

Responsibilities and Actions Youth European LET'S TAKE CARE OF EUROPE

SUMMARY

produced by the youth of the 7 European country who participates to the International Conference - BRASIL2010

Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain

“We hope that making information available about these issues will lead people to act both individually and collectively, will provide knowledge and offer objective information and data, and will foster the development of critical thinking. We will promote debates in our schools in order to stimulate dialogue amongst students and we will find innovative and fun ways to raise awareness (artistic photographs, videos, conferences, games, etc).”

Youth from France

“We should avoid isolating big words and theories. We must start to act and to work in our daily lives. We must adopt small changes of attitude, which can lead to great results. We should start from our closest surroundings: our families, our homes, our schools, our neighborhoods.

We will all take action for a better future! We can make a difference!”

Youth from Greece

“Please value respectful living together - it is the basis for environmental protection. Live peacefully. It is important to have a equal distribution of things people need for their life. Demand that everybody has equal chances to participate in humane life. We have to respect each other - respect every human. We must take actions against poverty.

Think globally, act locally! Start at home!”

Youth from Germany

“The living beings are part of the Earth, and the Earth is part of us, we mutually complete ourselves. We, the human beings, are characterized by having a brain that allows us to improve our environment; but, instead of this, we are making it worse. Our self-centeredness is damaging the most valuable thing we have: our house, our Planet.”

Youth from Spain

TOPIC 1. ENERGY

➤ Subtopic 1) **Increase independence from non-renewable energy sources**

Responsibility:

- Use of cleaner, more efficient and renewable sources of energy.

Actions:

- Use alternative energy sources like: photovoltaic, geothermic and biomass.
- Choosing cleaner means of transportation, calling for diversification and access and valuing the use of clean renewable energies by all.
- Struggle for the use of renewable sources of energy.
- Raise the awareness of the population and the local authorities on the need to adopt measures for the reduction of energy consumption.
- Promote energy self-sufficiency using renewable energies (ex: wind; tides, solar, geothermic, biomass).
- Increase the production and the consumption, for the population, of renewable energies reducing the material costs.

➤ Subtopic 2) **Energy waste / Energy conservation at households/school**

Responsibilities:

- Prevent the heat leaks out of our households (through slits between walls and windows or doors).
- Not to waste energy by old electrical appliances.
- Save energy.
- Save money.

Actions:

- Turn off the lights and all electronic equipments when not in use.
- Don't leave all electronic equipments in stand-by mode.
- Replace traditional light bulbs with energy-saving ones, by using energy efficient light bulbs, more economic appliances, lights with motion detector;
- Save energy while heating taking steps to avoid losing the warmth from homes (insulation, windows do not open on the radiators, etc.)..
- Prioritise natural light over electric light.
- Eat less meat and other energy ineffective food.
- Ask for the subsidies for the better isolation for our houses.
- Buy new ecological appliance or at least install some timed switches. We should also persuade as much people as possible, or lectures at school.
- Protest against energy overconsumption in big cities.
- Load the mobile phones' batteries only when totally discharged.
- Be aware of the investigations and progresses in regard to energy saving and elimination of polluting substances, and fight for their implementation in our own environment.

TOPIC 2. AIR

> Subtopic 1) **Greenhouse gas emission**

Responsibility:

- Reduce your own emissions and make the other decrease theirs.
- Reduce the emission of gases responsible for the greenhouse effect's increase.

Actions:

- Promote the use of public transportations for the population.
- Reduce the use of road transport for goods.
- Implement policies on forest management as a way to reduce the quantity of forest fires.

> Subtopic 2) **Air pollution**

Responsibility:

- Take responsible attitudes to lower the production of air pollutants that are particularly dangerous to health and environment and affect negatively soil and water (eg acid rain).
- Take responsibility for the quality of air, lives of animals, people and plants.

Actions:

- Wear warmer clothes to reduce the use of central heating (temperatures inside schools and buildings should not be over 19°C).
- Use alternative transport systems such as non-motorized transport (walking or cycling), or with smaller engines for short distances (bike).
- Use public transport for long distances as much as possible and increase accessibility of hybrid cars.

TOPIC 3. WATER

> Subtopic 1) **Preserve water as essential good for life on earth**

Responsibilities:

- Unequal distribution of access to water in the world.

Actions:

- Raise awareness of the problems related to water on a global scale (through images, data, press, movies...).
- Identify existent associations and NGOs dedicated to this matter and try to learn about their actions.
- Raise the awareness of the population and the economic agents on a sustainable water consumption.
- Implement measures in favour of the reuse of water.
- Adopt at local, national and European levels policies aiming at concrete actions to protect WATER.

➤ Subtopic 2) **Water waste in towns. Responsible consume of water**

Responsibilities:

- Use the water resources in an efficient way.
- Don't waste water.

Actions:

- Remember always to close the tap after use and be aware of any leakage.
- Use at home and at school, the jet-breaker applied to the taps.
- Collect and use rainwater to water the flowers in the garden at home and school.
- Raise awareness about the responsible and more intelligent use of water resources, by promoting speeches by experts in schools and in the community.
- Warned of the presence of water leaks in the school systems.
- Ask our schools administration to carry out a study on water consumption;
- Propose the Administrative Board to implement technical strategies to reduce water consumption (rain water captation devices, water savers, etc.).
- For month we will use dishwasher and we measure how much water we use. Then we the second month do not use the dishwasher and after that we measure the using water too. Then we compare that and we think that dishwashers save water.
- Support public action for better water management.
- Changing our everyday habits related to personal hygiene and to cleaning services.

➤ Subtopic 3) **Contamination of water (plastic bottles in rivers and lakes, pollution)**

Responsibilities:

- Teach pupils from primary schools to use water resources in an efficient way.

Actions:

- Refill plastic bottles with tap water.
- Reduce the consumption of chemicals in our houses.
- Raise awareness about the responsible use of water resources, by promoting speeches by experts in schools and in the community.
- Try to convince agricultural workers not to use pesticides and fertilizers in an uncontrolled way.

➤ Subtopic 4) **Protect watercourses.**

Responsibilities:

- Protect watercourses

Actions:

- Alert the local authorities and the industries on the need of proceeding to water treatment for residual waters.
- Reduce the use of chemical fertilizers in agriculture, rich in phosphates and nitrogen, as a way to fight the pollution of the superficial and ground waters.
- Reduce the pollutant sources that provoke the superficial waters' eutrophication.

TOPIC 4. EARTH

> Subtopic 1) **Fight against desertification**

Responsibilities:

- Prevent soils desertification.

Actions:

- We take care of our forests and we regulate the uncontrolled dumping of rubbish, illegal deforestation and of fire threats. We help firemen and we will take part in voluntary groups to protect the forests.
- Participate in reforestation of regions affected by fire.
- Prevent deforestation by promoting a sustainable use of the forest resources.
- Reduce intensive use of soils for agriculture.
- Encourage and support biological agriculture.

> Subtopic 2) **Contamination of public spaces and natural sites with waste**

Responsibilities:

- Don't dispose waste in the environment.
- Don't drop your garbage just somewhere.

Actions:

- Clean littered areas.
- Protest by e-mail to the public administrator that do not keep local areas clean and tidy.
- Raise awareness in families, peers and pupils of primary schools on the themes of the selective collection of garbage.
- Adopt a "national" day without waste in your school.
- Find out about illegal waste dumps, do not remain indifferent, but rather protest and request that the guilty is punished.
- Make garbage dumps safer.
- Request that the City Council implement a recycling system and everything required for better waste management.

Responsibility:

- Contribute to separation of garbage.

Actions:

- Implement garbage selective collection in schools.
- Recycle organic materials and reuse them in gardens and for growing vegetables.
- Organize an awareness-raising campaign to reduce waste generation, for instance, through games.
- Create a scrap notebook from used paper.
- Require that treatment stations are constructed and their proper functioning is assured.
- Implement the 3 Rs, without becoming needlessly dependant on fashion or on technological innovations (taking advantage of and/or giving instead of throwing, repairing instead of throwing out...).

> Subtopic 3) **Deforestation**

Responsibility:

- Reduce deforestation.
- Increase forest cover.
- Raise awareness.

Actions:

- Planting trees and taking care of city's gardens. If each of us planted only one tree every year, millions of species would sprout : "Plant a tree, sow life".
- Recuperate the green areas in our local environment for study and biodiversity conservation.
- Reduce the consumption of paper. Save paper at home so that many trees can live.
- Stop the destruction of the forest and especially take care of the rain forest.
- Compel the State to protect the forests from illegal practices and intentional fire and we insist on punishment of the responsible ones. In this regard, we call for a more efficient police.
- Implement measures for forest fire fighting (cleaning woods and forests, burning, firebreaks).
- Reforest the burned areas with local species (oaks, chestnut trees, cork oaks, holm oaks).

TOPIC 5. SOCIO-ECONOMIC

> Subtopic 1) **Consumerism**

Responsibility:

- Responsible consumerism.
- to keep ourselves informed, to serve as an example to others and to sensitize the population so as to reduce our energy debt.

Actions:

- Prefer products without plastic or excessive packaging, bulk foods, products in recycled containers or with refill.
- Consume only the necessary amount of food (for instance, the Mediterranean diet) and give priority to local products.
- Stop consuming unnecessary goods.
- Eat local food (sustainable food).
- Re-educate using games and teaching through the elaboration of games with and for the youngest so that they can see how much care and pampering our Earth needs.

> Subtopic 2) **Waste of non-renewable resources (water, energy, fuel, soil, etc.)**

Responsibility:

- Don't waste.
- Change our production standards.
- Develop the use of non polluting and renewable sources of energy.

Actions:

- Save electric energy by using washing machine at full load.
- Spend less time in the shower, don't flush solid waste in the WC and use only ecological detergent and the right amount of it.
- Optimize the public transport.

- Deepen our knowledge concerning different uses of renewable energies in our region and stimulate our school establishments to carry out projects aimed to increase the use of this kind of energy.
- Create awareness of the impacts of using these fuels in our family and community circles, providing them with information, calling upon them to act and providing references such as the environmental footprint.
- Don't construct unnecessary buildings.
- Build only in a rational and environment-friendly way.

➤ **Subtopic 3) Non sustainable use of natural resources**

Responsibilities:

- Preservation of biodiversity.
- Fight against overexploitation of natural resources.

Actions:

- Plant trees in our schools.
- Use certified recycled paper.
- Sensitize consumers to protect forests and biodiversity.
- Learn with each other how to move forward towards sustainable development.

➤ **Subtopic 4) Responsible consumer behavior (goods, food)**

Responsibility:

- Change our current living standard because it does not respect the environment.
- Recycle and reuse – to redefine our real needs.
- Support local farmers and economy.
- Avoid long distance transportation.
- Contribute to increase the profit of the farmers and producers in developing countries.
- Raise awareness of the existence of fair trade products.

Actions:

- Ask that organic meals are prepared in our school cafeterias (or at least that some of these organic and healthy items are progressively introduced in the menu).
- Donate to care and assistance institutions the food that is not consumed in the school.
- Awareness raising with schools administrators and the population to adopt new consumption habits.
- Adopt in our everyday lives the triad: reduction – reuse – recycle.
- Do not throw away what is not working: we will repair and reuse it.
- Change the domestic utensils for more ecological and less energy consuming and we will be attentive to its maintenance whenever possible.
- Buy agricultural products at local farmers.
- Give priority to local and seasonal products.
- Buy products with a fair-trade label.
- Check the fair-trade label so as not to support corporations which violate human rights and break labor laws.
- Talk about our responsibilities.

- Talk about local products and buy fair-trade and tell your friends to follow you to do a right thing.
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➤ Subtopic 5) **Take care of the natural environment**

Responsibility:

- Protect endangered species from illegal hunting practices.
- Regulate the uncontrolled dumping of rubbish within forests.
- Transform schools, neighborhoods, cities into healthy places from an environmental point of view.
- Preserve biodiversity by protecting the ecosystems.

Actions:

- Take care of existing green spaces and cultivate plants in gardens and school.
 - Organize and participate in planting and cultivation activities.
 - Ask the City Council to protect and to increase green spaces.
 - Demand that our regional City Council adopt the European Union Guidelines for all matters concerning waste management and nature protection.
 - Respect environmental protection laws and protest when you see illegal and harmful actions to the environment.
 - Promote information campaigns alerting the population on the need of preserving their ecosystems.
 - Accept a day by day commitment, stopping to do those small things that, although they seem to be insignificant, are damaging little by little our Planet (let's banish forever phrases such as: "A paper on the floor, so what...", "A plastic bag in the beach, so what...", "So what...").
 - Pressure the State to promote ecological solutions (e.g. organic agriculture).
 - Be ambassadors of environmental protection ideas and of their incorporation into everyday practices, in the areas where we live.
 - Raise awareness and mobilize our classmates, our teachers, friends and neighbors, through discussions and actions in and out of school.
 - Create communication material, such as banners that we will display in every classroom, containing information on climate change and possible actions.
 - Make contact with other schools within our region and organize common awareness raising of the greater public, such as manifestations in the streets, and distribution of communication material.
 - Create our own blog so as to present environment information, good practices and our groups' ideas and actions.
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➤ Subtopic 6) **Social consequences of climate change**

Responsibility:

- Do our best to reduce our environment footprint.
- Diffuse information among people to act individually and collectively.
- Take actions against poverty.
- Guarantee an equal distribution of things people need for their life.
- Respect each other - respect every human.
- Live peacefully.

- Take care of environment when future adults.

Actions:

- Contribute to the creation of a statute on the refugee situation caused by climate change.
- Propose that the Amazon is considered a world natural heritage.
- Awareness raising and political pressure over decision-makers at the national and international levels.
- Buy fair trade products at home and to encourage school cafeterias to introduce some such items on the menu.
- Sharing knowledge and offering objective information and data and to foster the development of critical behavior.
- Promote debates in our schools in order to stimulate dialogue between youth and we will find innovative and fun means of awareness raising (artistic pictures/photos, videos, conferences, games, etc.).
- Demand that everybody has equal chances to participate in humane life.
- Start more social networks fighting child labour.
- Contact governmental authorities, to learn about their planning of environmental actions to face climate change and make our own propositions.
- When we grow up:
 - if we turn out to be teachers, we will be engaged in educating our pupils in a way that they can become conscious citizens and respectful to the environment;
 - if we become entrepreneurs, we will be committed to respecting the law so as to minimize the dangerous impacts to the environment;
 - if we become part of the City Council, we will be engaged in taking care of environmental issues in our regions;
 - those who turn out to be policemen will be committed to defend environmental laws.
