

Climate Action



What is climate change?

Climate change refers to the phenomenon that is causing the earth to become warmer which means that our climate and our weather systems are changing.

When we burn fossil fuels to run our homes, factories and cars, carbon dioxide is produced. They release carbon dioxide which is the main greenhouse gas. Greenhouse gases cause the earth to heat up by trapping the sun's heat in the earth's atmosphere - acting like a greenhouse.

Most scientists (95%) now agree that human activity is largely responsible for climate change and that the choices we make today will decide the future of our climate.

Did you know?

- It is widely recognised that we need to limit the rise in global temperatures to 2°C in order to avoid dangerous climate change. However, for many of the world's poorest people climate change is already dangerous.
- Ireland had the third highest emissions of carbon dioxide per person in the EU. With an average carbon footprint of 12.8 tonnes per person, Ireland's emissions in 2013 were 45% higher than the EU average of 8.8 tonnes. (CSO 2016)
- 2016 was the warmest year on, and July 2017 was the hottest month ever recorded (NASA)

What is the greenhouse effect?

Greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide, let the heat of the sun into our atmosphere but don't allow the heat to escape (like a greenhouse). Because of the amount of fossil fuels we burn to meet our energy needs, we are producing too much carbon dioxide. More heat is being trapped than before and this is causing climate change.

What are the impacts of Climate Change?

- Polar ice caps melt
- Sea levels rise causing floods
- Loss of land, habitats, species and biodiversity
- Changes in the type of food we can grow and eat
- Reduced access to clean potable water
- Extreme weather events such as hurricanes, floods and drought
- Increased migration
- Greater global inequality



What is a carbon footprint or carbon number?

Our carbon footprint measures how much carbon dioxide we as individuals produce by, for example, using energy in our homes and when we travel. We can measure this by calculating our carbon number. We can tackle climate change by reducing our carbon number.

What is Climate Justice?

Although climate change is a global problem and its effects (impacts) can vary greatly in different parts of the world, the risks are not distributed equally. Therefore we need a global response to the problem. Those who are most vulnerable to the most severe impacts are the poorer, more marginalised countries around the world. Ironically, they are often the countries that contribute least to the greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change. This situation is unjust.

What Climate Action can we take?

- Research the impacts of climate change on Ireland and globally
- Calculate your Carbon Footprint and come up with ways to reduce it
- Go on a carbon diet! Try to use less energy and less carbon dioxide in everyday life.
- Walk, cycle or take public transport. It uses less energy and CO₂ than going by car.
- Don't waste energy, switch things like lights and TVs off (not just on standby) when they are not in use.
- Choose energy efficient products like light bulbs and appliances with an A on the energy label. They do the same job with less energy so they save money too!
- When buying things such as clothes, accessories, toys, cosmetics choose products that are produced locally, using environmentally friendly materials and practices, with less packaging.
- Buy locally grown food that is in season when possible
- Plant native trees, and plants; they provide food and shelter for birds, insects and absorb CO₂
- Remember to reduce, reuse and recycle as much as you can!
- Research what the Irish Government are doing to take action on climate change. Investigate what other countries are doing. Write to your politicians asking them to take Climate Action.
- Look at the fact sheets for the other One Good Idea project ideas on thee for inspiration on travel, food, fashion and energy.
- Create your own inspiring One Good Idea campaign to encourage the people around you to take Climate Action!



Resources for Students and Teachers:

Useful Websites:

- For information on Climate Change and Climate Action in Ireland and globally:
 - <http://www.epa.ie/>
 - <http://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-action/Pages/default.aspx>
 - <http://www.dccae.gov.ie/documents/National%20Mitigation%20Plan%202017.pdf>
 - <http://www.climateactionprogramme.org/>
 - <http://unfccc.int/>
- Examples of climate action campaigns:
 - <https://1010uk.org/>
 - <http://www.350.org>
 - www.stopclimatechaos.ie
 - <https://www.foe.ie/>
 - <http://www.greenpeace.org>
- Calculate your carbon footprint :
 - <http://www.epa.ie/climate/calculators/>

Climate Justice information:

- <http://www.mrfcj.org/>
- <http://www.trocaire.org/climate>

Videos:

- **Eco Eye: Climate Change and Me** – An investigation into the realities of climate change in Ireland. <http://www.earthhorizon.ie/> - Season 15, Episode 5.
- **Eco Eye: Climate Friendly Living** – A look at our carbon footprint and the measures we can take to reduce it <http://www.earthhorizon.ie/> Series 15 Episode
- **Climate Council:** All the top climate scientists in the world have something to tell you <http://www.climatecouncil.org.au/really-important-science-announcement>
- **Leonardo DiCaprio:** Inspirational climate speeches and a film from the famous actor <http://leonardodicaprio.com/news/>
- **Before the Flood** <https://www.beforetheflood.com/>
- **National Geographic:** Climate Change 101 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EtW2rrLHs08>



- **UN Climate Summit:** Opening Film with Morgan Freeman <http://www.takepart.com/video/2014/09/17/whats-possible-un-climate-summit-opening-film>
- **The Island President** – A story of climate justice and how President Mohamed Nasheed of the Maldives tried to protect the islands from the impacts of climate change <http://theislandpresident.com/>
- **An Inconvenient Truth / An Inconvenient Sequel** – Al Gore’s epic films on the global impact of climate change <https://www.algore.com/library/an-inconvenient-truth-dvd>

Resources for Teachers:

Climate Action Lesson Plans:

The One Good Idea project links to the following Curriculum Strands:
SESE, Science and Geography - Environmental awareness and care SESE, Geography - Natural environments, Human Environment SPHE - Myself and the wider world; Environmental care SESE, Science - Materials, Energy & Forces.

Use the following [Energy in Action](#) lesson plans.

- Lesson plans on global warming and climate change
 - C3 Activity 1: Global Warming in a Bottle
 - C3 Activity 2: The Effect of Global Warming on the Polar Ice Caps and Melting Glaciers
- Lesson plans on sustainability
 - A3 Activity 1: Visualising: Why Sustainability? Is there enough land for everyone?

