The rest of this edition looks into games as a philosophical and teaching tool, a food app for dietary requirements (page 54), and gender and language issues (pages 10 and 11). We have an opinion piece on a new unit supporting researchers (page 12), an interview with a filmmaker (page 68), and a visit to the Joint Research Centre by Malta's best and brightest (page 50). The Valletta 2018 Foundation talks about the need to listen to the Valletta community (page 64) and we find out more about a big donation to research in Malta by the island's largest charity (page 62).

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