



Toolkit on Pro-Environmental Youth Engagement



Prepared by the ACP MEAs 3 Programme of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), October 2022

Co-chairs

Balakrishna Pisupati (Law Division, UNEP)
Louise Dorner (Law Division, UNEP)

Authors

Alexander Suppan, Anaëlle Barthel, Anna Rosa Prasser, Aysu Ahmad, Brune Dufour, Charline Luck, Lara Horvath, Lars Basset, Lili Vessereau, Nejra Selimovic, Pablo Morente Acate, Paul Buchholz, Tara Olsen, Theresa Schlosser

Mentors

Aditi Tandon (Mongabay India), Balakrishna Pisupati (Law Division, UNEP), Emma Sairanen (Sitra), Nibedita Mukherjee (Brunel University London), Timothy Hodges (McGill University)

Chapter Coordinators and Editors

Alexander Suppan, Anaëlle Barthel, Charline Luck, Lara Horvath, Lars Basset, Louise Dorner (Law Division, UNEP), Paul Buchholz, Tara Olsen

Technical Support

Ladu Lemi (Law Division, UNEP), Mary Kanyua (Law Division, UNEP)

Design and Layout

Emma Peinhopf

Disclaimer

The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views, policies or official opinion of the European Commission, UNEP or the contributing organizations.

This Toolkit has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this publication do not necessarily reflect the views, policies or official opinion of the European Commission, UNEP or the contributing organizations.

The ACP MEAs 3 Programme

The ACP MEAs is a joint UNEP- EU-FAO-OACPS partnership programme. It aims to build the capacity of 79 countries in Africa, Caribbean, and the Pacific to fulfil their obligations to multilateral environmental agreements. Phase III (ACP MEAs 3) of this programme is being implemented in Africa by the African Union Commission (AUC), Abidjan Convention and Nairobi Convention, in the Caribbean by the Secretariat of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and Cartagena Convention, in the Pacific by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The European Environmental Bureau (EEB) is the civil society partner.

This toolkit has been produced by UNEP under the ACP MEAs 3 Youth Empowerment and Training Initiative (YETI) to inspire young people and provide guidance on how to engage on pro-environmental change on four different levels: an individual, local & national, international and social-media level.

Learn more at acpmeas.com or follow us [@MeasAcp](https://twitter.com/MeasAcp)

 This publication is prepared under the Creative Commons license

Suggested Credits

United Nations Environment Programme (2022). Toolkit on Pro-Environmental Youth Engagement. UNEP, Nairobi.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4	Engaging in Pro-Environmental Change on an EU and International Level	18
Tips for Behavioral Changes towards a more Sustainable Lifestyle at Home	6	Introduction	18
Introduction	6	Engagement Possibilities in the United Nations System	19
Bathroom	7	Engagement Possibilities at the EU level	20
Mobility and Transport	8	Engagement Possibilities in Non-Governmental Organisations	21
Kitchen	9	Leading Pro-Environmental Change through Effective Social Media Communication	23
Bedroom/Living Room	10	Introduction	23
How to Take Sustainable Actions on a Local and National Level	11	Instagram	24
Introduction	11	Facebook	26
Pro-Environmental Engagement in Communities and Neighbourhoods	12	YouTube	27
Pro-Environmental Engagement in Schools	14	Twitter	28
Pro-Environmental Engagement in Universities	15	TikTok	29
Pro-environmental Engagement on a National Level	17	References	31

Introduction

Are you a young person living in Europe, ambitious to engage in pro-environmental change but do not know how, due to the complexity of the climate crisis and the multiplicity of options? In this toolkit you find information and guidance on how you can engage and lead pro-environmental change on four different levels (without necessarily requiring a lot of resources nor time): an **individual, local & national, international and social-media communication level**.

The triple planetary crisis is one of the major challenges our society currently faces: from **climate change and biodiversity loss to pollution**. The COVID-19 pandemic has proven the dramatic health risk, environmental destruction and biodiversity loss can cause, given the high interconnectedness between environmental and health emergencies (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018). In the aftermath of this pandemic, **we must not fall back to the business as usual but rethink habits and structures causing this environmental crisis and engage in pro-environmental change**. 192 countries and the European Union joined the Paris Agreement in 2015, a legally binding international treaty to limit global heating to 1.5 - 2 °C compared to pre-industrial levels. Current commitments are not enough to reach the Paris targets. **A high inequality can be observed across countries in**

their contribution and suffering in relation to the environmental crisis (Ritchie, 2018). Many high-income countries, including European countries, produce more global ecological damage than low-income countries (Ritchie, 2018). Nonetheless, it is often low-income countries which are currently the most affected by the climate crisis. We all know that the climate crisis does not stop at borders and also **Europe is already experiencing environmental issues that will increase in the near future**. (→ You can read more on how the environmental crisis affects our lives in Europe in Info Box 1).

While science is clear that the environmental crisis is irreversible, the IPCC report and the latest positive environmental stories by Euronews show that there are enough reasons to remain hopeful! We, as **the largest young generation in history, have the power to contribute to pro-environmental change and shape the future we will be living in** (Ritchie, 2018). Many political leaders have already acknowledged that we have essential skills to protect the environment: we hold the necessary idealism and zeal, we have (not yet) been trapped in the comfort of habits and familiar structures and have the creativity and energy to engage in pro-environmental change. With this toolkit we aim to encourage you to **believe in your capacity to act** and inspire you to use your power to engage in pro-environmental change now!

In Chapter 1 you find a range of inspiration on how you can engage in more pro-environmental behaviour at home. We refer to pro-environmental behaviour as “behaviour that consciously seeks to minimise the negative impact of one’s actions on the natural and built world” (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002, p. 240). In Chapter 2 we provide you with tips on how you can engage on environmental issues in your community (in your school, neighbourhood or university) and country in a meaningful way. In Chapter 3 you find guidance on how you can engage on an international level such as in the UN, the European Union or Non-Governmental Organisations. In Chapter 4 we provide you with step-by-step guides on how you can effectively raise awareness on environmental issues on different social media channels. **We can only tackle this environmental crisis in time if we work all together - we hope this toolkit provides you with the required guidance and inspiration to engage in pro-environmental change today!**

! Small remark: *The amount of engagement options might seem overwhelming, but the toolkit is designed for you to pick your ways to make an environmental change and take it step by step from there!*

Who are we and why did we create this Toolkit?

We created this toolkit under the [ACP MEAs 3 Youth Empowerment and Training Initiative \(YETI\) Europe](#). The overall objective of this YETI was to empower us, a pool of 16 selected young individuals, with sufficient expertise and skills to become influencers and youth leaders capable to train, support and empower other young people and provide inputs to global, national and local positions on pro-environmental behaviour, management and governance. Throughout the programme, we developed the capacity to bring about youth-led environmental change by engaging with UNEP personnel and experts from around the world, conducting research, completing training on key environmental issues, and participating in side events such as the Youth Environment Assembly.

Growing up in Europe eager to engage in environmental issues, we have experienced that many of us and our peers have the ambition to contribute to pro-environmental change but are often wondering “how?”. So we decided to translate all the expertise and insights gained throughout the programme in this common toolkit to inspire other young people aiming to become influencers of pro-environmental change.

We thank the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the European Union and all the experts involved in YETI for their support and guidance.



Info Box

Did you realise how the environmental crisis is increasingly affecting our lives in Europe?

Even if we manage to reach the goal set in the Paris Agreement in 2015 to limit global warming to 1.5 - 2 °C, Europe will experience sea-level rise and flooding in the future ([IPCC, 2021](#)). Sea level rise will affect around 75 % of all European cities, particularly Italy, the Netherlands, and Spain. Annually, up to 5.5 million people could be affected by coastal flooding in the EU at the end of the 21st century if no adaptation measures were taken. Contemporaneously, the periods of ecological and agricultural droughts in some regions will rise ([IPCC, 2021](#)). The environmental crisis also poses a dangerous health risk to European society (e.g. causing increasing respiratory allergies and mortality). Air pollution is the largest environmental health risk causing increased diseases and premature deaths in Europe (e.g. stroke and heart disease).

Loss of biodiversity in Europe and its effects

Biodiversity in Europe is at risk! [Europe's Nature is threatened](#) by unsustainable farming, forestry, increasing urbanisation and pollution.

- **Biodiversity and agriculture:** [Agriculture activities are one of the main causes for biodiversity loss](#) in the European Union. [Grasslands](#) are especially threatened by these activities which endangers wildlife (e.g. [pollinators](#)).
- **Biodiversity and climate change:** If the temperature continues rising continually, only about

32% of the plant species which existed in Europe 1990 will survive until 2050 ([Reid, 2006](#)). Due to the changing habits and locations of species, the ecosystems will become less stable, which will affect ecosystem services humans are profiting from, such as climate regulations and soil development ([Feehan, Harley & Minnen, 2009](#)).

- **Biodiversity and invasive species:** During the last years about 10,000 [alien species](#), which are not native in the habitat they are living in, have been registered in Europe. Most of them have been introduced to Europe by purpose, mostly for economic reasons (“Invasive species”, n.d.). Although it is common knowledge that they harm the native ecosystems, the imports of alien species are rising.
- **Biodiversity and overexploitation:** [Overexploitation](#) and unsustainable use of natural resources poses a further threat to biodiversity in Europe. A lot of resources do not have enough time to recover, which is why their [stocks are continuously dropping](#) and might not be able to recover again (e.g. [fish stocks](#)).

Eco-anxiety

There is a lot to be concerned about, often resulting in [eco-anxiety](#) and climate doom. But this is the last thing we want you to feel. When hopelessness takes over, apathy begins to increase, inhibiting people to take the imperative actions. The latest positive environmental stories by [Euronews](#) show that there are enough reasons to remain hopeful!

1 Tips for Behavioral Changes towards a more Sustainable Lifestyle at Home

Introduction

Your daily choices at home and individual (consumer) behaviour matter! While the private sector and governments share a high responsibility for engaging in pro-environmental change, shifting individual behaviour towards a more sustainable direction is also imperative to reduce emissions, particularly by people in well-off countries. Research has proven that taking “The Jump” towards six lifestyle changes can have a significant pro-environmental impact. The energy consumption by EU households contribute a quarter to EU’s total greenhouse gas emissions (Eurostat, 2020). To keep global heating below 1.5°C, each household has to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 2.5 tonnes of CO2 per year by 2030 (Ritchie, 2018). However, the current degree of individual pro-environmental behaviour is insufficient as only 5% of EU

households live within these parameters (Ritchie, 2019). Sustainable consumption and production can also enhance poverty alleviation and the shift towards green and low-carbon economies.

Living more sustainably is often assumed to be expensive, time costly and hard. But this does not have to be necessarily the case - it is more about re-considering, changing habits and consuming less, which will also save you some money! In this chapter, you can find several tips for a more sustainable lifestyle and pro-environmental behaviour to engage in every room of your home, step by step.

! Small remark: *In this chapter, pro-environmental behaviours that have been proven to have a high pro-environmental impact are highlighted with a red exclamation mark “!”.*



Bathroom

1. Save electricity

- **Avoid using a tumble dryer.** One tumble dryer cycle can use twice as much energy as an average washing machine cycle.
- Wash your laundry using a **cold water setting**.
- i** → You can find further information on how to save electricity here.

2. Save water

- **Have a shower not a bath** (Tessaly, 2011).
- **!** According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a five-minute shower uses 38 to 95 litres of water while a full bathtub requires about 260 litres.
- **Shower less frequently** or just a catlick and try to **reduce the flow**.
- **Save cold water** when you are in the shower, while waiting for the water to get warm. If you use a bucket (to absorb it) you can water plants afterwards or do cold hand washing clothes.

3. Consciously use the washing machine

- **!** **Fill up your washing machine** and do not do a wash if you only have a few items.
- **Choose the lowest suitable temperature.** These days, detergents are so efficient that they get most clothes clean at low temperatures.
- **Skip the pre-wash cycle** or use a short cycle if your clothes are not very dirty.

- **Prevent shedding microplastics** by using wash bags that capture synthetic fibres containing microplastic (e.g. polyester) or purchase microplastic free fabrics.
- **Choose sustainable fabric care products** and protect your clothes from damage in the wash.
- i** → Find more information on this under the 4th heading here.
- **Invest in an eco-friendly washing machine**, if you need a new washing machine.
- **Use eco-friendly detergents or make your own.** Many detergents include liquid, microplastics or chemicals that are harmful when released in the water cycle. It notably impacts microorganisms and natural processes as they can be hard to filter out.

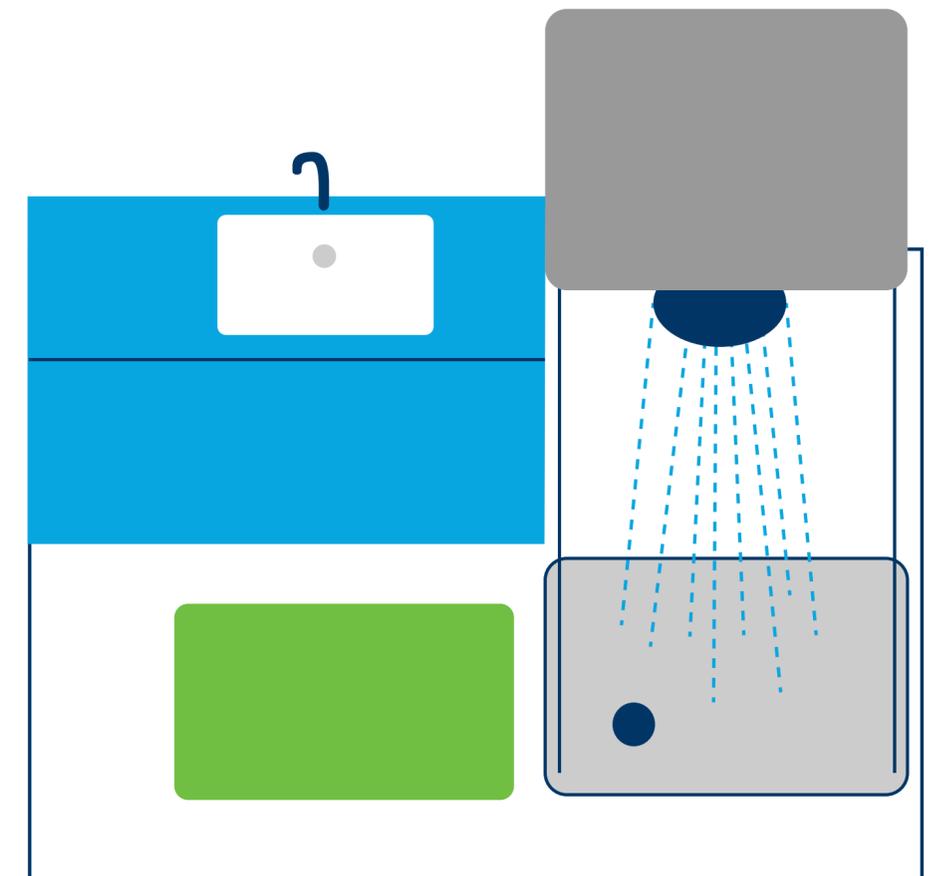
4. Consume less and protect ecosystems and your health

We can easily find many articles in our bathrooms (make-up remover cotton, tampons, cotton bud...) that are non-reusable and contain dangerous substances (e.g. microplastic) that have a serious impact on us and the environment.

- **Use reusable hygiene articles** instead of single-use ones e.g. menstruation cups or toothbrush with changeable head. Here you find some examples of products.
- **Prefer paraben free products** in order to protect aquatic ecosystems and your health.
- **Use respectful sunscreen.** You can find product examples here.
- **Avoid plastic - even the invisible one!** Despite plas-

tic packaging, many self-care and cosmetic products contain microbeads and microplastics which are hardly visible to the naked eye e.g. shampoo, shower gel, deodorant, mascara, insect repellent, shaving cream (some of these products are even made of more than 90% plastic).

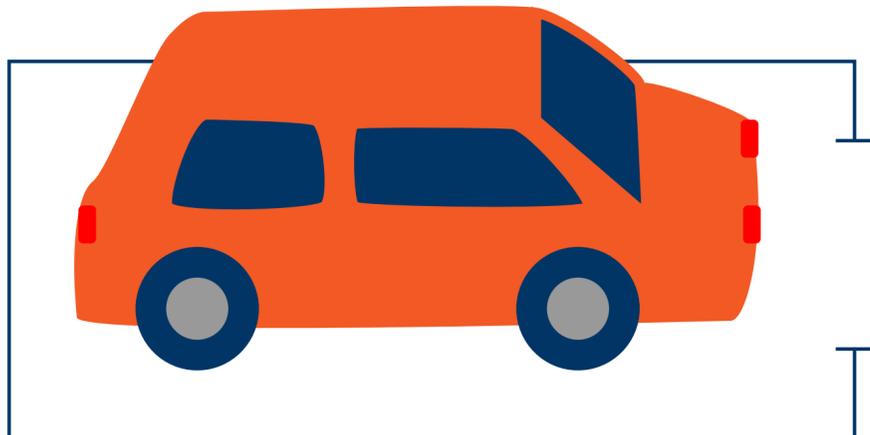
- i** → Find more information on microplastics in self-care products here.
- i** → Check your products for microplastics here and find microplastic-free products here.



Mobility and Transport

1. Consciously choose your mode of commuting daily

- **! Walk or use the bike when you can.** If needed, use public transport.
- **! Choose to live without a car if possible.** If you need to take the car: use carpooling with friends or colleagues instead of driving alone. Find more tips on how you can reduce pollution of your car usage [here](#).
- **Fuel or hybrid/electric car?** The [debate between fuel and hybrid/electric cars](#) does not permit us to have a perfect answer for now. While the emissions caused and the resources being used during the production of an electric engine are still too high to be considered the greener choice, the electric car generates less greenhouse gases during its lifetime.



2. Travel consciously

- **! Choose to travel by bus and train** rather than by car, aeroplane or cruise ship. Flying is [among the largest contributors](#) to an individual's carbon footprint and you can significantly decrease it by choosing one transportation form over another. If there is no other option than taking the car, consider using [BlaBlaCar](#) or [tripndrive](#).
Our tip: Calculate and compare the environmental impact of your next trip by car, train and plane [here](#).
- Europe is a beautiful and diverse continent to explore. Instead of booking your next plane ticket to another continent, **plan your next trip within Europe** with environmental conscious and cheap travel options by bus (e.g. [FlixBus](#)) and train (e.g. [Interrail](#)). You can also apply for a DiscoverEU travel pass [here](#).
- **Take an adventure and go on a cycling trip** to another European country. This is a zero-emission, cheap and exciting mode of exploring another part of your or another country. You can find more tips on traveling by bike [here](#).

- **Book environmental conscious accommodations.** Find a list of eco-friendly hostels [here](#) and [here](#).
 - **WWOOF around.** [Wwoofing](#) is an exciting way to travel at low cost, experience ecological farming and local life in other countries while getting to know inspiring people.
 - Travel the world for a fraction of its costs by working in an **environmentally conscious project or restaurant** and connecting with likeminded people with [Workaway](#) or [Greenheart Travel](#).
- ! Small remark:** *Voluntourism can also have [negative effects on the local environment even without your intention](#). So critically inform yourself about the projects before committing to engage!*

Kitchen

1. Consume sustainable food

- **! Cut your consumption of dairy products and have a plant-based diet.** Cutting meat and other dairy products from your diet can significantly decrease your individual emissions contribution by 66% (Poore & Nemecek, 2018). Plant-based diet does not have to be boring. You can find a variety of plant-based recipes online e.g. [Bish Bash Bosh](#) by Ian Theasby.
- **Buy local and seasonal products** to reduce the emissions that are caused by the transport of your food.
- **Buy products with eco-labels.** Find more information on the different eco-labels in the [ecolabel index](#).
- **Waste less food.** Cook only the amount you plan to eat and get creative with using leftovers. You can find accessible, low-waste recipes by [Max La Manna](#) here.

2. Reduce waste

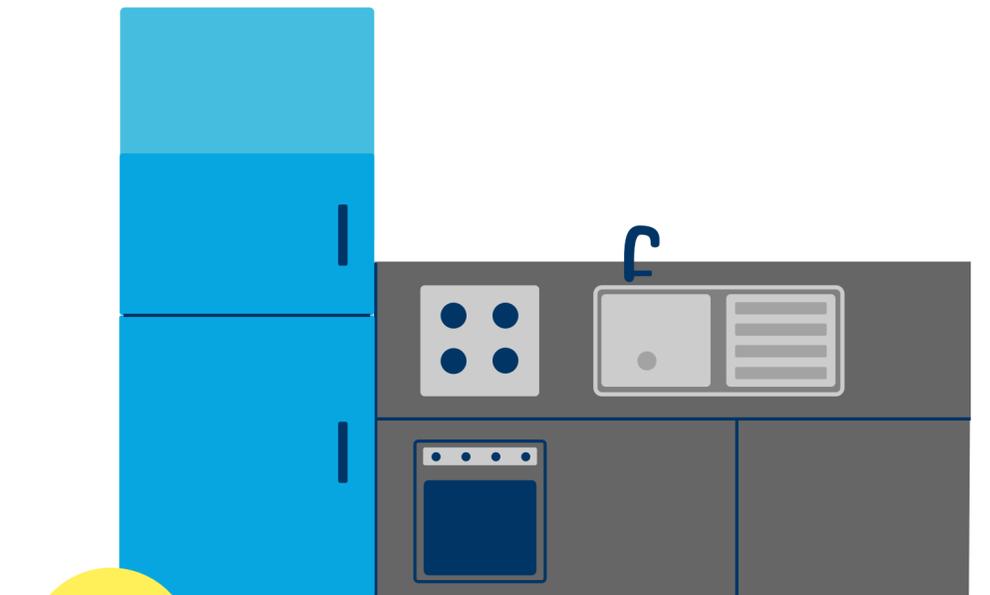
- **Buy less and only what you need** (making a grocery list helps!). These apps can help you to reduce waste and save money: [TooGoodToGo](#), [Olio](#).
- **Avoid products with plastic packaging** (and reuse packaging) e.g. by purchasing your food at local markets and bulk stores. You can find bulk stores in your area [here](#). At the time of disposal, you can use bread bags instead of plastic bags. Did you know that you could be [swallowing an amount of plastic](#) equivalent to a credit card a week?

- **Reuse and Recycle.** Inform yourself on correct waste separation in your country as it helps in the recycling process, reduces the removal of raw materials from nature, saves water, and also decreases waste in dumps.
- **Compost** to keep part of your waste [out of dumps](#) and create a vegetable garden at home.
- Make step-by-step changes towards **a zero waste lifestyle**. (Find further tips for a zero-waste lifestyle [here](#)).

3. Save energy

- **Avoid peak demand times.** Turn on the washing machine and dishwasher outside these peak times e.g. during the night.
- Avoid washing dishes by hand and **use a dishwasher.**
- **Only boil as much water as you need.**
- **Buy energy efficient appliances** if you need new ones. Many products carry an [EU energy label](#). The ranking ranges from A+++ (most efficient) to G (least efficient).
Example: An A+++ dishwasher uses half the energy used by a D-ranked one.
- If you need a new oven check if it is properly sealed and go for an A-rated model. This could also [save you some money](#) over its lifetime.

i Find more information on how to save electricity [here](#).



Info Box

Find further tips and information on sustainable food consumption here:

- [Future Learn](#)
- Food Unfolded: [Website](#), [Series](#), [YouTube channel](#)
- [Food Fight Podcast](#)
- [TooGoodtoGo](#)
- EIT Food: [Website](#), [YouTube channel](#)
- [Regenerative agriculture revolution](#), an impactful way to offset CO2 emissions
- Find inspiration in [this article](#) on what kind of impact you can have by changing your diet.
- Try out the game „[Zombie Attack](#)“ and educate yourself on balanced nutrition playfully.

Bedroom/ Living Room

1. Reduce your clothes consumption, upcycle, re-wear and purchase sustainable clothes

- **! Avoid impulsive purchases** and reconsider social norms of having new pieces in your wardrobe every year - be part of changing this perceived normality.
- **! Upcycle or maintain products as long as possible.** You can find some upcycling inspiration [here](#).
- **Buy second-hand clothes and furniture** if you need something new (at flea markets, second hand (web) stores) or organise clothes swaps with your friends. Find sustainable fashion apps [here](#).
- If you can not find this piece of cloth you urgently need in a second-hand store: **Buy it from environmental conscious brands** with high credibility, commitments, and consumer awareness (e.g. Patagonia, ECOALF, Reformation, Wunderwerk, Armedangels) and avoid buying fast fashion brands. You can find more information on sustainable clothing [here](#).
- **Buy clothes with sustainable fabric and production.** You can find more info on the impact of each fabric in the [Material Change Index](#).

2. Save electricity

- **Turn off the lights** when you do not need them.
- **You are a gamer?** Check out offers by the [Play For The Planet Alliance](#) and play for the planet.
- **Be conscious about your video consumption time** on [Netflix](#), [Disney+](#), [Youtube](#), [Prime Video](#) or TV broadcast.
- **Replace all your light bulbs with energy efficient LED bulbs.**

3. Green finance

- **Consciously choose where you put your money and start your green bank account.** Put your money to banks that invest in projects protecting, rather than harming the environment. Green banks direct their core operations toward the betterment of the environment. Invest in climate risk funds.



Info Box

General recommendations to life more sustainable at home applicable to all rooms

- **Save energy:**
 - » **! Choose a renewable energy supplier.** But inform yourself well, [not all suppliers are as green as they promote to be](#).
 - » **! Buy energy efficient appliances** e.g. automatic light sensors or smart systems. Be informed and measure your energy consumption with a measuring device in your home.
 - » [Avoid peak demand times](#). Especially in mornings and evenings there is a high demand of energy where suppliers often use fossil fuels to provide sufficient energy. – You can find more practical tips to save energy [here](#).
- **Take advantage of rainwater.**
- **Review product labels** and trace the whole production journey back to the origin of the raw material. Does the raw material in question have an ecological certificate? If you do not find any information associated with an ecological production

Make an appointment with your local bank and discuss attractive offers in green financing. Examples for green banks in Europe: [Triodos Bank](#), [Tomorrow Bank](#).

- **Invest in Green Exchange Traded Funds** that support environmentally and socially conscious business practices and policies e.g. [iShares Global Clean Energy UCITS ETF USD](#).

system, send an email to the manufacturer and ask. This signals producers that there is interest and demand potentially motivating more pro-environmental consideration for their future production.

- **You want to engage in tackling plastic pollution?** The [Tide Turners Plastic challenge](#) is a good way to start.

Useful apps enhancing your pro-environmental behaviour at home:

- [List of apps](#) enhancing your sustainable lifestyle.
- [ActNow](#) - The UN Campaign for Individual Action.
- [SDGs in Action](#).
- [SDG Impact Assessment Tool](#).

Further useful sources with tips for environmental engagement on a household level:

- [Anatomy of Action](#)
- [GEO-6 for Youth](#)

2

How to Take Sustainable Actions on a Local and National Level



Introduction

We want to start off this chapter by encouraging you to not underestimate the positive impact your own voice and actions can have on a local or national level. By raising awareness and taking actions within your circle of friends and family, fellow students or neighbours you can easily become an inspiration and ambassador for pro-environmental change for others.

In this chapter you find tips and guidance on how you can get engaged on environmental issues in your community and neighbourhood, schools, universities and on a national level in your country.

! Small remark: *All the information provided is non-exhaustive, as there are numerous examples of initiatives and organisations that can be found operating at the national level. Wherever you engage, it is important to be aware of the regional context, the resources available and the measures necessary.*

Pro-Environmental Engagement in Communities and Neighbourhoods

Engaging in a pro-environmental project with other people in your community can be highly motivating and inspiring. The possibilities to engage on a community level vary from region to region. There are different resources available and also different measures necessary to tackle environmental issues effectively. Nevertheless: you can and should do something for the environment everywhere!

In what environmental projects could you engage in different European countries?

There are a variety of local projects tackling environmental issues. In the following list, you can find different local and national environment-related organisations and projects around Europe you can engage in as a young person. Some projects listed might also exist in similar formats in other countries. So get inspired by projects from other countries and conduct your research on whether something similar already exists in your country - if not, it might be time to create it in your country or community!

i → [List of accredited organisations by European Solidarity Corps](#)

i → [List of national and local initiatives and organisations you can get involved in \(by YETI mentees\)](#)

Our tips on how to start your own local project

1. Define the topic and the goal of your project:

- What is the objective of your project?
Our tip: You can specify the impact of your activity in relation to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) with this [Impact Assessment Tool](#). Start with one topic. You can always increase the scale of your project once your project is running.
- Familiarise yourself with the context of your project: What are environmental problems, where do these problems stem from, what measures are required, what resources are available to tackle the issue?
- Exchange with others: What are key challenges, lessons learnt and main tips by others working in the field? Is something similar already happening in your neighbourhood or in the country? If so, great - you can join forces, exchange ideas and learn from each other.
- Get inspired by already [existing projects](#).

2. Join forces and start implementing your fantastic ideas:

- When searching for others to join your project, make sure to be clear what your project is and have done extensive research on the issues you aim to address. Only if you are informed yourself, you can convince others!
 - Raise awareness on your project...
 - ...via social media (In [Chapter 4](#) you find more information on environmental engagement through social media).
 - ...by collaborating with another youth project on an event and thereby introducing your project.
 - ...by organising your own local event in the neighbourhood attracting peoples' attention e.g. an art installation related to the topic (e.g. arts installation out of plastic), an educational webinar or meeting, an open vegan lunch, an info-stand at the local farmers market or a flash-mop.
 - ...by hanging info-posters on info boards in schools, universities or cafes.
- i** → You can find more information on how to raise awareness [here](#).

3. What resources and skills do you need?

- Make a list with all the resources and skills you need and that are available for your initiative (e.g. printing, Wi-Fi, transportation, meeting space, social media outreach). Be creative and make the best out of the resources that are accessible.
- These websites, can help you to start fundraising for your project: [Gofundme](#), [Global giving](#), [Temboo](#), [European Solidarity Corbs](#).

4. Implement your project

- The implementation process of a project largely varies and an extensive guidance is beyond the scope of this toolkit. You can find useful tips on this in Chapter 2 of the [decadeonrestoration](#) toolkit. The toolkit is intended for founding ecosystem restoration projects, but recommendations provided can be applied to other projects as well.
- Inspire and empower other young people to also start their projects by sharing a photo or video showcasing your project with [#MyClimateAction](#), [UNFCCC](#) and online. (In [Chater 4](#) you can find more tips on pro-environmental social media usage).



Info Box

Further information on how you can get engaged in your community and neighbourhood and launch your own project

- Five steps helping you start your environmental project [here](#).
- 10 useful tips for your environmental project [here](#).
- Documentary [Tomorrow](#). A globe-trotting documentary focusing on pro-environmental solutions rather than problems by providing insights into the projects of activists, local communities and everyday citizens.
- [Tide Turners Plastic Challenge Badge](#) is an insightful toolkit providing insight and guidance on how you can start reducing your plastic consumption today.



Pro-Environmental Engagement in Schools

Schools can play a significant role shaping youth's knowledge on the environment and their pro-environmental behaviour. Consequently, pro-environmental engagement in schools is imperative, to train young people to question and think beyond the current structures causing the environmental crisis, develop alternative solutions and engage. Anaëlle (Young European Ambassador and YETI mentee) on her experience in school:

"When I was in middle school, I got the chance to attend different activities related to environmental topics such as weather operations, the water cycle, wind energy, etc. I felt that "adults" took us seriously, believed that we could understand such issues and involved us in the decision making process. These experiences really shaped my feeling of responsibility for my future, our future"

i Searching for inspiration? In this list you can find different projects and tips on how can you engage on environmental issues, organise activities and empower others in schools:

- [Earth School](#)
- [EIT EU Skills for Future](#)
- [EIT Food Science Class](#)
- [Girls Go Circular](#)
- [See and eat](#)
- [EIT Youth Mission](#)
- [EIT Eat Healthy to Keep Healthy](#)
- [The diet - Food a Fact Of Life](#)
- [Schools - Too Good To Go](#)
- [Young Innovators programme](#) by [Climate Kic](#)
- [Recycle more - Environmental Projects ideas](#)
- [A Glance At Top 10 Eco-Friendly School Projects](#)
- [Sustainable Schools - Project ideas](#)



Info Box

Domokos Péter Kovács, the Youth Delegate of Hungary to the United Nations recently founded a project where rubbish cans are painted in Hungarian schools to promote recycling. Here are his **key recommendations important to keep in mind when starting such a school project:**

1. Know the stakeholders (e.g. teachers, school leaders, the state, parents, the school children, the rubbish company) you want to involve in the project and be clear on who in the school will be your main contact person to help you implement your project.

- Which stakeholder is important to get approval from and what happens if they say no? What do I need from these stakeholders? Do I have enough support with(out) them?

2. Know your surroundings and think about who is already within your network.

- Who empties these rubbish cans at the end of the day? Who is your mentor?
- Why do you want to give cleaning staff more work with recycling with no salary increase? Explain to them why it is important and explore together their opinions and resources in relation to recycling.

3. Involve a big and diverse group (of students) from different (friend)groups.

4. Ensure that the projects will continue (if relevant) even if you are not there.

5. Consider whether you need a pilot project to win stakeholders over and know where to position your project.

6. Make an evaluation of your impact, during and after the project. How is the project working? Do you need to adapt/change anything to make the project/initiative more effective?

- Know the community surrounding your project and involve them throughout the process. *Example:* create a [survey](#) and share it around to ask people within the school on their views on the project.
- You can use the [Impact Assessment Tool](#) to evaluate your project's impact in relation to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#).



Pro-Environmental Engagement in Universities

Raising awareness and transforming the university campus into an ecologically friendly place is the first step towards the creation of an environmentally conscious society and leaders of tomorrow. It will increase environmental consciousness and the adoption of sustainable habits by your fellow students that they hopefully maintain in their future.

Different possibilities to get involved in your university

- **Join a student association** to share and implement your ideas on pro-environmental changes within the university.
- **Join a student movement.** They are taking place all over Europe, including initiatives that are supported by the European Union to empower youth. Have a look at the [European Youth Year website](#) and find a project that matters to you.
 - » *Example 1:* [Youth-led perspectives for an Africa-Europe Partnership for Social and Climate Justice](#) is an event focusing on African and European youth views, demands, experiences and successes to inform the Africa-EU Partnership in two key areas: Green Transition and Governance, Peace and Security.
 - » *Example 2:* **Students about the future of Europe** is an event in Poland that consists of multiple workshops on topics such as the European Green Deal.

- **Create your own environmental association** and gather fellow students around the common goal of promoting pro-environmental behavioural changes.
 - » *Example:* [Assas environnement](#) is an ecological association within Panthéon-Assas University (Paris, France). It is concerned with the environmental respect within the university and beyond. They organise Clean-Walks, conferences, and afterwork activities revolving around the environment.
 - » **Our tip:** Get in contact with [Assas environnement](#) via their social media. Creating your own association might seem scary but exchanging ideas and tips with people already involved in similar associations will certainly help you.
- **Initiate your own projects within your university.**
 - » *Examples* of projects aiming to reduce food waste that can be implemented in your university as well can be found [here](#).



What can you do (within your association) in your university?

- **Promote pro-environmental changes in the everyday life** of students at university.

Examples of such projects you can easily organise in your university are:

- » Sales of organic, local vegetables and fruits like [Fresh Bag](#).
- » Open market where different environmentally conscious producers and stores from the area can sell and raise awareness on their products.
- » Workshop or talk with a local (student/teacher) living a sustainable lifestyle sharing their tips and tricks.
- » Workshop on how to sustainably produce (hygienic) products yourself (e.g. deodorant).
- » DIY workshops on how to upcycle objects. You can find more information on upcycling at [ethical.net](#).
- » Recycling and composting initiative in the cafeteria.
- » Setting up collection points to encourage upcycling (e.g. for [Terracycle](#) transforming used pencils into outdoor furniture).
- » Encouraging students to bring their own containers to the cafeteria to reduce waste.
- » Create green nudging interventions to encourage behavior change on campus. You can find quick guidance on this in the [Little Book of Green Nudges](#).

- **Organise a forum for discussion** with different stakeholders and administration of your university. They might be eager to hear your ideas to make the university more pro-environmental and energy-efficient and might help you implement the projects.

- » Despite the projects listed above, there might be initiatives you require their help (e.g. improvement of green spaces, reduction of plastic waste or reduction of digital pollution).
- » You can find more information on ecological transition in universities [here](#).

- **Raise awareness.**

Examples of different possibilities to raise environmental awareness are:

- » **Movie screening** possibly followed by a (panel) discussion with stakeholders in the field. You could even collaborate with cinemas in your city to organise it there. Check [this website](#) for good environment related movies.
- » **Short film.** (e.g. Create a short film providing tips to reduce the ecological impact as a student, to publish on social media or the university's webpage).
- » **Debates.** Partnership with your university's debate club (if there is none, it is easy to create one!) to organise debates on environmental challenges. **Our tip:** choose a topic that allows for constructive dialogue while remaining fun.

- » **Talks and Panel Discussions.** Invite experts (e.g. students, professors or external experts such as the [Climate Pact Ambassadors](#)) to initiate a discussion.
- » **(Pub) Quiz** on the planetary crisis. When creating the quiz think of questions on environmental issues, which allows participants to learn and raise concern while having fun.

Pro-environmental engagement in universities on a national and international level:

Join forces with other students in your country and beyond and engage together on pro-environmental change!

Example for joint student engagement on a national level is [RESES](#).

- RESES is a student network for an ecological and solidarity society.
- It is a national network of 150 student associations in France that carry out projects related to ecological and solidarity issues to have 100% of students and 100% of the campuses trained and committed towards an ecological transition.

Example for joint student engagement on an international level: [Climate Student Movement](#)

Pro-environmental Engagement on a National Level

Make use of your voice, engage in country-wide initiatives or get directly involved in environmental decision-making processes in your country. In this part of the toolkit, you find a variety of examples on how you can engage on environmental issues on a national level. If you are interested in one of the initiatives existing in other countries, check if a similar one already exists in your country and join, or get together with others and initiate it in your country!

! Small remark: *Despite the tips provided in this chapter, do not forget to use your right to vote consciously and inform yourself well on the candidate's environmental plans and actions when making your voting choice.*

Youth Delegate

You can apply to become a Youth Delegate. Youth Delegates are young people, often chosen by their youth council or young people of their country, to represent the voice of their generation in national and international meetings. The role and mandate of youth delegates varies between countries. Several European countries include a young representative in their country's delegation to the UN General Assembly. Some coun-



tries also have youth delegates for climate joining the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meeting and/or youth delegates for biodiversity joining the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) meetings.

You can find further information on Youth Delegates here:

- [The UN Youth Delegates programme](#)
- Becoming a [United Nations Youth Delegate](#) in Brussels
- Becoming a [Youth Delegate](#) at the Council of Europe

Our tips on how to become a Youth Delegate:

- Investigate whether your country already has a [Youth Delegate program](#) (usually created through a youth council) and familiarise yourself with the application process of your country.
- If no such program exists, contact [YOUNGO](#) or the [Global Youth Biodiversity Network](#) and ask for tips on how to advocate for a youth delegate program.
- Read this short [UN Youth Delegate Report](#) listing info about the work and role of Youth Delegates in different countries

Initiatives and organisations on a national level

There are a variety of organisations and initiatives in each European country you can get involved in. Get inspired by some projects from other countries listed [here](#) and conduct your research on whether something similar already exists in your country - if not, it is your chance to initiate it!

Searching for inspiration? - Get Inspired by these young climate activists on how to engage on a national level on environmental issues:

- **Luisa Neubauer** is a 22-year-old student from Germany. Inspired by Greta Thunberg, she is a dominant voice in the Friday For Future movement and joins the Green Party. In her podcast [1,5 Grad](#) she is talking about the global climate crisis. Follow her on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).
- **Eyal Weintraub** is a climate activist and student from Argentina. He is one of the founders of Youth for Climate Argentina, one of the biggest climate organisations in Latin America. He also co-authored the book "La Generacion Despierta" (The awakened generation) dealing with environmentalism and the climate crisis. Follow him on [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).
- **Adélaïde Charlier** is a Belgian climate and human rights activist and co-founder of [@youth.for.climate](#).
- **Greta Thunberg** is a Swedish environmental activist who initiated the [#FridaysforFuture](#) movement and is challenging leaders around the world to take climate change mitigation actions immediately.
- **Camille Etienne** is a climate and social activist from France and author of [Avant l'orage](#).

Engaging in Pro-Environmental Change on an EU and International Level



Introduction

The diversity of culture and ideas brought to life in international engagements and discussions, make holistic and inclusive pro-environmental change possible. Together, we are growing stronger than ever. International organisations like UNEP are convinced that “Youth are central in achieving a more sustainable and healthier planet”. In the past years, we received the legitimacy to speak up, our words were added to international resolutions and received places in international summits.

By engaging internationally in initiatives, organisations or projects, you can have a significant positive impact. In the following chapter we provide you with guidance on how you can engage with the UN System, at an EU level, and in non-governmental organisations. We also provide you with some sources where you can find further information on environmental governance and international engagement possibilities.

Engagement Possibilities in the United Nations System

The United Nations offers different opportunities for young people from diverse backgrounds to connect and engage on issues related to the triple planetary crisis in conferences, workshops, initiatives and assemblies. We listed some possibilities you can engage in here:

UNEP Youth Programmes and Initiatives

UNEP is the leading global environmental authority, setting the environmental governance agenda, promoting the implementation of sustainable development in relation to the environment within the UN system and serving as an authoritative environmental advocate. UNEP initiates a variety of programs, platforms and initiatives enabling meaningful youth participation in environmental issues.

You can find further information on different programs and initiatives you can engage in on the [UNEP Website](#). One of the youth programs by UNEP is the [Youth Empowerment Training Initiative \(YETI\)](#) under which we created this toolkit. The YETI program aims to empower young people with sufficient expertise and skills to become influencers and youth leaders capable of training, supporting and empowering other youth and providing inputs on pro-environmental behaviour, management and governance. The goals and areas of action of the YETI change from year to year and region. After completing the programme, participants can also join the alumni network, enabling to connect and join forces with former YETI mentees from around the world.

Our tip if you want to engage at the UN level: Be curious, be opportunistic, and constantly look for opportunities from UNEP that are popping up from time to time [here](#) and on the [website of MGCY!](#)

The Global Youth Environment Assembly

The [Global Youth Environment Assembly](#) enables youth participation in the processes of environmental governance in the UN system. In different working groups, youth develop and propose effective solutions on different environmental issues. As a young leader you can enhance your knowledge, viewpoints and exchange ideas.

Initiatives by the Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth

The current UN Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Jayathma Wickramanayake of Sri Lanka as his next [Envoy on Youth](#). The Envoy on Youth addresses the rights and needs of young people and empower them as agents of change and rights-holders. The office of the Envoy on Youth organises different initiatives and possibilities for you to get involved in sustainable development.

i *How to engage?* You can find further information on different possibilities [here](#).

Example: Young Leader for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
The office of the Envoy on Youth is looking on a biennial basis for 17 Young Leaders for SDGs from different backgrounds. The objective of Young Leaders is to advocate for SDGs, engage peers and their audience in the advocacy and implementation of the [2030 Agenda](#) and contribute to SDGs related initiatives by the UN and its partners.

i *How to engage?* You can find more information on the application process [here](#).

UN Youth Task Force

You can engage in Youth Task Forces responsible for the youth engagement in specific international meeting processes and programmes. Current examples are the [Stockholm+50 Youth Task Force](#), facilitating youth engagement in the Stockholm+50 meeting processes, and the [UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration Youth Task Force](#), responsible for youth engagement in the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#) context. Despite engaging as a member of a Youth Task Force you can also only participate in one of the activities organised by these task forces or provide your inputs in youth policy papers (e.g. [Global Youth Policy Paper 2022](#)) and open consultations.

Engagement Possibilities at the EU level

Having served its citizens for nearly 30 years with an open ear for new ideas and progress, the EU offers a fantastic range of events and programs for young people.

Our tip: Check out the [EU Youth Portal](#) to inform yourself on the current EU youth opportunities.

The European Year of Youth (2022)

The EU declared the year 2022 as the European Year of Youth. It offers you a variety of opportunities to engage in activities, learn and exchange visions with people all over Europe and empower others to confidently engage in change to build a better future.

The Conference on the Future of Europe

This is an incredible opportunity for you as an European citizen to make your voice heard, discuss other citizens' ideas or share your own, debate issues and priorities in relation to EU's future and create or join events. It consists of a [Multilingual digital platform](#), [Decentralised Events](#), [European Citizens' Panels](#) and a [Conference Plenary](#). The conference's outcome will be presented to the Joint Presidency in a report. You can find further information on how to get involved [here](#). You can also directly share your own ideas on youth and other topics [here](#).

i *How to engage?* We listed the key points of the [selection process](#) here:

- 4 Panels of 200 European citizens, each chosen through random selection, from the 27 Member States reflecting EU's diversity (geographic origin (nationality and urban/rural), gender, age, socioeconomic background, and level of education).
- At least one female and one male citizen per member state is part of each panel.
- A third of each panel is composed of young people (age 16 – 25).

The Young European Ambassadors Initiative (YEAs)

This is a multicultural and diverse network, connecting young people from different EU Member States, Armenia, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, and the United Kingdom. Some of us authors are also YEAs and can highly recommend you to join the initiative. It enables you to participate in regular training sessions online to gain knowledge on EU related topics (e.g. environment or biodiversity related issues) from various experts (e.g. EU officials, diplomats, journalists, EU Neighbourhood Team etc.). As YEAs, you can also create your own projects and the EU even provides monetary assistance for some of them.

i *How to engage?* To be part of the YEAs initiative you can [apply here](#) once a year.

The EU Youth Parliament

The EU Youth Parliament is a peer-to-peer educational programme bringing European youth together to debate the most important issues of current times. It empowers, inspires and educates youth to become young leaders by offering over 500 different programs and events.

i *How to engage?* The application procedure varies from country to country. Overall, the website of the EU Youth Parliament advises to contact the [national department of the EYP via email](#) to apply.

The European Youth Event (EYE)

In the European Youth Event (EYE) you gain insights into how the EU works and participate in discussions with other young people from Europe. The next EYE will take place in Strasbourg and online in June 2023.

i *How to engage?* You can find more information on how to participate and even organise activities during EYE2023 as a youth organisation/youth group [here](#).

Engagement Possibilities in

Non-Governmental Organisations

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) work independent of the government and are mostly nonprofit entities organised on community, national or international levels to serve socio-political goals. Due to their independence they often enjoy a high level of trust among society. There are various NGOs engaging on environmental issues including and empowering young people in their work. In this chapter we listed some of these NGOs you can engage in as a young person.

Global Citizen

[Global Citizen](#) is a community and movement of positive change to improve the world. The objective is to amplify collective voices to demand commitments from leaders by connecting people concerned about various issues and ready to take action (e.g. signing petitions, joining campaigns and completing pro-environmental challenges e.g. green bootcamp, zero plastic for a week, sustainability in your home). This movement makes taking actions accessible, fast, and easy by securing real and effective outcomes for the world.

i *How to engage?* People from all over the world can sign up via this [website](#) or [app](#).

Greenheart Travel Program

Greenheart Travel enables students to combine travelling the world with participating in pro-environmental actions. The [Greenheart Travel website](#) gives a great overview of all the different possibilities and trips students can take.

Example: A trip to Hawaii, where young students clean up the beach, help the homeless population of Oahu and take part in different projects, protecting and repopulating the Hawaiian flora while getting insights into a different culture.

! **Small remark:** *Voluntourism can also have negative effects on the local environment even without your intention. So critically inform yourself about the projects before committing to engage!*

Connect4Climate

[Connect4Climate](#) is a global partnership program launched by the World Bank Group and the Italian Ministry of Environment, and joined by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. It promotes solutions for climate change and empowers people to act on an international level. You can share [your stories](#) about your experience in environmental engagement or directly [participate in the program](#). This partnership provides many [programmes, information](#), and opportunities. Young people from this organisation advocated at [the COP26](#) in Glasgow.

i *How to engage?* You find the latest news and engagement possibilities on their [Instagram](#) and their [Website](#).



Info Box

Sources providing information on environmental governance, and possibilities for you to engage in environmental issues on an international level:

Sources with UN related information (portals):

- [UNEP Website](#) of the UN Environment Programme.
- [Informeia](#): An information portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) providing various resources in relation to the MEAs. This portal also offers a range of [free online-courses](#). You will receive a certificate by UNEP if you have successfully completed the course.
- [World Environment Situation Room](#): A platform with data and information about the environment provided by UNEP.
- [International Resource Panel](#): A science-policy platform founded by UNEP to enhance usage of natural resources by building and sharing necessary knowledge.
- [Toolkit for Young Environmental Advocates](#) ft. Stockholm+50: Providing guidance on how to engage and make your youth voice heard on a high decision-making level.

Sources with informations about international environmental governance:

- [Climate Transparency](#) provides a comprehensive overview on the current climate policy and energy use in different countries.
- [Climate Action Tracker](#) provides detailed information about national climate policy and internatio-

nal agreements based on the nationally determined contributions of a country.

- [Global Carbon Atlas](#) informs about the current and historical carbon fluxes around the world resulting from natural processes and human activities.
- [Institute for European Environmental Policy](#) is a sustainability think tank that provides information on sustainability policy and related issues across the EU and the world.
- The Green Comp [Policy Toolkit](#).

Further international organisations you can engage in:

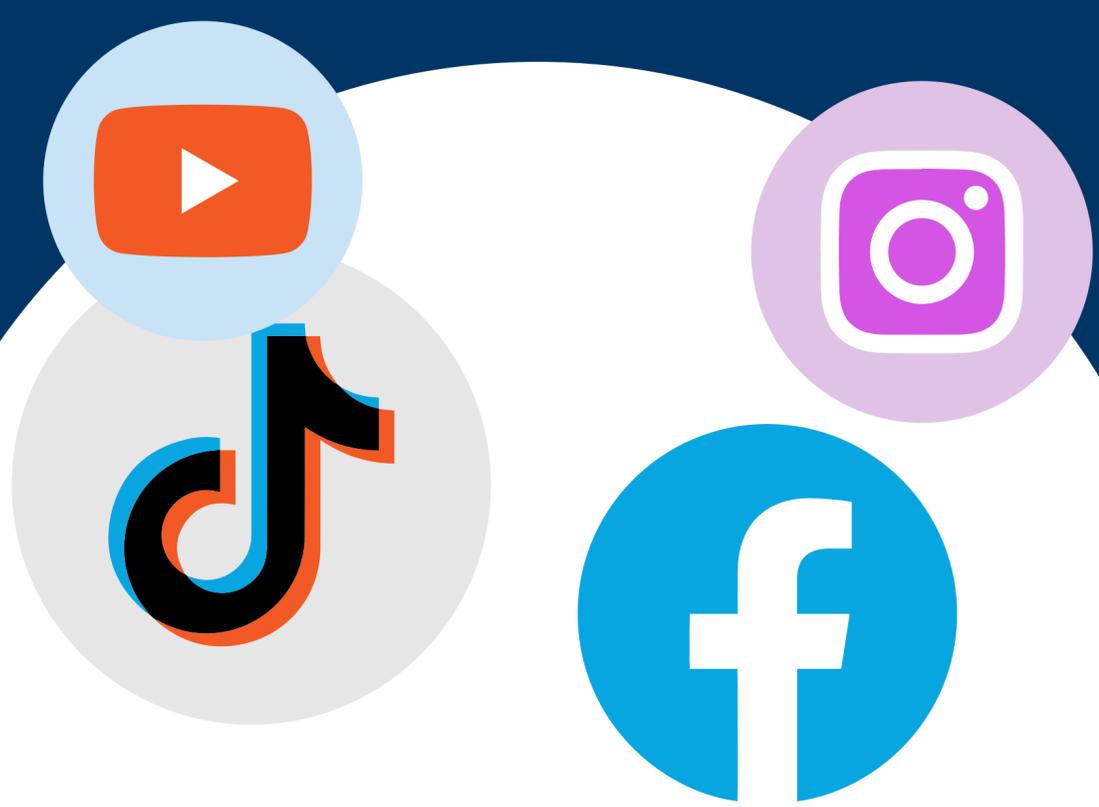
- The Global Youth Biodiversity Network ([GYBN](#))
- The Global Youth Climate Network ([GYCN](#))
- The European Youth Energy Network ([EYEN](#))
- [Climate- Kic](#) is EU's main climate innovation initiative
- [The Global Environment Facility \(GEF\) Small Grants Programme](#) is programme supporting international development through local projects and actions.
- [Young European Leadership](#) is an international organisation empowering future decision makers and leaders e.g. you can participate in Y7 & Y20.
- [YEE](#): The Youth and Environment Europe is an independent European network of environmental youth organisations.
- [Greenpeace](#): To become a volunteer, write to [Greenpeace European Unit](#) or to the national and regional organisation of [your country](#).

- [Fridays for Future](#) is an international movement, initiated by Greta Thunberg, that demonstrates every Friday to request pro-environmental actions from decision-makers.

Further ideas on how you can engage on an international level:

- Join forces with young people around the world by sharing ideas, knowledge and experiences or start an online campaign (In [Chapter 4](#) you find more tips on social media engagement).
- Create a meeting with friends and people you have met during your travel (maybe online) and discuss environmental ideas to receive a diversity of inputs and perspectives.
- Engage yourself in local environmental organisations while being abroad ([Chapter 2](#)).
- Start your own international initiative or campaign ([Our tip](#): Get in contact with some international organisations listed above to exchange ideas and receive some hands on tips by people already involved in similar projects).

4 Leading Pro-Environmental Change through Effective Social Media Communication



Introduction

Various social media channels provide a good platform to raise awareness and influence pro-environmental change across society. Environmental engagement through social media can enhance social mobilisation and has been the engine of many protest movements, initiatives and even revolutions (Leong, Pan, Bahri, & Fauzi, 2019). It enables you to shape the values, opinions and habits of others which is key for pro-environmental behaviour change. Social media can also have a democratising influence in the media landscape as it allows more people to create content and influence the public agenda. A little reminder: Activism does not have to be a full time job and particularly social media makes quick and effective engagement possible. Even if you perceive

yourself as “normal” person living a “normal” life, you can make a difference. Your audience might also perceive themselves as “normal” making your content an even bigger inspiration as it comes across as relatable and easy to implement. In this chapter, we provide you with step-by-step guidance on how to engage in an effective, yet mindful way, on each of these five platforms: Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Twitter and TikTok.

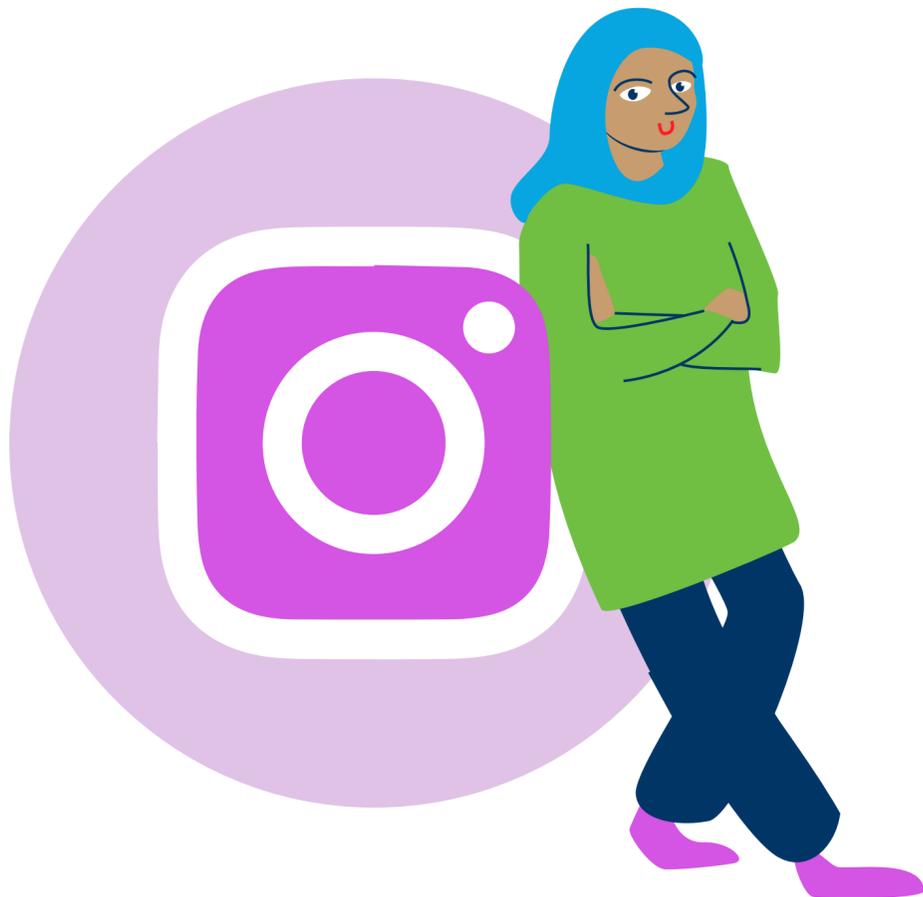
Our tip: when it comes to the creation of content: Rely on yourself to figure out what posts are valuable to you and what direction your content should take. Remember that something that is popular may not always be good and

vice versa. Make sure you create content in an inclusive, sensitive manner without hurting anyone because of their identity, gender, appearance etc. Here you will find tips on how to ensure that your posts are inclusive. Last but not least: help others and share what you have learnt here with fellow climate activists.

! Small remark: *To use most social media platforms you need to be aged 13 and over. You are younger than 13? There are still plenty of options for you to engage on environmental issues or raise awareness other than using social media - just check the other chapters for more inspiration and guidance.*

Instagram

On [Instagram](#) you can upload a variety of media in combination with empowering messages, geographical tags and hashtags. You can share your content with pre-approved followers or publicly, which makes the platform attractive for raising awareness on environmental issues and informing how to take action (e.g. by sharing petitions and promoting pro-environment engagement). Click [here](#) to learn more about Instagram and its algorithm and follow the 10 steps to successfully start your engagement on Instagram!



Step 1: Define your topic

What do you want to talk about in relation to the planetary crisis? Instagram enables you to create an emotional connection to your content and audience. Choose a topic that you personally care about and make authenticity your asset. People will notice when you put your heart and mind into the posts, and it will translate into more visibility and engagement.

Step 2: Define your goal(s)

What do you want to achieve with your content? E.g. Do you want to raise awareness on environmental issues? Motivate and inspire to engage in pro-environmental behaviour change? Inform about initiatives and campaigns? Or maybe even start a movement on your own? Think big but also define your goals clearly. Break them down into small steps that will help you to stay on track and measure your success. *Example:* Goal 1: Reach 10 followers, Goal 2: Reach 100 followers etc.

Step 3: Define your strategy

Define your audience and narrative. Who do you want to reach (e.g. friends, young people from your country, a European or even international audience)? Be aware of the environmental values, attitudes and motivations of your audience to choose the narrative and content of your posts that successfully address and engage your audience. Imagine: What narrative would be most likely to cause a reaction? What issues are personally close to them and what would motivate them to engage in pro-behavioral change? Consider it as an interesting and emotionally appealing story in which you are the main character, motivating your audience to stay engaged and share your content in their own profiles.

Examples: [Climate educators on Instagram](#), [Youth Climate Activists](#), [Climate Justice activists](#).

Step 4: Define your content

Your content has to be aligned with your defined target audience to successfully address and engage them. Despite choosing a fitting narrative, the visual identity of your account is key to its success. Successful Instagram activists use gorgeous artwork and design to promote their message through [artivism](#). If your visual identity is more text based, create eye-catching content in similar designs, so your audience can easily identify your content. **Our tip:** Find inspiration by following this [link](#) or go on Instagram and search the hashtags #activism or #artivism. There are some free design tools such as [Canva](#) where you can easily create visually appealing posts.

Step 5: Start your account

Setting up the account in the app is very intuitive, but if you are new to social media, we recommend you to watch [this tutorial video](#).

Step 6: Check your online safety!

Be mindful about what you share online, especially if you share personal pictures.

Step 7: Get your first followers

Start by following your friends and family members and let them know what you want to do with your account and how they could support you. Remember: Engagement is key for visibility on Instagram.

Step 8: Your first post

Create your first content and off you go! If you do not know where to start, [click here](#) to find some

inspiration as well as materials. We recommend that you post with regularity and during the hours of the day when your users are the most active. If you are using third party material, we recommend you to read our general Info Box about third party content.

Step 9: Grow

Stay visible by posting regularly and engage with your followers. Try out different features that Instagram has to offer and stay innovative. Expand your follower base by identifying and using common hashtags. Engage directly with similar accounts by reposting and cross-posting each other, to empower each other and grow together - maybe you can even start a collaborative campaign?

Step 10: Take care of yourself!

Instagram is designed in a way to maximise the time you will spend online and you are exposed to many (hidden) advertisements. There is a real danger of addiction, caused by various elements. Please also carefully read the Info Box about mental health and online safety.



Info Box

Your words matter - Choose your terminology on social media consciously

Research has shown that small changes to language or framing can have significant effects on people's perception of the climate emergency. When you create your social media posts we recommend you to refer to "climate crisis" instead of "climate change", and "global heating" instead of global warming. This will help to influence policy and public understanding of the environment. Experts also recommend that you use the term "climate change deniers" instead of "climate sceptics". To get more information on this in a fun way, we recommend this video.

Info Box

Mental health and online safety

Social media is not an easy environment. Here is an official guide on how to use social media safely. We recommend that you reflect regularly on your work, your time investment and your feelings. Do not hesitate to take a break from engaging with social media if you feel that you need it and measure or limit your screen time within the app or by an external app. Also read this guide on how to keep your personal information safe on social media.

Info Box

From raising awareness to taking action

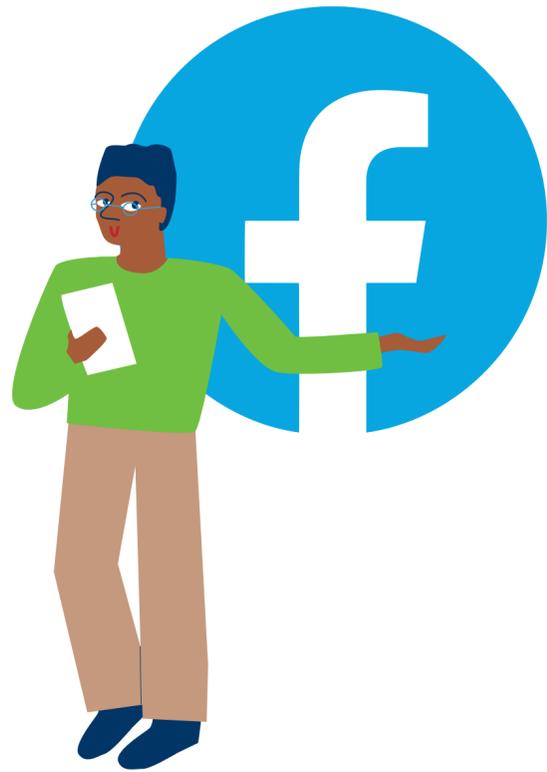
Most people in Europe are aware of the environmental crisis, but few take significant actions.

Our tip: Use your social media presence and create content on social media inspiring people to act! The psychologist Cameron Brick suggested to us that the 3 R's need to be communicated to inspire action:

1. Reality: Scientists are convinced that a human-caused planetary crisis is occurring, the impacts are already happening and will get worse.
2. Risk: Our climate may get worse than we expect, and we may experience negative surprises such as abrupt climate change or impacts.
3. Response: There is much we can do and the sooner we respond, the better off we will be (Vesely, Klöckner & Brick, 2020).

How to choose a narrative engaging a large audience?

Motivating people who do not identify themselves with pro-environmental values and behaviours to change their behaviour is difficult. Research found that communicating the co-benefits of addressing climate change provides a good way to motivate even "non-environmentalists" to engage in pro-environmental action (Co-benefits refer to benefits for society of pro-environmental behaviour, such as a reduction of diseases). So try to put an emphasis also on co-benefits in your social media posts to successfully engage a large audience, even non-environmentalists!



Facebook

Facebook is the biggest, most established and used social media platform in the world, with more than three billion registered users. Therefore, if your goal is to reach as many people as possible, Facebook is a great choice. Facebook also allows cross-posting from Instagram. So read through our 10-steps guide and start your engagement on Facebook today!

Step 1 : Define your topic

What do you want to talk about? Which topics do you already know and want to inform, inspire or engage others about? Choose something that you personally care about!

Step 2 : Define your goals

Define what you want to ideally achieve (e.g. people to care, people to vote for something, people to boycott/demonstrate etc.). How can you measure your success? Break your goals down into smaller challenges to make them more manageable and realistic.

Step 3 : Define your strategy

Clearly define your target audience. Who do you want to reach with your posts? What is needed to resolve the situation and what could your audience do about it? Be aware of the environmental values, attitudes and motivations of your audience to choose the narrative and content of your posts (language/images) that successfully address and engage your audience. Try to imagine what narrative would be most likely to cause a reaction, what issues are personally close to them, and what would motivate them to engage in behavioural change?

Step 4 : Define your content

You will need a preferably catchy name and visual identity (logo, colour palette) to be recognizable at first sight. Also think about how often you are going to post, and be aware: preparing posts can be time-consuming!

Step 5 : Start your account

It is time to start your Facebook page! You can find a detailed explanation on how to do that here.

Step 6 : Be careful

Anyone can get access to your page, so you might want to take the time to reflect on using a pseudonym for your page. You should ensure that your personal

data is not visible to everyone. This guide can help you with this.

Step 7 : Get your first followers

Your first followers will often be people you know and trust. Depending on whether you feel comfortable with your online friends knowing about your activism, you can either send an individual message to private friends telling them about your page or communicate more widely on your personal social media channel.

Step 8 : Create your first post

It is time to create your first post! Here are tips on how to create posts for Facebook and here you find tips on how to maximise engagement. Be also mindful of the publicity of what you are writing, and critically ask yourself: would you be fine with one of your parents or a potential employer reading it?

Step 9 : Growing your page

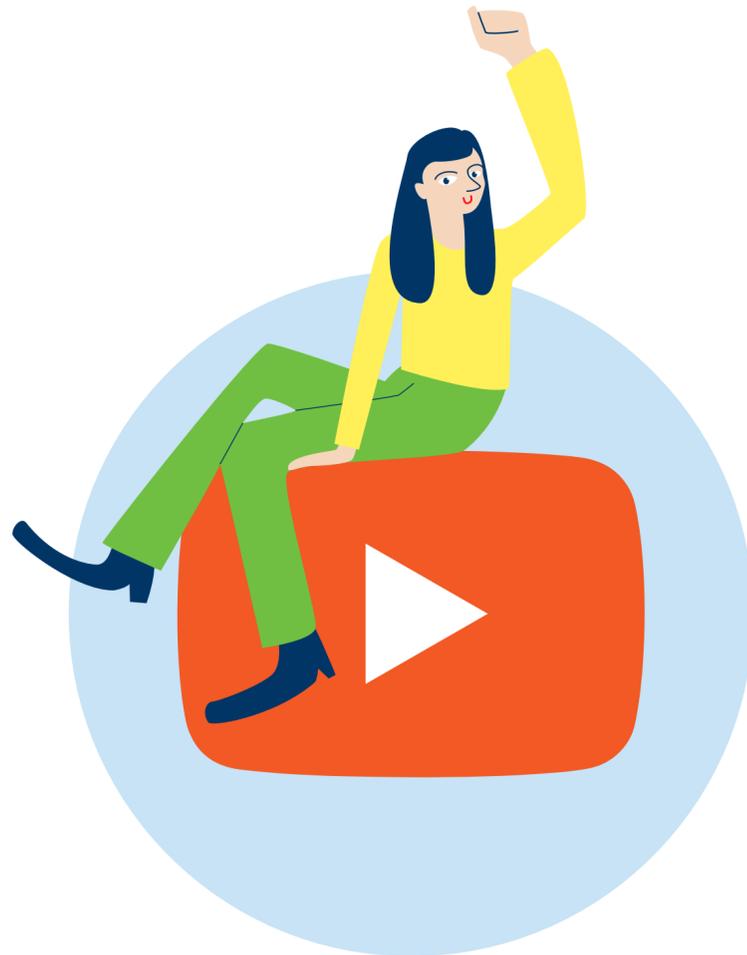
In order to keep your follower base active post regularly, enabling people to anticipate when they are going to see your next posts. To expand your follower base, here are some tips from the business sector. If you are looking to raise funds for your organisation, make sure to include a budget for social media promotion. Advertisement and promotion are an important and sometimes essential part of growing your Facebook presence.

Step 10 : Take care of you!

Reflect on your work, your time investment and your feelings, don't hesitate to take a break if needed. There is a real danger of addiction, caused by various elements of social media. Please also read the Info Box 10 about mental health and online safety.

YouTube

Climate change is a very broad and complex topic so there is an urgent need to share information and education in an understandable and accessible way. YouTube is the biggest platform for online videos in the world and offers you just that. If you want to educate yourself, find information to share or even create content on your own, YouTube is a great place to start. In the following ten-steps-strategy, we will explain the most important things you need to consider if you want to start your own YouTube channel.



Step 1 : Define your topic

What type of videos do you want to produce and about what? Explore the variety of options provided by YouTube that can help in the process of growing a network and monetizing your content. Get inspired and informed on what is out there by checking out and analysing different accounts, communication styles and presentations by various stakeholders. *Searching for inspiration?* Check out channels such as Climate Town, Not Just Bikes, Ecosia, or Global Weirding.

Step 2 : Define your goals

What interesting and important content can you add to the material that is already out there? No need to reinvent the wheel, but maybe you can put your spin on a story or combine narratives to highlight new facets.

Step 3 : Define your strategy

Clearly define your target audience. Who do you want to reach out to? What is needed to resolve the environmental issue you want to address and what could your audience do about it? Be aware of the environmental values, attitudes and motivations of your audience to choose the narrative and content of your posts (language/images) that successfully address and engage your audience. Try to imagine what narrative would be most likely to cause a reaction, what issues are personally close to them, and what would motivate them to engage in behavioural change?

Step 4: Decide on a narrative

Where should your story start and where should it end. Who will be watching your video? Choose your tone and format accordingly. The most popular duration for videos on YouTube is between 7 and 15 minutes.

Step 5: Start filming

Grab a camera and start recording yourself, your environment or use stock footage - make it relevant to the story you are telling. Here are some practical tips for the recording process.

Step 6: Make your content accessible

When uploading, remember to make use of tags and thumbnails. Using a lot of different tags will help promote the video, while using tags that are misleading will decrease the average watching time. The first impression will get people interested, but you also want them to stay.

Step 7: Use criticism to your advantage

After uploading your video, be open to different opinions, but do not let them deplete your motivation.

Step 8: Collaborate!

To successfully inspire a large number of people to engage in pro-environmental change we need to work together. Expand your own horizon as well as your exposure to other peoples' attention. Here you find further advice on how to identify potential collaborators and how to approach them.

Step 9: Engagement is key

The more you interact with other people through the platform, the higher your visibility will be.

Step 10: Enhancing exposure

Try to upload new content on a regular basis. Algorithms favour regularity and will be more likely to promote your content. To reach a larger audience, you can post your videos on different platforms (e.g. Instagram, Facebook etc.).

Twitter

Many people describe [Twitter](#) as the new political arena, where the rules are different to the ones in real life.

Twitter can get you in touch with many inspiring people: young environmental leaders and their organisations, pro-environmental stakeholders from around the world or opinion leaders from many sectors. It is a news and opinion platform that follows and influences the pulse of time as well as the political discourse.

Step 1 : Define your topic

What do you want to talk about? Defining this is important for your Twitter usage, as its algorithm is driven by the interests that you communicate on Twitter. [Here](#) you can get more insights on how the Twitter algorithm works and how you can make it work for you.

Step 2 : Define your goal(s)

What do you want to achieve on Twitter? Define your goals clearly and break them into the smallest possible steps to monitor their fulfilment and your personal progress (e.g. goal 1: reach 10 followers, goal 2: get reposted 20 times etc.).

Step 3 : Define your strategy

To use Twitter most effectively, be aware of the different engagement strategies existing and potentially decide to follow one or two so you can work towards your goals consistently. You can engage as a leader, a follower, an organiser or a moderator.

- **The leader:** Make your voice heard on Twitter by sharing your opinion and getting reposted by your followers. If your posts or the [hashtags](#) that you use start trending, they will be shown to other people browsing Twitter and looking for new topics. You can also start a discussion and invite others to join.
- **The expert:** Get in touch with other experts in similar areas and exchange knowledge, best practices and opportunities. Furthermore, you can join existing discussions and promote a science based approach in relation to environmental issues.
- **The mediator:** Interact with different stakeholders, build your network and create connections between actors that share a similar approach or mission. Often enough, many activists are striving for the same thing, unaware of the existence of each other. You can make an impact by connecting them with each other.
- **The supporter:** Every opinion leader needs their supporters who consistently share their content and help them to stay relevant. By linking, reposting and commenting on the posts of inspiring activists, you can help them to reach a broader audience and make sure their voices are heard.

Step 4 : Define your content

Since a tweet is limited to 280 characters, it is all about providing short and concise information while staying [interesting and engaging](#) your followers. Twitter is more of an open network. You can easily share external links and videos from other platforms. Always be careful to check the source before you post or repost something! Here is a [general guide you can follow to identify credible sources](#).

Step 5 : Start your account

There are a few steps involved to set up your Twitter account. You can find a step-by-step guide [here](#).

Step 6 : Be careful

There is a danger of [misinformation](#), [fake news](#), [populistic media strategies](#) as well as [troll armies](#) on Twitter. You will not get around doing your own fact checking and remaining critical of the information that you consume and share yourself.

Step 7 : Get your first followers

You can follow individual users as well as hashtags. We recommend these [climate Twitter users](#) and [hashtags](#) as a start. If you are a climate activist, you should indicate that clearly in your profile and even send introduction messages to other climate activists or organisations you are following.

Step 8: Start posting and reposting

It is time to create your first post! Reposting gives you the chance to express your opinion and support the content of other users by sharing their posts in your timeline. As they will also appear on your timeline, people will connect you to the content you are reposting which shapes the way that people perceive your personal profile. Also, be mindful and reflect on your own [assumptions and biases](#) that you might unwontedly carry into your postings.

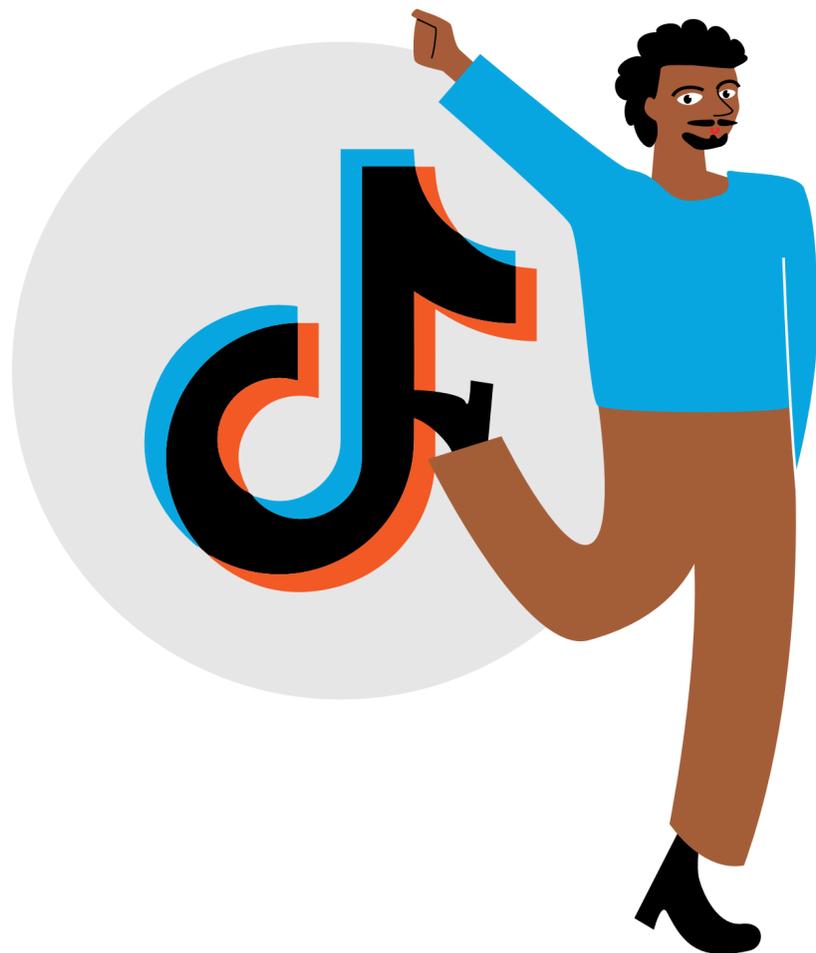
Step 9: Growing your Twitter Page

If you want to become and remain visible, post regularly and follow some trends to reach a wider audience. You can monitor the trending hashtags to find the ones which relate to climate and start from there. The challenge is to find a balance between

talking about (new) topics that you consider to be important while being visible in already existing, trending discourses.

Step 10: Take care of yourself

Reflect on your work, your time investment and your feelings. As with every social media platform, several problems can occur when using Twitter, making a conscious usage important. Please also carefully read the Info Box 10 about mental health and online safety.



TikTok

TikTok is the fastest growing social media platform to date. The platform hosts a large community of young and open-minded people that is increasingly interested in environmental preservation. Summing it up: A climate discussion is happening on TikTok, and you can join it to get in touch with a global community of creators and influencers who are concerned about the planetary crisis. **Our tip:** Watch the TED talk by climate activist Zahra Biabani on eco-friendly content on TikTok and pro-environmental change.

Step 1 : Define your topic

Do you want to talk about environment related issues such as climate awareness, education or sustainable and zero waste lifestyle? It should definitely be a topic that fuels your creativity and that you care about on a personal level. **Our tip:** Watch some content by creators from EcoTok to get some inspiration.

Step 2 : Define your goal(s)

Define your goals and break them into small steps to monitor their fulfilment and your personal progress (e.g.: goal 1: Reach 10 followers, goal 2: receive 100 views on one Reel etc.). There are many success stories and a large EcoTok community, proving a large audience is interested in environment related content.

Step 3 : Define your strategy

By combining creative ideas, artistic work and commitment, you can make your audience aware on the importance of environmental action and

accessible engagement options. Accordingly, one strategy would be to become a “knowledge broker” for climate facts. Another strategy is to reach people on a personal level with ideas of changing their lifestyle in a more sustainable way. More frequent exposure to sustainable practices and ideas can increase accessibility and enhance behaviour change (Berger & Firtzsimons, 2008). If you want to take a deep dive into the behaviours, practices, and motivations of TikTok Social activists we recommend this paper.

Step 4 : Define your content

Get inspired by TikTok creators and use their openly shared resources to define and create your content. Find creative ways of inspiring people to incorporate sustainability into their daily life by e.g. shopping more sustainable, learning to cook with plants straight out of nature or even the own backyard, or tips to achieve a zero waste lifestyle and a reduction of ones overall material footprint.

Step 5 : Start your account

Download TikTok from Google Play or the App Store. Remember to set up a strong password that you do not share with anyone, and use a two-way-authenticator for additional safety. Consider this guide about keeping your personal information safe.

Step 6 : Be careful

The data management of the TikTok app has been a controversial issue in the past. Be aware that you are sharing your content and your data with unknown entities.

Step 7 : Get your first followers

Start by following your personal friends, family and people you know in real life. Afterwards, we recommend searching for users who share similar content as you, so you can support each other with likes, comments and shares.

Step 8: Start posting your own videos

Develop your own style and personal touch, so your audience will recognize you easily. Make sure there is some variation in your content: sometimes you might want to participate in TikTok trends, or reach your niche audience, or experiment with new ideas that might resonate with a broader audience.

Step 9: Growing your TikTok Page

We recommend you to read [this guide](#) and watch this YouTube [video](#) on how to reach more people with your TikTok content. There are many ways to be successful on TikTok, so be open-minded and try different strategies.

Step 10: Take care of yourself

TikTok's algorithms are designed with the goal of [maximising the time you spend scrolling and watching videos](#). Please take care of yourself and carefully read the [Info Box 10 about mental health and online safety](#).



Info Box

How to share good content in the correct way?

Always be careful to check the source you get information from before you post or repost something! Here is a [general guide you can follow to identify credible sources](#). Also carefully review the images or videos being borrowed to determine the conditions of use. Consider the guidelines of the respective social network. Please note that many photos with Creative Commons licences still have restrictions on their use. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are not violating any copyright regulations. If in doubt, refrain from posting the image or video. Read [this guide](#) for more information on correct usage of content by others.

Info Box

Be aware and beware of your own biases

We as humans are prone to different cognitive biases. One common bias is the: [confirmation bias](#), which refers to “the tendency to process information by looking for, or interpreting, information that is consistent with one’s existing beliefs”. Knowing the [most common fallacies](#) will help you to critically evaluate your own judgements, beliefs and acquisition of information. Stay open to contradictory information and view-points in your engagement on social media!

Info Box

Basic tips for social media content creation

- Provide sources for informative content if possible (e.g. “Source: @UNEP”).
- Use open resources and tools enhancing your social media content creation: [Unsplash](#), [Pixabay](#), [Pexels](#), [Flickr](#), [Canva](#), [GlobalConscience.world](#) (Tip: Carefully review the images being borrowed to determine the conditions of use).
- Create a coherent and clear social media presence:
 - » Coherence in design (e.g. colours, font, font size)
 - » What is the vision, mission and core values that you want to convey with your design?
Our tip: Decide on certain colours, fonts etc. that represent the core vision, mission and values of your account and stick to those. Do not mix too many sizes of headings/ subheading.
- Transfer data (to colleagues) without losing any quality with e.g. [WeTransfer](#).

References

- Ciscar, Juan-Carlos; Feyen, L.; Ibarreta D., Soria A. (Hg.) (2018): Climate impacts in Europe. Final report of the JRC PESETA III project. Europäische Kommission. Luxembourg (JRC science for policy report) https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwjQ4963p9f2AhUF16QKHZ11DWIQFnoECA0QAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fpublications.jrc.ec.europa.eu%2Frepository%2Fbitstream%2FJRC112769%2Fkjna29427enn_1.pdf&usg=AOvVaw3Tush4d3EVCP4DVyPFsRU6
- Eurostat. (2020, June). *Energy consumption in households*. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Energy_consumption_in_households
- Feehan, J., Harley, M. & Minnen, J. (2009). Climate change in Europe. 1. Impact on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity. A review. *Agronomy for Sustainable Development*, 29(3), 409–421. <https://doi.org/10.1051/agro:2008066>
- Ferrer, M. de. (2022, July 25). *Here are all the positive environmental stories from 2022 so far*. euronews. Retrieved July 29, 2022, from <https://www.euronews.com/green/2022/07/25/here-are-all-the-positive-environmental-stories-from-2022-so-far>
- Hutton, G. & Menne, B. (2014). Economic evidence on the health impacts of climate change in Europe. *Environmental Health Insights*, 8, 43–52. <https://doi.org/10.4137/EHI.S164>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2018). *Global warming of 1.5 oC. An IPCC special report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5degree C. above preindustrial levels and related greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the strengthening of the global response to the context of climate change*. World Meteorological Society. <https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/>
- IPCC, 2021: Summary for Policymakers. In: *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [MassonDelmotte, V., P. Zhai, A. Pirani, S.L. Connors, C. Péan, S. Berger, N. Caud, Y. Chen, L. Goldfarb, M.I. Gomis, M. Huang, K. Leitzell, E. Lonnoy, J.B.R. Matthews, T.K. Maycock, T. Waterfield, O. Yelekçi, R. Yu, and B. Zhou (eds.)]. Cambridge University Press. In Press.
- Invasive species*. Site. (n.d.). Retrieved July 29, 2022, from <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/threats/invasive-species>
- Leong, C., Pan, S. L., Bahri, S., & Fauzi, A. (2019). Social media empowerment in social movements: power activation and power accrual in digital activism. *European Journal of Information Systems*, 28(2), 173-204.
- Overexploitation*. Site. (n.d.). Retrieved July 26, 2022, from <https://biodiversity.europa.eu/threats/overexploitation>
- Poore, J., & Nemecek, T. (2018). Reducing food's environmental impacts through producers and consumers. *Science*, 360(6392), 987-992.
- Reid, H. (2006). Climate Change and Biodiversity in Europe. *Conservation and Society*, 4(1), 84–101. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/26396649>

Ritchie, H. (2018, December 4). *Who emits more than their share of CO2 emissions?* Our World in Data. <https://ourworldindata.org/share-co2-emissions>

Ritchie, H. (2019, October 3). *Where in the world do people emit the most CO2 emissions?* Our World in Data. <https://ourworldindata.org/per-capita-co2>

SDG Impact Assessment Tool. (n.d.). Retrieved July 29, 2022, from <https://sdgimpactassessmenttool.org/en-gb/articles/instructions>

Tessaly, J. (2011, April). Shower or Bath?: Essential Answer. Retrieved from <https://stanfordmag.org/contents/shower-or-bath-essential-answer>.

Tips for your home. Climate Action. (n.d.). Retrieved July 29, 2022, from https://ec.europa.eu/clima/citizens/climate-tips/tips-your-home_en

United Nations Environment Programme (2021). GEO-6 for Youth. UNEP, Nairobi. <https://www.unep.org/resources/geo-6-youth>.

Vesely, S., Klöckner, C. A., & Brick, C. (2020). Pro-environmental behavior as a signal of cooperativeness: Evidence from a social dilemma experiment. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 67, 10