

**YOU CONTROL CLIMATE CHANGE,  
TAKE RESPONSIBILITY!  
CHANGE!  
TURN DOWN! SWITCH OFF! RECYCLE! WALK!**

**Dear friend,  
You who read this message,**

You may have noticed that there is more and more increasingly talk of global warming in the news and everywhere around us. This is because climate change is one of the greatest challenges that we all face. If we do not take action against climate change, the world we live in will be unimaginably different in a few decades. It will be generally hotter, and some islands and coastal areas will disappear under the sea, because the polar ice is constantly melting. There will be more storms, floods, heat waves and droughts. Food and water shortages will grow globally, and some climate-sensitive animals and plants will die out.



**IT IS IN OUR POWER** to prevent this from happening, but this requires each individual to play their part in taking actions to protect our surrounding environment.

The climate is changing mainly due to the way we produce and use energy to provide us with electricity, heat our homes, power our factories, run our cars and fuel the planes. By changing these patterns and using energy more responsibly, we can reduce the emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases that drive climate change.



# HOW WE CAN HELP? BY TAKING RESPONSIBILITY!

Here is a list of things we can do daily - easy, practical, economical!

## TURN DOWN!

- Don't overheat your home. Reducing the temperature by just 1°C can cut up to 7% off your family's energy bill. 70 % of energy used by households is for heating.
- Ask for your parents' help to programme your home's thermostat so that at night or while you are out of the house, the temperature is set at 17°C and by the time you wake up or return home, the temperature is at a comfortable 20°C again.
- Save hot water by taking a shower rather than a bath – it requires four times less energy.
- When you air your room, leave the window wide open for a few minutes and then close it again rather than letting the heat escape over a long period.
- Remind your parents to regularly defrost the refrigerator. Don't set your fridge at the highest cooling setting. This can save up to 30% of the energy used.
- Don't put hot or warm food in the fridge. Let it cool down first and place it in the fridge afterwards.

## SWITCH OFF!

- Don't forget to switch off the lights when you don't need them.
- Don't leave TV, computer or stereo sets on stand by. On average a TV set uses 45 per cent of its energy on stand by. If all Europeans avoided the standby mode, the energy saved will be sufficient for the needs of a country like Belgium.
- Don't leave your mobile phone charging when the battery is full. If you do, 95% of the electricity is wasted – only 5% is used to actually charge your phone.
- Talk to parents about energy-saving bulbs and household appliances. Those that are energy efficient have the European A + label.
- If you turn off the water tap while brushing your teeth you will save several litres of water.

## RECYCLE!

- When shopping, use a reusable shopping bag instead of disposable plastic one.
- Bring used glass to the bottle bank and sort paper, cardboard and cans from the rest of your waste. Recycling aluminium cans consumes 10 times less energy than producing new ones. Factories use far less energy making paper from old newspapers than from wood pulp.
- If you have a garden, compost your biodegradable waste.
- Choose products which come with little packaging and buy refills when you can.
- Take your breakfast in a reusable food box instead of aluminium foil or paper bag.

## WALK!

- If you need to go to a nearby place, walk or cycle instead (do not forget the safety helmet!). Encourage the same your parents who probably prefer the car. Let them avoid using it for a few kilometres.
- When you travel further, consider taking a bus or a train.
- Also avoid air travel when possible - aeroplanes emit a huge amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions into the atmosphere. Flying is the world's fastest growing source of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- If your parents are about a car, ask them to buy a small and fuel-efficient model – they will also save money on their fuel bill!

## ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Plant a tree at school, in your garden or neighbourhood. Five trees soak up around of one tone CO<sub>2</sub> throughout their life time.

- Look for goods with EU Ecolabel (symbolised by a little flower) and EU Organic label (symbolised by a little leaf) in shops or supermarkets.



- Use as little paper as possible: photocopy on both sides. Use email.



- Consume locally produced, seasonal food. Not only is it healthier, it is also better for the environment!
- Eat less meat. Producing meat is CO<sub>2</sub>-intensive.
- Offer your own original initiatives at school, at home, at the youth center or at the sports club. It's more fun when we do it together!
- Keep track of your actions to reduce climate change! For a period of eight weeks, give yourself points for every action you have taken during that week and, at the end of the period add all the totals and see how you scored. ***This is the assessment that Mother Nature puts on your noble efforts to preserve and protect her!***

**DISTRIBUTE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR FRIENDS, CLASSMATES, RELATIVES AND FOLLOWERS!**

Do not forget that you can control climate change and show responsibility by reducing your CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through making small changes to your daily behavior!

**YOU ARE ALREADY IN!  
HELP MORE PEOPLE TO FOLLOW YOU!  
WE ARE WITH YOU, BE WITH US!**

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