

Key Findings

InterClimate Network's online Climate Action Survey saw nearly 10,000 respondents aged 11 to 18 share information about their current climate action, the barriers preventing greater action, as well as their motivations for doing more (April 2022 to January 2023).

Young people are concerned and willing to act

11–18-year-old students were concerned about climate change, and many believed that every individual has the power to effect change, young people included. A striking finding was the extent of willingness in this age group to either start action if not previously engaged, or to become more involved:



8 in 10

were concerned about climate change.



7 in 10

were already taking some form of climate action with a clear top three: Energy reduction; Reducing use, reusing and recycling; Transport alternatives.



Over 1 in 2

said they would start action in key areas: Energy reduction; Reducing use, reusing and recycling; Transport alternatives; Helping protect and improve nature.



Climate actions are not consistent

Whilst there was clear concern and intent to act, significant contrasts emerged between action at home and involvement in school and community. There were also marked variations in young people's interest in different areas of action:



9 in 10

students who were reducing use, reusing and recycling were doing so at home, dropping to

4 in 10 at school

3 in 10 when out



More than 9 in 10

had not been involved in climate strikes and campaigning.

8 in 10

were not willing to start taking part in strikes or campaigning.



3 in 4

said they had not looked to: help protect and improve nature; make their diets more environmentally friendly; influence family and friends.



6 in 10

did not want to make changes to their diet or think about the impact of what they buy and use.

Schools have a significant role in climate change engagement

Students consistently highlighted that schools provided the critical link to trusted information and awareness about climate change. Over 40% would like to get more involved in tangible climate action in their school, however:



7 in 10

had limited time devoted to action.



7 in 10

did not regularly spend time with nature or learning through nature.



6 in 10

did not feel part of decisions or discuss solutions in class.



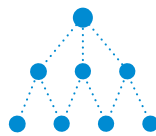
Greater leadership is essential to deliver change

Students believed that Government has both the responsibility and the most power to address climate change. Open comments and responses clearly showed:



7 in 10

believed Government has most influence over the course of climate change.



Students wanted greater structural changes

calling for more ambition, leadership, policy improvements and action from the Government.



Inaction from leaders has wider repercussions.

Reflections about the negative impact of inadequate action by Government included concern that it prevents businesses and individuals from changing, and respondents showed frustration that we are not getting on with it.

Climate action needs to be nurtured

There were striking differences in respondents' engagement in climate action reflective of:



A supportive community

There was a direct correlation between families already positively changing behaviours and talking about climate change and greater student action. Beyond the home, inspiration and empowerment to act came when those around them engaged in action and conversations, from individual teachers through to global activists – naming Greta Thunberg and David Attenborough as key influencers.



Students' sense of agency

Those already taking climate action had a stronger belief about their personal impact on climate change and the extent to which climate change will influence their futures. This link also coincided with a greater concern and higher placing for the environment in their list of day-to-day priorities.



Barriers faced

Students reported: not having the right infrastructure and opportunities including a lack of time and access, such as safe transport options; insufficient knowledge about what to do; and motivational barriers such as a lack of interest in certain actions or liking their meat-based diet too much to change.