

Climate Voices II: Ideas and Inspiration for Climate Action in your School

InterClimate Network's Model Climate Conferences / Local Action Summits provide an insight into the world of global climate negotiations. This toolkit aims to inspire and support you further in your own ideas for taking action and raising awareness of climate change issues in school.

1 What difference can we make?

In Paris in December 2015 (COP21) global leaders agreed to take Climate Change action to try and keep global temperature rise to "well below" 2.0C (3.6F) above pre-industrial times and endeavour to limit them even more, to 1.5C. The urgency of action on the agreement is highlighted in the latest IPCC report with its call for much **more ambitious action** across the world. Its co-chair, Dr Debra Roberts said of the report,

"This is not about remote science; it is about where we live and work, and it gives us a clue on how we might be able to contribute to that massive change."

The 2008 Climate Change Act commits the UK to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least **80% by 2050**, relative to 1990 levels. Many cities and local authorities, individual schools and colleges have developed carbon reduction strategies or climate action plans.

At InterClimate Network we believe that we all need to do more and that young people can and will lead the way to a more sustainable future through your creative ideas and energy.

2 What's going on already?

At a series of Model Climate Conferences/Local Action Summits, we asked students to say what you are already doing. Here are some of the activities you told us about...

At home

I do everything I can to reduce my carbon footprint.

I make sure we're recycling at home.

In the community

I go to a Scout club that helps the environment.

I did a beach clean-up in the summer in Cornwall.

I am persuading people to reduce climate change by speaking about it.

In school

We have solar panels.

We have recycling bins for paper and printer cartridges.

We're taking energy readings.

Our school 'houses' are coming together to do a sustainability project.

3 Get started or grow your own plans!

Here are some ideas if you are looking to start something new, or want to boost what you're already doing in your school. **Remember to take photographs and keep a record** so you can share it with other people. Tweet it to **@ClimateVoicesUK** and we'll spread the word...

Awareness raising – hold your own Climate Conference



- Run a climate conference in school to raise awareness of what's happening globally
- Invite parents and teachers to form teams as well as students
- Ask InterClimate Network for the country briefings and any other support you need
- Write about it in your school newsletter, and your local press will be interested too!

Energy - reduce your use



- Do an energy audit of your school to see how many lights, computers and other pieces of equipment are left on when not in use, and compare different buildings. (School buildings can make up nearly 50% of an entire local council GHG emissions)
- Install a Smart Meter and set up a rota to monitor it over a set time (councils and energy companies can provide monitors and equipment)
- Set up a competition to see which year or House can save the greatest amount of energy. Get agreement from school leaders to set up a 'Green Fund' from a proportion of any money saved on bills.

Food - create a school garden



- Find out if your school or local venue has a plot of land you could use. Seek advice and ask around for other support - money, tools, contacts, helping to write to garden centres for donations
- Plant things you can eat and set up a compost scheme. Put bins for biodegradable waste in the canteen and staff rooms to add to the compost for your garden
- Hold a Harvest Fete with a plant and seed sale and the sale of fresh fruit and vegetables to show the value of your work. And a scarecrow competition for fun!

Local environment – find out what's out there



- Take photos or film what you find in your area and interview shop owners and the public to find out their views
- Speak with any local businesses already involved in sustainable solutions
- Create a big map of both the sustainability issues and the positive actions you have found to present in an assembly, and invite parents along too.

Transport and Pollution – local hotspots



- Find out about local air quality and pollution hotspots via your local Pollution Monitoring Centres - you can also ask to visit them <http://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/networks/>
- Research specific areas close to school such as traffic at key crossroads or next to major roads and devise your own awareness raising project
- Think about initiatives that you could promote in school e.g. walking and cycling; public transport; car sharing.

Waste & Recycling – reduce, reuse, recycle!



- Think about ways to reduce consumption and re-use rather than throw away e.g.
 - Design and make new clothes out of old clothes
 - Make bags out of old jeans or friendship bracelets out of old t-shirts
- Have a catwalk show in your school or put up a display about ethical fashion
- Find out your school's re-cycling rates and plan an awareness raising campaign or competition to increase the rates, and maybe raise funds for your Green Fund!

4 Useful information and websites

Whilst we strive to provide only links to useful and ethical websites, we have no control over their content and the links to other websites do not imply a recommendation for all the content found on these sites.

Atlas Schools Tool-kit

Although quite old now (the project has ended) the Atlas Schools tool-kit helps schools to measure your carbon footprint and understand how different activities of the school affect carbon emissions and help to reduce its environmental impact, as well as save money.

<http://www.cisl.cam.ac.uk/publications/publication-pdfs/using-the-atlas-schools-toolkit-a-guide/view>

Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT)

CAT is an education and visitor centre demonstrating practical solutions for sustainability. They provide relevant resources, and workshops that address sustainability across the curriculum.

<http://learning.cat.org.uk/index.php/en/resources>

The Carbon Trust

The **Empower for Schools**[™] application is an interactive online tool, designed to help staff and pupils to cut carbon and save money on energy bills. It includes advice and recommendations on all carbon hotspots in a school. The cost of one year's access to this tool is £650 but their claim is that schools can save up to £21,500 per year in energy bills.

<http://www.carbontrust.com/resources/tools/empower-for-schools>

Eco-Action Games

They specialise in innovative, interactive, eco educational games, resources & employee training that help people become more eco-friendly in their everyday lives at home, school and work.

<https://ecoactiongames.org.uk/shop>

Eco-Schools England

Eco-Schools has recently launched a pathway for secondary schools with guidance and resources designed to help a school Eco-Committee take as much ownership of the scheme as possible.

<https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/secondary-pathway/>

Ellen Macarthur Foundation - circular economy

The circular economy engages students in one of the most challenging and complex issues facing our global economy: how to move beyond the linear 'take-make-dispose' model.

<https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/our-work/activities/schools-colleges>

Energy Envoys

This is an Energy Envoys opportunity provided by the National Energy Foundation for young people wanting to complete the volunteering section of their Duke of Edinburgh's Awards.

<http://www.energyenvoys.org.uk/content/welcome>

Global Dimension resources website

This government funded website is a gateway to a massive range of resources. Search by topic and age suitability in the left hand browser.

<http://www.globaldimension.org.uk/>

Green Schools Project

Provides support and resources to schools to set up and run a fun and engaging student-led environmental programme.

<https://www.greenschoolsproject.org.uk/>

LESS CO2

This programme is run by the Ashden Awards and focuses on ways pupils and the wider school community can integrate energy and carbon savings, making our schools more sustainable through simple behavioural changes and retrofits.

<https://www.ashden.org/about/less-co2>

Modeshift

Modeshift STARS is a national schools awards scheme established to recognise schools that have demonstrated excellence in supporting sustainable travel. This free scheme encourages schools across the country to join a major effort to increase sustainable and active travel.

<http://www.modeshiftstars.org/>

Oxfam Education

Oxfam Education has a huge bank of learning and activity resources to bring the issues Oxfam works on to life, both in the classroom and the wider community. They also provide school speakers and teacher training opportunities.

<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources>

Practical Action

Offering a range of resources including STEM challenges such as Plastic Challenge to create something new from recycled plastic and a Water Harvester Design Challenge.

<http://practicalaction.org/schools>

Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC)

A local Development Education Centre in Reading with resources to download or buy, including 'All you need for a Sustainability Assembly' and an exploration of the global Fashion industry called, 'Passion for Fashion.'

<http://w3.risc.org.uk/education/resources>

STEMnet

STEM Ambassadors are volunteers from a wide range of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related jobs and disciplines across the UK. They come to schools, offering their time and enthusiasm to help bring STEM subjects to life and demonstrate the value of them in life and careers.

<https://www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassadors>

Sustainability and Environmental Education – SEEd

SEEd is an education charity which aims to broaden and deepen the practice of education for sustainability and environmental education. They have listed resources as well as some competitions and school initiatives on their website.

<https://se-ed.co.uk/edu/resources/resources-energy-climate-change/>

University of Reading

The University of Reading's Walker Institute aims to enhance understanding and improve prediction of the risks and opportunities from our changing climate.

<http://www.walker-institute.ac.uk>

WRAP - Recycle Now

Recycle Now is the national recycling campaign for England, managed by WRAP. They run Recycle Week each year and also produce useful data in their reports, including on schools.

<http://www.wrap.org.uk/>

5 Get in touch

Climate Voices II is an initiative by InterClimate Network funded by the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and local funders. We are a charity with a mission to mobilise the energy and creativity of young people, inspiring them to become active citizens and leaders in sustainable development. If you have any queries or need any help, get in touch with:

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