GreeNET

Education and Culture DG
Lifelong Learning Programme

GreeNET: Environmental Education through Enquiry and Technology

GreeNET Best Practice Authoring Tool Manual

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1 GreeNET Best Practice Authoring Tool

In order to help educators design innovative Best Practices, an online software tool that guides them through each step of the best practice design is developed in the context of GreeNET project. The Best Practice Authoring Tool is a database of educational scenarios and digital resources.

The resources hosted by the software tool can easily be **searched**, **retrieved** and **integrated** into your best practice, but there is also the option to **upload** and **store** your own resources. More than being just an authoring tool for teachers and educators, the software allows visitors to **follow educational scenarios** and **play with digital resources**. Students and learners can directly receive guidelines and complete educational scenarios prepared by educators.

The following section includes a brief overview of the Best Practice Authoring Tool. In order to access the tool, **open a browser window** and **type the following address**:

http://greenet-education.eu/greenet/

Figure 1.1 represents the **Main page** of the Best Practice Authoring Tool. On this page the visitor can **browse** through the listed best practices of the Repository and **access** them by selecting the GO NOW! button.

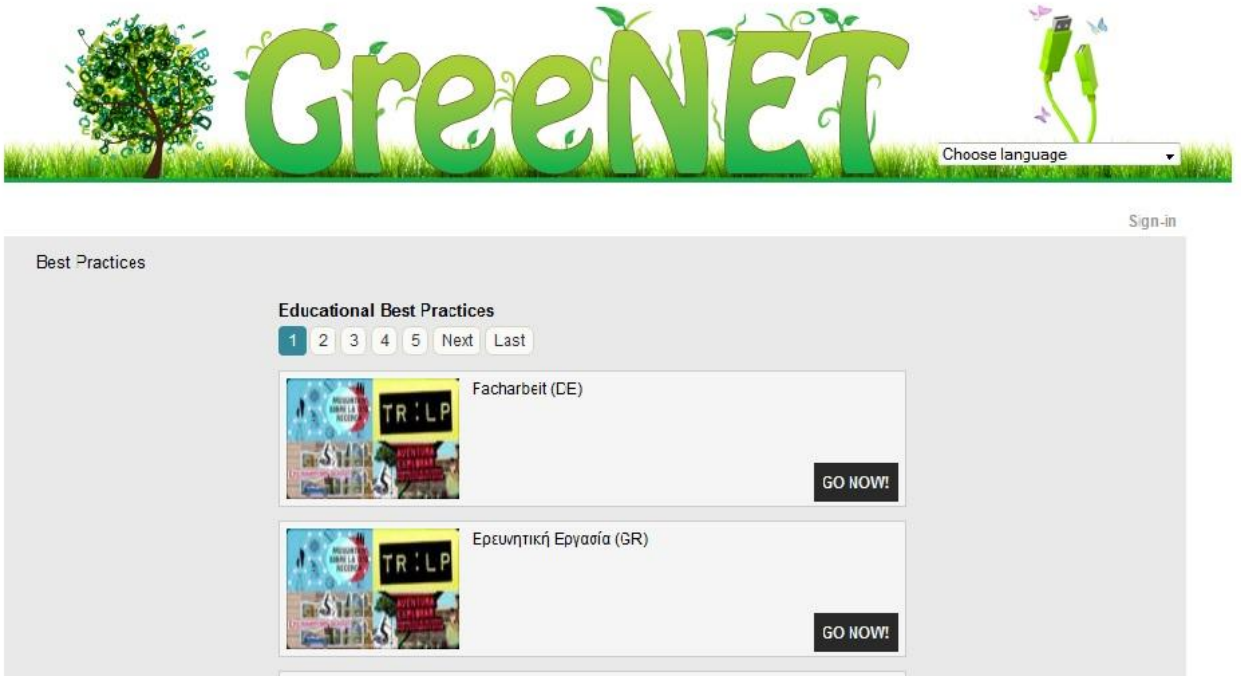


Figure 1.1: Main Page of Best Practice Authoring tool

1.1 Sign in

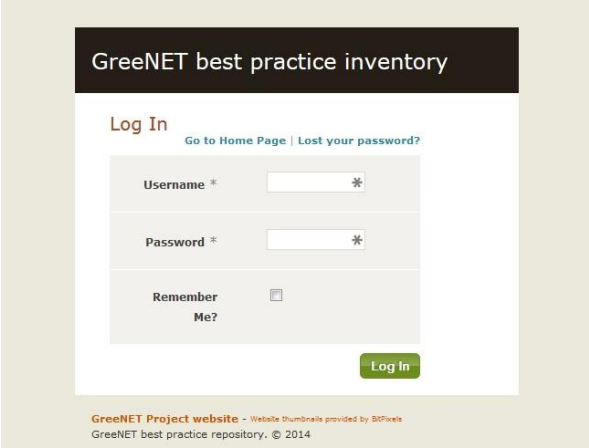


Figure 1.2: Log in

To **have access to more functionalities** including creating your own Best Practice and uploading resources, **Sign in is required**.

Select the Sign-in button located on the top right corner of your screen and complete the required fields by providing your **Username** and **Password** (Figure 1.2).

1.2 Dashboard

Once you have logged in, the **Dashboard** of the Best Practice Authoring Tool provides you with an overview of what is available on the site and guides you to create your own Best Practice.

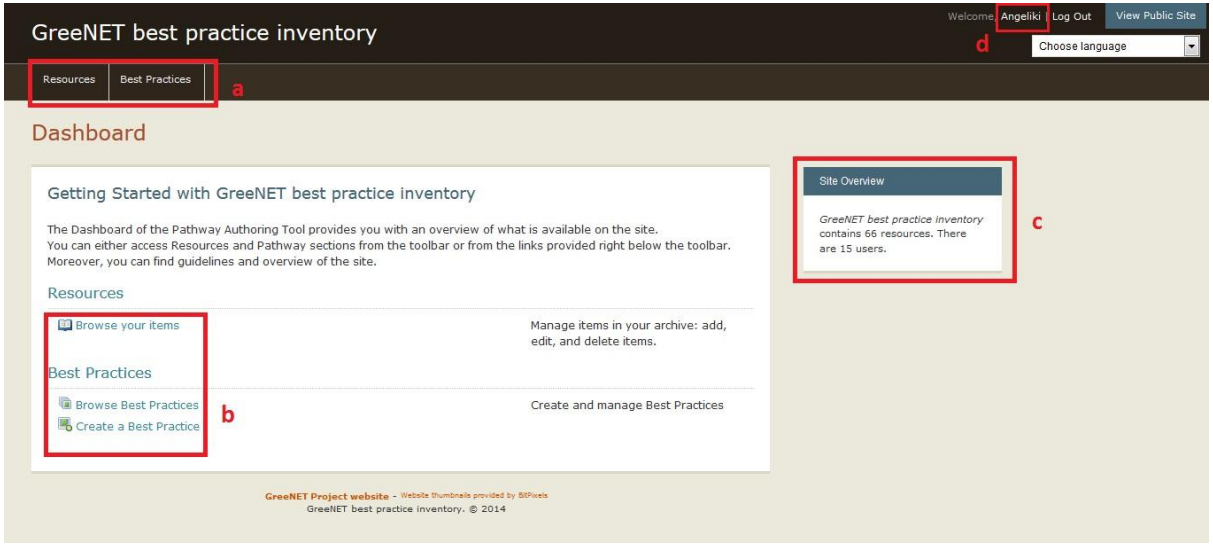


Figure 1.3: Dashboard

You can either access Resources and Best Practices sections from the toolbar or from the links provided right below the toolbar: **Browse your Items,** or **Browse/ Create a Best Practice** (Figure 1.3 – area "b")**.**

On the right column of the Dashboard you can check the **Site Overview** (number of items and users of the site) (Figure 1.3 – area "c").

The main toolbar consists of two sections: **Resources and Best Practices** (Figure 1.3 – area "a").

If you want to edit your personal information you have to click on the top right corner (near log-out) your name (Figure 1.3 – area "d") and then system provides a form where you can change your information (name, email, username, password) (Figure 1.4).

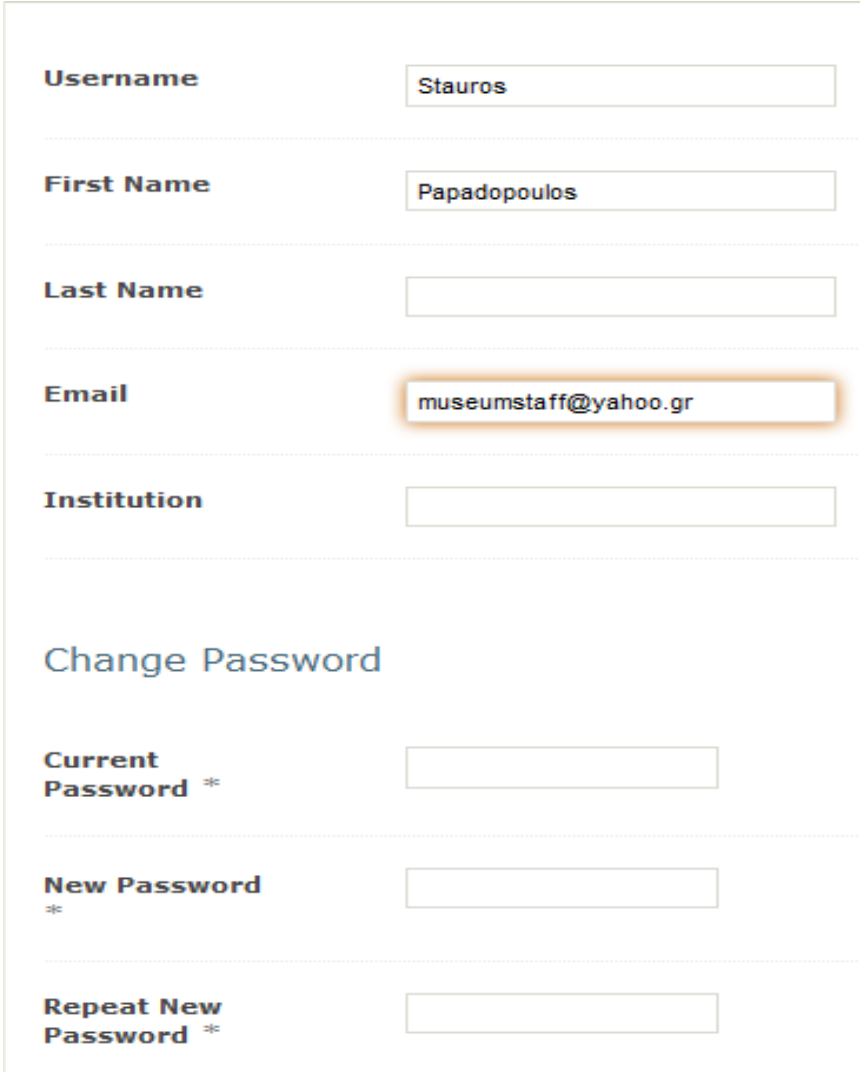


Figure 1.4: Personal Account

1.3 Resources

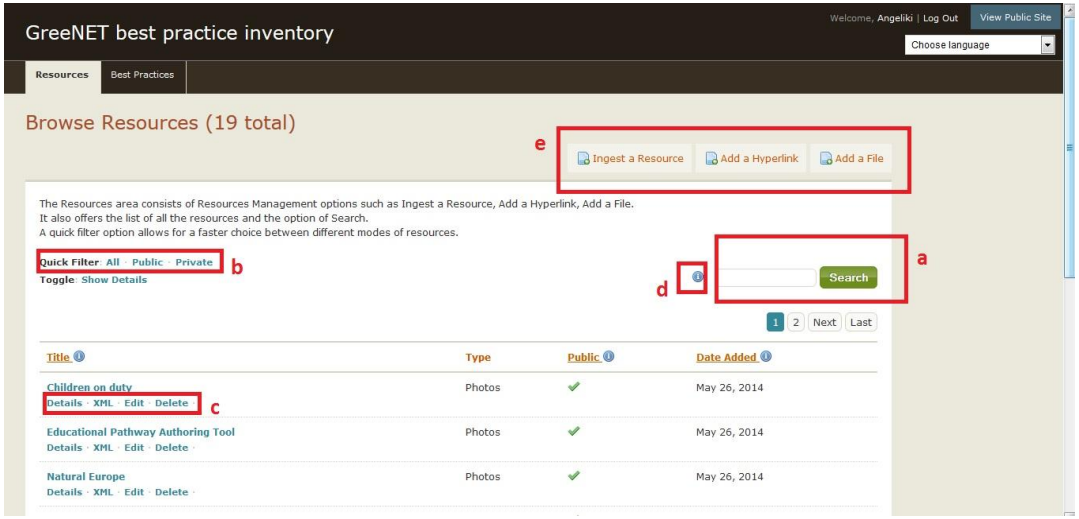


Figure 1.5: Resources Management

The **Resources** area consists of **Resources Management** options such as **Basic Search** (Figure 1.5 - area "a"). A quick filter option (Figure 1.5 – area "b") allows for a faster choice between different modes of resources (all - public – private).

Users can view the resource's **thumbnail/image preview** by clicking on "details" (Figure 1.5 – area "c")

Figure 1.6: Thumbnail/image preview

Furthermore, besides each option/field there is an information box (Figure 1.5 – area "d") which displays instructions/ guidelines.

1.3.1 Add a Resource

You can **Add a Resource** (Figure 1.5 – area “e”) into your repository with two different ways.

1. You can **add a file** from your personal resources (ex. from your local disc)

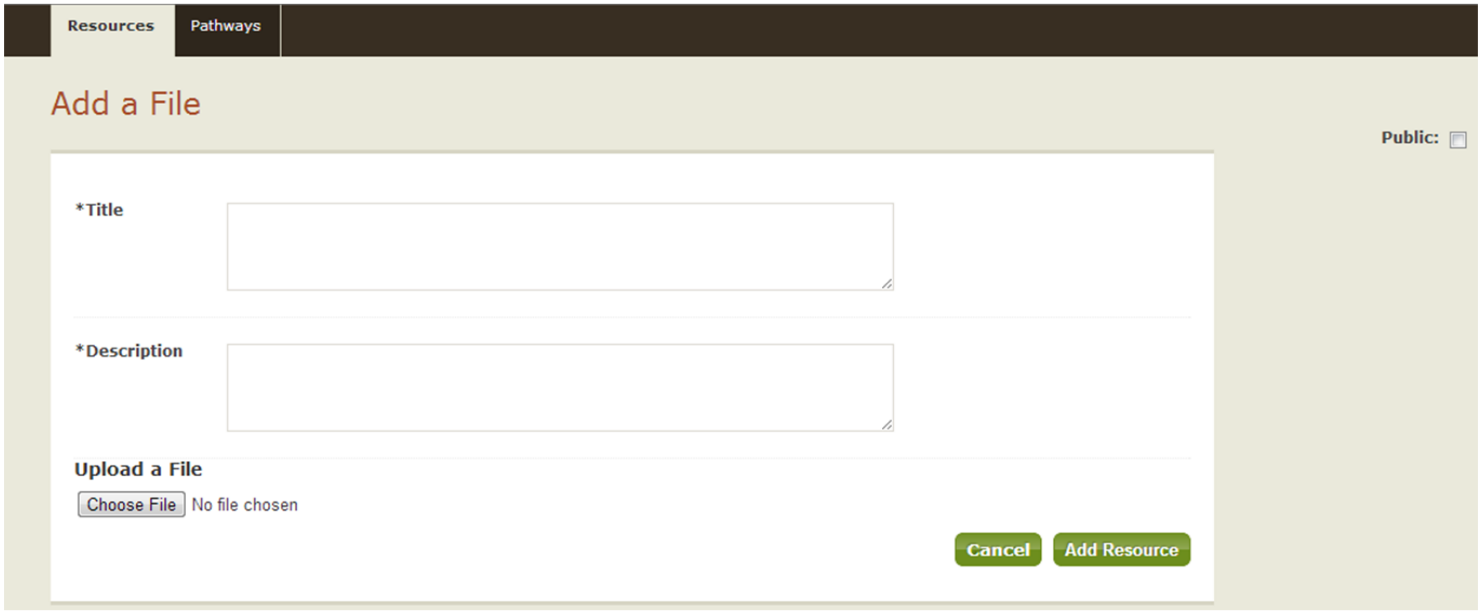


Figure 1.7: Add a file

2. **Add a hyperlink:** you can enter a URL that links to another website/source

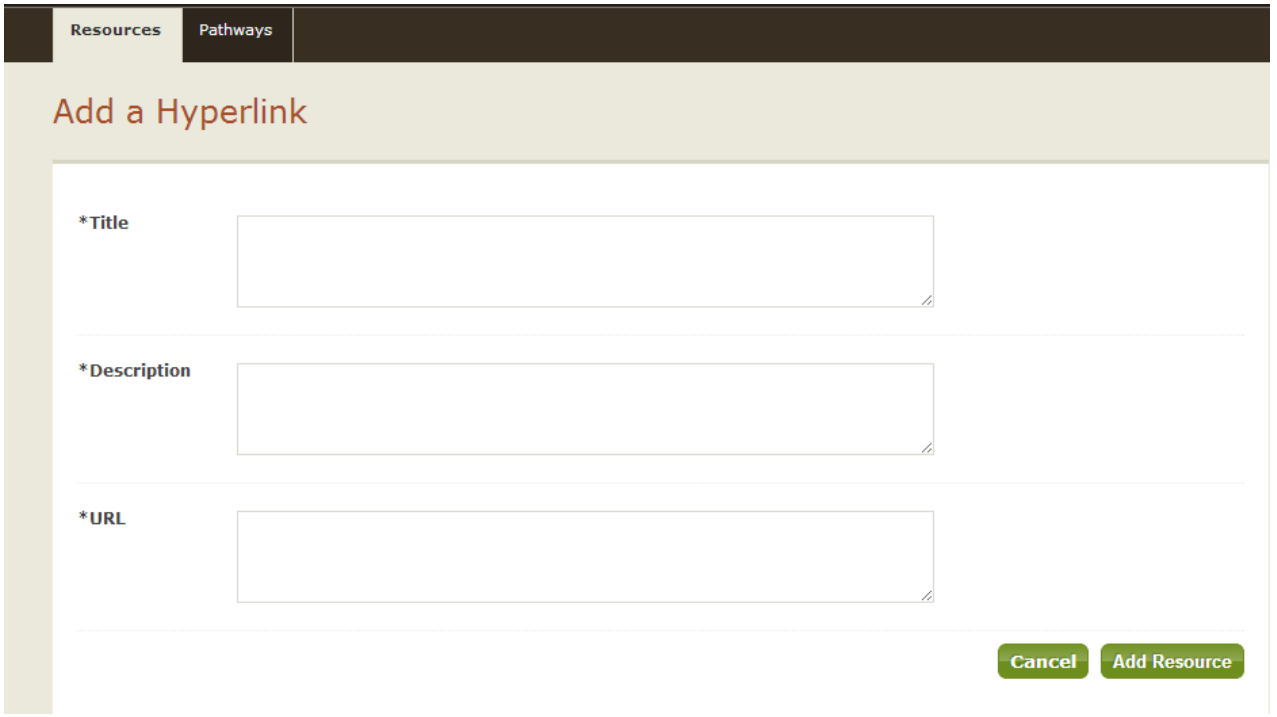


Figure 1.8: Add hyperlink

1.3.2 Edit a Resource

You can edit a resource

1. By clicking the *edit* button on **Browse Resource** page (Figure 2.5 – area “a”), or short after you *add the resource* into your repository, with any of the three aforementioned ways, the system will redirect you to the form where you can edit the metadata of the resource.
2. In the **Edit a Resource** page you can select from the left sub-menu (Figure 2.11 – area “a”) the **type of metadata** you would like to configure
3. Then you can **change the element** of your choice (Title, Description)
4. You can make the Resource “**public**” ticking the box or you can “**Delete**” it if you want (Figure 2.11 – area “b”)
5. Finally, if you want to save the changes that you made to the resource you just have to click the button “**Save Changes**” (Figure 1.11 – area “c”)

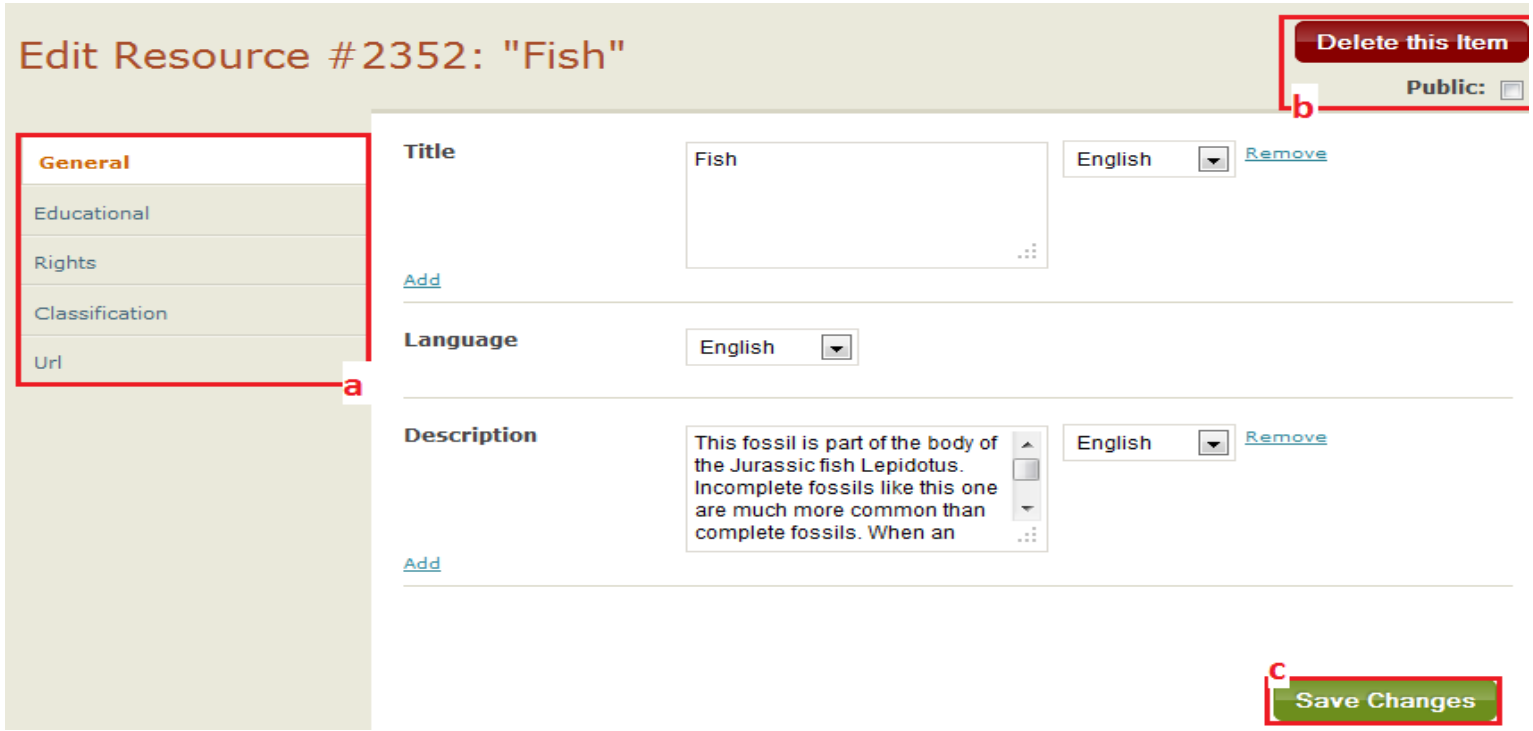


Figure 1.9: Edit the metadata of a Resource

1.4 Best Practices

The **Best Practices** area, accessible from either the Dashboard links or the toolbar, provides a list of the Best Practices available on the site. To read more about each Best Practice, click on the Title link. Users can also **Add their own Best Practice** (Figure 1.12 - area "a"). For step by step guidelines on how to create your own Best Practice, go to chapter 2.1 *"How to create a Best Practice"*.

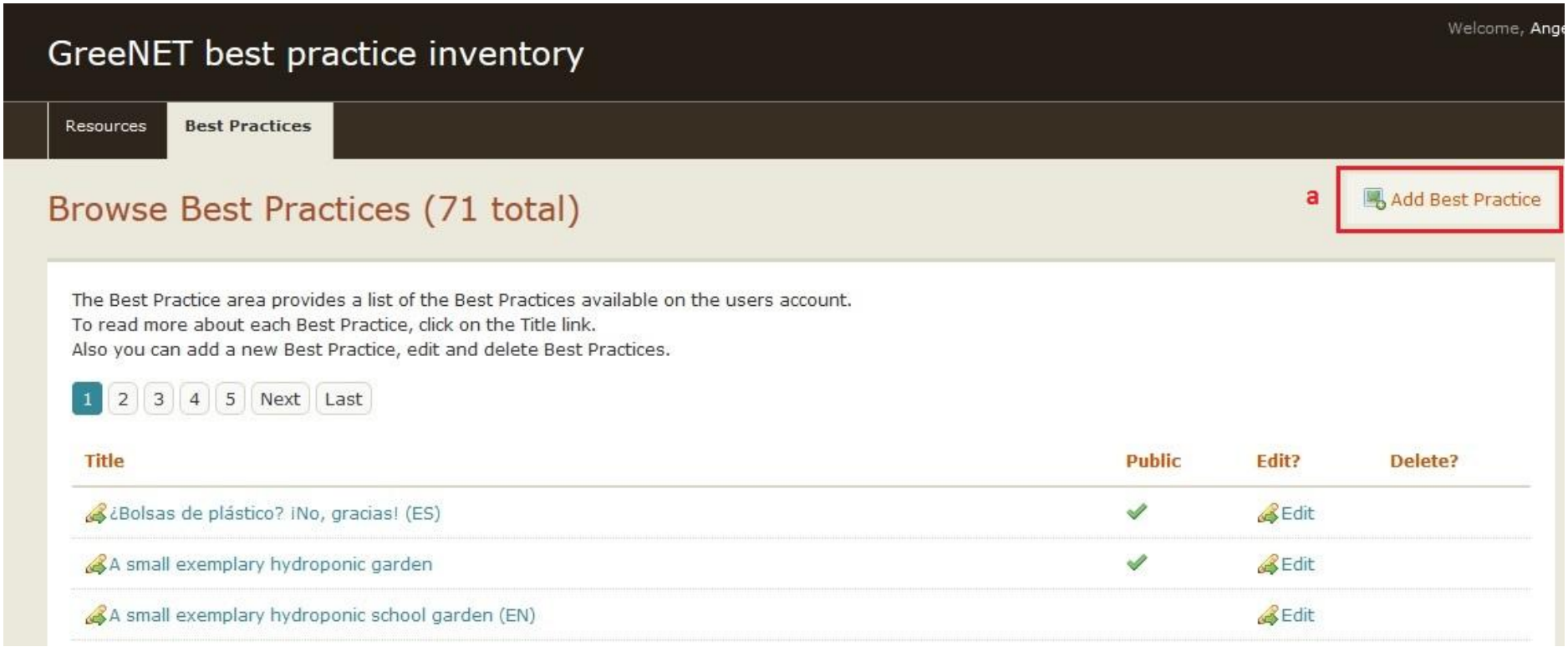


Figure 1.10: Best Practices

2 Design your Best Practice

Before starting to develop your own Best Practice using the Best Practice Authoring Tool (http://greenet-education.eu) it is important to remember that a Best Practice consists of text, images and a number of educational resources. Moreover, a Best Practice is structured in several sections guiding you through the content & criteria. The Authoring Tool gives you the opportunity to create your Best Practice online and to upload your own resources, but also to use the ones available on the site. Resources can include images, videos, links, documents, presentations and can be organised in collections.

Therefore, before starting the creation of your Best Practice, you might want to make sure that all the images and resources you plan to include in your Best Practice are uploaded and available on the tool. This chapter will focus on how to Create a Best Practice. However, while editing your Best Practice you can continue adding new resources from your computer or other sources.

2.1 How to create a Best Practice

In order to create a Best Practice on the Authoring Tool, follow the steps listed below:

- **Sign in** at http://greenet-education.eu for more info check section 1.1 *Sing In*
- Go to the **Best Practices** tab and click on **Add Best Practice** button (Figure 1.12–area "a") alternatively select **Create a Best Practice** from the Dashboard (Figure 1.3–area "b")**;**
- Add a title (Figure 2.1 – area "a") and a description (Figure 2.1 – area "b");

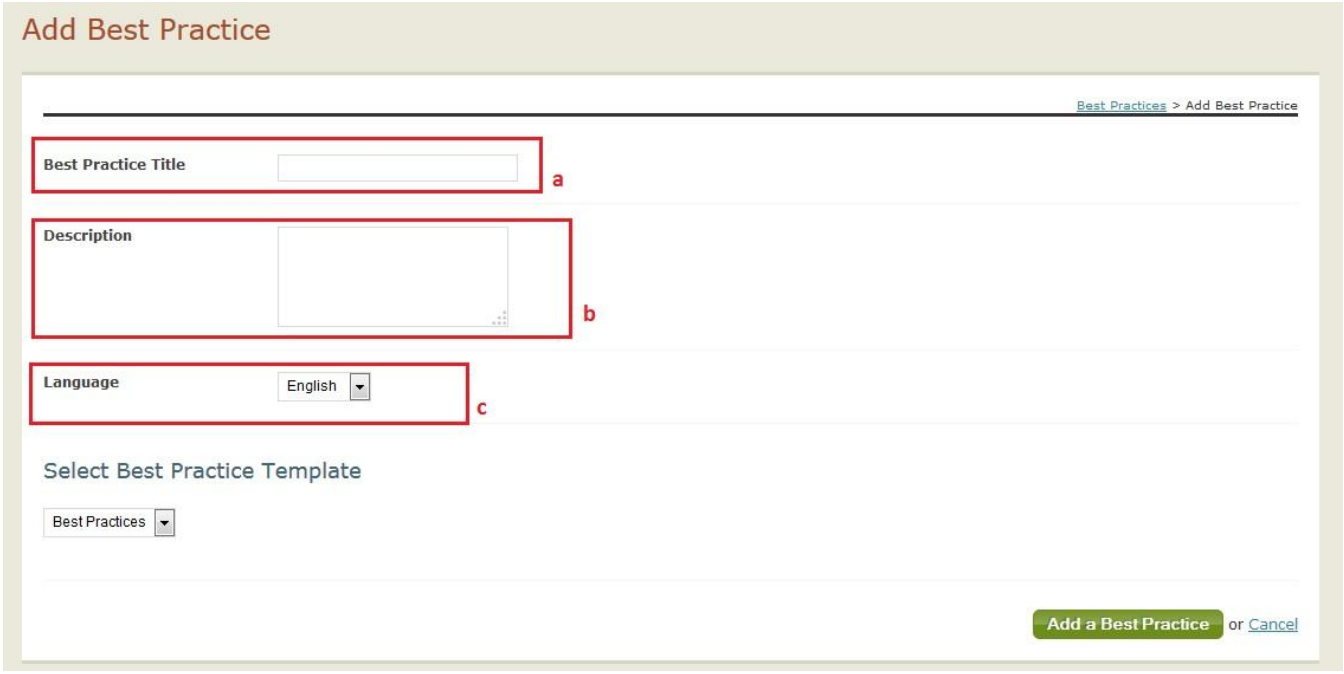


Figure 2.1: Add Best Practice

- Select the Best Practice language (Figure 2.1 - area “c”);you can choose one of the five given languages available in the menu;
- Click on to save your choices and create the new Best Practice (Figure 2.1).

2.1.1 Authoring

- Complete one by one the **Best Practice Sections: General Information, Content, Criteria**
- Each section consists of one or more pages corresponding to the description of a Best Practice . For each page, select **Edit** to start filling it in or **Save and Finish** after you have completed all the pages.

  - **General Information** consists of six (6) pages: *Summary, Aims, Main Activities, Involved Actors, Connection with the Curriculum, Where to find the application or case (Figure 2.2).*

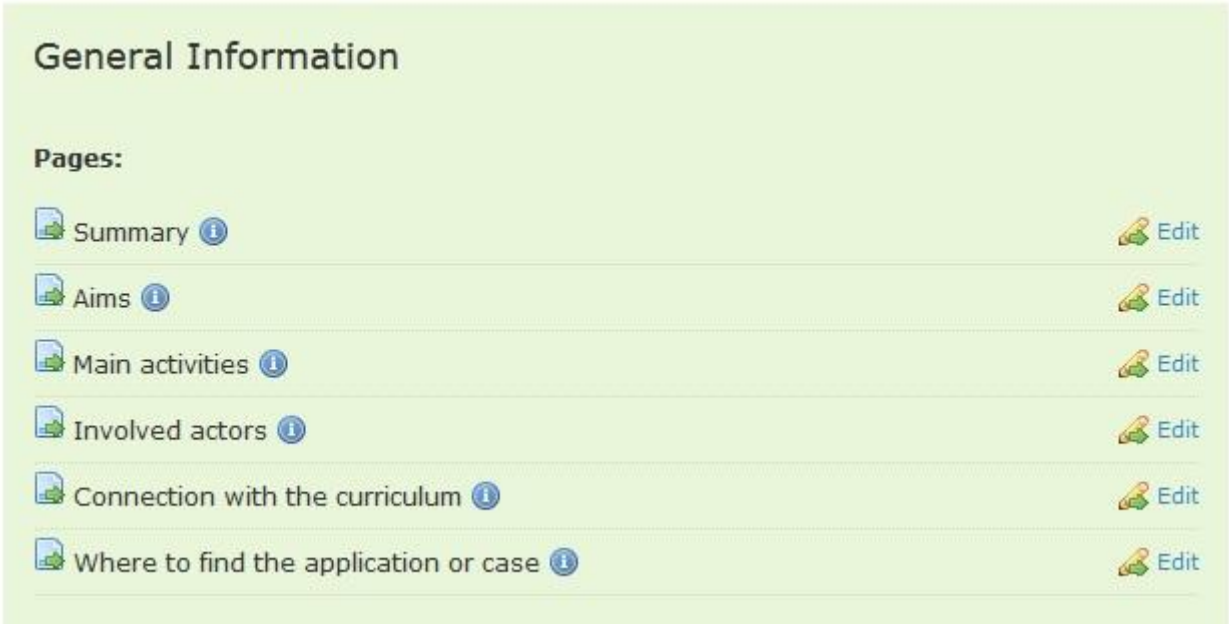


Figure 2.2: Genera Information section

- **Content** consists of one (1) page: Content (Figure 2.3)

Figure 2.3: Content section

- Criteria phase consists of ten (10) pages that cover the identification criteria for the GreeNEt Best Practices (Figure 2.4).

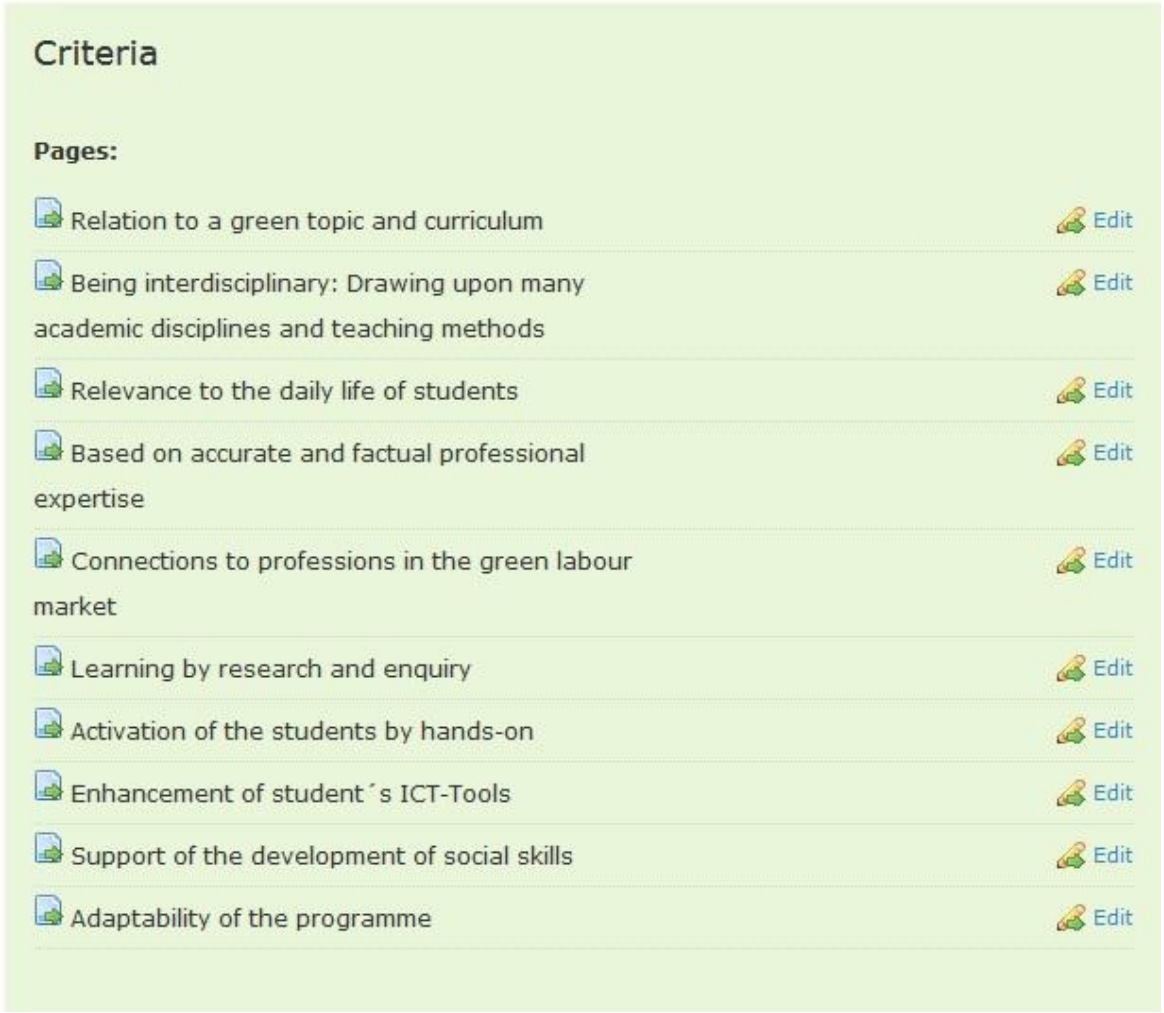


Figure 2.4: Criteria phase

2.1.2 Editing and formating

Editing text is easy, especially if you are familiar with any word processor software. If you are not sure what a button does, you can simply hover over it and a description will appear.

Figure 2.5: Text editor

You can link your text to external pages in 4 simple steps:

a) Highlight your text, b) Select the Add link button (Figure 2.5 - area ”a”)
b) c) Provide the URL of the page in the new window
c) d) Click on Insert.

When you perform Copy – Paste from Word, but in order to avoid problems, make sure you first copy your selected text the text from Word and paste it to Notepad. You can also use the HTML source editor option, accessed by the respective button found at the Text editor toolbar ”html” and then copy and paste the text from Notepad to the Rich text editor. You can now format it using the editor.

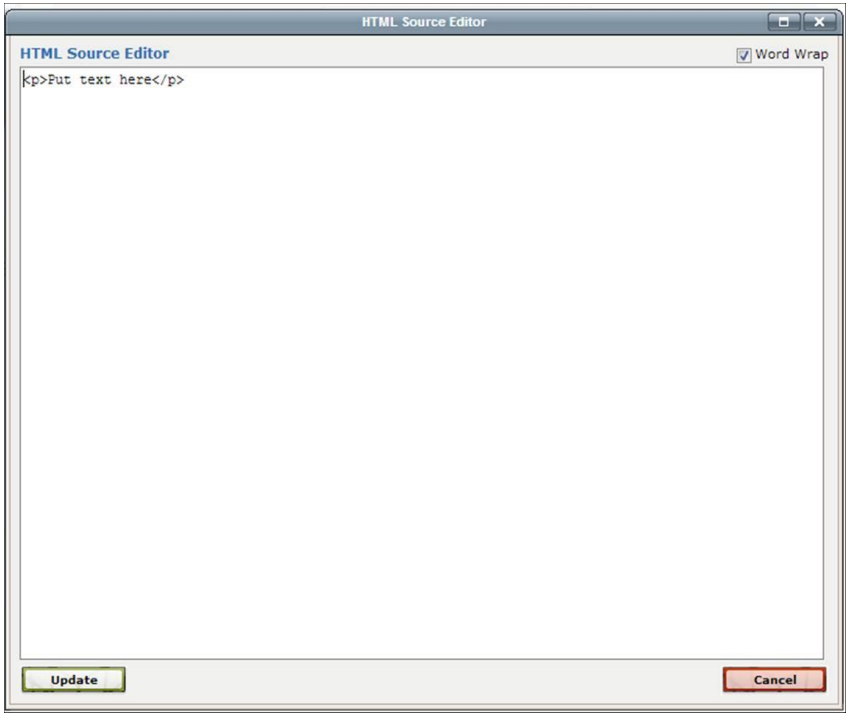


Figure 2.6: html source editor

2.1.3 How to fill in a page

All the pages from the different sections of the Best Practice have an identical structure that allows you to insert text, images and connect supporting material and Europeana objects with just few clicks.

- Start by filling in the page with **text**. Use the **Rich text editor** to format your text (up to 4 text-boxes). Read section Editing and Formating above.

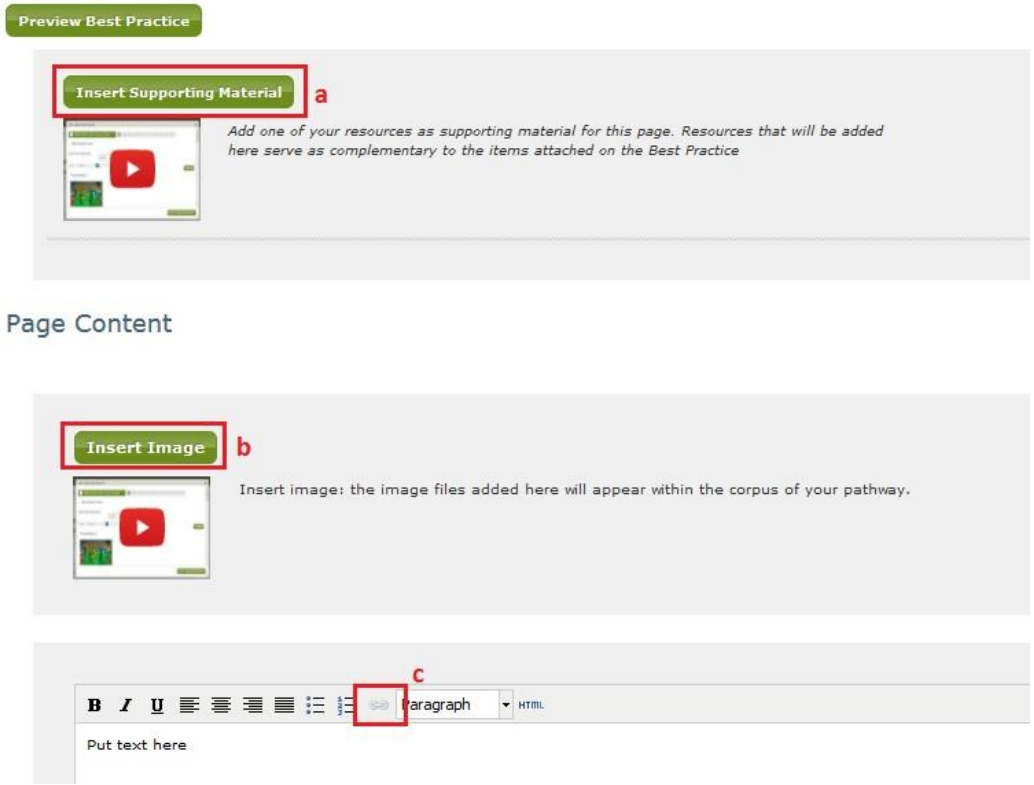


Figure 2.7: Page structure

- In each phase of the Best Practices the user can add an image as:
    - **Supporting material** - either image, or page, or any link from the library (resources) that the user has in the Best Practice Tool (using the button "**Insert supporting material"** on the upper right part of each page) (Figure 2.7 – area "a")
    - An attached item (see button "**Insert image**" that is placed on the top of the text box in the main area of each page) (Figure 2.7 – area "b").
    - **Link** within the text of each phase of the Best Practice (through the insert link button in the text editor) (Figure 2.7 – area "c")

The differences between the above are:

1. With the "insert" option you insert images that appear inside the Best Practice text (used as the main material of the Best Practice, the most important - up to 4 items). Moreover, the 1st image you enter in the introduction phase will appear in the left corner of your Best Practice in all phases.
2. With the "supporting material" you insert images and links, etc that appear in small thumbnails (preview) alongside the text of the Best Practice (used for material that complements the Best Practice).
3. Links provided in the text can only be links to external websites and not within the Best Practice Authoring Tool

- **Insert supporting material /Insert image** (Figure 2.6 – area "a"); Click on it and a pop-item will be appeared (Figure 2.7). Type one or more keywords or look through 'all items' and choose it from the list provided, and then click "Insert Supporting Material / Insert selected image". Additionally, if you cannot find the resource that you are looking for, you can **Add a new resource to your collection.** Once the item is inserted it will be listed in the supporting materials section of the Best Practice page. If you wish to remove a supporting material form the list click on the ⛔ icon.
  Please note that only public items will be listed in supporting materials.

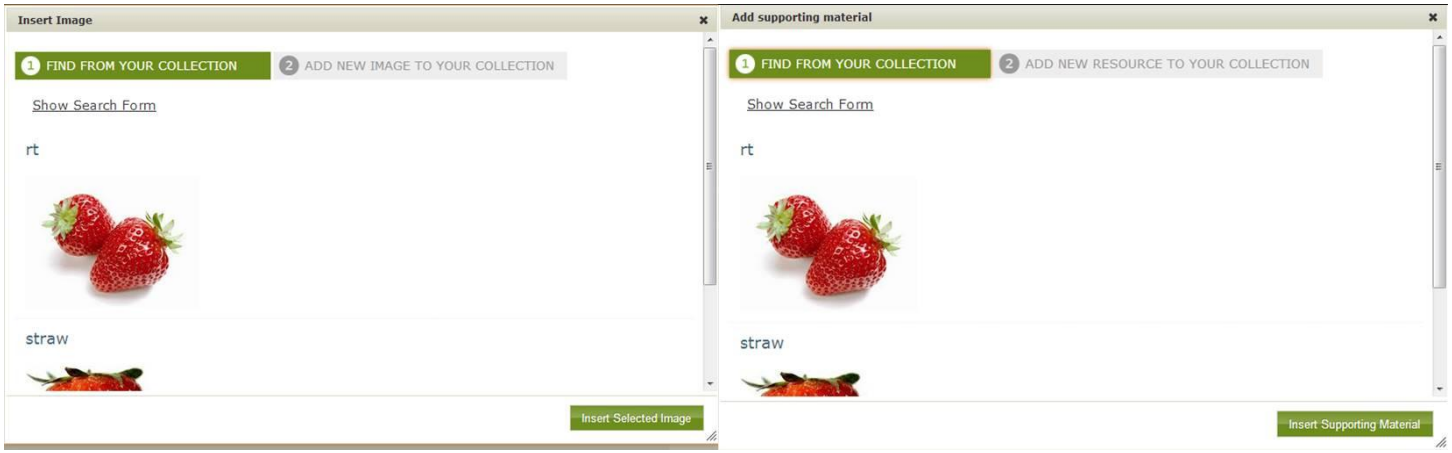


Figure 2.8: Select supporting material / image from your collection or add a new resource

- Select the Preview Best Practice link to check how your Best Practice will look like once published (Figure 2.7).

- Select from the breadcrumb the section that you want, in order to edit only this section.

Figure 2.9: Edit page – Breadcrumb

- Select **Save** or **Save and return to Best Practice** to complete the other pages on the sections of the Best Practice.

Figure 2.10: Best Practice page

2.1.4 Best Practice Metadata

In order to **describe your Best Practice**, you have seven (7) categories of metadata available: **General, Lifecycle, Meta – metadata, Technical, Educational, Rights** and **Classification.**

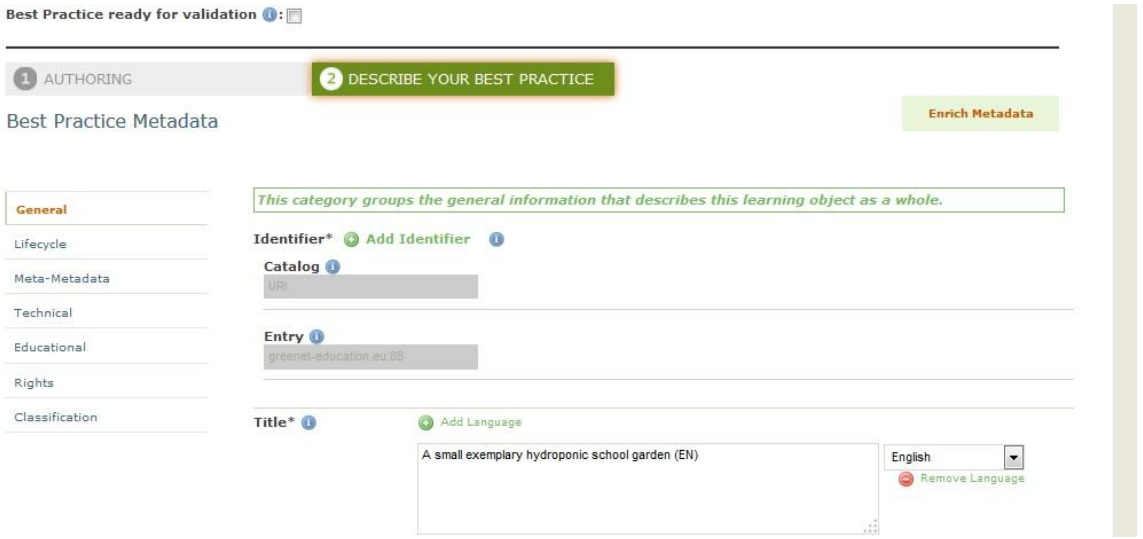


Figure 2.11: Add Best Practice - metadata

- In the **General** section, provide the **Title** and **Language** of the Best Practice and add a short **Description** in various languages.
- In the **Lifecycle** section, provide information about the contributor/ creator of this Best Practice.
- In the **Meta – metadata** section, provide information about the metadata record itself.

- The **Technical** section focuses on the technical requirements and characteristics of the Best Practice.
- The **Educational** section focuses on the **Learning Resource type, Intended end user Role, Learning context** and **Typical Age range**.
- In the **Rights** section, provide information about **Copyright** and other restrictions. Select your preferences from the fields provided, in order to decide whether you prefer to allow commercial uses of your work, modifications and if the Best Practice is available freely or at a cost. Once you provide this information, the tool will select the appropriate license (e.g. a Creative Commons license), and make it available on the main page of the Best Practice.
- In the **Classification** section, identify the learning purposes of your educational Best Practice.
- Save changes or Save and Finish if you have finalized your Best Practice.
- To make your Best Practice public, please select the **"Best Practice ready for validation"** option, by ticking the box (Figure 2.11).

3 The GreeNET Best Practice Template for Guided Best Practices

The GreeNET Best Practice Template consists of 3 steps describing the Best Practice:

Best Practice Step	Steps
General Information	Title of the Best Practice (BP)
	Summary
	Aims
	Main activities
	Involved actors
	Connection with the curriculum
	Where to find the application or case
Content	Content
Criteria	Relation to a green topic and curriculum
	Being interdisciplinary: Drawing upon many academic disciplines and teaching methods
	Relevance to the daily life of students
	Based on accurate and factual professional expertise
	Connections to professions in the green labour market
	Learning by research and enquiry
	Activation of the students by hands-on
	Enhancement of student´s ICT-Tools
	Support of the development of social skills
	Adaptability of the programme

Table 3.1: The guided Educational Best Practice template

A) General Information

This section includes basic introductory information about the learning experience that will allow the teacher to comprehend the scope of the educational Best Practice, its relevance to his/her teaching needs and goals, and provide him/her with guidance for the preparation of the learning experience. More specifically the pages of this section are:

- **Summary:** Give a short insight to the case describing the context & content.
- **Aims:** What is the aim of the case?
- **Main activities:** What are the main activities included in this case?
- **Involved actors**: *The involved actors are those who take the provided information/ case/ application and bring it to the end user. E.g. teachers, researchers, curriculum developers, the public. (This is NOT the same as the end user)*
- **Connection with the curriculum:** The links of the proposed case? With certain areas of the school curriculum or other formal education curriculum are mentioned here.
- **Where to find the application or case:** e.g. web based, local address of installation

B) Content

- **Content**: Give a narrative description of your Best Practice (~500 words up to 1 page)

C) Criteria

This section includes the short description of how the criteria of the Best Practice are met. There are ten (10) criteria to be filled in. The more criteria are met, the better the Best Practice is.

- Relation to a green topic and curriculum
- Being interdisciplinary: Drawing upon many academic disciplines and teaching methods

- Relevance to the daily life of students
- Based on accurate and factual professional expertise
- Connections to professions in the green labour market
- Learning by research and enquiry
- Activation of the students by hands-on
- Enhancement of student´s ICT-Tools
- Support of the development of social skills
- Adaptability of the programme

4 Best Practice - Step by Step Tutorial

„Rainforest and Climate Change" is a Best Practice linked to the modules of biology and geography and is addressed to secondary school students. In the following pages, you will explore selective sections of the educational Best Practice as it appears in View Mode and in Edit Mode, accompanied by comments and descriptions.

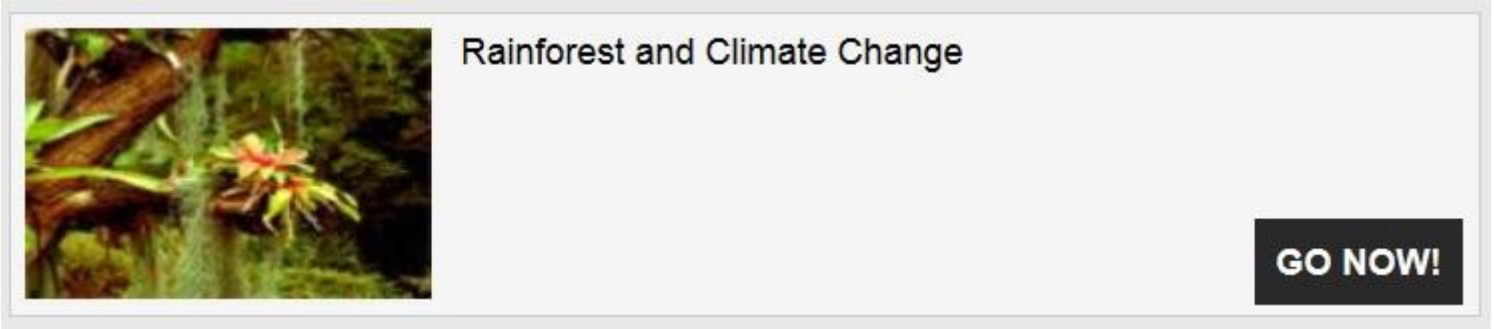


Figure 4.1: Best Practice starting point

EDIT MODE

Figure 4.2: Best Practice sections in Edit mode

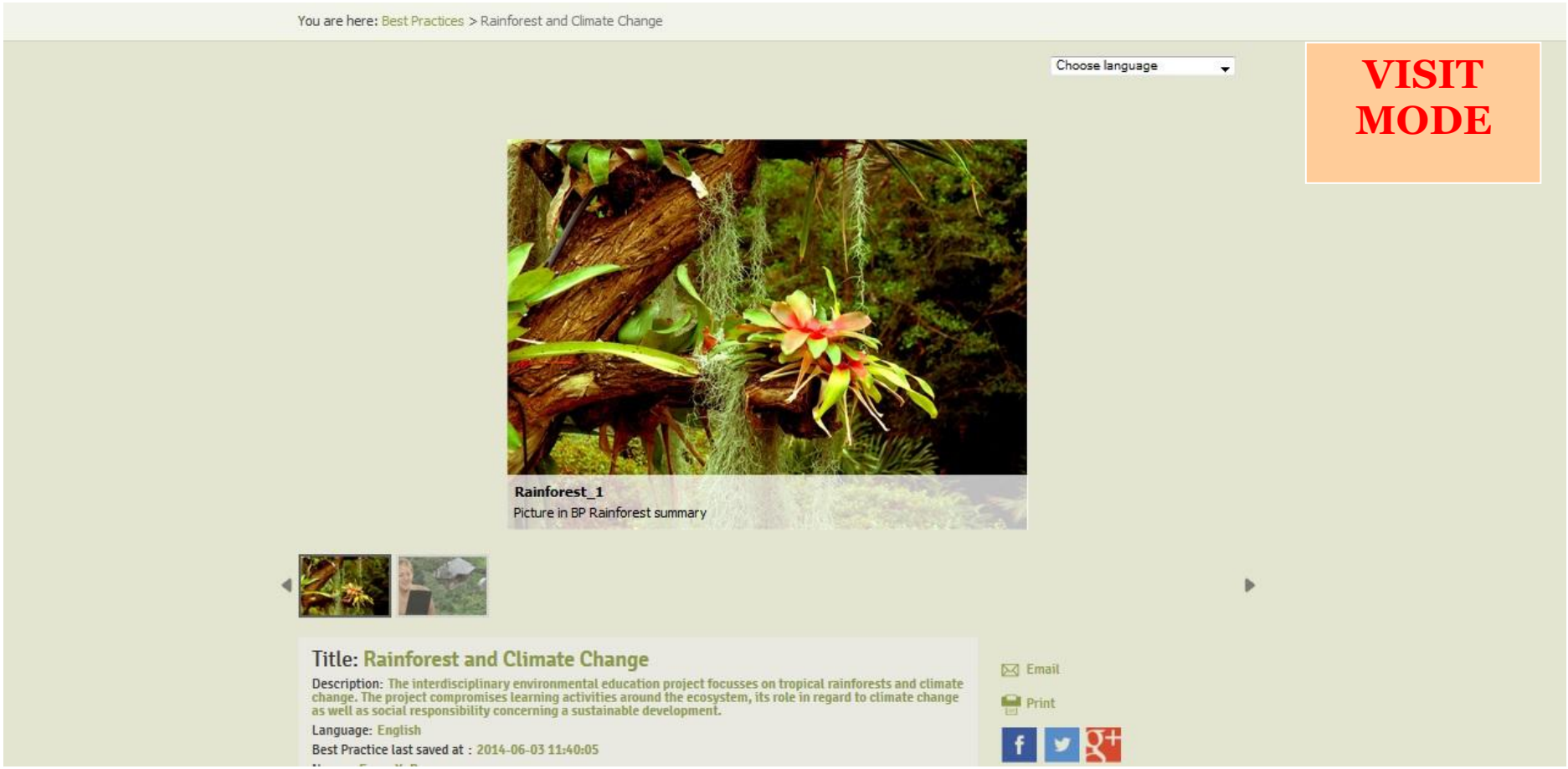


Figure 4.3: Best Practice sections in Visit mode

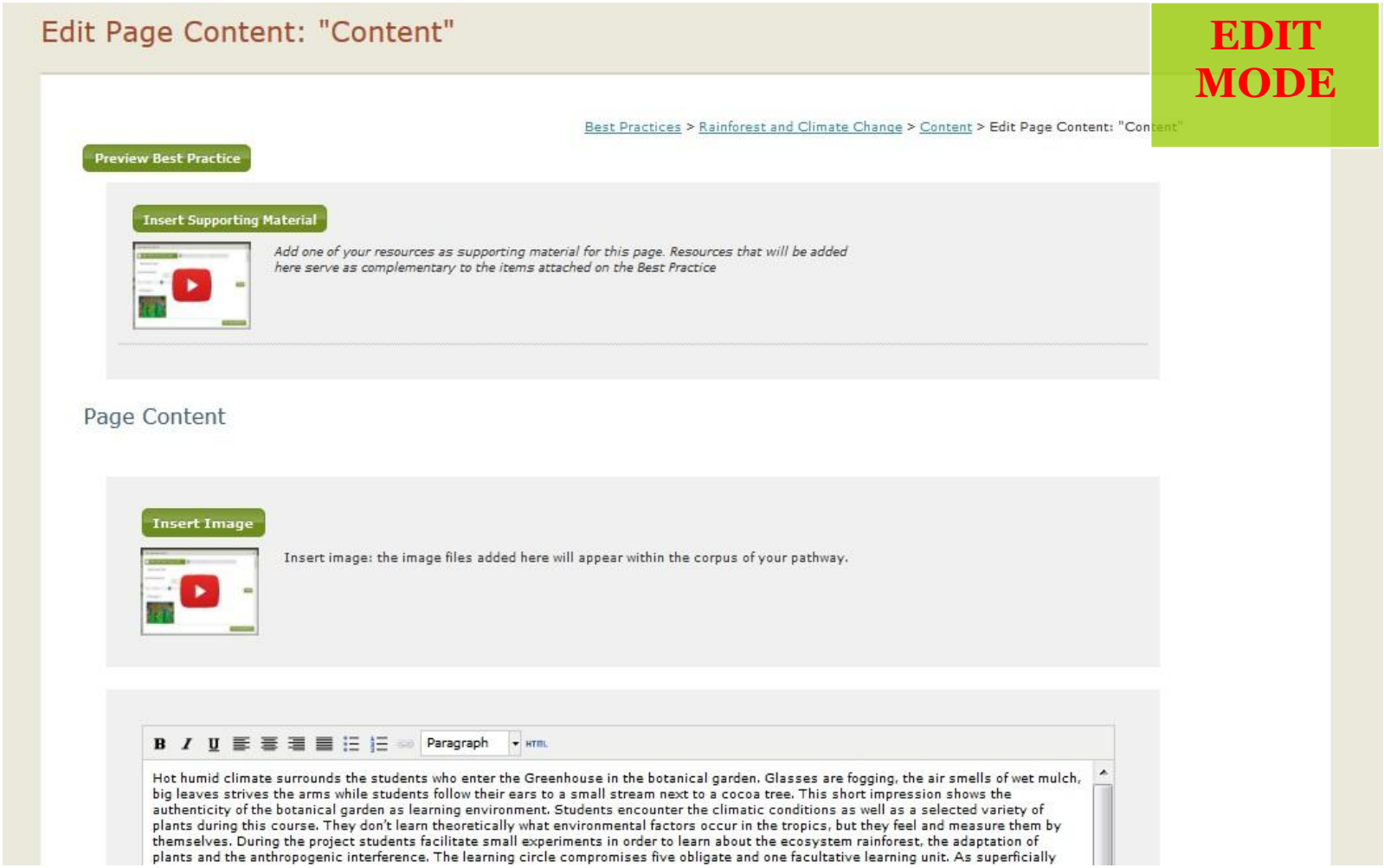
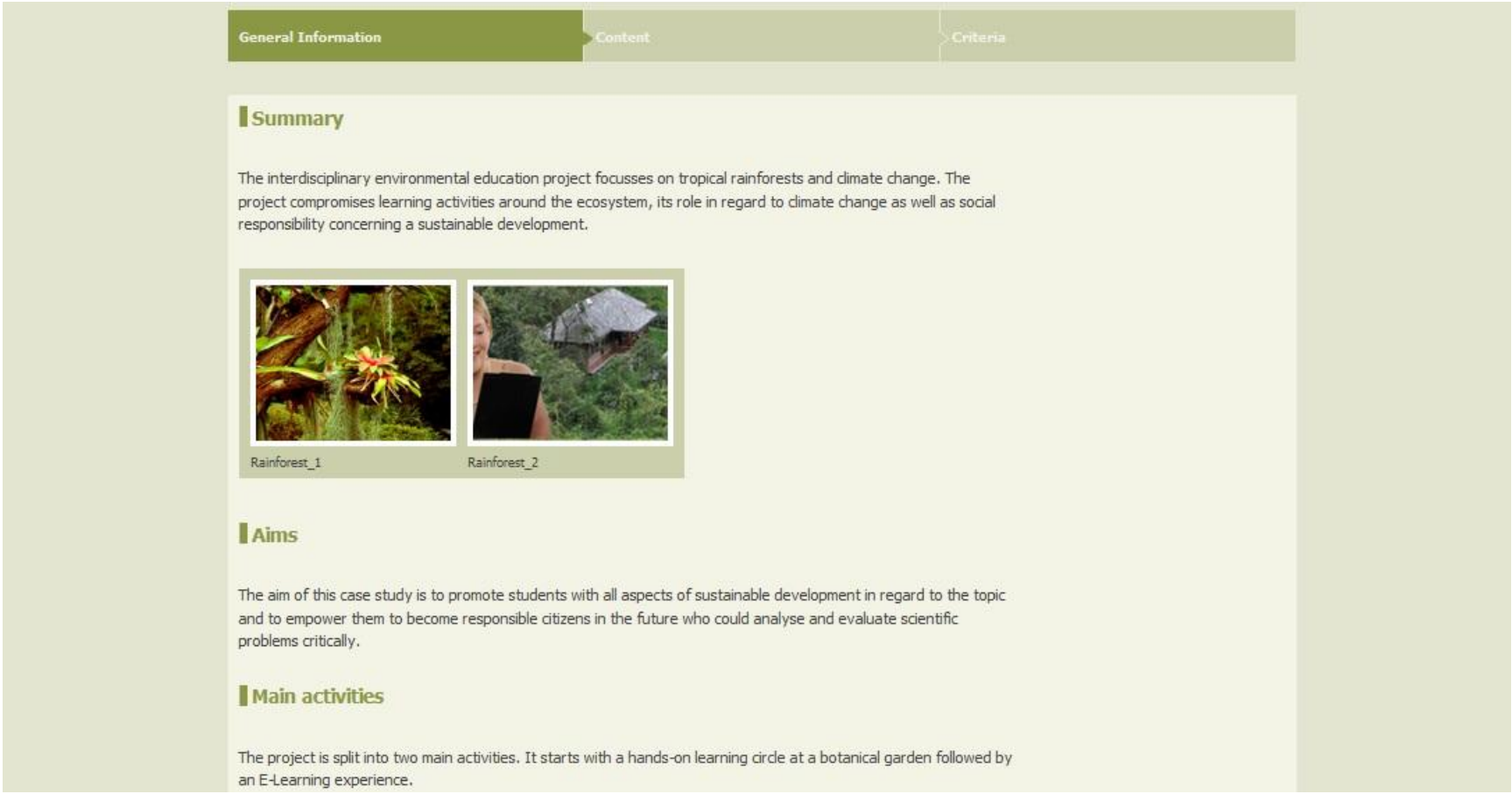


Figure 4.4: Content Phase in Edit mode

Each Best Practice section displays both the guiding text and photos in an attractive way.

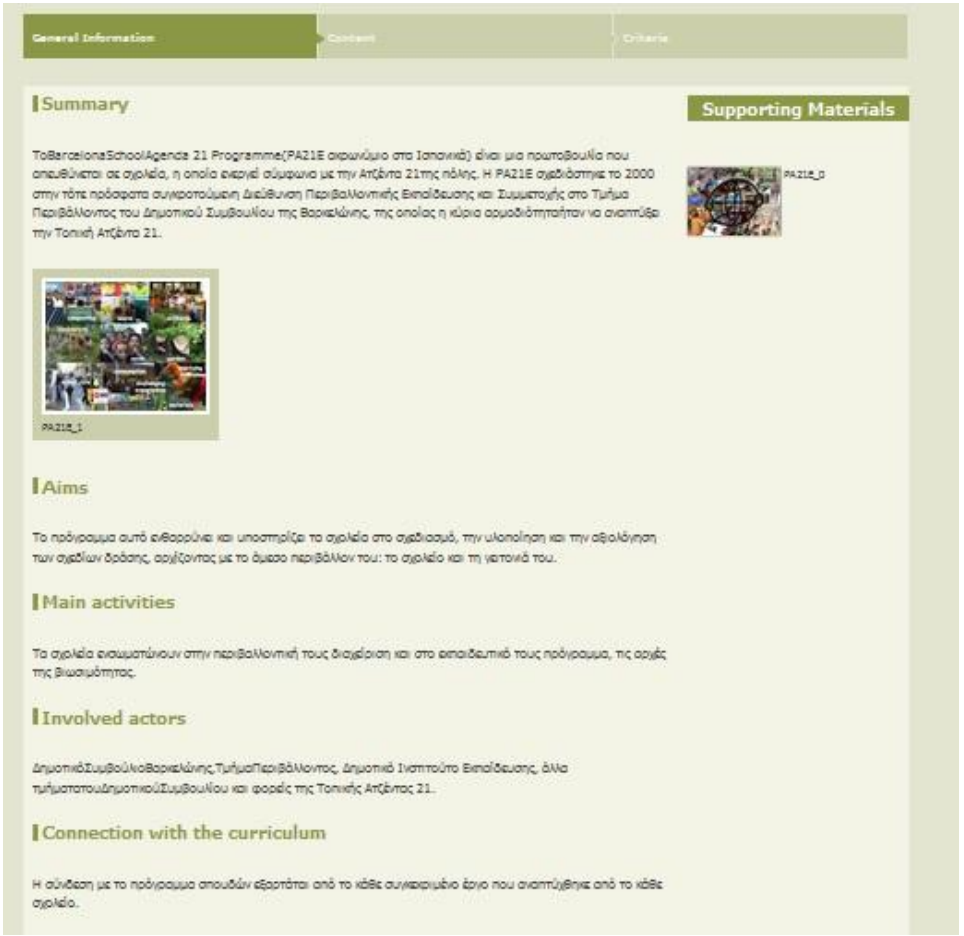


VISIT MODE

Figure 4.5: General Information in Visit mode

Figure 4.6: General Information pages in Edit mode

Each Best Practice section displays both the guiding text and photos in an attractive way. In each separate phase, the viewer can come across the equivalent different steps. To view the part desired, one can scroll down and read the text, while also accessing the corresponding supporting material, found on the right part of the page (Figure 4.7).



VISIT MODE

Figure 4.7: General Information pages in Visit mode

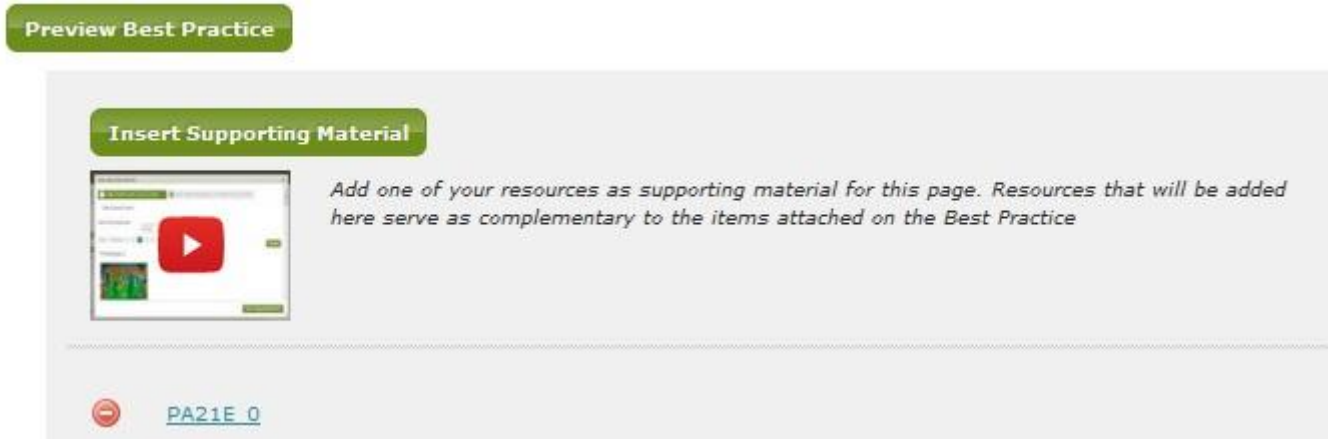
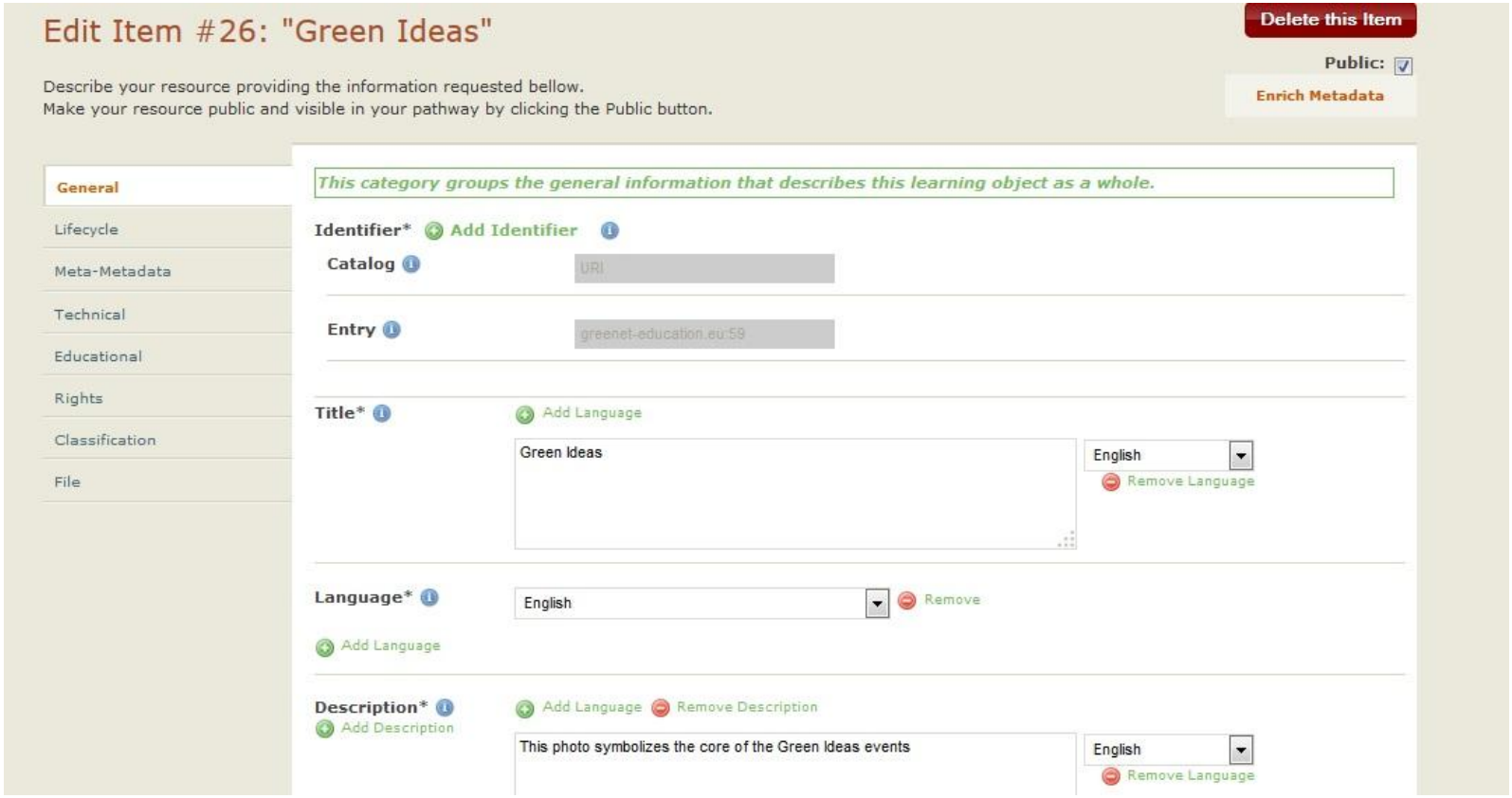


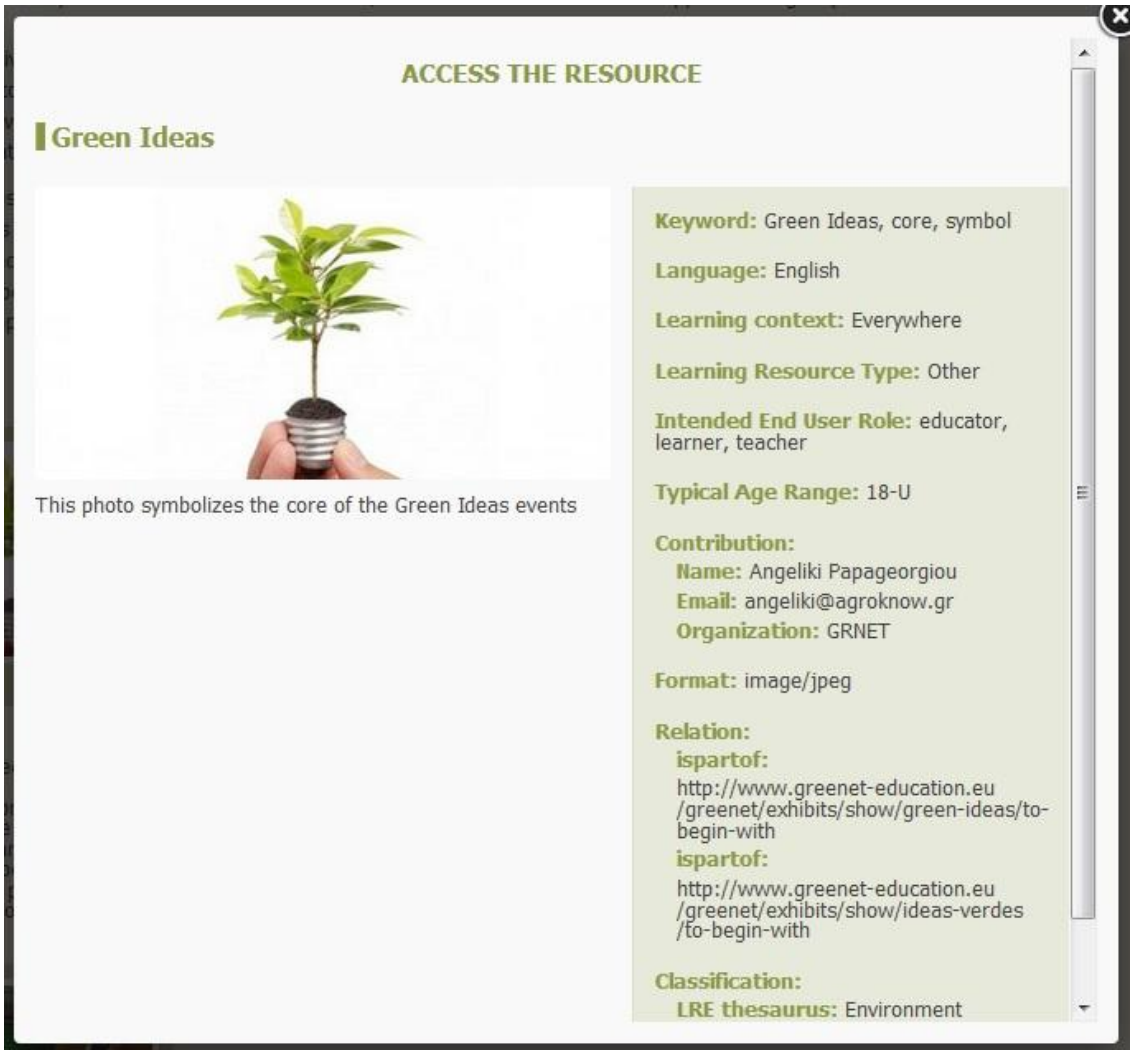
Figure 4.8: Add Supporting materials in Edit mode

Figure 4.9: Supporting materials in Visit mode



EDIT MODE

Figure 4.10: Edit a Resource in Edit Mode



VISIT MODE

Figure 4.11: View a resource in Visit mode

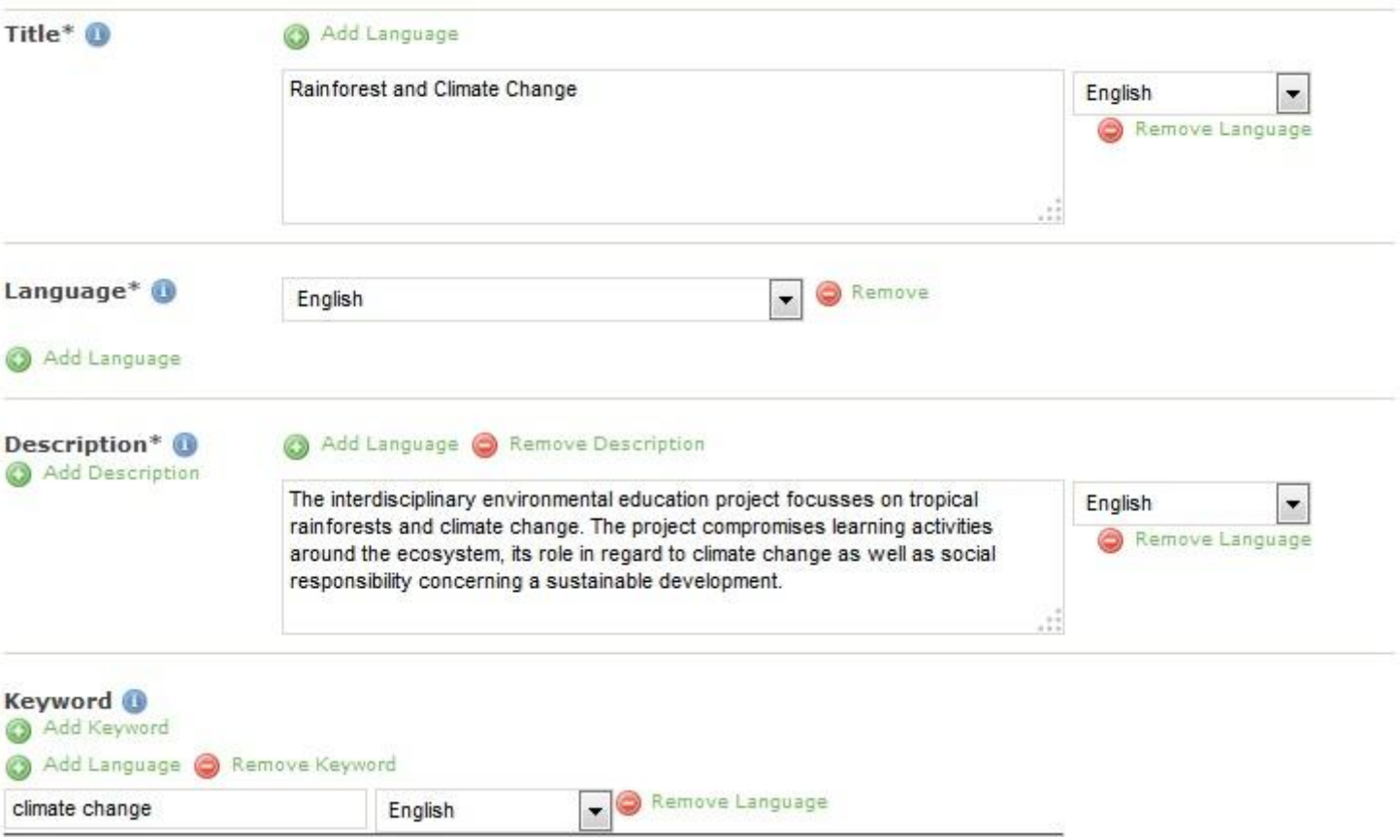


Figure 4.12: Metadata in Edit mode

Figure 4.13: Metadata in Visit mode