

Environment

Impact Issue Sheet

The environment is all around us but how much notice do we actually take of it? Do we care that people are damaging it? If not why not? "The world is so big that I can't make a difference!" you might think. But what are the problems facing the environment and how can we help them?

See

Local Environment

- What is your local environment like?
- Is there much rubbish around?
- Do people respect the environment?
- How much green space is there?
- What issues face your local environment?

Make a note...

Over the next week make a note of the state of your local area. Is it covered in rubbish? Or is it well looked after? You might want to take pictures to bring along to your next Impact meeting to show what your neighbourhood is like.

Global Environment

- When you think of the world environment, what positive things come to mind?
- What issues concern you about the world environment?
- How have you become aware about these issues? (e.g. through school, the news, friends)
- What facts do you know about these issues?
- How can you find out more about the issues which concern you?

Action stations

Each member of the group should agree to find information about the issues to bring to the next meeting.

Activity: How green are you?

In your house how green are you? List all the ways that you try to help the environment, and all the things you do that are not very environmentally friendly. Share with the rest of your group.

- What things do you do or buy that pollute the world or areas where you live?
- Do you ever waste things? Give examples.
- Do you recycle?
- What else do you do that is "green"?

How green is your parish or school? Survey the people in your parish or school to find out how green they are. What do you want to know? What questions will you ask? What are the "green" things you want to find out about? Design your questionnaire and then plan how you are going to get it filled in. Bring completed results to your next meeting.

What do your results tell you?

In my area...

- Contact your local council and find out what can be recycled and where. What's the rubbish collection like in your area? Does everything have to go in the bin or are there special recycling collections?

Transport

Using a different piece of paper for each day of the week, each member of the group writes down the different types of transport used each day. Did you get a lift in a car, walk, ride your bike or get a bus or train?

- Do you ask for a lift or drive when you could walk/use public transport?
- Why do you do make this choice?
- When you go on holiday how do you get there?

What are the main issues that you have discovered about the environment? **Chart them up on flipchart paper.**

Judge *What do you think?*

- What do you think about the main issues you have discovered?
- Are they good or bad?

“Rich countries, like the UK and other G8 nations, are responsible for the majority of CO2 emissions released over the past 200 years, so they must take a lead in cutting emissions.”

Friends of the Earth “Energy and climate change”

- Do you agree that we should take a lead in helping to reduce our CO2 emissions?
- Would you give up the use of a car, or stop flying, to do this? Why/why not?

Agree or disagree?

Split the room in two, one side is agree, the other disagree. Decide whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Don't just copy your friends - show what you really think, because you might be asked for your reasons!

- It doesn't matter if I drop litter in school, the cleaners will pick it up.
- I always try to recycle things like paper, cans and plastic bottles.
- You should put another jumper on if it's cold instead of putting the heating on.
- I should walk to my friend's house instead getting a lift from my parents.
- You should have a shower instead of a bath.
- It's important to have a garden or green area where you live.
- It's alright for me to fly off on holiday if I want to.

What do you think are the issues here? Are any more important than others?

“The 10 hottest years ever recorded have all occurred since 1990. Yet just 2–3°C of warming could mean up to 300 million more people will be at risk of malaria, 3 billion people will face water shortages and 100 million people will be more at risk from coastal flooding.” Friends of the Earth “Energy and climate change”

- Does anything about this statement shock or surprise you?
- Do you think this has anything to do with you?
- Do we have a responsibility to change our lives to help improve the environment, to help other people who we will never meet?

If the statement above is true, it means that climate change (mainly caused by the world's richest countries) will make the lives of the world's poorest even worse.

- What do you think about this? What do you think we are called to do in response?

Scripture Enquiry

When I consider your heavens,
the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars,
which you have set in place,
what is man that you are mindful of
him,
the son of man that you care for
him?
You made him a little lower than the
heavenly beings
and crowned him with glory and
honour.

You made him ruler over the works
of your hands;
you put everything under his feet:
all flocks and herds,
and the beasts of the field,
the birds of the air,
and the fish of the sea,
all that swim the paths of the seas.
O LORD, our Lord,
how majestic is your name in all the
earth!

Psalm 8:3-9

- What does this passage tell us about our role in looking after the environment?
- How do you think people might react to hearing this?
- Does anything surprise you about this passage? Does anything challenge you?
- What do you think this passage is calling you to do?

Act *Now look back at your SEE. What will you take action about?*

Help:

- Is there a place where young people go in your area that needs tidying up? Can you give a day to tidy it? Can you organise more people to help?
- Help your family become more environmentally friendly. What do they need to do?
- Go through your wardrobe. Give any old clothes to a charity shop.
- Contact a local environmental group in your area and find out how you can help.

Tell it:

- Hold a quiz on the environment. Invite other young people to come. How much do they really know about caring for our world? You could have an environmentally friendly prize.
- How about putting on a play about climate change? Download the script of '**Degrees of Change**' at www.cafod.org.uk - about how a group of young people react to a terrible event.

Stand up for:

- Get involved in a campaign for climate change. See www.operationnoah.org.
- Look at the CAFOD youth website (www.cafod.org.uk/bigdeal) for ideas of how you can take action to stand up for the world's poorest people being affected by climate change.

