

Green Pathways

**Empowering Migrant Youth for
Environmental Protection**



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The Basics

SUSTAINABILITY?
What exactly does that mean?

Sustainability is when the citizens of a city only produce as much plastic waste as can be recycled.

Sustainability is when the people from a village take out as much fish from the nearby lake as can regenerate.

Sustainability is when a wood selling company doesn't cut more trees from a forest than can grow back or are replanted.



As a result, the natural resources as forests, fish, metals etc are used in a way that coming generations will be able to use them in the same way we did.

[Check here for more information](#)

Why It Matters

The Impact of Environmental Degradation on Health and Well-Being

Environmental degradation directly affects human health and well-being. Air pollution can cause respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, while contaminated water can lead to gastrointestinal infections and other serious health problems. Soil pollution can result in the contamination of crops, affecting food safety and nutrition. Additionally, the loss of natural habitats and biodiversity can reduce the availability of medicinal plants and other natural resources critical for health. Altogether, climate change and environmental degradation affects all of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which were established by the UN in 2015.



The Importance of Protecting Natural Resources for Future Generations

Natural resources such as clean water, fertile soil, and forests are finite and need to be managed sustainably to ensure their availability for future generations.

Protecting these resources is essential for maintaining ecological balance and ensuring that future generations can enjoy a healthy environment. Sustainable management of natural resources helps prevent shortages, supports economic stability, and enhances the quality of life for all living beings. By preserving the environment today, we ensure a habitable planet for the youth of tomorrow and for countless generations to come.



Air Pollution

The release of harmful substances into the atmosphere, such as carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen oxides from industrial activities and vehicle emissions. This can lead to respiratory diseases, environmental damage, and contributes to global warming.

Deforestation

The large-scale removal of forests for timber, agriculture, or urban development. Deforestation leads to loss of habitat for millions of species, disrupts water cycles, and contributes to increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Key Environmental Issues

Climate Change

Long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, and other atmospheric conditions on Earth. Climate change is primarily driven by human activities, particularly the burning of fossil fuels, which increases levels of greenhouse gases. This leads to global warming, sea-level rise, and extreme weather events.

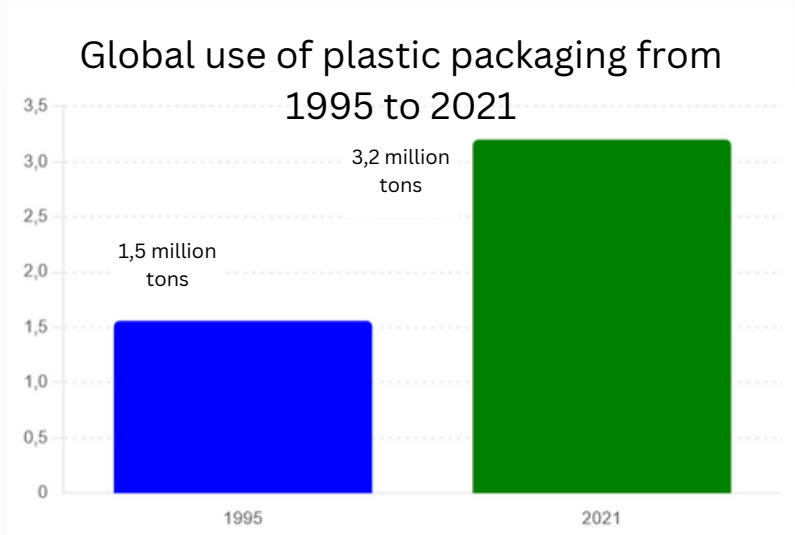
Water Pollution

Contamination of water bodies by harmful chemicals, waste products, and other pollutants. This affects drinking water, aquatic life, and can lead to severe health issues.





How you can make a difference



Refuse:

Avoid products that generate waste, such as single-use plastics.



Reuse:

Find new uses for items instead of discarding them.

The four "R" of everyday sustainability

Reduce:

Minimize your consumption and waste production



Recycle:

Properly sort and recycle materials like paper, plastic, glass, and metal.



Refuse

Bring your own cup for
your everyday coffee to go

Bring your own bag to
buy at the grocery
store.



DID YOU KNOW?
Per year, around 500 billion
disposable cups are used globally!

Reuse

Find new uses for items instead of
discarding them.



Find more creative ideas here:



[www.pinterest.de/
upcycledwonders/reuse/](http://www.pinterest.de/upcycledwonders/reuse/)

Properly sort and recycle materials like paper, plastic, glass, and metal.



Includes all kind of aluminium or plastic packaging



Includes envelopes with plastic windows. Paper with heavy soiling (eg from food products) and receipts should be thrown into a black container. Throw juice/milk cartons/tetrapacks into the **yellow** bin.

Recycle



All waste that cannot be recycled



Garden or kitchen waste that can be composted (tea leaves and coffee grounds, leftover fruits and vegetables, peelings and eggshells, leaves)

Energy Conservation: Tips for Saving Energy at Home and School

On average, incandescent light bulbs use about 60 watts of electricity, and LED light bulbs use about 10 watts. Using an incandescent light bulb for 2 hours per day will use about 12.2 kilowatt-hours of electricity per month and 43.8 kilowatt-hours of electricity per year.

Turn off lights and appliances when not in use.

Use energy-efficient light bulbs and appliances.



Unplug chargers and devices when they're not in use.

Sustainable Transportation

Carpool with friends or family
to reduce the number of
cars on the road.

Advocate for better public
transportation options in your community.

Use public transportation
instead of personal vehicles.



Opt for walking or biking
for short distances.

Step 3

Green consumption



How to choose sustainable products



Support local and organic farmers by buying locally grown and organic food.

Choose items with minimal packaging or that use biodegradable materials.



Choose second hand products over new products.

Look for eco labels and certifications (see next page)



The Impact of Consumer Choices on the Environment

Every purchase you make can support sustainable practices and reduce environmental harm.

Consumer demand can drive companies to adopt more sustainable practices.

By choosing eco-friendly products, you contribute to a market that values sustainability

Eco seals



During the production of goods:

- eco-standards were met
- no child labor was used
- the manufacturing plant paid workers wages and bonuses above the national minimum



The product packaging is partially or completely made from recycled materials or is suitable for subsequent processing.



“Sustainable fishing” standards are met. However, MSC has recently come under frequent criticism for issuing certificates to companies that rely on unacceptable fishing practices.



Special disposal. A “separate fee” is placed on power sources (batteries) and goods containing certain hazardous substances (mercury, lead).



FSC stand for Forest Stewardship Council. It indicates that the wood used in a product comes from certified plantations or logging sites. As with the MSC, there have been discussions about the reliability of this seal.



«Unhealthy and poisonous materials. Special caution is required for disposal.



Dangerous for the environment



Ecolabel of the European Union. The product meets the requirements of environmental standards.



Local organic seals, e.g. Germany and France



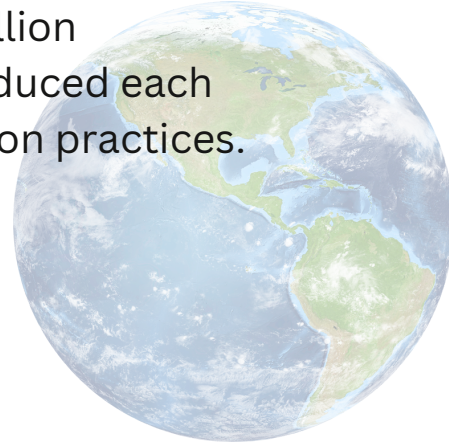
The GOTS label assures eco-friendly shoppers of responsible manufacturing practices for organic textiles. Requires products to contain a significant percentage of organic fibers and limits the use of synthetic and regenerated fibers.



Organic seal of European Union

Example: Fast Fashion

Approximately 92 million tons of textile waste are produced each year globally due to fast fashion practices.



Find more information in this video:

The true cost of fast fashion

Many European countries send their textile waste to African or South American countries. This has led to huge garbage dumps filled with discarded clothing, which local waste management systems cannot handle. The result is severe environmental pollution, large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions and health issues for local communities.



What can be done about it?



Buy second hand instead of new cloths



Reduce the amount of textile waste by opting for good quality products which can be used for long time



Upcycling: Before put old cloths in the waste, make new cloths of it or give it a new purpose



Find some creative ideas for upcycling of cloths here





Raising Awareness

One main issue is **awareness**, which needs a certain level of understanding and information. Here are some resources and advice which can be useful

Raising Awareness: How to Effectively Communicate About Environmental Issues

- Use clear and simple language to explain issues and solutions.
- Share personal stories and examples to make the issue relatable.
- Focus on positive actions and solutions to inspire others.



Online campaigns

Participate in online campaigns and hashtags to raise awareness.



[Click here for 5 digital campaigns that made a splash on World Environment Day](#)

This youtube channel is worth following

The UnSchool of Disruptive Design

Some videos worth watching

- >> *Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Household Waste*
- >> *Can healthy food save the planet?*
- >> *10 Everyday Sustainable Living Swaps*





Taking Action

There are various ways to take part in **eco-friendly activities** and it is often not easy to decide where to start from.

This is a short list of examples all over Europe to give an overview of existing activities.

Associació habitats



is an organization that promotes the restoration and conservation of rivers and wetlands in Catalonia through the "Projecte Rius," engaging the community in river cleaning and monitoring activities.

Zero Waste Lab Amsterdam

A community initiative that promotes zero waste through workshops, educational programs, and community engagement to reduce waste and encourage sustainable living

Pracownia



The organization Pracownia ("Association Workshop for All Beings") fights for the protection of Polish forests. It supports and connects local civil society organizations and citizens who are campaigning against deforestation in Poland's remaining primeval forest areas.

#FridaysForFuture

is a youth-led and -organised movement that began in August 2018, organizing demonstrations for better climate politics in over 7500 cities many different countries.



More examples from around Europe...

Green Agents++ / Migrafrica

Project in Cologne(Germany) which promotes multilingual education on environment protection for the migrant communities.



Tema



Tema is the largest environmental NGO in Turkey, its mission is to raise public awareness of environmental problems specifically soil erosion, desertification, deforestation, habitat destruction, biodiversity loss and climate change.

Granara Eco-Village

It was an abandoned village that a group of urban youths slowly re-built and re-claimed from the wild, turning it into one of the first Eco-Villages in Italy. Today the Village is a place where different experiences of ecology can meet to ... dream, research, and experiment.



La Ruche Qui Dit Qui!

A network that supports local farmers and sustainable agriculture by connecting them directly with consumers through online platforms and local pick-up points for fresh, organic produce.



What else can we do?

- Find local initiatives
- Start a petition
- Participate in demonstrations
- Write to local decision makers
- Support and share online campaigns
- Share important information with friends and family
- Find local initiatives or organizations
- Buy at eco-friendly stores



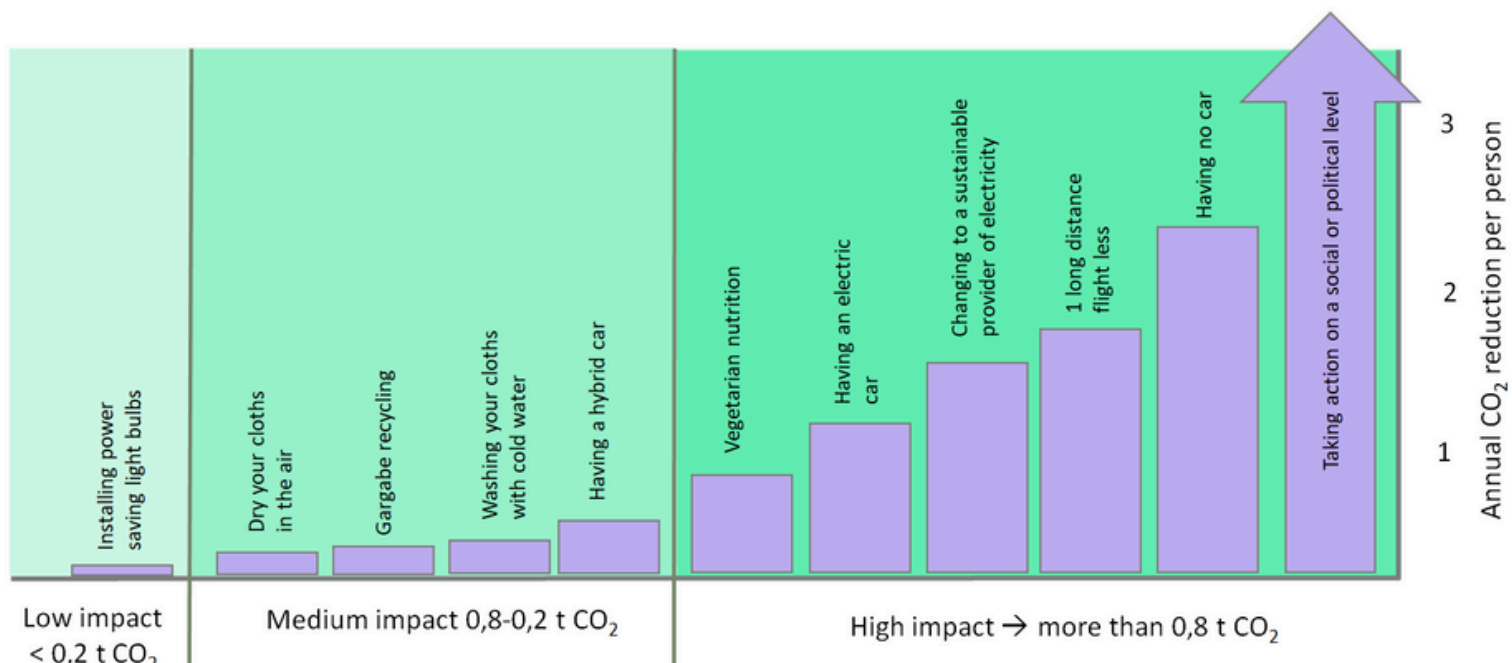
What organizations and activities are there in your town?

Conclusion

There several ways how we can make a positive change towards an eco-friendly and sustainable future. The best thing is not to do it alone, but to share the ideas, experiences among a group of friends or family.

However, every actions you might take are not equally effective. The table below gives an overview on the impact of different actions.

DIFFERENT ACTIONS HAVE A DIFFERENT IMPACT



Quelle: lunduniversity.lu.se

If you have ever asked yourself: What is it worth to make an effort while there are so many other people who don't care? On top of this, all the millionaires and billionaires have such an huge impact on the environment and climate change that, no matter what I do, all my efforts are in vain!

It's all normal to feel like this while trying to make a change in a positive way.

As an answer, we want to ask you these two questions:

How many millionaires are there and how many "normal" people?

And: if you don't start to make a change, who then will?

It starts with you!

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