

Youth-Led Action on Climate Change

Leader's Guide (Europe)





In April 2025 at WAGGGS World Centre, 'Our Chalet' in Switzerland, 29 participants from 17 different countries across the Europe Region came together to reflect on their role as Guides and Scouts in tackling the global issue of climate change. It was there that this programme began to take root. Through shared stories, discussions, and collaboration, we realised that climate change is not just a distant or individual issue. It is a collective challenge that affects us all. Yet, within that challenge lies an incredible opportunity: the power to build stronger, more connected communities that take meaningful action together.

Youth-Led Action on Climate Change (YLACC) builds on the Girl-Led Action on Climate Change programme, which has been created and implemented in different regions including Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This version has been specifically tailored for a European and co-educational context. The purpose of YLACC is to empower young people to become leaders in their local communities by providing them with the knowledge, tools and confidence to take action and to advocate for meaningful change.

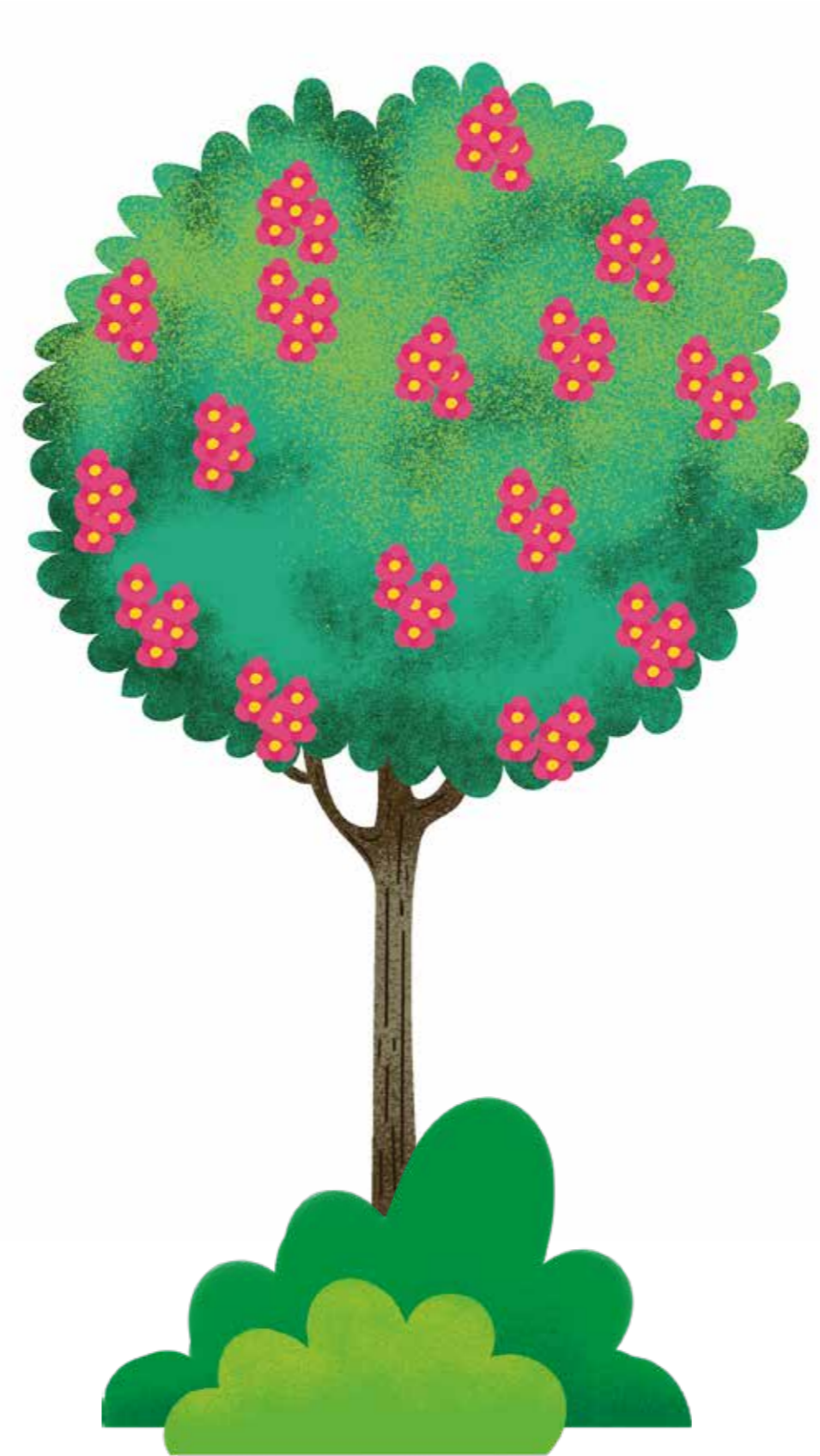
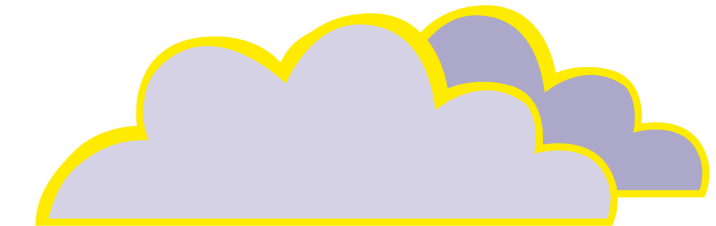
As members of a global movement, we recognise our privilege in Europe and our responsibility to promote equity, peace, and sustainable change- environmentally and socially. We acknowledge that climate change does not impact everyone equally and are committed to ensuring that everyone has the right to live in a healthy environment, and that on our collective journey toward climate justice, no one is left behind.

This programme is dedicated to our young people: they are not responsible for the past, yet they have the power and right to shape the future they want. It doesn't matter where we come from- climate change affects us all; but we are not powerless, nor are we alone. The scale of the problem can feel overwhelming at times, yet hope and action are always possible: we can always make a difference, especially if we do it together. Let's be the change we want to see in the world! We hope this programme can give you the tools, knowledge and confidence to take meaningful action with your unit and feel empowered as you contribute to a more sustainable and just future.

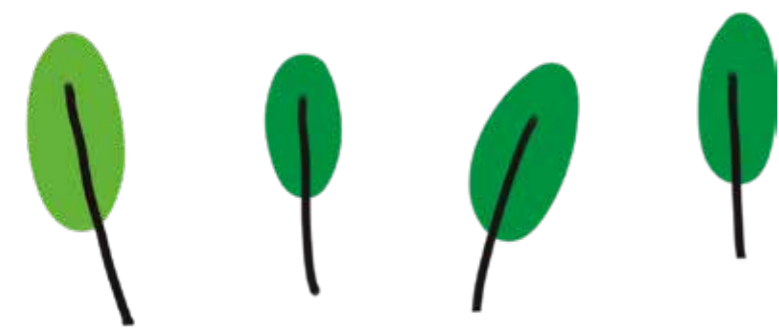
***Europe Region Environmental Working Group
World Association of Girl Guides & Girl Scouts***

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Introduction

Climate change is the biggest challenge of our time and is a serious threat to our future. Around the world, many young people are already being affected by rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and the destruction of the natural habitats that we depend on for our survival.

These changes don't impact everyone equally:

- Climate change often makes **existing inequalities worse** and also means that the countries and communities that have contributed the least to the climate crisis are the worst affected.
- In particular, the **power imbalance between men and women** means that girls and women are more impacted by climate change. This is due to unequal access to resources, education, decision-making power, and opportunities.

To empower young people to be part of the solutions, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS), Europe Region has developed this badge as part of the **Youth-Led Action on Climate Change (YLACC) programme**.

In this programme young people will understand the **causes and effects of climate change**, what **climate justice** means, and feel empowered to make changes in their daily lives to **mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change**. Young people will develop their leadership skills to **take action** in their communities and develop the tools to **advocate for urgent climate action** and a more equal, sustainable and climate-resilient world.



Educational framework

Climate change has a devastating impact on the planet, especially threatening the future of young people. But we know that **young people have the power to make a difference!** This curriculum creates a safe and supportive space for them to develop new life skills, learn about climate change, and become more resilient. They can use their knowledge and skills by taking mitigation and adaptation actions, speaking out and raising awareness about climate change, through a climate justice approach.

Curriculum impact

A key goal of the curriculum is to contextualise the climate crisis. It presents a clear and honest narrative that highlights the relevance of climate change, and its fundamental role in worsening inequalities worldwide. Young people will be encouraged to shape their behaviours in response to climate change, and to take conscious action through mitigation and adaptation approaches.

By taking part in this programme, we can:

Change the lives of young people by supporting them to:

- Gain knowledge on how equality, justice and climate change issues intersect.
- Develop the tools to continuously research the impact of climate change on their community.
- Develop the values, attitudes, and behaviours of an environmental changemaker.
- Develop their problem-solving skills.
- Find personal, positive ways to adapt to and mitigate climate change impacts on their lives.

Change communities by supporting young people to:

- Increase awareness within their community about climate change and what they can do about it.
- Inspire others to take climate action by sharing their knowledge and skills with people around them.
- Reflect on the global inequalities and gender dimension of climate change and take this into account when analysing local and global issues.
- Take practical mitigation and adaptation action in their families and communities.

Change societies by supporting young people to:

- Promote climate action.
- Challenge global inequalities in climate action and beyond.
- Increase young people's participation in environmental decision-making.
- Run projects and campaigns for climate action at local, national or global level.

Using the WAGGGS educational approach

Learn more about climate change

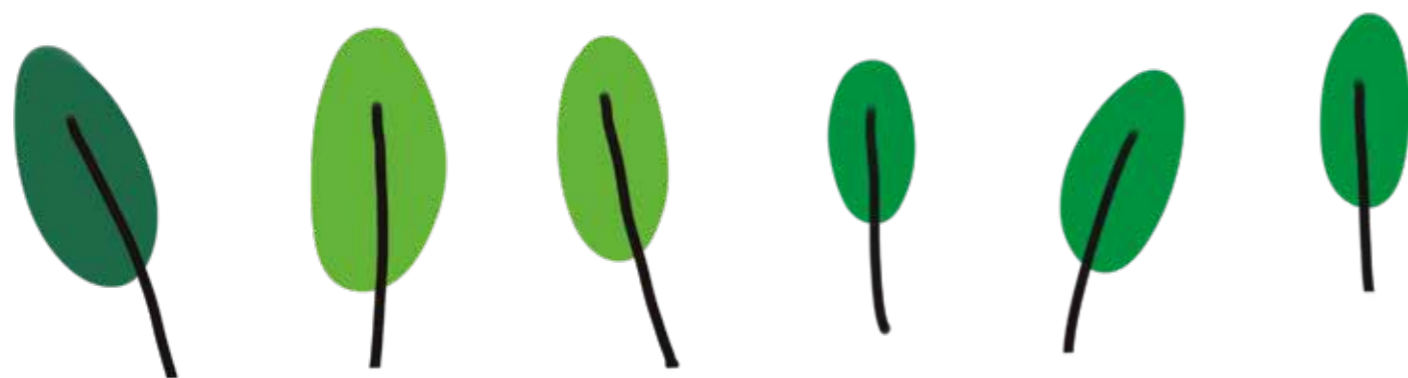
This curriculum has been developed to be easy to deliver, even with minimal knowledge of climate change. You should be able to deliver activities just by reading them through and familiarising yourself with them. Useful definitions, facts and explanations have been built in the debrief and discussion parts of the activities. You can find additional information on the fact sheets to develop your climate change knowledge and feel more confident in facilitating activities.

To deepen your understanding of climate change, you can use the “Background information” section of the [YUNGA Challenge badge on Climate Change](#).

Create a safe and supportive environment

The threats of climate change are a concerning topic for everyone, and climate anxiety (negative emotions associated with the perception of climate change) is becoming a common feeling, especially among young people. When learning about climate change, participants may feel worried about the impact of climate change on their future, helpless against the present consequences, and may also feel that they're not heard by people who have the power to change things.

While this curriculum doesn't shy away from explaining the urgency of the situation, it is important that these difficult conversations happen in a safe environment that protects everyone's wellbeing.



Give space to share

Learning about climate change, especially in areas that are very vulnerable to its consequences, can be upsetting. If participants are expressing or showing signs of anxiety, give them the space to share their concerns, and acknowledge their emotions. Validate them and thank them for sharing their experiences.



Research precise information

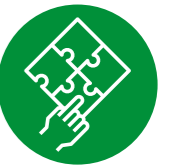
Climate change is a reality, and we are already living with its consequences. But feeling worried about it might mean that some young people keep thinking about the worst possible scenario.

This curriculum encourages young people to explore and be realistic about the consequences of climate change in their daily lives. Support them to research and use accurate information! It will help them gain perspective and envisage climate change as a part of their lives, rather than an impending catastrophe.



Be part of the solution

Working together towards solutions can help young people feel empowered. This curriculum gives participants the tools to become environmental leaders and changemakers, in their lives, in their families and in their communities. Activities support participants to explore what they can do, whatever their age or experience, to change their behaviours to protect the environment, and adapt to the consequences of climate change. Help them focus on how they can take action - it is a great way to make sure they stay motivated and hopeful.



It's a collective effort

Through the curriculum, participants will take action and share their ideas with others. Nurture this collective space, so they feel supported in their efforts, and optimistic that they are not alone in this fight. There are many other young people like them who are passionate about making a difference! Some activities also allow them to share their knowledge and find strategies to influence others, outside of their Guiding and Scouting group to take action. Make space during the programme for participants to share their experiences influencing others, and realise the collective impact they are having.



Educational approach

This curriculum uses a non-formal educational approach to make activities accessible, usable and engaging for participants. By using the Girl Guide and Girl Scout educational method and leadership model, alongside the Growing and Learning (GAL) framework, this curriculum provides spaces for participants to direct their own learning and develop the behaviours to make sustainable change.

Learning by doing

People learn best when they feel involved in the learning. Learning by doing enables participants to connect their experiences to their own lives and empowers them to act. That's why this curriculum promotes learning in a hands-on way through interactive games, challenges, experiments, roleplays and discussions. Activities support participants to solve problems, develop their own ideas, apply their knowledge on climate change and practise the skills they need to become environmental changemakers.



Learning in small groups

Often young people feel more engaged in the learning when it takes place in small groups. They can learn a lot from each other and have more fun with their peers. The activities in this curriculum support peer learning through collaborative problem-solving, negotiation, small group decision-making and supporting each other.



My path, my pace

People learn in different ways. This curriculum uses a variety of activities to engage with different learning styles. Participants can choose which topics and activities they want to engage with, based on their interests, needs and learning styles. The curriculum also creates spaces for participants to contribute to the activities in different ways, and to celebrate their achievements throughout the curriculum.



Connecting with others

This curriculum encourages participants to connect with each other, their peers but also their families and communities, to better understand the impact of climate change as well as explore possible ways of taking action in their everyday life. Participants are encouraged to learn from people different from them, empathise with others and connect with people around them to ask questions and share their learnings.



Connecting with the world

Climate change is a global issue that affects the world around us in many different ways. This curriculum makes space for participants to learn from their environment, connect with nature and engage with their local communities. By completing YLACC, participants will get a chance to explore and better understand the world around them so they can take action to protect it, and become active global citizens.



Learn more about the Girl Guide and Girl Scout non-formal educational method here:

www.wagggg.org/en/what-we-do/Learn/prepared-learn-prepared-lead/our-non-formal-educational-method/

Leadership practice

To become environmental change makers ready to tackle challenges in their lives, in their communities and in the wider world, young people need to develop their confidence and see themselves as leaders. This curriculum is designed to give young people of all ages space to consciously practise leadership using the [Girl Guide and Girl Scout leadership model](#). By using the six leadership mindsets throughout the curriculum, they will develop the values, attitudes, and behaviours they need to become leaders for climate action.



This curriculum supports young members to use their **reflective mindset** through individual and collective reflection about their impact on the environment, their strengths, and the skills and behaviours they want to work on to take action on climate change.



It encourages the use of the **collaborative mindset** through collective games and challenges, where Guides and Scouts have to be team players, support each other and use people's different strengths to work together against climate change.



Activities encourage **worldly leadership** by giving young members space to reflect on how climate change is a crucial part of their context, and to challenge themselves to take different perspectives and experiences into account when exploring climate change adaptation and mitigation solutions.



Developing a **creative and critical thinking mindset** is crucial to tackling the climate crisis. Through the activities, participants have opportunities to understand climate change through analysing information and doing research, and to develop their imagination, take informed risks and come up with innovative solutions to deal with the consequences of climate change.



This curriculum takes a unique perspective on climate change by supporting participants to develop their **gender equality mindset** and explore how girls and women are disproportionately affected by climate change and why. They are encouraged to challenge gender expectations and reflect on how they can overcome gender barriers to leadership in the journey as environmental changemakers..



The main objective of this programme is to equip participants with the tools to take **responsible action** on climate change. By learning about climate change, they can change their behaviours to protect the environment, support their families and communities to take action, and mobilise others for climate action.

Learn more about the Girl Guide and Girl Scout leadership model here:

<https://shorturl.at/16zJA>

Growing and Learning (GAL) framework

To help girls and young people navigate this world, we embrace lifelong and life wide learning. This is learning that happens throughout life and through every aspect of life. This lies at the heart of our **Compass 2032** vision: an equal world where all girls can thrive with GAL helping us achieve this.

This prism helps us visualise how Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting transforms the shared light of purpose into a spectrum of growth outcomes. The different elements of our approach, like our method, leadership model, and the space we create, interact like the structure of a prism, shaping the learner's journey in unique and meaningful ways.

CONNECTED BY A SHARED PURPOSE

WE USE THE GIRL GUIDE AND GIRL SCOUT APPROACH

TO CREATE SPACE TO GROW AND LEARN

AND OFFER R.E.A.L. LEARNING EXPERIENCES

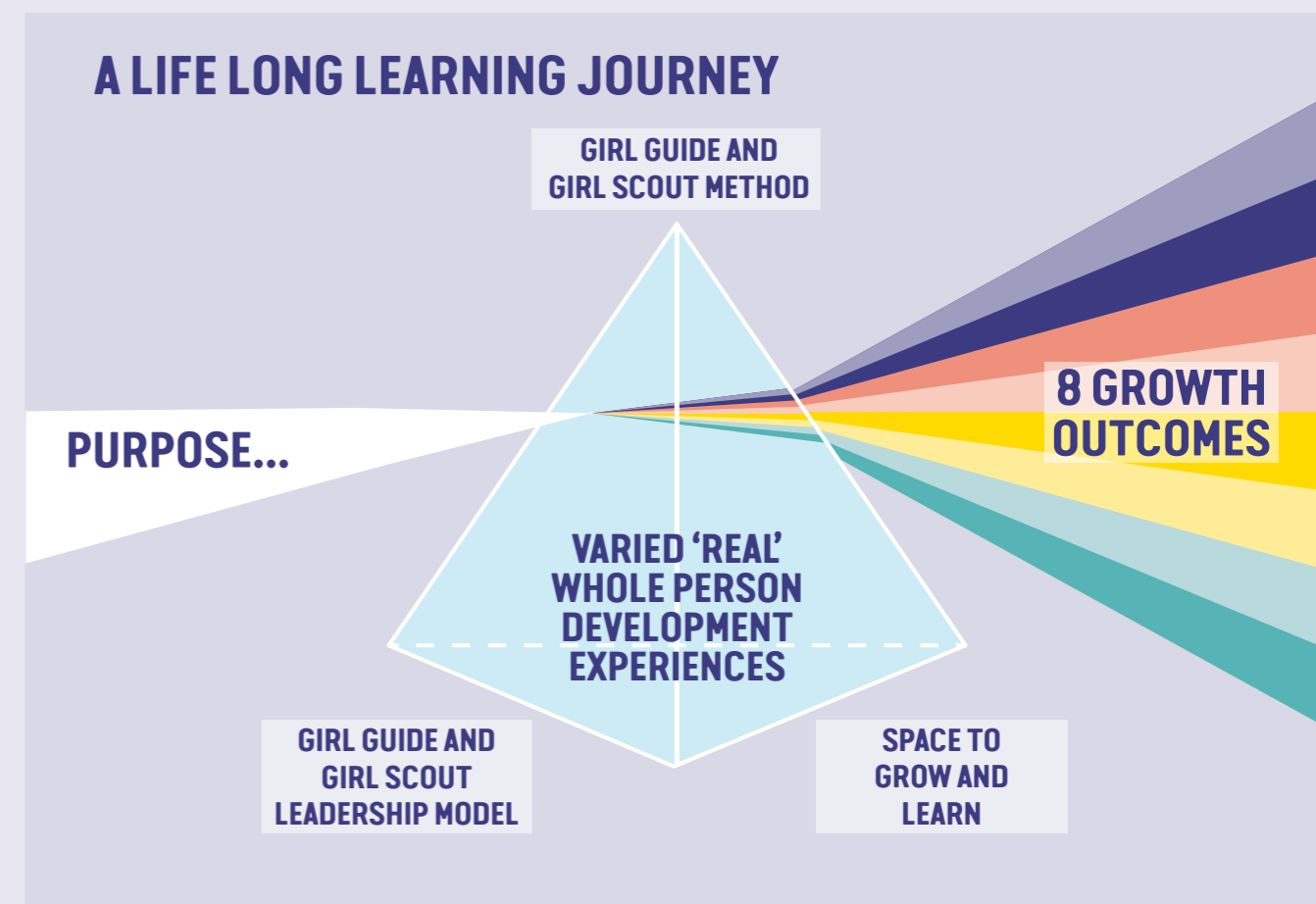
SO LEARNERS CAN REACH THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL

The eight growth outcomes, aim to represent how within Girl Guiding and Girl Scouting we support any and every member to:

1. Be confident to be themselves
2. Have integrity and make choices rooted in their values
3. Be curious and creative
4. Be prepared to adapt to change
5. Respect and feel part of nature
6. Be able to form meaningful connections with all
7. Care about the world and know they can make a difference
8. Feel connected with something bigger than themselves.

This curriculum encourages participants to be curious and creative (3) and respect and feel part of nature (5). By caring about the world and knowing they can make a difference (7), they will feel connected to something bigger than themselves (8).

You can find out more about GAL here:
campfire.waggs.org/organization/growing-and-learning



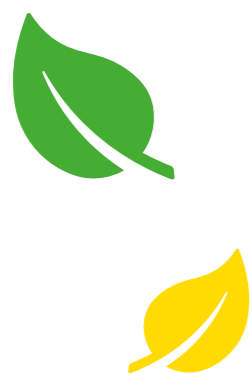
How to earn the badge



This badge programme is arranged into three stages, and each stage has two sections.

Participants should complete 9 activities to complete the programme, as well as a before and after survey. We give a guideline to the length of the programme, but the time it takes your group to complete the programme may be longer if you and your group decide to spend time summarising what took place at the previous unit meeting.

Even though you can complete this programme over a few days, we recommend that you complete up to two activities each week, so that everyone has time to reflect on what they have learnt. Check the time icon on each activity to check that it suits the time available in your unit meeting.




STAGE 1
See the bigger picture

(Before) survey

What is climate change?	Who is most affected by climate change?	Climate action plan part 1
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>


STAGE 2
Explore the issues

Decision tree activity

The natural world <i>Choose one of these topics and choose one activity out of three.</i>	People <i>Choose one of these topics and choose one activity out of three</i>	Climate action plan part 2
Extreme weather	Lifestyle	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Animals and plants	Health	
Water	Freedom	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	


STAGE 3
Prepare to take action

How to take action	Share the knowledge	Climate action plan part 3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Let's Celebrate + (After) survey

Take action

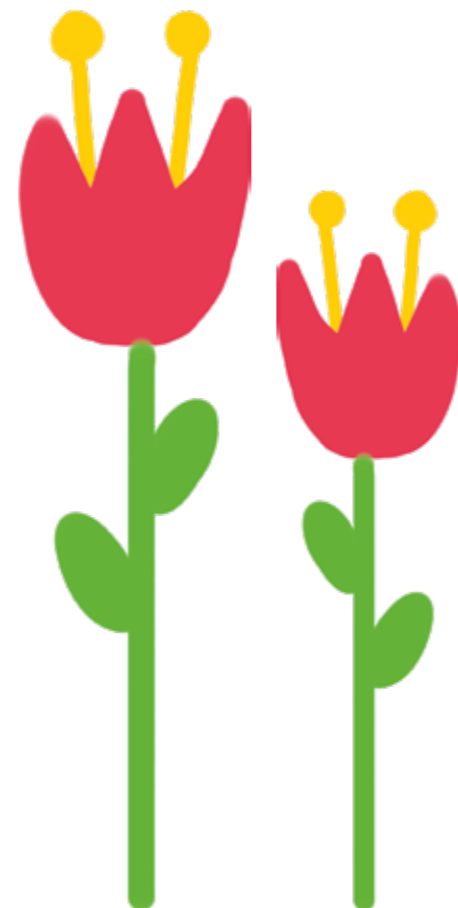
At the end of the curriculum, your group has the chance to share their learnings about climate change by planning and implementing a Take Action project. We want to spread the message that we all need to raise awareness, speak out and take action on climate change! To gain the YLACC badge, each participant's Take Action project should:

- Reach out to two other people their age who haven't taken part in the curriculum.
- Give a meaningful insight into what the group has learned.
- Encourage participants to become climate action leaders, share what they have learned about climate change and raise awareness of different ways to take action with their peers and communities.
- Be hands on and fun.

Other ways to use the YLACC activity packs

Completing the full badge programme will give Guides and Scouts a comprehensive understanding of climate change and prepare them to take climate action. However, these activity packs can also be used to explore climate change issues, without committing to completing the full programme. Other ways to use the YLACC packs include:

- Choosing a topic your group is interested in (for example 'Water') and running activities from this topic in Guide/ Scout meetings- participants can take it further by doing the 'Bring it home' tasks individually to learn more.
- Running 'taster sessions' by doing activities from Stage 1 of the programme- if your group is interested, they can decide to continue and do the full programme!
- For older Guides/ Scouts, running stand-alone activities with others outside their Guide/ Scout meetings e.g. friends, family, school groups.
- If you're a Guide or Scout who isn't doing the programme with your group but would like to use these activity packs, you can complete some of the activities on your own. At the start of each activity, check the 'Suitable for' box to see which ones you can do individually.



Age groups

The curriculum is divided into three age groups- Younger, Middle and Older. There are separate badge programmes suited to each age group. This leader's guide accompanies all three badge programmes.

You can choose to complete activities from the programme of an earlier age group, if you and your group decide that this would work best, but we do not recommend completing activities from a higher age group.

Sections structure



Fact sheets

For each topic there are a series of fact sheets to give you relevant information, facts and definitions for each section. You can use this to understand the subjects; these have been designed to be read by the leaders and the older years.

Narrative

The programme is told through the story of Silvia, a Girl Guide on her way to visit her Aunt. On her journey she learns about different elements of climate change. For the narrative you will need to select characters to read the various sections for younger and middle years, or one narrator for the older years.

Activities

The activities are designed so that the participants can review the summary and choose which activity they would like to do. **They need to complete one or two activities from each section to earn the badge.**



Evaluating impact

In each of the activity packs, there is a before and after evaluation survey for participants to complete. We encourage leaders to complete these surveys with their group so that they can measure changes in participants' understanding, behaviours and confidence in addressing climate change. It can also be motivating for participants to see how much they have learned throughout the programme.

You can use the below tables to collate the data from the surveys- fill them in once you have received the completed before and after surveys from your group.

Name of unit:	
This unit has:	() girls/women () boys/men () other genders
Age group of unit:	() younger () middle () older

In each column, fill in the total number of people in your unit who gave that answer to each question.



BEFORE SURVEY

Total number of respondents:

Question ↓	Total number of answers in unit		
	No	More or less	Yes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			

AFTER SURVEY

Total number of respondents:

Question ↓	Total number of answers in unit		
	No	More or less	Yes
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

Youth-led decisions

The programme has been designed so that young people – as the participants of the programme can self-lead. The programme's topical nature allows them to choose the issues most relevant to them and develop a deeper understanding through self-selected activities.

There are notes throughout the activities that say 'instructions for leaders' - this can be the patrol leader, another Guide/ Scout or an adult. Encourage participants to lead themselves wherever possible.

As a leader, it's crucial to look for ways to involve participants in decision-making, so every member of the group can take part and share their opinions. This will help build skills needed in the final stage of the programme and in the exciting opportunities to follow. Use the following ideas to help promote youth-led decision-making throughout the programme.

Selecting activities

Tops or tails | Suitable for Younger and Middle Years | 5 minutes

This activity is suitable for in-person and online meetings

Use this method to help participants choose activity options. Name one option 'tops' and the other 'tails'. Ask the participants to stand up and vote by putting their hands either on their heads (tops) or on their hips (tails). Count the votes and announce the winning choice.

Adapt it

- Make it a secret vote by asking everyone to close their eyes, so they will be less influenced by their friends.
- Ask everyone to clap or stamp when you read out their favourite idea. The idea with the loudest response wins. If you have space on the wall at your unit, add a poster which lists the different options that were agreed on. You can then tick these off when you complete them to help show them that their decisions matter. .

Voting | Suitable for all ages | 10 minutes

This activity is suitable for in-person and online meetings

You will need: Voting tokens (beans, pebbles, beads, etc.), bottles

Voting is a very simple method of choosing which activity the group wants to complete or which topic to do next. Label bottles with the available choices. Ask participants to vote by putting their tokens into the bottle. The bottle with the most tokens wins.

Arranging into groups

Quick response | Suitable for Middle and Older | 5 minutes

This activity is suitable for in-person meetings

The participants move around the space following the instructions of the leader. For example, "stride like a peacock", "walk like a tiger". When you call out a number, the participants should get into groups of that number. Play this a few times and end by calling out the number of the required group size. .

Things in common | Suitable for all ages | 5 minutes

This activity is suitable for in-person meetings

This works very well when you need to divide the group into random teams. Ask participants to get into teams of a particular number, but everyone in the team must have something in common. For example, they are wearing the same colour socks, they all had the same breakfast. Play this a few times and end by calling out the number of the required group size.

Things in common (online version) | Suitable for Guides, Scouts, Rangers and Rovers | 10 minutes

This activity is suitable for online meetings

You will need: A video conferencing tool with breakout room capability (e.g. Zoom)

Open several breakout rooms and ensure the setting is open so that participants can self-select their breakout rooms. Ask everyone to get into teams of a particular number, but everyone in the team must have something in common. Give participants 1-2 minutes to look at everyone's screens and identify potential group members. For example, they are wearing the same colour top, they all had the same breakfast. Allow participants 3-4 minutes in breakout rooms to confirm they share the common trait. Repeat the process with different common traits. End with a dynamic grouping: "Form groups of 6 (or the group number needed) based on any common trait of your choice."



Virtual Voting | Suitable for all ages | 10 minutes

This activity is suitable for online meetings

You will need: Online voting tool (e.g. Google forms, Poll Everywhere, Mentimeter, Zoom Polling)

Create a form and add a question for the choices, using multiple-choice or checkboxes for participants to select from. Copy and share the link for the form with the group via the meeting chat.

Section fact sheets



These fact sheets are designed to give leaders and older participants information, facts and definitions relevant for each section. These have not been designed to be read all in one go, as each fact sheet gives information about a particular section.

You can read through a section's fact sheet to prepare for the activities in that section or keep them close during the activities to feel confident that you have enough climate change knowledge to answer participants' questions and support discussions.





What is climate change?



WEATHER DEFINITION

Weather is a specific event—like a rainstorm or hot day—that happens over a few hours, days or weeks in a specific geographic location. Climate is the average weather conditions in a place over 30 years or more.



CLIMATE CHANGE DEFINITION

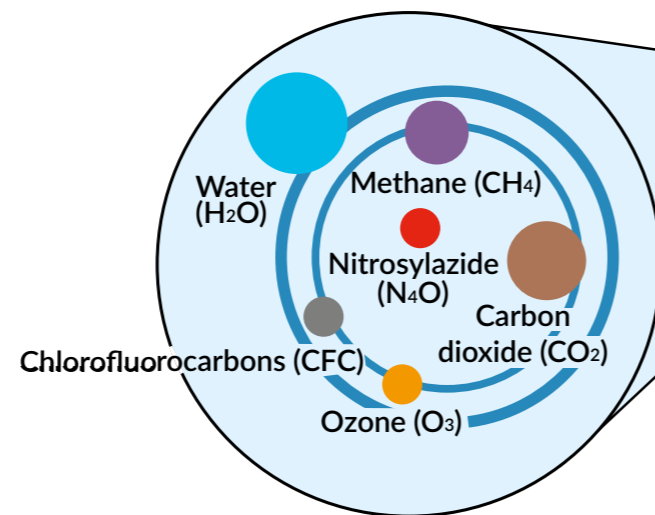
“Climate change” means a shift in climate conditions (e.g. average temperatures and rainfall) over a long period of time. Climate change can be caused by both human activity and natural causes, however over the last two centuries, human activity has been the main driver for rapid shifts in climate- mainly through burning fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.

What human activities cause a concentration of greenhouse gases

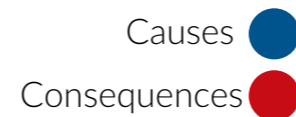
1. Electricity (29%)
2. Industry (29%)
3. Agriculture, livestock, land use & waste (20%)
4. Transport (15%)
5. Buildings (7%)

Some consequences this has

- Polar ice caps & glaciers melting
- Sea levels rising
- Rainfalls/storms/hurricanes
- Droughts/heatwaves/fires



Greenhouse gases



The greenhouse effect and human activity

1. The sun produces heat
2. Some of it is reflected by the Earth and atmosphere
3. Some of it is trapped in the atmosphere and makes the Earth warmer and a comfortable place to live on
4. Human activity has increased the greenhouse effect because of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (such as CO₂), making the Earth warmer than it would naturally be





What is climate change?

The Paris Agreement



The Paris Agreement is an international treaty on global climate action, signed in 2015 in Paris. It holds accountable all 195 countries who signed it to:

- Take ambitious action on climate change
- Adapt to the effects of climate change
- Ensure support for developing countries.

Through the Paris Agreement, countries have agreed to limit this century's average global temperature increase to no more than 2°C, and to pursue additional efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C.

At the current rates of global carbon emissions, we will already reach a 1.5°C much earlier than expected. A report by the World Meteorological Organization published in 2025 predicts that there is a 70% chance that 5-year average warming for 2025-2029 will be more than 1.5 °C.



In my region, the heat has increased significantly, and the rains are heavier and more uncontrolled, causing flooding. The air has become drier and more polluted, which worsens people's health. I also notice that nature has changed, with fewer plants and animals, and farmers are struggling because of the climate.
Girl Guide, Portugal

GLOBAL WARMING

Because climate change is caused by human activity (especially industrial activity), we measure it by comparing how much the Earth's climate has been heating up since the pre-industrial period (1850-1900).

We have already seen a rise in more than 1°C since that period and the consequences are huge. Countries all over the world have agreed to keep this global warming well below 2°C, while aiming for 1.5°C. This is what scientists predict the difference will be between a 1.5°C and 2°C temperature rise.

HALF A DEGREE OF WARMING MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE: EXPLAINING IPCC'S 1.5°C SPECIAL REPORT

	1.5°C	2°C	2°C IMPACTS		1.5°C	2°C	2°C IMPACTS
EXTREME HEAT Global population exposed to severe heat at least once every five years	14%	37%	2.6x WORSE	ECOSYSTEMS Amount of Earth's land area where ecosystems will shift to a new biome	7%	13%	1.86x WORSE
SEA-ICE-FREE ARTIC Number of ice-free summers	AT LEAST 1 EVERY 100 YEARS	AT LEAST 1 EVERY 10 YEARS	10x WORSE	PERMAFROST Amount at Artic permafrost that will thaw	4.8 MILLION KM ²	6.6 MILLION KM ²	38% WORSE
SEA LEVEL RISE Amount of sea level rise by 2100	0.40 METERS	0.46 METERS	.06M MORE	CROP YIELDS Reduction in maize harvests in tropics	3%	7%	2.3x WORSE
SPECIES LOSS VERTEBRATES Vertebrates that lose at least half of their range	4%	8%	2x WORSE	CORAL REEFS Further decline in coral reefs	70-90%	99%	UP TO 29% WORSE
SPECIES LOSS PLANTS Plants that lose at least half of their range	8%	16%	2x WORSE	FISHERIES Decline in marine fisheries	1.5 MILLION TONES	3 MILLION TONES	2x WORSE
SPECIES LOSS INSECTS Insects that lose at least half of their range	6%	18%	3x WORSE				





Who is most affected by climate change?

What is climate justice?

Climate justice looks to address global inequalities that are further highlighted by the climate crisis:

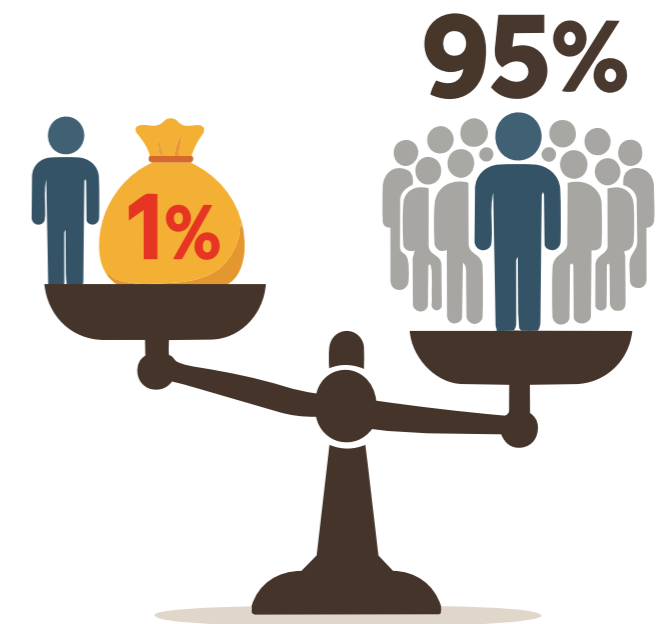
- It recognises that climate change affects people differently based on factors such as gender, race, geographic location or socioeconomic status.
- It recognises that marginalised and vulnerable populations as well as future generations are disproportionately affected by climate change, despite contributing the least to the problem.
- It highlights the uneven historical emissions primarily from wealthy countries and emphasises the need to place equity and human rights at the centre of climate action.
- It advocates for responsible actors, such as wealthy nations, industries, and corporations, to support and prioritise the needs of those most impacted, addressing broader issues of inequality and unfair economic systems that underpin the climate crisis.



I think the future and climate change will increase inequality between people; between those who have the capacity to move away from heatwaves, flood areas, and those who cannot, and those who have the capacity to choose sustainable options and those who cannot.
Girl Guide, Norway

- The richest 1 percent have more wealth than the bottom 95 percent of the world's population put together.¹
Why this matters for the climate crisis? Wealth concentration drives high carbon consumption, while limiting the ability of governments to fund adaptation and loss and damage.
- G20 countries (The group of 20 major economies, including the European Union) account for 78% of global GHG emissions today.²
- Since the Industrial Revolution, North America & Europe together account for 60% of cumulative CO₂; Africa accounts for 3%.³

The richest **1%** have more wealth than the bottom **95%** of the world's population put together.



Source:

¹<https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-releases/worlds-top-1-own-more-wealth-95-humanity-shadow-global-oligarchy-hangs-over-un>

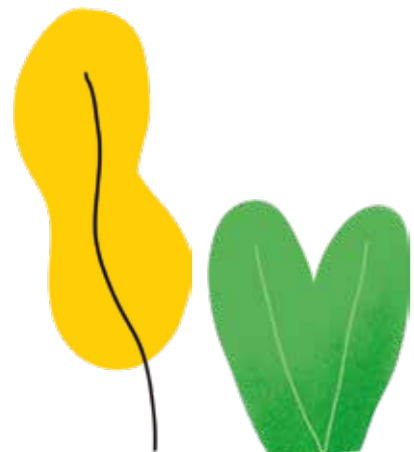
²<https://www.un.org/en/actnow/facts-and-figures>

³<https://ourworldindata.org/contributed-most-global-co2>





Who is most affected by climate change?



What is gender equality?

“Gender equality, or equality between women and men refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women’s and men’s rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.” (UN Women)

Discrimination against women and girls takes different forms in different parts of the world, but no country in the world has achieved gender equality.



Gender equality in the world

- Women earn 23% less than men globally.
- Globally, women are just 13 per cent of agricultural land holders.
- Two thirds of illiterate adults in the world are women.
- Women spend 3 times as many hours doing unpaid domestic and care work as men each day.
- 1 in 3 women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence - mostly by an intimate partner.
- Women only occupy 24% of parliamentary seats worldwide.
- As of 2024, women held 33% of the seats in national parliaments across the EU.
- In 2023, women’s gross hourly earnings in the EU were on average 12% below those of men.

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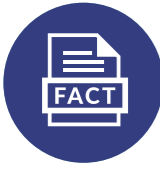
Women only occupy **24%** of parliamentary seats.





Impact of climate change on women and girls



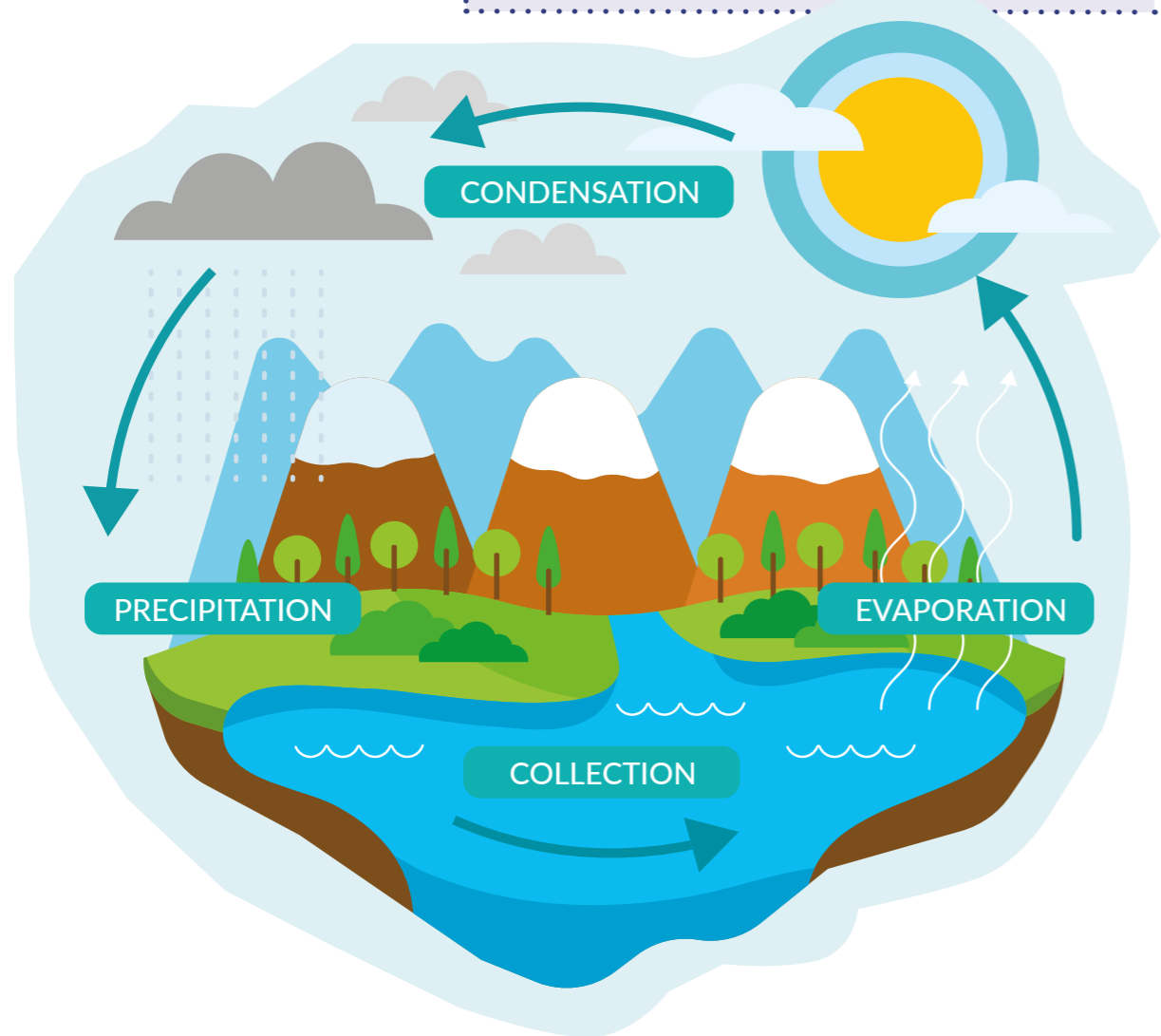


Extreme weather

Climate change impacts the water cycle on Earth. This causes extreme weather events and disasters.

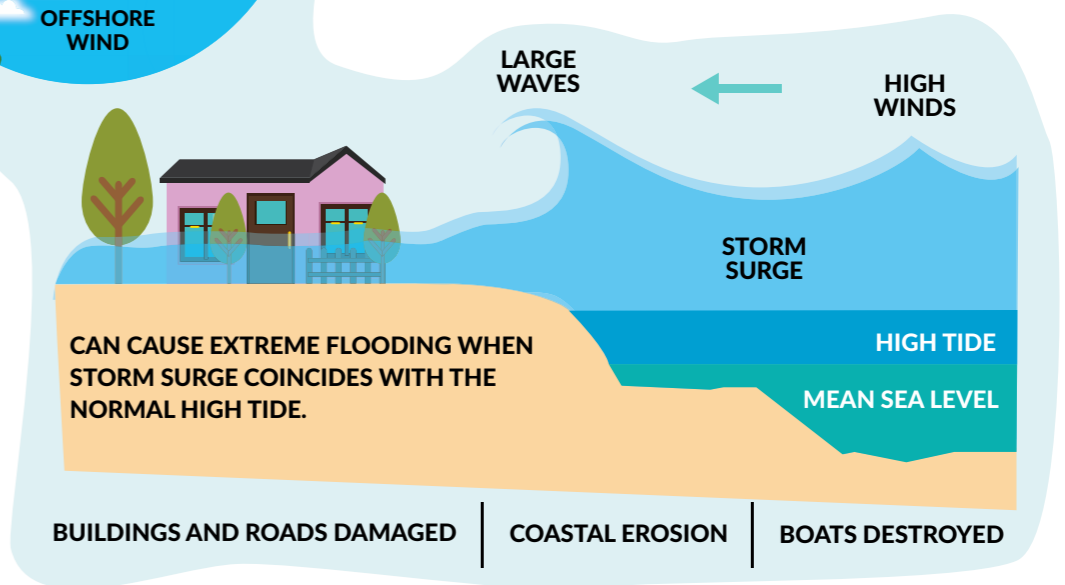
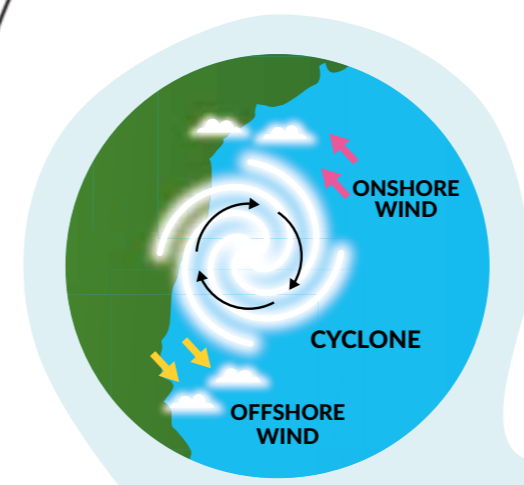
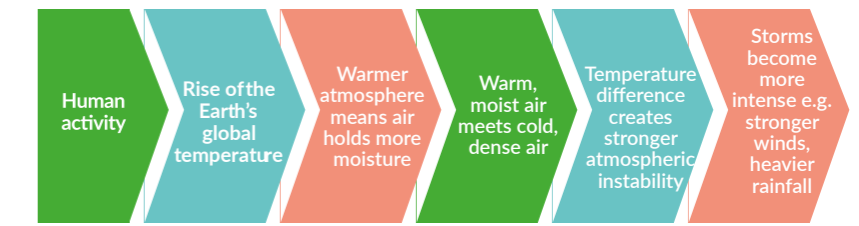
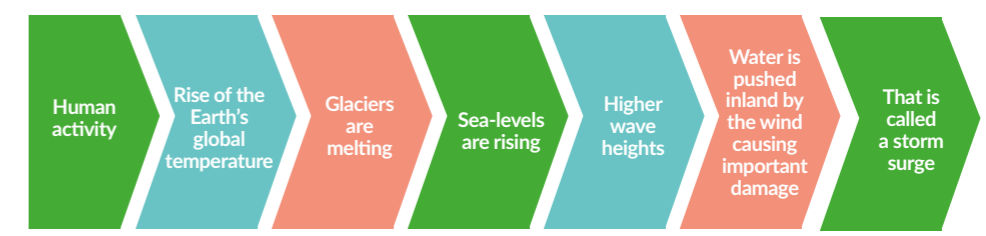
What is the water cycle?

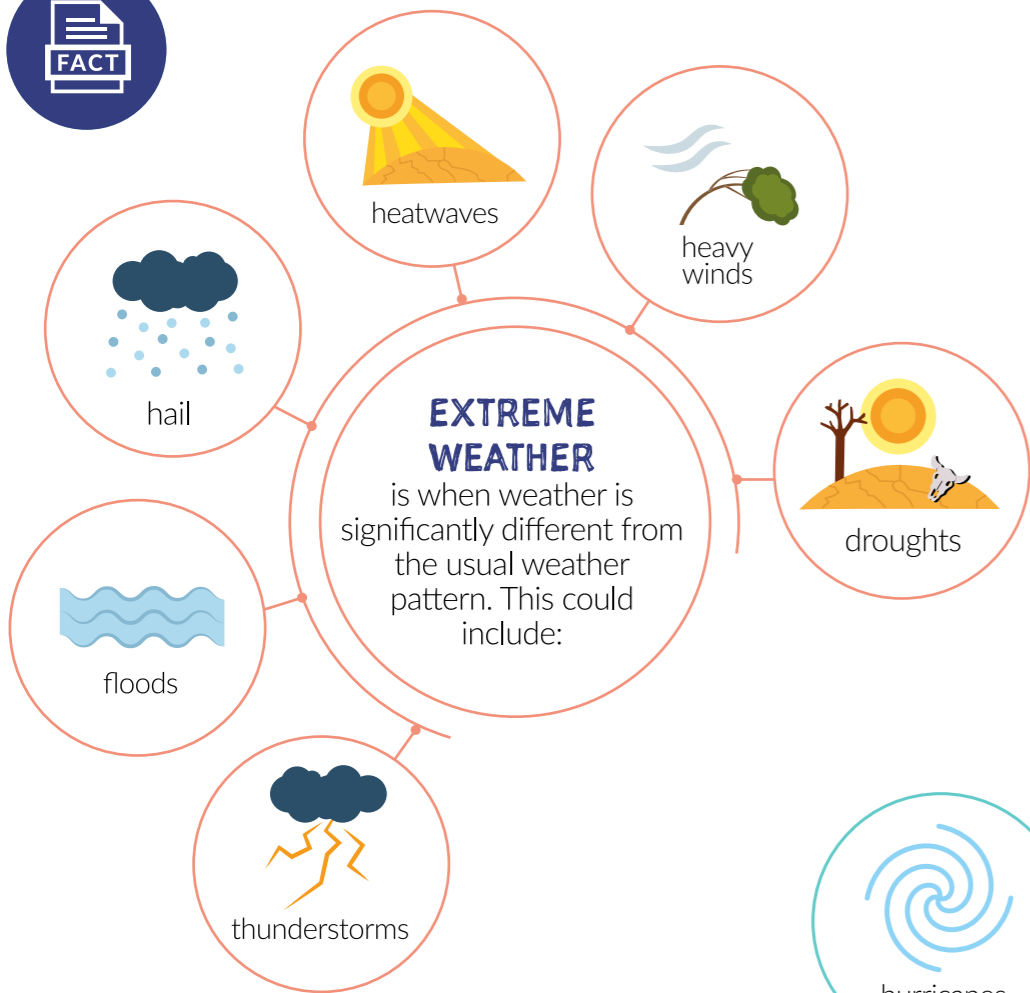
The sun evaporates water from the oceans into water vapour. This invisible vapour rises into the atmosphere, where the air is colder. The colder air causes water vapour to condense into water droplets (rain) and clouds.



The increase in air and water temperatures changes the water cycle, and leads to rising sea levels, more dangerous storms and higher wind speeds, more intense and prolonged droughts and wildfire seasons, heavier precipitation and flooding.

Climate change makes storms more dangerous

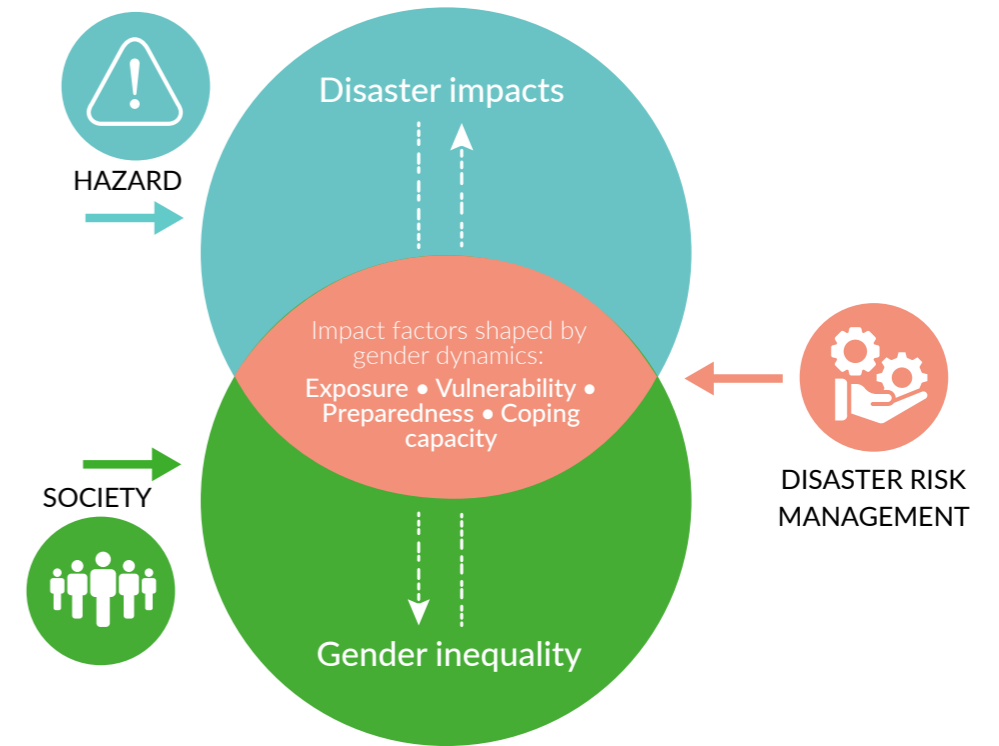




The number of climate-related disasters has **tripled** in the last 30 years.

Between 2006 and 2016, the rate of global sea-level rise was **2.5 times faster** than it was for almost all of the 20th century.

How gender dynamics link with disasters impact



"I fear that climate change will make my city unliveable: Florence has always been hot in summer due to its geographic location, but I've noticed it's getting worse. At the other end of the spectrum, the enormous rainfall of the last two years, following periods of drought, has caused significant property damage."
Girl Scout, Italy

Source: <https://www.oxfam.org/en/5-natural-disasters-beg-climate-action>

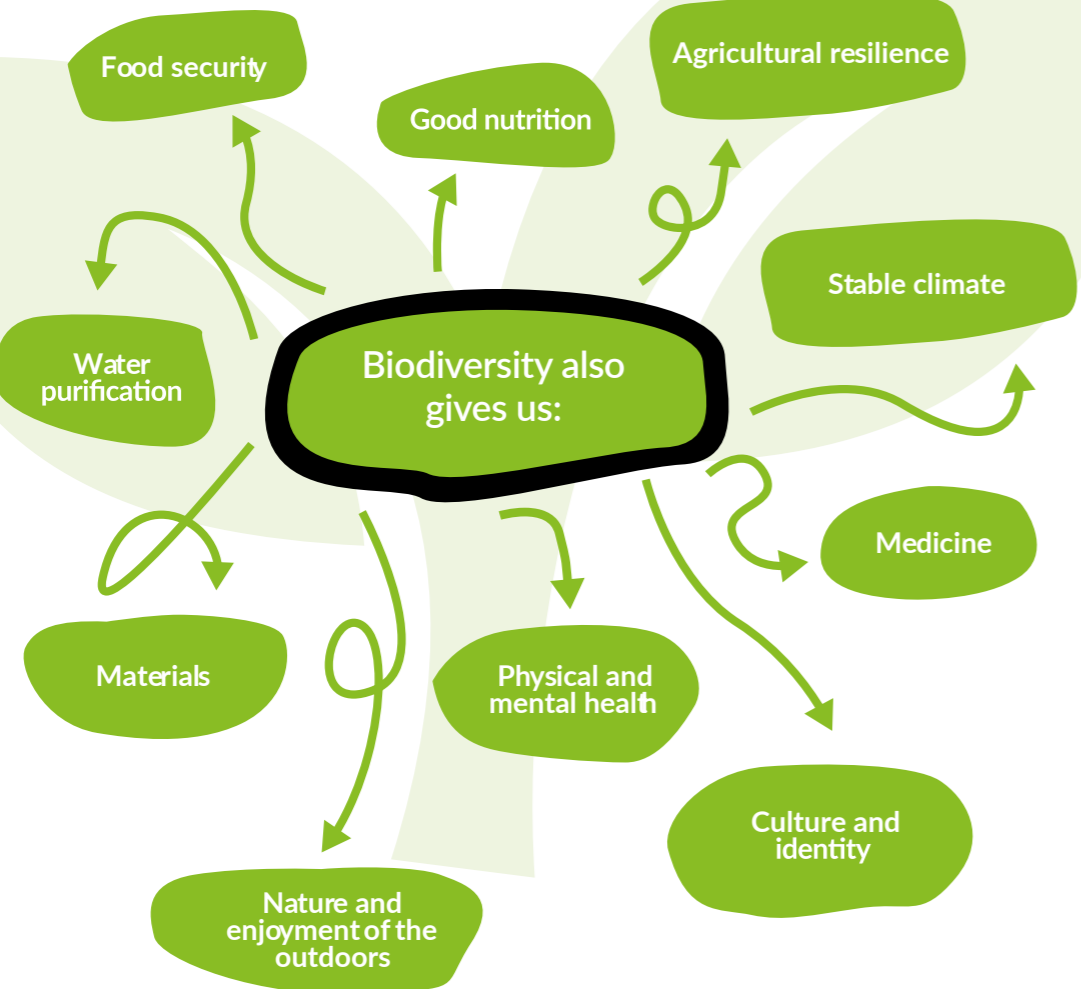


Animals and plants

Biodiversity refers to the variety of living species on Earth, including plants, animals, bacteria, and fungi. While Earth's biodiversity is so rich that many species have yet to be discovered, many species are being threatened with extinction due to human activities, putting the Earth's magnificent biodiversity at risk.

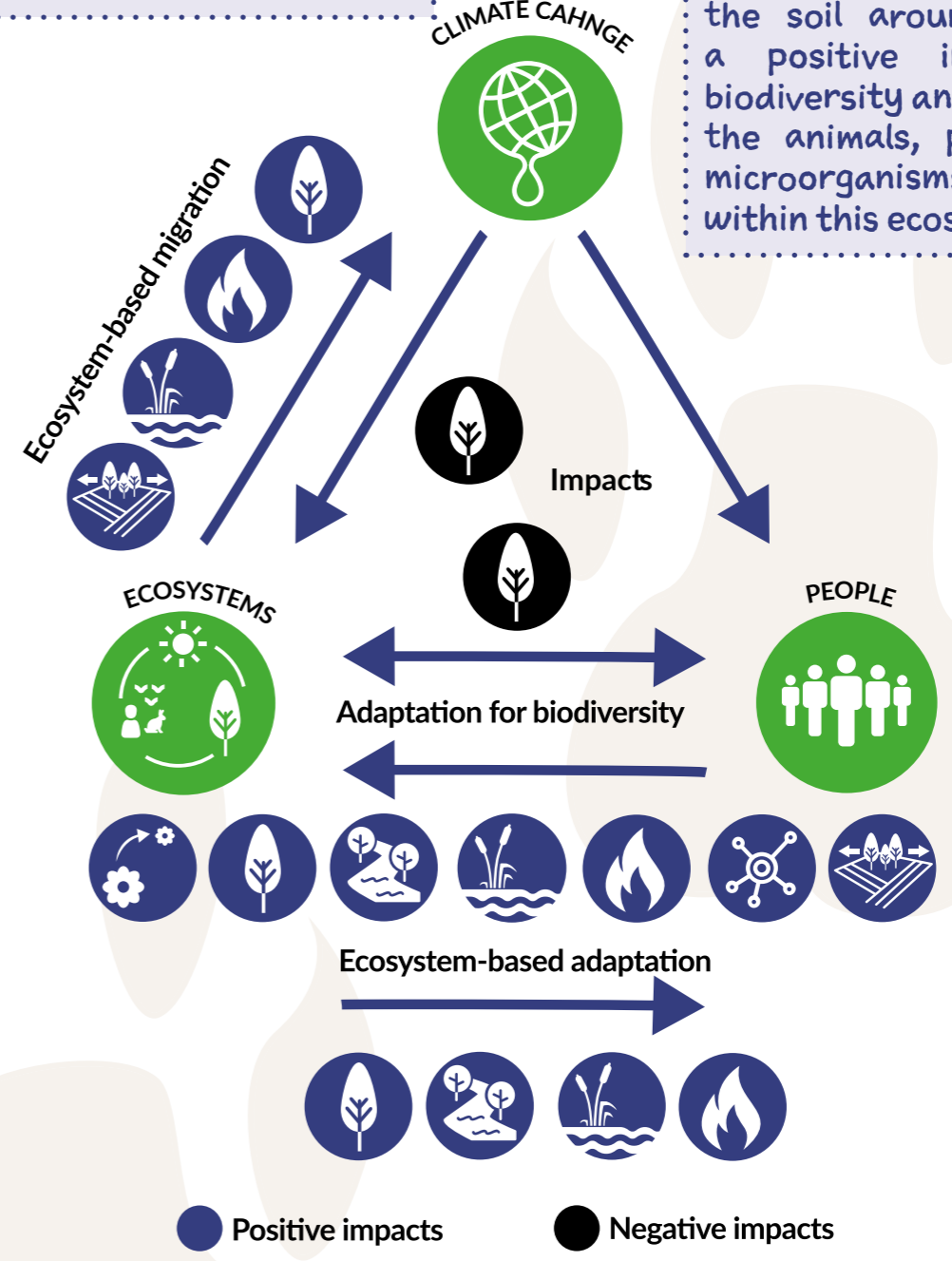
An **ecosystem** is a geographic area where plants, animals and other organisms, as well as weather and landscapes, work together to form a bubble of life.

Biodiversity is important because it helps the planet stay healthy, balanced and resilient.



Human activity and climate change impact ecosystems, but protecting and encouraging biodiversity can help us mitigate climate change and adapt to it too!

Soil is the world's most biodiverse habitat, but it can also be taken for granted. More than half of the world's species live in the soil. Nurturing the soil around us has a positive impact on biodiversity and supports the animals, plants and microorganisms which live within this ecosystem.



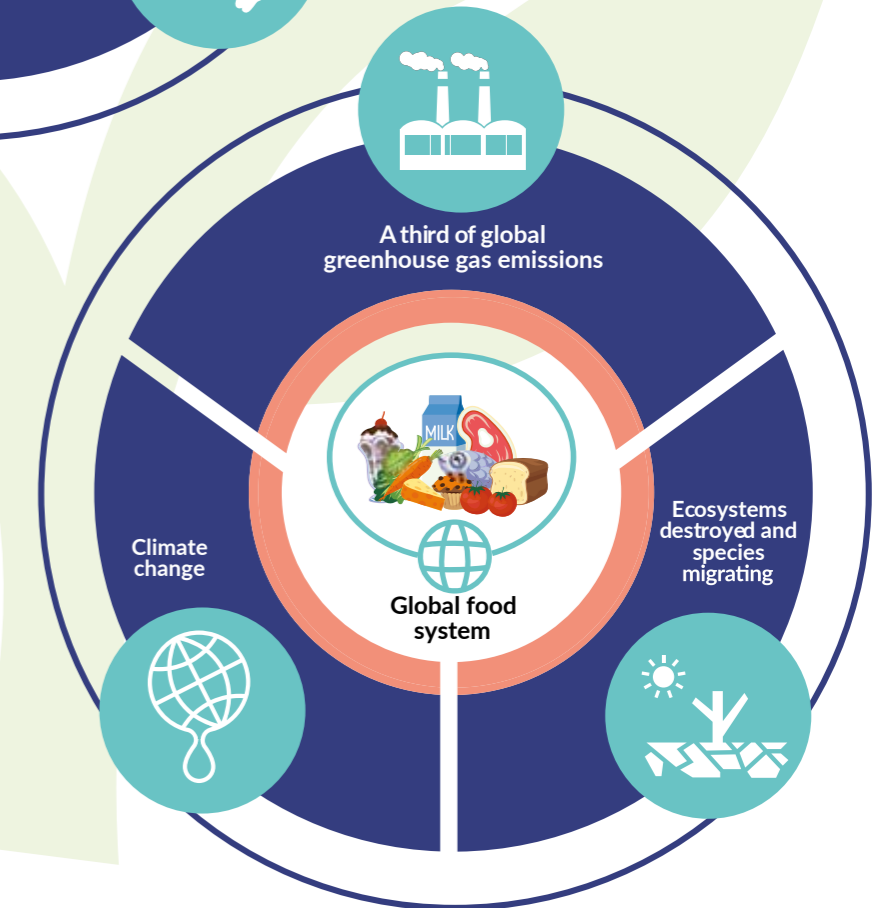
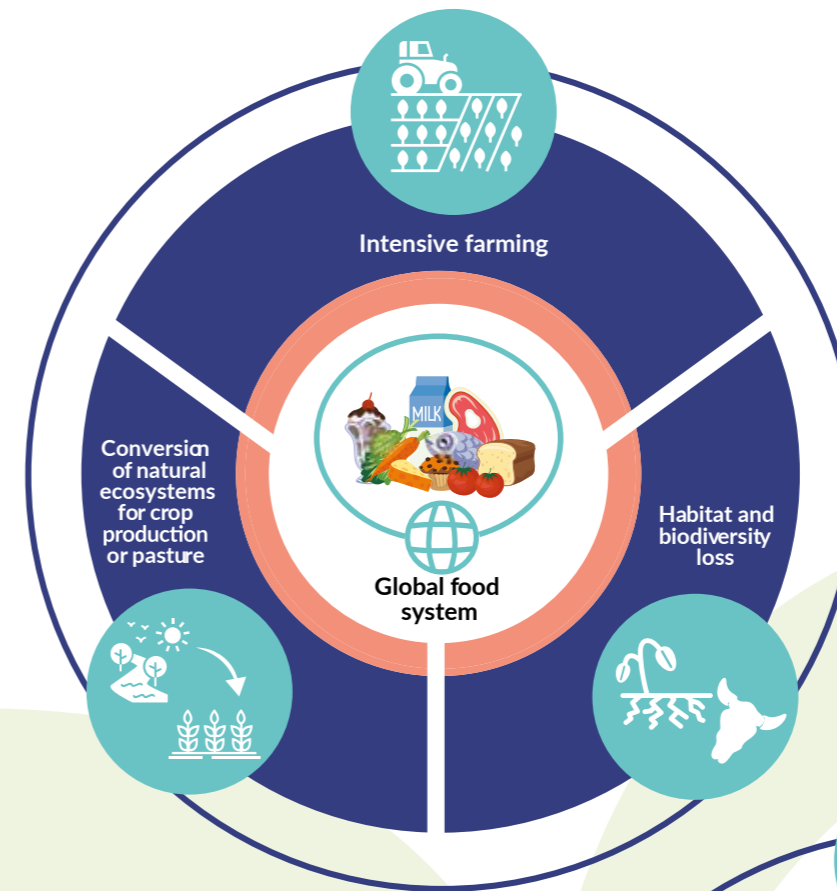
- Reafforestation
- Forest creation in unsuitable areas (negative)
- River restoration
- Wetland restoration
- Protection and expansion of natural/seminatural areas
- Increased connectivity
- Species translocation
- Natural fire regime restoration



Biodiversity and ecosystems in Europe

- Between 1970- 2020 Europe has experienced an average 24% decline in monitored populations of mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles, and fish.
- European seas are among the most damaged globally- pollution, overfishing and climate change are severely impacting marine biodiversity.
- Increasing droughts, wildfires, storms, and pest outbreaks have weakened forest resilience, making large areas more vulnerable to dieback.
- Around 60-70% of European soils are unhealthy due to erosion, pollution, compaction, and declining organic matter, threatening both biodiversity and agricultural productivity.
- Due to habitat loss and pesticide use in agriculture, wild pollinators such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies, which are crucial in our food system, are in steep decline.

Food production affects biodiversity and climate change





Some products are specifically harmful to the environment. For example, **palm oil** is a common ingredient in many products such as snacks, processed foods, soaps, shampoos and cosmetics. Because it is widely used, its intensive cultivation has been encouraged, leading to large-scale deforestation to make space for palm oil culture. Many palm oil products are consumed in Europe, however palm oil cultivation affects the biodiversity and habitats of countries outside Europe. **193** endangered and vulnerable species in the world have palm oil production as one of their main threats, including chimpanzees, orangutans and African forest elephants.

How to protect biodiversity



1. Change the way we eat. Shifting to a plant-based diet will reduce the disproportionate impact of animal farming on biodiversity and reducing food waste will reduce pressure on resources and land.



2. Protect land from exploitation to protect natural ecosystems, and restore ecosystems on agricultural land to increase biodiversity.

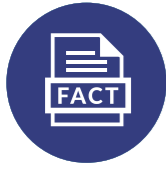


3. Farm in a way that is kinder to nature and biodiversity, by avoiding the use of harmful products such as chemical fertilisers and pesticides and farming diverse cultures.



4. Buying our food from local producers that use nature-friendly farming principles such as organic farming or regenerative agriculture.



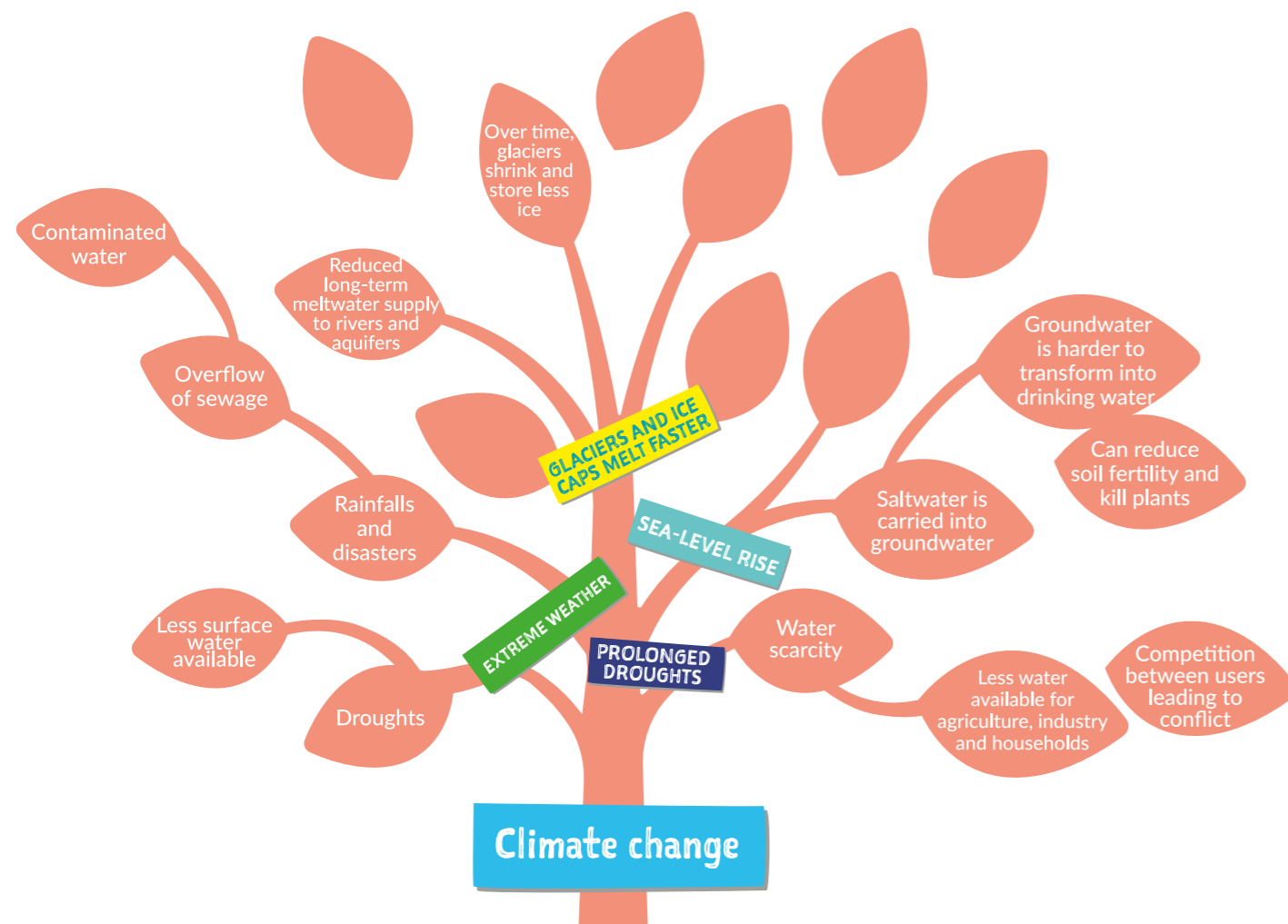


Water

Water is a primary need. Its accessibility is essential not only to health, but also to poverty reduction, food security, peace and human rights, ecosystems and education. Yet, many countries face growing challenges linked to water scarcity, water pollution, degraded water related ecosystems and cooperation over transboundary water basins.

Climate change is making water availability less predictable in many regions in the world because of droughts, as well as water contamination caused by floods.

Climate change affects safe drinking water supplies



Access to clean water in the world



In the world, **3 in 10** people lack access to safely managed drinking water.



Water scarcity affects more than **40 per cent** of the global population and is projected to rise.



More than **80 per cent** of wastewater resulting from human activities is discharged into rivers or sea without any pollution removal.



Each year, almost **1,000 children** die due to preventable water and sanitation-related diarrheal diseases.



Women and girls are responsible for water collection in **80 per cent** of households that don't have access to water on-site.



Approximately **30 per cent** of Europe's population experiences significant water stress each year, driven by rising temperatures, droughts, and increasing water demand.

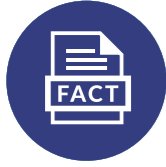


The average EU citizen consumes **4,815 litres** of water per day, including both direct (e.g. drinking, washing) and indirect use (embedded in food, energy, products).

Instead of this infographic can it be part of the tree diagram. So the yellow label like before that says: **Glaciers and ice caps melt faster.** And then the other two steps (reduced long-term... and Over time, glaciers...) in the leaves following on from each other.

Follow the same pattern as prolonged droughts with the leaves following (hope this makes sense?).





Lifestyle

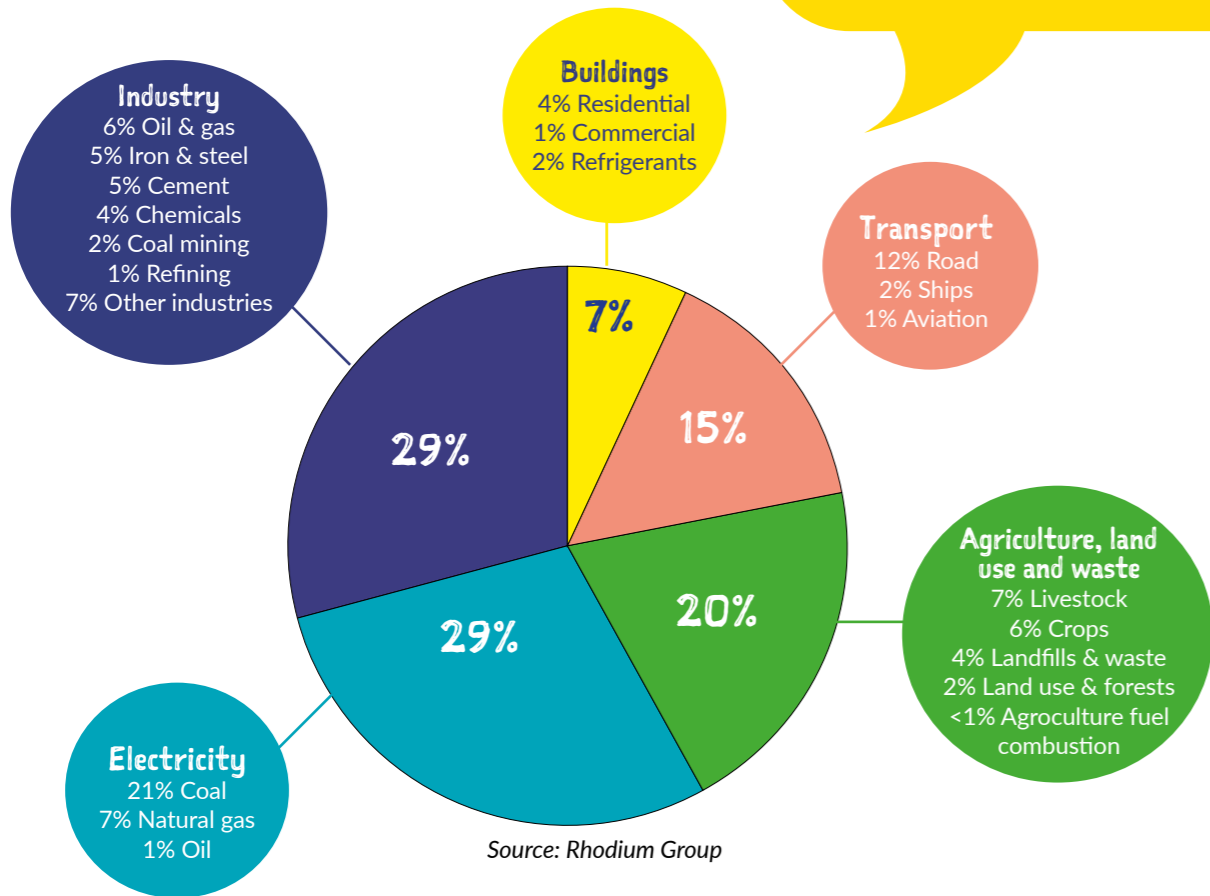
Our lifestyles and daily choices can contribute to climate change through high consumption, waste, energy use, and transport habits. However, changing our lifestyle to live more sustainably is one of the fastest and most direct ways to tackle climate change! What's more, encouraging lifestyle changes within our communities can have a big impact- many people are already concerned about climate change and want to take action.

We can also speak up and push for better systems and policies. We can influence policy makers, governments and businesses to make sustainable living easier, fairer and more accessible for everyone.

In our Scout group we do quite a bit. We've done clean-up drives at parks and beaches, planted trees in our community, and held recycling challenges. We also try to use reusable gear on camps and talk about sustainability during meetings. It's not just talk- we actually try to live it out.
Girl Guide, Albania

Global emissions by sector

2021 greenhouse gas emissions



Source: <https://rhg.com/research/global-greenhouse-gas-emissions-2022/>

Top lifestyle changes to help fight climate change

ENERGY

- Switch to renewable energy providers
- Save energy at home e.g. use LED lighting, energy efficient appliances, lower heating/ cooling
- Insulate your home

FOOD

- Eat more plant-based meals: shifting away from livestock-intensive diets significantly lowers emissions.
- Reduce food waste by smart shopping and composting- one third of produced food is lost or wasted, contributing to up to 10% of global GHG emissions!
- Buy food that is local and seasonal
- Grow your own food or join a community growing project!
- Support sustainable agriculture- it creates 64% fewer emissions and allows for greater levels of biodiversity than conventional farming.

RESTORE NATURE

- Plant trees or contribute to reforestation projects
- Join campaigns and rewilding projects that restore habitats and promote biodiversity

Source: www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/10-ways-you-can-help-fight-climate-crisis

TRANSPORT

- Walk, cycle or take public transport
- Limit flying- consider other options such as train travel

BUYING

- Repair, reuse, recycle: Every item we purchase- whether electronics, clothing, or plastics- leaves a carbon footprint, created during the extraction of materials, manufacturing, global transport and disposal.
- Limit our use of plastic, particularly single-use plastic- once plastic is discarded it can linger for hundreds of years
- Shop second-hand to avoid contributing to fast-fashion waste
- Buy sustainable, durable goods
- Support eco-conscious businesses and boycott unsustainable businesses

USE YOUR VOICE

- Encourage others- family, friends, colleagues- to live more sustainably
- Lobby local leaders, businesses, and politicians to adopt climate-friendly policies and take urgent climate action





Health

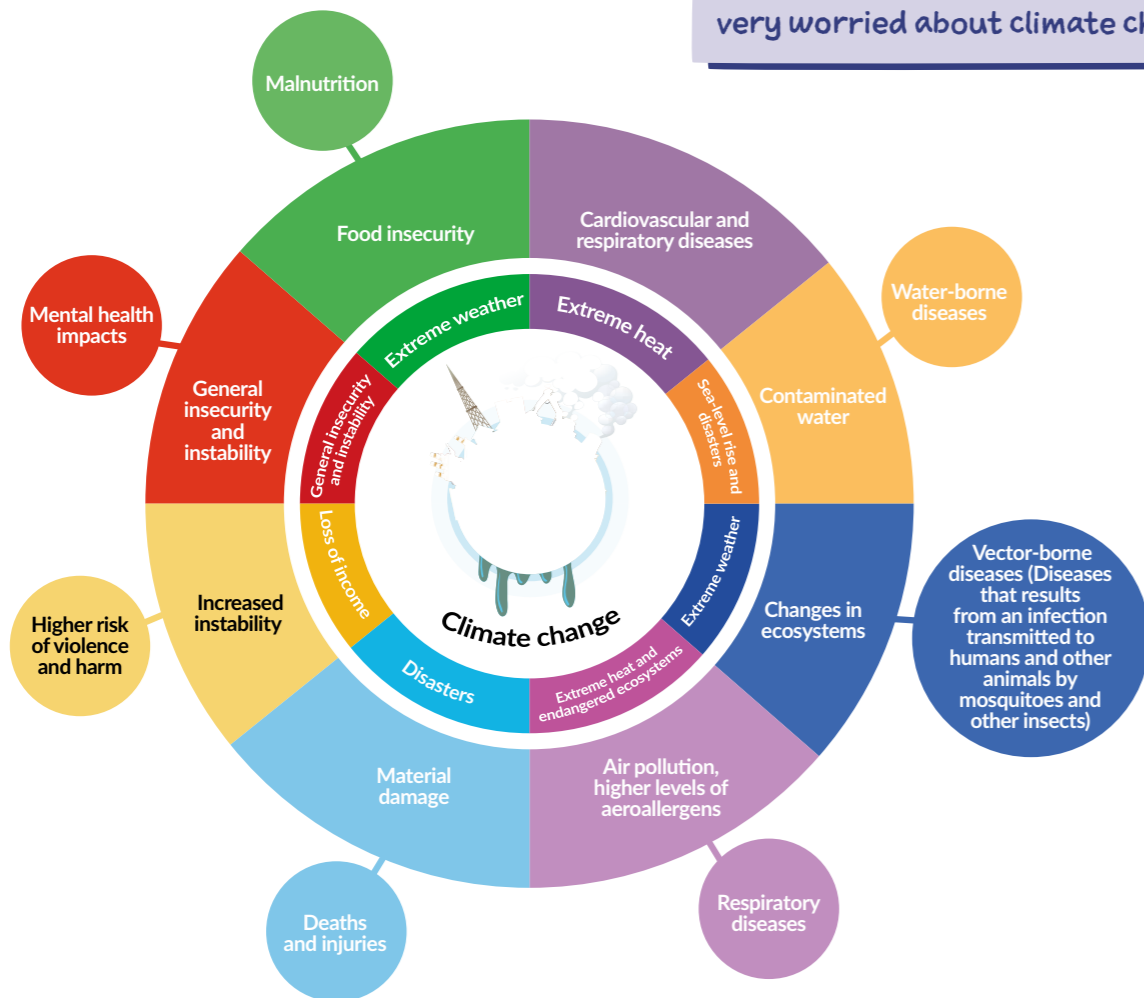
Climate change severely affects human health through its consequences on air, water, food and safety.

It also increases mental health issues such as climate anxiety and stress from climate-related events.

When it gets too hot, it's harder to focus on school and daily activities. Poor air quality makes me feel more tired and I don't enjoy being outside as much.
Girl Scout, Azerbaijan

The impact of climate change on health

In a survey of 104 Guides & Scouts across Europe, **78%** were extremely worried or very worried about climate change.

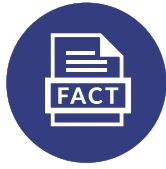


EU Laws & policies related to health

We need to demand that governments, policy-makers, businesses and corporations uphold environmental laws and policies that protect our health and reduce the effects of climate change. Here are some EU laws & policies you can use when advocating and lobbying decision-makers- check the links for the latest law and policy updates:

EU Law/ Policy	Details	Link- click 'select language' at the top of the page
European Climate Law	Part of the European Green Deal calling for Europe's economy and society to become climate-neutral by 2050. Climate neutrality means achieving net zero GHG emissions for EU Member States as a whole, mainly by cutting emissions, investing in clean technologies, and protecting the environment.	https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/european-climate-law_en
Zero Pollution Action Plan 2021	Policy under the EU Green Deal to cut air, water and soil pollution to levels no longer harmful to health and ecosystems, and that respect planetary boundaries by 2050.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/strategy/zero-pollution-action-plan_en
Farm to Fork Strategy 2020	Policy under the EU Green Deal to create sustainable, fair, and healthy food systems. Its goals include reducing the environmental and climate footprint of food production by cutting pesticide and fertiliser use, promoting organic farming, reducing food waste, and ensuring food security and healthy diets for citizens.	https://food.ec.europa.eu/horizontal-topics/farm-fork-strategy_en
Soil Strategy 2021	Policy under the EU Green Deal to achieve healthy soils by 2050 centred on sustainable food production, biodiversity and climate resilience.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/soil-health/soil-strategy-2030_en
Water Framework Directive 2000	The main law for water protection in Europe focusing on reducing and removing pollution and ensuring there is enough water to support wildlife at the same time as human needs. It applies to surface water bodies such as streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, reservoirs, coastal waters and groundwaters.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/water/water-framework-directive_en
Ambient Air Quality Directive 2024	Law that sets standards for air quality and air pollutants such as targeting vehicle emissions and industrial pollutants. It ensures that people suffering from health damages due to air pollution have the right to be compensated in the case of a violation of EU air quality rules.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/air/air-quality_en





Health

EU Law/ Policy	Details	Link- click 'select language' at the top of the page
Industrial and Livestock Rearing Emissions Directive 2024	Law that regulates air, water, and soil pollution from major industrial installations and intensive livestock farms to lower emissions and reduce the impact on the environment.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/industrial-emissions-and-safety/industrial-and-livestock-rearing-emissions-directive-ied-20_en
Nature Restoration Law 2024	First continent-wide law of its kind requiring Member States to restore all the EU's degraded land and sea ecosystems by 2050, in particular those with the most potential to capture and store carbon and to prevent and reduce the impact of disasters.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/nature-and-biodiversity/nature-restoration-regulation_en
Regulation on Deforestation-free Products 2023	Law mandating that agricultural commodities entering the EU- like beef, soy, coffee, palm oil, and cocoa- must not contribute to deforestation.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/forests/deforestation/regulation-deforestation-free-products_en
Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy	EU roadmap outlining actions to make transport greener, cutting emissions and improving connectivity.	https://transport.ec.europa.eu/transport-themes/eu-mobility-transport-achievements-2019-2024/sustainable-smart-mobility_en
Waste Framework Directive	Legislation establishing the principles of waste management, prioritising prevention, reuse, and re-cycling under the waste hierarchy.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/topics/waste-and-recycling/waste-framework-directive_en
Renewable Energy Directive	Law that sets binding targets and rules for increasing the share of energy from renewable sources across all sectors to help achieve climate neutrality.	https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/renewable-energy/renewable-energy-directive-targets-and-rules/renewable-energy-directive_en
Environmental Crime Directive 2024	Law Introducing tougher penalties for environmental crimes- including severe pollution of soil, water and air, and expanding criminal offences to include ecocide, illegal timber trafficking and violations of chemical legislation.	https://environment.ec.europa.eu/law-and-governance/environmental-compliance-assurance/environmental-crime-directive_en



Freedom

Climate change threatens our freedoms and fundamental human rights- especially for those in vulnerable communities.

Right to life

Climate change is threatening our right to life, freedom and safety, particularly through extreme weather events such as storms, floods and wildfires.

- The 2023 summer heatwave in Europe resulted in the deaths of 47,000 people.¹
- The World Health Organization predicts that climate change will cause 250,000 deaths per year between 2030 and 2050, due to malaria, malnutrition, diarrhoea and heat stress.²

Right to housing

Extreme weather events like floods and wildfires are already destroying people's homes, leaving them displaced. Sea-level rises threaten the homes of millions of people around the world in coastal and low-lying territories.

- In 2023, Europe recorded its highest number of internally displaced people, with around 227,000 people displaced.³

Right to health

We all have the right to the highest standard of physical and mental health. Areas with weak health infrastructure will be the least able to cope without assistance to prepare and respond.

Climate justice & freedom

Climate justice is essential to safeguarding people's freedoms and human rights, as climate change disproportionately affects marginalised and vulnerable populations. Inequalities linked to gender, race, geographic location, and socioeconomic status shape how people experience these impacts- despite human rights being universal.

Rights to water and to sanitation

Melting snow and ice, reduced rainfall, higher temperatures and rising sea levels show that climate change is affecting our right to clean water and sanitation.

Source:

¹https://www.lemonde.fr/en/environment/article/2024/08/12/more-than-47-000-people-died-of-heatstroke-in-europe-in-2023_6714124_114.html

²<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>

³<https://climate-adapt.eea.europa.eu/en/observatory/topics/other-topics/internal-displacement>





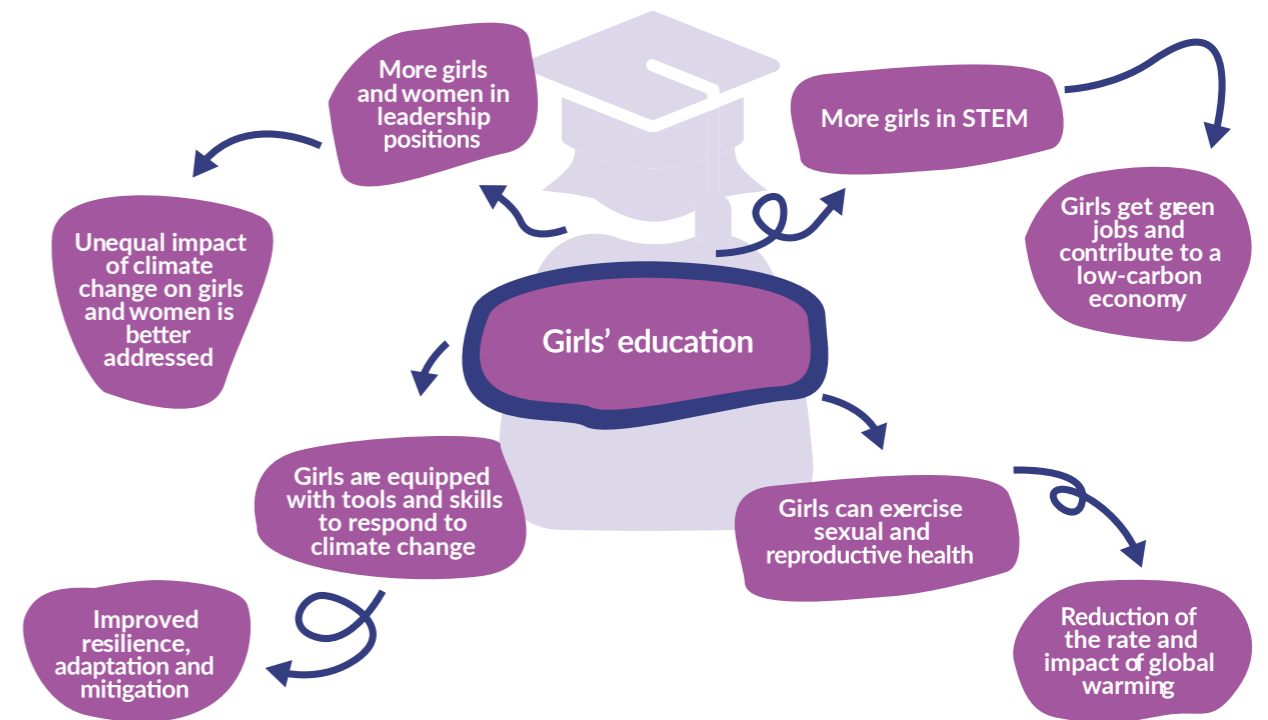
Freedom

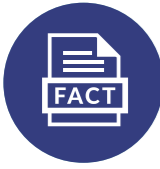
How climate change impact girls' rights, freedom and safety

Climate change affects girls' chances to enjoy their rights, to take the lead in their own lives, and to choose their own paths, particularly in low-income communities in Global South countries.



Girls' education is a solution to climate change

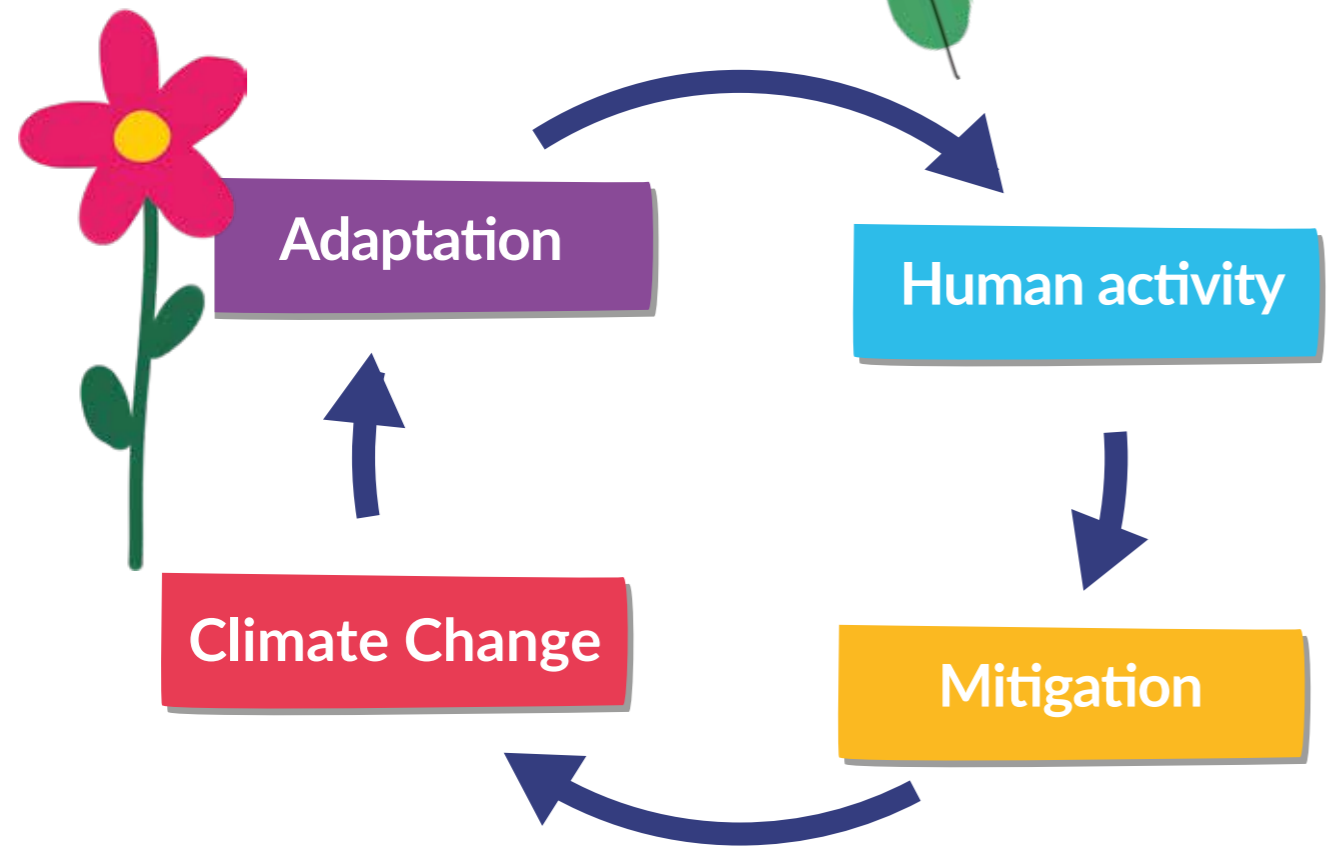




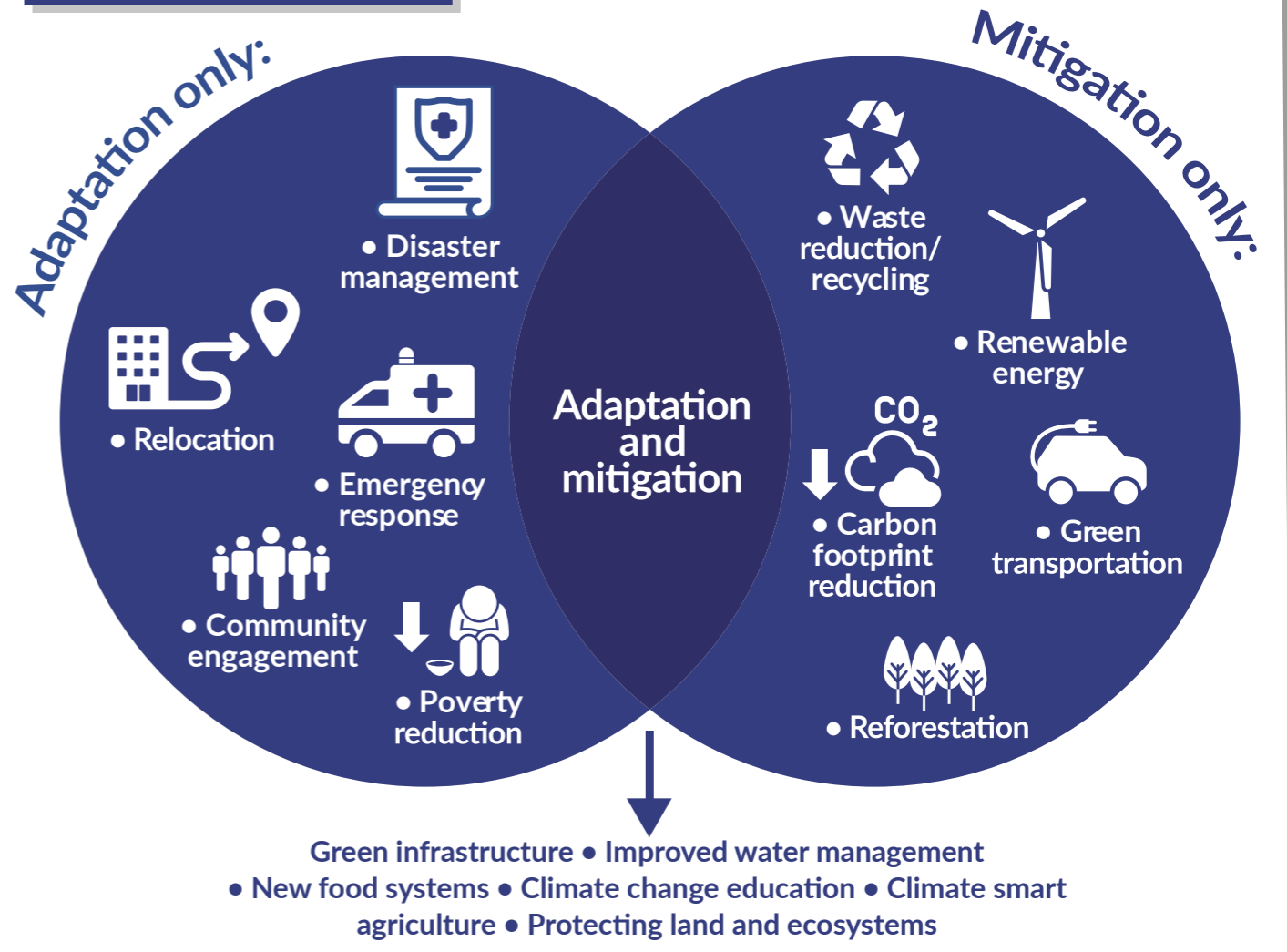
How to take action

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION refers to the action of reducing or preventing further greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere.

ADAPTATION TO CLIMATE CHANGE seeks to moderate or avoid harm of changes in climate and find new solutions for people to live and prosper under their new climatic conditions.



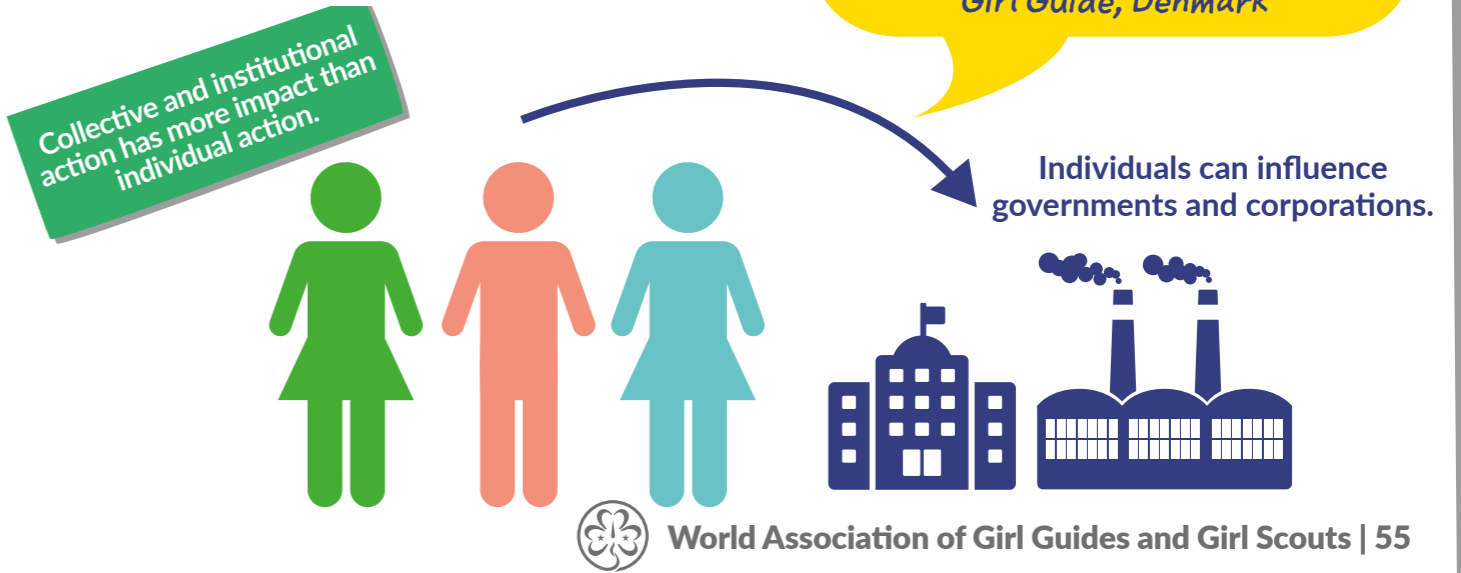
Climate resilience

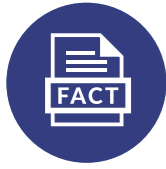


Individual vs. collective action

We can all take action for climate change. We can lead more sustainable lives and adapt to the consequences of climate change. But governments and corporations have more power than individuals to solve climate change. We all need to work together to make a big difference.

When I hear about storms, flooding etc. I always think about how it is getting worse with the rising sea levels (especially in Denmark, because it's flat), but it also makes me remember that we have caused it, and makes me want to do more.
Girl Guide, Denmark





Share the knowledge

NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCs)

NDCs are the climate action plans that each country submits under the **Paris Agreement** (See the What is Climate Change fact sheet), outlining how they will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change.

They are “nationally determined” because each country sets its **own targets**, reflecting its circumstances and capacities.

Countries must update their NDCs every **five years**, with each update expected to show higher ambition.

NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDCs)

NDCs form the backbone of the global effort to keep warming well below **2 °C** and pursue **1.5 °C**.

They are not **legally binding**, which means there is limited accountability if countries fail to reach their targets.

You can read more about NDCs here: <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/all-about-ndcs>

The EU Green Deal

The EU Green Deal is a comprehensive action plan with the aim of making its 27 member states **carbon-neutral by 2050**. It was born out of the **Paris Agreement** in 2019, providing the EU with a policy framework to deliver on the Paris Agreement’s commitments within Europe.

You can read more here: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/priorities-2019-2024/european-green-deal_en



Source: <https://euinasean.eu/eu-green-deal/>





Share the knowledge

Meet 8 young climate activists around the world

Girl Guide Activists

Joy Marlene Kodo, Benin

Joy Marlene has been an Advocacy Champion since 2022 and serves as the National Youth Coordinator of the Girl Guides Association of Benin. Representing WAGGGS at COP27, she later became a Young Climate Negotiator for Least Developed Countries (LDC), advocating for gender equality in climate action at key international forums. As a Junior Negotiator, she supports the LDC Adaptation Team and contributes to shaping global climate negotiations.



Sarah-Anna Awad, Austria

Sarah-Anna is a WAGGGS Advocacy Champion. She became a climate activist to prevent glaciers from melting, which is already causing huge issues in her country. She is committed to action on the SDGs in Austria and worldwide, and is a global climate activist. She has spoken out at global events like the UN Commission on the Status of Women 2019 and the UN Youth Climate Summit.



Cassandra Walcott, Barbados

Cassandra is passionate about protecting sea life. She got the idea for her project while attending the Helen Storrow Seminar 2019. She is removing excess seaweed from the beaches in Barbados – which is killing sea life and creating odour pollution – and using it to create fertiliser.



Eya Ben Soltana, Tunisia

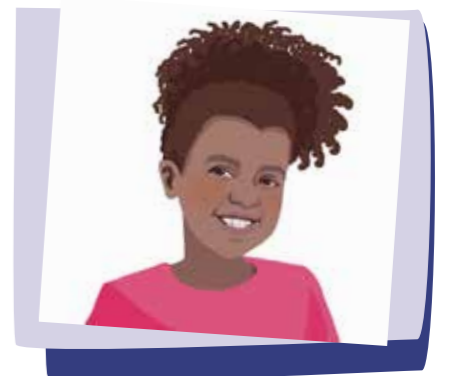
Eya was inspired to take action on access to water and sanitation after attending the Helen Storrow Seminar in 2018. With friends, she started a project to bring clean, safe water to schools in remote villages in Tunisia.



Global activists

Ellyanne Chlystun Githae Wanjiku, Kenya

Ellyanne started taking climate action at only 4 years old by planting trees. She founded Children with Nature, the only organisation in Africa led by young people working specifically on influencing the young to protect the environment. At 9, she had already been behind the planting of 250,000 trees in Kenya.



Greta Thunberg, Sweden

Greta is internationally recognised for inspiring a global youth movement demanding urgent action on climate change. She began her activism in 2018 when she was 15, by striking outside the Swedish Parliament, sparking the Fridays for Future movement. Since then, she has addressed world leaders at the UN, COP conferences, and other major platforms, calling for science-based policies and climate justice.



Autumn Peltier, Canada

Autumn has been passionate about water protection since she was 8 years old. She advocates for access to clean water for First Nation People of Canada. At 12, she confronted Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on his record on water protection.



Ridhima Pandey, India

Ridhima gained international attention at the age of 9 when she filed a petition against the Indian government for failing to take adequate action on climate change. In 2019, she was one of 16 children, including Greta Thunberg, to file a landmark complaint to the UN against several countries for inaction on the climate crisis. Since then, Ridhima has continued to campaign for sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and stronger climate policies to protect future generations.



Organisations and Campaigns

If you enjoyed taking part in this programme and wish to continue your journey, joining organisations and movements can be an inspiring way to take action and be part of climate solutions. Here is a list of organisations and campaigns that are driving climate action, climate justice and environmental protection across Europe and globally- many have local groups that you can join in your area.

350.org

A global movement working to end the fossil fuel era by divesting from coal, oil, and gas, and accelerating the transition to renewable energy: 350.org

ACT NOW

The UN's climate action campaign encouraging individuals to pledge and track everyday sustainable choices: un.org/en/actnow

Climate Live

A youth-led campaign using concerts and music events to inspire urgent climate action: climate-live.org

Count Us In

A global movement aiming to inspire 1 billion people to take 16 practical climate actions and reduce their carbon footprints: count-us-in.org

Extinction Rebellion Youth (XR Youth)

The youth branch of XR, organizing non-violent civil disobedience campaigns for climate and ecological justice: rebellion.global/groups/#countries

Fridays for Future (FFF)

A global, youth-led movement of school strikes and protests demanding urgent political action on climate justice: fridaysforfuture.org

Greenpeace

An international environmental organisation using peaceful direct action, research, and advocacy to campaign against climate change and environmental degradation: greenpeace.org

La Via Campesina

A global movement representing millions of small-scale farmers, peasants, and rural workers, advocating for climate justice and food sovereignty: viacampesina.org

Leave It in the Ground Initiative

A campaign dedicated to keeping fossil fuels in the ground and promoting a fast, just transition to renewable energy: leave-it-in-the-ground.org

Rewilding Europe

An initiative working to restore wild nature and biodiversity across European landscapes: rewildingeurope.com

Right to Repair Europe

A coalition of European organisations advocating for stronger repair rights, longer-lasting products and reduced e-waste across the EU: repair.eu

UNESCO Youth Climate Action Network

A platform supporting youth-led initiatives, knowledge-sharing, and policy engagement on climate action: unesco.org/en/youth/climate-action-network

World's Youth for Climate Justice

A youth-led campaign advocating for intergenerational climate justice and stronger legal protections for the environment: wy4cj.org/take-action

World Wildlife Fund (WWF)

A conservation organisation working globally to protect biodiversity, reduce carbon emissions, and secure a sustainable future: worldwildlife.org

World Association of Girl Guides & Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)

Each year WAGGGS sends delegations to global advocacy spaces such as the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the UN Climate Change Conference (COP): waggs.org/en/what-we-do/girl-led-advocacy/

World Food Forum (WFF)

WFF is a youth-led initiative by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), empowering young people to transform agrifood systems and build a sustainable food future: world-food-forum.org

Young Friends of the Earth Europe

A grassroots network of youth groups across Europe campaigning for climate and environmental justice at local, national, and EU level: youngfoee.eu

Youth4Climate

A global initiative launched through the United Nations Development Programme, empowering young people to influence climate policy and implement projects: youth4climate.info

Youth and United Nations Global Alliance (YUNGA)

Led by FAO, this partnership empowers young people to take action on environmental issues. Check out the challenge badges on a range of topics such as biodiversity, soil health, oceans and plastic pollution: fao.org/yunga/home/en/

Acknowledgments

We are grateful for the European Youth Foundation's generous financial support, which has enabled us to develop this curriculum. The Youth-Led Action for Climate Change (YLACC) Europe curriculum was developed with valuable contributions from the European Environmental Working Group as well as Guides and Scouts across the Europe Region. Thank you for letting us know everything related to your needs, interests, and fears about climate change, and how it affects your daily life.

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Special thanks to the dedicated volunteers of the WAGGGS Europe Environmental working group: Joel Kruse, Silvia Zampato, Justyna Piwowar, Mirta Cimmino, Giada Sannino, Karen Jones, Lexie Massie and Marie Morris Kehlet.

This edition of the Youth-led Action on Climate Change programme was adapted for Europe Region based on the Girl-Led Action on Climate Change programme in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

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Youth-Led action on Climate Change

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