



32 WAYS YOU CAN CHANGE THE INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE FOOTPRINT

*“The world as we have created it is a process of our thinking.
It cannot be changed without changing our thinking” - Albert Einstein*

INDIVIDUAL ACTIONS



REDUCE

1 SAVE ENERGY

Saving energy can be done in many ways, such as:

- a) increase energy efficiency of your home;
- b) take advantage of electric heating or better green energy (geothermal, wind, solar) and choose your energy provider on the basis of their environmental commitments;
- c) turn off the lights and the appliances when not necessary;
- d) replace analogue thermostats with digital thermostats (less temperature fluctuations);
- e) choose lamps of low consumption and long duration;
- f) unplug battery chargers and turn the power strips off when electrical home appliances are not in use, etc.

You can find more ideas here:

www.progress-energy.com/carolinas/home/save-energy-money/energy-saving-tips-calculators/100-tips.page

2 SAVE WATER

Saving water is crucial. Here are some ideas:

- a) avoid letting water run unnecessarily;
- b) reduce the duration of the shower;
- c) fix the leaky taps (a dripping tap can waste more than 12 litres of water a day or 4380 litres per year!);
- d) collect rainwater for watering the garden or lawn;
- e) do not wash your car too often;
- f) follow the directions/regulations of the municipality regarding the use of water in summer;
- g) turn off the tap when brushing teeth or washing dishes;
- h) wash only full loads of clothes and dishes;
- i) reduce meat consumption (a single serving of chicken requires 360 litres of water!);
- j) preferring shower than bath etc.

You can find more tips here:

<http://www.gcint.org/get-involved/tips/>

REUSE

3

REUSE GOODS— UPCYCLING

By reusing some products, you avoid mindless consumption and consumerism.

Ex: do not use plastic/aluminium film for storing your food; use tupperware instead which is practical and reusable.

Upcycling is a kind of creative reuse and means to avoid waste in such a way as to create a product of a higher quality or value than the original. This is a significant step towards regenerative design culture where the final products are cleaner, healthier, and usually have a higher value than the initial product.



RECYCLE

4

RECYCLE AND SAVE WATER

Recycling is the process of converting waste materials into reusable objects. Normally the waste materials must be separated according to the type of material in paper, plastic and glass and be thrown to the special bins of recycling. Recycle or, if possible, avoid receiving unaddressed mail.

Find tips at:

<https://stopjunkmail.org.uk/guide/15-minute-guide>

Check also your municipality rates/regulation concerning the recycling.

5

COMPOST

Composting is the recycling of the biodegradable waste - such as food or garden waste - and it is taking place usually into a rich soil, known as compost. It is essential to separate organic waste from the rest as it is biodegradable and improve the workability and harvest of the soil.

Find more at:

<http://www.earthtimes.org/going-green/importance-composting-help-eliminate-organic-waste-fertilize-soil/82/>

6

BECOME AN AWARE AND RESPONSIBLE CONSUMER

Becoming an aware and responsible consumer means being an informed and vigilant citizen:

- a) asking yourself before you buy if a purchase is a need or desire;
- b) prioritizing local products;
- c) prioritizing products made from recycled and recyclable materials;
- d) avoiding packaged products, including those over-packaged;
- e) avoiding food waste;
- f) buying from zero waste shops;
- g) avoiding consuming endangered species;
- h) avoiding using plastic bags in the supermarkets etc.

All these actions are a step forward to sustainable way of life. So, being a responsible consumer means considering one's health, environment and other peoples' rights.

Find food for thought at

<http://recyclingweek.planetark.org/documents/doc-712-plastic-bags-factsheet-2012.pdf>.

Check also the European Consumer Organization:

<http://www.beuc.eu/>.

Check out your *FOOTPRINT* on our planet. The websites gives you 3 tips a day delivered for 3 days to help change your behavior according to the results:

<http://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>.



1. Cutting out the new:

- Refraining from buying the newest version of a product if the current version is still working well;

- Buying used or vintage clothing and furniture, but only if they are alternatives to buying new.

1. Choosing the ethical:

- Learning more about the products one buys, including their carbon footprint;

- Choosing eco-labeled goods and services;

- Purchasing environmentally friendly products, including recycled goods and items that are easily recyclable and biodegradable;

- Choosing goods from manufacturers and dealers with clear environmental and ethical policies.

1. Cutting down on shopping trips:

- Buying in bulk can save on shopping trips;

- Buying dried and concentrated products saves transporting water;

- When possible, shopping online can be one of the simplest ways of greening shopping, with fewer trips to shopping centres.

1. Buying nothing:

- Trying some ideas like [Buy Nothing Christmas](#) which questions how the rampant consumerism of Christmas is damaging the planet or [Buy Nothing Day](#) - and international day of protest against consumerism.

7

PARTICIPATE IN ROOF GARDENING

If you don't have garden at your place, you can take advantage of the roof of your building and create your own green area. Besides the decorative benefit, roof plantings may provide vegetables, temperature control, hydrological benefits, architectural enhancement, recreational opportunities, and in large scale it may even have ecological benefits.



8

CHOOSE FAIR TRADE

Fair Trade products are made with respect to people and planet, promote safe and healthy working conditions, protect the environment, enable transparency and empower communities to build strong and thriving businesses. Look for the Fair Trade Certified products.

9

BE AWARE OF THE ORIGIN OF YOUR CLOTHES AND PRODUCTS YOU DAILY USE

You can prevent fashion industries by exploiting human resources and violate workers' rights in developing countries. Be aware of who made your clothes and participate in the initiative "Fashion revolution" to stop workers from being exploited by big fashion industries. Find more information for the "Fashion revolution" here: <http://fashionrevolution.org/>. Find also a lot of information about the contents of your cosmetic, food, as well as how healthy, sustainable and ethical they are, in the link: www.codecheck.info. Participate in circular economy initiatives: <http://www.emmaus-international.org/fr/>.

10

USE ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF TRANSPORT

Use alternative means of transport and bicycle; in this way, you help in reducing the traffic congestion and decreasing the greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. In addition, by riding a bike you improve also your health, avoid the daily traffic jam and produce zero pollution. Car sharing for long distance and short daily commute is a perfect way to reduce gas emissions but also establish bonds with other people and make your journey more pleasant.

Find ideas in this inspiring video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zMvpAz38qSo>.

11

PREFER ORGANIC FOODS

Organic foods are produced by methods that foster resource cycling, promote ecological balance, and conserve biodiversity. Choosing Organic/Bio products is a way of life that has a lot of advantages:

- a) avoid chemicals;
- b) avoid GMO;
- c) avoid hormones, antibiotics and drugs in animal products;
- d) preserve our ecosystems;
- e) preserve agricultural diversity;
- f) reduce pollution and protect water and soil etc.

12 BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELER

Sustainable traveler takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, and addresses the needs of environment, host communities, visitors and industry. You can be a responsible traveler and promote sustainable tourism in many ways:

- a) get informed about the communities and environment you visit;
- b) do not litter and try to avoid excessive waste and the use of plastic bottles;
- c) conserve water and try to reduce energy consumption;
- d) always ask before taking photographs;
- e) respect cultural differences and dress respectively;
- f) support the local economy and prefer public transit **etc.**

Find more information here:

<http://www.sustainabletourism.net/sustainable-tourism/travel-tips-responsible-travel-tips/> and
<http://www.sustainabletourism.net/sustainable-tourism/travel-tips/>

13 JOIN CITIZENS' INITIATIVES ON PARTICIPATION & VOLUNTEERING

By joining citizens' initiatives you are getting engaged in active citizenship and increase your power in your community (participation -> engagement-> influence on decisions).

Furthermore, volunteering is an act of altruism that engages citizens to solidarity and contribution by helping the development of communities through acts that do not aim at a personal financial gain but at a common objective.

Look for the association of citizens in your city promoting sustainable development and check global initiative:

<http://www.theglobalcitizensinitiative.org>

14 BE AWARE OF THE RIGHT USE OF TERMINOLOGY

In our days, every single word matters. The same word can have more meanings that may lead to misunderstanding and wrong messages. The right use of language reveals education, culture and willingness for communication. For instance, when the conversation is about migration, it is good to avoid terms like "invasion" and "illegal migrant" that could have a negative meaning. For better understanding, it is always useful to do some research, just out of curiosity!

For more information:

<http://europeanvoluntaryservice.org/evs-in-europe/>

15 TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXCHANGE PROGRAMS AND SUMMER CAMPS

There are quite a lot exchange programs and summer camps, which provide, especially to youngsters, a good chance to visit other countries and get familiar with a new culture and a new language and also get involved into different kind of problems. Exchange programs improve our communication skills, enlarge our horizons, broaden our knowledge and raise our awareness about global issues.

16

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXISTING PROJECTS

Participate in a wide variety of initiatives, projects and networks aimed to engage youngsters into development, environmental issues and inform them about global challenges. From Erasmus+ to EVS, all of them are invaluable for the creation of more aware and responsible individuals.

Some links that may be useful for your research are the below:

- "Youth Xchange: Climate change and life styles guidebook" by UNESCO: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0021/002128/212876e.pdf>;
- "Global Survey on Sustainable Lifestyles": <http://www.unep.org/resourceefficiency/Policy/SCPPoliciesandthe10YFP/MarrakechProcess/TaskForces/SustainableLifestyles/IntroductiontoTaskForceProjects/GlobalSurveyonSustainableLifestyles/tabid/78363/Default.aspx>.

Check out more ideas and issue-specific guides for youth here:

<http://www.tigweb.org/action-tools/guide/>.



COLLECTIVE ACTIONS



1

SUPPORT COLLABORATIVE CONSUMPTION

Collaborative consumption is the shared use of a good or service by a group, providing that the purchase price is recouped through renting or exchanging. This is achieved by sharing or renting out some personal but underused assets. Collaborative consumption reduces consumerism and helps creating solidarity in communities.

A well-known example of collaborative consumption is *carpooling*, meaning sharing of car journeys so that more than one person travels in a car. Also, sharing tool, food purchase etc.

2

PROMOTE URBAN GREENHOUSES AND GARDENS

Small gardens or greenhouses in every neighborhood can bring together citizens in order to get organized and collaborate for producing their own fruit and vegetables and after all, share them with each other. It is a good way to improve communication, give motivation to achieve a common purpose and improve the urban environment.



3 RECOVER ABANDONED SPACES

An abandoned place can be easily transformed into a beautiful place which is worth visiting and where people can come together. An empty wall could be decorated with a beautiful graffiti; a desert plot can be remade to a garden or a place where activities will take place. The enhancement of the urban environment can also result from citizen initiatives.

4 ATTEND COURSES ON HOME-MADE PRODUCTS AND DETERGENTS

Courses of making home-made products such as marmalades, compote-fruit puree, sweets etc. or home-made detergents like liquid soap for personal hygiene and washing, could help people to increase their creativity and reduce poverty, giving the fact that home-made things are low cost but high quality. Also, it helps citizens to interact, exchange knowledge and finally improve their way of life. A variety of internet offers: from collective courses to video tutorials that can be followed comfortably from home, are an important asset for action.

5 JOIN “DIALOGUE CIRCLES” AND “MOVIE DEBATE EVENINGS”

“Dialogue circles” made by citizens is a good way for citizens to raise awareness and be informed about what is happening and what affects them. The topics could vary and concern not only the neighborhood or the local communities but also national and global issues. Experts, like activists, could be present, so as to consult, train and motivate citizens. The next step is to get committed and act.

Movie-debate evenings are an opportunity for citizens to be concerned and discuss about a movie concerning modern social, political or environmental issues.

You can find some relevant ideas here:

<http://www.homethemovie.org/>

<http://girlrising.com/>

6 PROMOTE SOCIAL STREETS

The idea is to promote socialization between neighbors living in the same street in order to build relationships, to exchange needs, to share expertise and knowledge, to implement common interest projects, with common benefits from a closer social interaction.

Get informed from the link:

<http://www.socialstreet.it/international/info-english/>

7 CREATE ONLINE PORTALS/FORUMS FOR NEW IDEAS AND ALLIANCES

When there is a place where everyone can express one’s opinion and be heard by others, the power of individual increases and one’s voice is taken into account. The online portals/forums aim to organize citizens and bring them together so as to react to common problems and come up with new ideas for the improvement of their community.

8 MOTIVATE YOUR MUNICIPALITY

A visit, a phone call or an email to the municipality could mobilize it to take initiatives or fix some problems which have never been noticed. New ideas are always welcome and reveal an active citizenship.

9 JOIN "100 IN 1 DAY"

"100in1Day" is a citizen movement with the goal to inspire change in cities across countries by compelling residents to activate 100 innovative ideas to improve their city, and all on one day.

Get informed from the official site:
<http://www.100in1day.com/>

10 JOIN THE NETWORK "ZERO WASTE EUROPE"

"Zero waste Europe" is a network that supports local groups with independent knowledge and streamlined tools to drive change more efficiently to a zero waste way of life. It structures the movement internationally to better represent the interests of communities at the EU level and commit policy makers with a unified voice.

Find more information on the official site:
<https://www.zerowasteurope.eu/>

11 GET INFORMED AND START A LOCAL 350 GROUP

"350" is a global grassroots climate movement that fights for a safe climate, a better future and an equitable world based on the power of ordinary people.

Get informed from the official site:
<http://350.org/>

12 ACTION FOR LIBRARIES

Reading is an invaluable tool for individual growth and education. Aiming to promote non-formal education and broaden our horizons, common libraries seem a good idea. Citizens could create a library by giving or lending books to a common space organized and managed by themselves, where they can read or borrow books. In this way, relations and trust between citizens are improved together with further education.

You can be further inspired by the link below:
www.library-project.org.



13

DISCUSS ABOUT VALUES

Political intervention and social information can be achieved through a campaign. Campaign is a planned course of action formulated to achieve defined objectives, concerning various issues such as human rights, environment and life in general. There are also some concrete examples, such as:

Lego & Shell: Greenpeace launched a global campaign calling on Lego to end its co-promotion with Shell because they believe Shell is leading the race to exploit the Arctic's oil reserves under the rapidly melting ocean ice. This could be seen as a good example of a viral campaign, using social media. Relevant link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qhbliUq0_r4&feature=youtu.be

The David versus Goliath campaign. In October, a group of “climate warriors” from 13 Pacific Islands travelled to Australia to raise awareness on the impact of the fossil fuel industry on their homes and livelihoods. With the campaign slogan “*we are not drowning, we are fighting*” they used traditional handmade canoes to paddle out into the harbor of the world's largest coal handling port to stop exports for a day. The Pacific Climate Warriors then joined Australians in peaceful occupations of fossil fuel companies. The message that the islanders are no longer content to sit and wait for climate change as the “canary in the coal mine” was made very clear. The true measure of success will be if the islands are guaranteed a future. Relevant link: <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/gallery/2014/oct/17/pacific-climate-warriors-blockade-newcastle-coal-port-in-pictures>

Awareness and fundraising campaign against poverty: people committed to live with only £1 a day for food and drink for a week. This event enabled the NGO to both raise awareness about poverty and the difficulty to live with such a little amount of money and fundraise for the project;. They raised 35,000£ which will be used for their life-saving work.

Soup and Socks: People taking action against poverty and refugee crisis by offering “soup and socks”. Concerning the refugees, they are planning a mobile soup kitchen along the Balkan route. Relevant link: <https://soupandsocks.eu/#latestnews>

Viva con Agua: is a charitable organization based in Hamburg (Germany), campaigning for clean drinking water worldwide. Besides the air we breathe, water is the most fundamental source of life. Water creates life, water is life. Water means healthy living, happy living. For Viva con Agua de Sankt, this is the primary motivation for the activities - the funding, and implementation of water projects around the world and thus enabling, people to access clean water. Relevant link: www.vivaconagua.co.uk.

GROW project aims at measuring the impact of the biggest brands on several fields, like women, farmers' rights, impact on water supply and soil... Oxfam issued a survey on each of these big brands and shows where they rank in each field; this survey is available on the website and regularly updated, so that one can see whether these brands have improved their policies or not. It seems like it has had some effect on them and that they tend to make efforts to improve their behavior.

Find more information here:

<http://www.behindthebrands.org>.

14 TAKE ACTION FOR DEFENDING COMMON GOODS AND VALUES

Confronting a real problem needs action to be undertaken by an organized group of people, who are able to inform other citizens about the problem and promote good practices for its solution. Take as example some initiatives that focus on raising awareness and solving actual challenges:

Save Women's Lives: Awareness raising campaigns with an accurate toolkit with clear, informative and interesting information about the issue. Art festival to turn people's attention to this issue and make it more visible – launched by *SOS Malta*.

Media Engagement in Development Issue and Promotion: Bring real stories of real projects to the Maltese population, use recognizable personalities to promote development issues, produce concrete, interesting and accurate information in a visual format through the documentaries – initiated by *SOS Malta*.

Malta Walks for Water: Joining forces with Ministry of Environment to link with ongoing campaign in schools (catch the drop), linking scarcity of water in Malta to water issues in Uganda –started by *SOS Malta*.

Side by Side: issuing a newspaper written by different journalists coming from several nationalities present in Malta; their articles dealt with integration and interculturalism – initiated by *SOS Malta*.

Sesame Workshop: Wash Up!

Initiative for preventing children deaths and diseases related to the lack of hygiene. The initiative target group was first and foremost children, and then their parents (since children are multipliers): the initiative showcased a Muppet girl in radio programmes or TV advertisements, and she delivered three key messages to children to make them aware of the need to take care of hygiene in order to prevent diseases; the three messages are as follows: Wash hands with soap before meals and after using toilets; Use safe toilets to defecate and wear sandals to the toilets; Drink clean water to stay hydrated and healthy. (This initiative was built upon the success of similar ones: one Muppet HIV-positive girl talked about HIV to children in order to make them aware of its dangers as well as prevent them from excluding HIV-positive people; furthermore, a famous Cookie Monster changed its diet in which it included more fruit and vegetables in order to prevent obesity and food-related diseases, showing an example of healthy attitude to food, to the children.)

CCFD-Terre Solidaire: Development association which goal is to tackle issues related to poverty and injustice. Several online brochures and online books (activity tools and books) are available and downloadable from the website to know more about development issues, discrimination and other related topics; some of them are designed for teachers and their classes (from primary school to high school) and deal with a broad range of topics linked to development (e.g.: migration, Roma people etc.); the language is adapted to every age and the brochures are well documented and full of information (e.g.: brochure dealing with Roma people).

Find more in the links below:

<http://ccfd-teresolidaire.org/>,
<http://ccfd-teresolidaire.org/mob/nos-outils-d-animation/dossier-enseignants-478/>

15

SUPPORT REPORTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

Follow and support freedom of information across countries: Check the list of “predators”, accompanied by a description of the misdeeds carried out by the predator or by a description of his alleged inner thoughts; this portrait gallery makes people aware of the situation of other countries and especially of the situation of the people who live in them; it is an easy way to make people aware of such issues.

16

UNDERTAKE A CARBON FOOTPRINT CHALLENGE

In order to be aware of your individual impact on the planet you can pass simple online tests, after that you can compare the results and discuss possible actions to reduce it. This action is simple but fun and effective as it raises awareness on issues that may not be taken seriously.

Find more ideas at:

<http://footprint.wwf.org.uk/>

The project “LADDER – Local Authorities as Drivers for Development Education and Raising awareness”. Funded by EuropeAid, LADDER has 1 global objective and 4 specific ones. Since the beginning of 2015, it seeks to enhance and increase the action of Local Authorities in EU DEAR policies: act in a sustainable way as drivers for development, engage citizens, cooperate with CSOs, improve DEAR methods in non-formal education system.

ALDA - the European Association for Local Democracy is a non-governmental organization dedicated to the promotion of good governance and citizen participation at the local level. ALDA in particular focuses on activities that facilitate cooperation between local authorities and civil society.

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