

4th April 2019: Inaugural speech

“One major change was the pressure being placed on our natural environment, and the increasing challenges to sustainability. The threat of the 'built-up' environment as opposed to the 'natural' environment is all the more evident, and is becoming more apparent. During the course of this Presidency, I will be recommending rigorous adherence to regulations and scrupulous decision-making in the interest of sustainability, and our ultimate obligations towards future generations. This will not only apply to the built-up environment, but also to air quality, marine pollution, and other measures that counter rising global temperatures.”

Link to speech (EN): <https://president.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Presidential-speech.pdf>

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/April/04/pr190697en.aspx>

“Inbidlet biss il-persjoni fuq l-ambjent naturali tagħna u żdiedet l-isfida għas-sostenibbiltà. It-teddida tal-ambjent 'mibni', fuq dak 'naturali', qiegħda dejjem tikber u tissaħħaħ. Matul din il-Prezidenza ħa nkun qiegħed nirrakkomanda lill-awtoritajiet konċernati il-ħarsien strett tar-regolamenti, u li d-deċiżjonijiet jittieħdu bl-akbar skruplu u responsabbiltà, fil-ħarsien tas-sostenibbiltà, u l-obbligi tagħna lejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet futuri. Dan mhux biss fil-konfront tal-ambjent mibni, imma daqstant ieħor fil-ħarsien tal-kwalità tal-arja, fil-passi kontra t-tniġġis tal-baħar, u miżuri oħra biex ma ngħollux it-temperatura tad-dinja.”

Link to speech (MT): <https://president.gov.mt/speeches/speech-delivered-4th-april-h-e-dr-george-w-vella-inauguration-president-republic-malta/>

Link to PR

(MT): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/April/04/pr190697.aspx>

7th May 2019: Discussion organised by the KSU at the UoM

“I personally don't like the current quality of the built environment ... It is featureless and flat with no redeeming factors, all concrete and glass. I don't know what we'll be leaving the future generations. What we're building is absolutely nothing to look forward to in the coming years.” Our quality of life will deteriorate, he pressed on, if we continue in this direction.”

Link to event video (KSU Facebook

page): <https://www.facebook.com/ksumalta/videos/802905930088073>

14th November 2019: Malta Sustainability Forum

“... more built up areas are directly impinging on the health and psychological well-being of the nation. It is important that the industry understands that this growth, while bringing considerable material benefit to some, must also bring with it a full understanding of the duties which are owed to the country as a whole. This is not only a matter of being generous in funding good causes and charitable institutions, which Maltese companies largely do, but also a matter of playing a direct and effective role in improving our collective social, cultural, economic and environmental well-being.”

Link to speech: <https://president.gov.mt/speeches/speech-george-vella-president-malta-malta-sustainability-forum-14th-november-2019/>

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/November/14/pr192455.aspx>

7th December 2019: Address to an event organised by JEF Malta

“It is the duty of present generations to ensure that a sustainable environment is passed in to upcoming citizens of the world.”

President’s Facebook post: <https://www.facebook.com/PresidentofMalta/posts/it-is-the-duty-of-present-generations-to-ensure-that-a-sustainable-environment-i/2636385909815765/>

23rd October 2020: Award ceremony of the annual Buonamico Award

“... urging the Environment and Resources Authority (ERA) to be more vigilant and to better protect the remaining environmental heritage. He stressed the need of striking a balance between economic success and sustainable development, and to realise that “progress” in the urban environment must not degrade the natural environment. He pointed out that we are very close to jeopardising this balance, with all the consequences that this entails.”

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2019/July/04/pr191482.aspx>

“... hegġeg lill-Awtorità tar-Riżorsi u l-Ambjent (l-ERA) biex tkun aktar vigilianti u tipproteġi aħjar il-wirt ambjentali li fadlilna. Sahaq fuq il-bżonn li jintlaħaq bilanċ bejn is-suċċess ekonomiku u l-iżvilupp sostenibbli, u li nirrealizzaw li l-“progress” fl-ambjent urban m’għandux ikun il-kaġun tat-tħassir ta’ dak naturali. Irrimarka li qegħdin qrib ħafna li dan il-bilanċ nipperikolawh, bil-konsegwenzi kollha li dan iġib miegħu.”

Link to PR (MT): [STQARRIJA MILL-UFFIĊĊJU TAL-PRESIDENT Il-President jappella għal bilanċ bejn is-suċċess ekonomiku u l-iżvilupp sostenibbli \(gov.mt\)](https://www.gov.mt/STQARRIJA-MILL-UFFIĊĊJU-TAL-PRESIDENT-Il-President-jappella-għal-bilanċ-bejn-is-suċċess-ekonomiku-u-l-iżvilupp-sostenibbli-(gov.mt))

28th October 2020: Ġieħ Ghawdex Award

“There is a need to find a sustainable balance between new buildings and construction projects, and the environment which, after all, we have a duty to protect, for ourselves and for future generations.”

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2020/October/29/pr202116en.aspx>

“Hemm bżonn li jinstab bilanċ sostenibbli bejn bini u proġetti ta’ kostruzzjoni ġodda, u l-ambjent li, wara kollox, għandna dmir u dover li nipproteġu, għalina u għal min ġej warajna.”

Link to PR

(MT): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2020/October/29/pr202116.aspx>

13th November 2020: Malta Architecture and Spatial Planning Awards 2019

“While explaining that development cannot be stopped, he expressed the importance of raising awareness, in the design of any project, on the effect it will have, not only for who is implementing the project, but for the whole nation. The President appealed to also protect the cultural heritage, and this is not only a reference to specific buildings of historical value, but also to their surroundings which give complete value to these structures. Above all, he appealed to value the Maltese character, what it was, and what it will be.”

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2020/November/14/pr202271en.aspx>

“Filwaqt li fisser kif l-iżvilupp ma jistax jitwaqqaf, esprima l-importanza li fit-tfassil ta’ kwalunkwe proġett, tizzied il-kuxjenza fuq l-effett li dan se jkun qed ikollu, mhux biss għal min ikun qed iwettaq il-proġett, iżda għall-poplu kollu. Il-President appella sabiex jithares ukoll il-wirt kulturali, u dan mhux referenza biss għal binjiet partikolari ta’ valur storiku iżda wkoll il-madwar tagħhom li jagħti valur sħiħ lil dawn l-istrutturi. Fuq kollox li jkun iwwalorizzat il-karattru Malti, dak li kien, u dak li għad ikun.”

Link to PR

(MT): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2020/November/14/pr202271.aspx>

13th December 2020: Republic Day speech.

“We cannot afford to lose our country’s beauty to unsightly buildings, with little or no architectural value or typical Maltese characteristics, which will be our architectural legacy to future generations. This jars greatly with the rich cultural heritage that our country is endowed with. Ours is a unique heritage, most of which is also World Heritage... Let us not be the ones who uglify our heritage and devalue it.”

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2020/December/13/pr202563en.aspx>

“Fuq kollox, irridu naraw li ma nkomplux inkerrhu pajjiżna b’binjiet utilitarji li m’għandhom ebda karattru arkitettoniku jew tipiku Malti, li ser inhallu lil uliedna u wlied uliedna bħala l-wirt arkitettoniku ta’ żmienna. Dan jistona bis-sħiħ mal-wirt kulturali għani li għandu pajjiżna. Dan huwa wirt uniku u hafna minnu huwa wirt Dinji... Ejjew ma nkunux ahna li dan il-wirt ngħarrquh u nnaqqasulu mill-valur tiegħu.”

Link to PR

(MT): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2020/December/13/pr202563.aspx>

26th January 2021 - Malta Sustainability Forum.

“Sustainability is key to achieving a good balance in the environmental, social, and economic aspects of development. During an interview launching the Malta Sustainability Forum 2021, President George Vella addressed a range of concerns focusing on sustainability – including the environment, climate change, resources, development, economic models as well as the role of women and young people – and mentioned the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals as a primary point of reference in this conversation.”

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2021/January/25/pr210147en.aspx>

“Is-sostenibbiltà hija fattur ewlieni biex niksbu bilanċ tajjeb fl-aspetti ambjentali, soċjali u ekonomiċi tal-iżvilupp. Matul intervista li tat bidu għall-Malta Sustainability Forum 2021, il-President George Vella indirizza diversi kwistjonijiet li jiffokaw fuq is-sostenibbiltà – inklużi l-ambjent, it-tibdil fil-klima, ir-riżorsi, l-iżvilupp, il-mudelli ekonomiċi kif ukoll ir-rwol tan-nisa u taż-żgħażaġh – u semma l-Għanijiet ta' Żvilupp Sostenibbli tan-Nazzjonijiet Magħquda bħala punt primarju ta' referenza f'din il-konverżazzjoni.”

Link to PR

(MT): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2021/January/25/pr210147.aspx>

28th January 2021: Visit to ERA

“The President touched upon the topic of applications and permits. “I want to stress the importance of this responsibility that you are carrying. There must be no deviation from what the law requires, with all the integrity and diligence required of each and every one of the enforcement officers,” said the President. “At the same time, the work to increase the efficiency in the processing of applications and permits must continue so that the public continues to be well-served. Always uphold the principles of transparency and accountability when carrying out your duties.””

Link to PR

(EN): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2021/January/28/pr210172en.aspx>

“Il-President ikkummenta dwar is-sugġett tal-applikazzjonijiet u l-permessi. “Irrid nišhaq fuq l-importanza ta’ din ir-responsabbiltà li qegħdin iġġorru. Ma għandu jkun hemm l-ebda żvija minn dak li titlob il-liġi, bir-rettezza kollha u d-diliġenza meħtieġa minn kull wieħed u waħda mill-uffiċjali tal-infurzar,” qal il-President. “Fl-istess ħin, tajjeb li jitkompla x-xogħol biex tiżdied l-effiċjenza fl-ipproċessar tal-applikazzjonijiet u l-permessi sabiex il-pubbliku jkompli jinqeda sew. Żommu dejjem il-prinċipji ta’ trasparenza u kontabilità fil-qadi ta’ dmirijietkom.”

Link to PR

(MT): <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2021/January/28/pr210172.aspx>

7th February 2021 – Interview on ToM on sustainable development

“Everyone is responsible for safeguarding our environment, living sustainably and generating a better world. I enjoyed the forum’s youth module because it reflected our youths as society’s decision-makers. They are vociferous in civil society and we should support them with tools, ranging from education to democratic representation in decision-making. It is in their interest to campaign against unsustainable practices today to defend their future.”

Link: <https://timesofmalta.com/articles/view/listen-to-the-experts-and-heed-our-planets-cries-for-help.850028>

1st March 2021: Speech to EkoSkola

“... President George Vella spoke about how important it is for everyone to safeguard the environment around them.”

Link to PR

EN: <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2021/March/01/pr210446en.aspx>

“... il-President George Vella tkellem dwar l-importanza li kulhadd jibza' għall-ambjent ta' madwaru.”

Link to PR

MT: <https://www.gov.mt/en/Government/DOI/Press%20Releases/Pages/2021/March/01/pr210446.aspx>

15th March 2021 – Meeting with Gozo Regional Council

“This morning I met with the President of the Gozo Regional Council Dr Samuel Azzopardi who, on behalf of the Gozitan local councils, expressed concern about the excessive development taking place in Gozo, which according to them, could ruin the natural beauty characterising the Island of Gozo.”

President’s Facebook post

- <https://www.facebook.com/PresidentofMalta/posts/3826916797429331>

Comments given by the GRC to the Press following the meeting: Gozitan mayors take their concerns on destruction of landscapes to President George Vella

- https://www.maltatoday.com.mt/news/national/108361/watch_gozitan_mayors_take_their_concerns_on_destruction_of_landscapes_to_president_george_vella#.YI5uMJAZyww