

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

InterClimate Network's Model Climate Conferences and 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 and 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 are 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!

Awareness raising - find out what's out there in your local environment



- 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 get creative to present the positive actions you have found in an assembly, and invite parents along too.

Energy - reduce your use



- Do an energy audit to see how many lights, computers and other pieces of equipment are left on when not in use over one full week and present your findings in school.
- Set up a competition to see which year group can save the greatest amount of energy over a set period. See if you can get agreement from school leaders to set up a 'Green Fund' from a proportion of any money saved on bills.
- Install a Smart Meter and set up a rota to monitor it over a set time. Councils and energy companies can provide equipment and support - school buildings can make up nearly 50% of an entire local council GHG emissions.

Food - create a school garden



- Do a food-waste survey every lunch time for one or two weeks and present your findings. Check out which meals are least popular so that this can be reported back.
- Put bins for biodegradable waste in the canteen and staff rooms and ask about setting up a compost heap if your school doesn't already have one. Record and tell everyone how much is being saved from general waste each week.
- Find out if your school or local venue has a plot of land you could use. Seek advice and ask for support. Plant things you can eat – you can even get free fruit and nut trees from the *Woodland Trust* - and use school's own compost!

Travel and Transport – local pollution hotspots



- Find out about local air quality and pollution hotspots via local [Air Quality Monitoring Centres](#) or by setting up and monitoring your own diffusion tube outside school
- Research traffic at specific areas close to school such as key crossroads or next to major roads and present your findings to your governors and local councillors.
- Find out what's going on in your Council (see *Modeshift STARS*) or with organisations like *Living Streets* below for lots of ideas that you could promote in school.

What we buy & use – reduce, reuse, recycle!



- Have a catwalk show by re-using old clothes or put up a display about ethical fashion
 - Make bags out of old jeans or friendship bracelets out of old t-shirts
- Make an 'installation' from just one week's single-use plastics and cans – tell everyone first and ask school if you can have special bins for collections during that week.
- Find out your school's paper 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. The links do not imply a recommendation for all the content found on these sites.

Atlas Schools Tool-kit: Although the project ended this toolkit helps schools to measure & understand how different activities of the school affect carbon emissions looking to reduce impact, as well as save money.

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

Bikeability: Government backed initiative for gaining practical skills and understanding how to cycle on today's roads. There are different levels and recognition of achievement.

<https://bikeability.org.uk/>

The Carbon Trust: Empower for Schools™ application to help staff and pupils identify carbon hotspots, cut carbon and save money on energy bills (they say up to £21,500 per year).

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

Centre for Alternative Technology (CAT): An education and visitor centre demonstrating practical solutions for sustainability. They provide relevant resources, and workshops that address sustainability across the curriculum.

<https://www.cat.org.uk/come-to-cat/groups-and-learning/school-visits/>

Centre for Sustainable Energy – Energy in Schools: CSE is working with Samsung and Univ of Lancaster on a pilot programme (government funded) using micro:bits to help schools reduce energy usage & bills, with a pupils' resources platform.

<https://www.energyinschools.co.uk/>

Countryside Classroom: A reservoir of classroom resources, packs and guidance including on food and food waste from a wide range of food, farming and environment education partners.

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

Development Education Centres (DECs): A network of organisations supporting global learning in schools, including through workshops, training, and a library of resources. Find your local centre via the Consortium of DECs website.

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

Eco-Action Games: Specialise in innovative, interactive, eco educational games, resources & employee training so people become more eco-friendly at home, school and work.

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

Eco-Schools England: A pathway for secondary schools has 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: 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 their Duke of Edinburgh's Awards volunteering.

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

Global Dimension resources website: Previously government funded, this 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: Support and resources to set up & run fun and engaging student-led environmental programme.

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

LESS CO2: Programme for pupils and school communities to integrate energy & carbon savings, making schools more sustainable through simple behavioural changes & retrofits.
<http://www.lessco2.org.uk/>

Living Streets: Initiatives to encourage walking, including walk to school month and to create a better walking environment. See an exciting pilot project in two Hackney schools closing neighbouring roads.
<https://www.livingstreets.org.uk/>

Modeshift: National schools awards scheme encouraging schools across the country to join a major effort to increase sustainable and active travel, with a national awards scheme.
<http://www.modeshiftstars.org/>

Oxfam Education: A huge bank of learning and activity resources to bring the issues Oxfam works on to life in the classroom. They have school speakers and teacher training opportunities.
<https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources>

Practical Action: Offering a range of resources including for STEM such as Plastic Challenge to create something new from recycled plastic and a Water Harvester Design Challenge.
<http://practicalaction.org/schools>

STEMnet: STEM Ambassadors are volunteers from a wide range of related jobs who come to school to bring STEM subjects to life and show their value for careers.
<https://www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassadors>

Sustainability and Environmental Education – SEEd: Working to broaden and deepen education for sustainability and environmental education.
<https://se-ed.co.uk/edu/resources/resources-energy-climate-change/>

Young Climate Warriors: Set up to engage and empower children to help combat climate change and harness the power of collective action. Weekly challenges for different age-groups are available online.
<https://www.youngclimatewarriors.org>

Woodland Trust: They give away hundreds of thousands of trees to schools - apply online for a tree pack and see their great Tree Tools website for guidance.
<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/free-trees/>

World Wildlife Fund: Great range of curriculum linked climate change KS2 & 3 resources and lesson plans available
<https://www.wwf.org.uk/get-involved/schools/resources/climate-change-resources>

WRAP - Recycle Now: Love Food Hate Waste aims to raise awareness of the need to reduce food waste and help us take action. Recycle Now is the national recycling campaign for England, managed by WRAP. They run Recycle Week and also produce useful data in their reports, including on schools.
<http://www.wrap.org.uk/>

5 Get in touch

Climate Voices II is co-funded by Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. Through events, resources and support we aim to inspire students to find their own solutions and lead Climate Action in school; contribute to local decision-making; and have a strong voice in their own sustainable futures.

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