Our Rights, Our Planet
STAND UP FOR THE ENVIRONMENT
About the booklet

Articolo12 has been commissioned by Terre des Hommes as part of the Children’s Environmental Rights Initiative (CERI) to create the content for an online and offline training on children’s rights and the environment.

The development of the training is part of an agreement with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to promote children’s right to a healthy environment.

The training targets children and young people aged 12-16.

Both the online and offline versions were developed in close collaboration between Indici Opponibili and Articolo12.

The online and offline trainings have been funded by UNEP and Terre des Hommes.

Acknowledgments

Articolo12 would like to thank all project partners for their support in developing this course (CERI, UNEP, Terre des Hommes) and the One Ocean Hub network for the extensive comments and reviews of the material.

We would especially like to thank the children and young people who contributed to the creation of this training.

We hope the course will help children and young people understand that they have a right to a healthy environment and feel empowered to fight for that right.

July 2022
Welcome!

In this booklet, you will learn about your rights as young people and children and about how your rights are connected to the environment.

The environment and human rights are dependent on each other.

Damage to the environment affects your rights as young people and children – in this booklet you will learn about your right to a healthy environment.

What will you learn?

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LEVEL 1 - Page 8
Your right to a healthy environment

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INTRO

Your rights
Did you know that you have rights as a child / young person?

“Hello, I’m Zuri, I’m 15 years old. I’m passionate about animals and I love spending time with my friends. Last year my school closed for a long time. I missed school and my friends; my learning was badly affected. Some friends continued to learn because they have internet at home, but I don’t. After some time, we asked our teachers to continue the lessons outdoors. They agreed. Now we can keep learning and spend time together”

Zuri and their friends asked their teachers to continue learning because they knew they have a right to education.

What are human rights? Human rights belong to everyone, everywhere. They are your right to live well, to have freedoms, to be treated equally, to be safe and have food, water and healthcare. There are many more rights: like your right to education, to have information and to be protected from anything that may be harmful.

Many people, including children, do not enjoy their human rights. This is why countries around the world have come together to promise human rights to all. They have created the United Nations to promote peace and rights.

Most countries have agreed that children and young people have special rights because they are still growing up. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the CRC, is a legal document that lists the human rights that all young people and children have. It tells governments, parents and all adults how to respect and protect these rights.

Your rights are also your power to ask for change when there is unfairness. When you know your rights, you can stand up for yourself, for those who are treated unfairly, and for the environment.
These articles are in one way or another connected to a healthy environment. There are no rights without a healthy environment.
Designs © UNICEF, 2019

Here a QR code to explore more on human rights
Introduction notes:
Note down your thoughts and ideas
LEVEL 1

Your right to a healthy environment

IN THIS LEVEL:

PAGE 9
Learn what “environment” means and how everything is connected

PAGE 10
Explore your right to live in a healthy environment and learn about how the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) protects these rights

PAGE 12
Meet David Boyd, one of the leading experts on Children’s Rights and the Environment

PAGE 13
Key takeaways from level 1
Think about your environment – your home, where you go to school, play and live.

By environment we mean:
The place where you grow up: your home and your neighbourhood. It is your region or country. It is also the natural world: our ocean, lands and rivers, all the plants, animals, people and every living thing. It is also where future generations will live.

These environments are all connected. Everything being connected means an event or people’s actions in one part of the world can affect other parts of the world.

For example, litter can end up in the ocean even if you live far away from it: it can get to the sea through waterways, by the wind, or through sewers. Ocean creatures can get poisoned by plastic and this damages all of our health.

Air pollution created in cities and by factories in one part of the world affects nature and living beings in other parts of the world.

We all share the air that we breathe. We all share the water that we drink and use. The ocean, lakes, rivers, icecaps, are all part of the same cycle of water and means that plants can grow and all living beings can survive.

Nature has been working for millions of years and exists because all living beings - plants, animals, all of us have our own important place to grow and live, we are connected to each other and depend on our environment.

You are completely connected to your environment. It is the air, water and food you take into your bodies to grow and develop. The health of your environment and the planet is your health and the quality of your life.
What is a healthy environment?

A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT EXISTS WHEN:

- The climate is safe for all living beings
- Everyone has clean air, clean water and healthy food
- Everyone has access to healthy ecosystems and biodiversity
- Young people and children grow up in unpolluted and non-toxic places
- Governments and industries protect and promote the health of the environment

YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT!

The right to a healthy environment is a human right, and a right of all young people and children.
**SOME OF YOUR RIGHTS ARE CONNECTED TO A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>You have the right to the best life possible and governments must make sure that children and young people develop in the best possible way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>You have the right to the best health care possible, clean water and nutritious food and a safe and healthy environment to live in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>You have the right to clothing, a safe home and other means to live, so that you can reach your full potential and develop in the best possible way. The government should help everyone to do this, and help families without money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>You have the right to rest, relax, play and take part in cultural activities. This means that you should be able to enjoy the environment around you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>You have the right to an education that can teach you, among other things, about the environment, to understand your rights and to respect the rights of other people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>You have the right to express your thoughts and opinions freely, unless it harms other people, and to be informed, including about the health of the planet and of the environment around you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>You have the right to join or start groups or associations, and meet with others. Many young people and children around the world are campaigning together for the environment.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Many young people and children around the world are campaigning together for the environment.

**YOUR RIGHTS AS YOUNG PEOPLE AND CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY YOUR RIGHT TO GROW UP IN A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT** must be fulfilled and protected.
Hi! I'm Dr. David Boyd, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment. Basically, I serve as an advocate for the fundamental human right to live in a healthy environment. The right to a healthy environment is of particular importance to young people, because you’re going to be here on this beautiful blue, green planet longer than the rest of us.

The right to a healthy environment includes clean air, safe and sufficient water, healthy and sustainably produced food, a safe climate, healthy ecosystems and biodiversity and non-toxic environments where we can all live, work, study and play.

The right to a healthy environment also includes a toolbox of participation rights, such as the right to environmental information, the right to engage in decisions about the environment and access to justice with effective remedies in case your right is being threatened or violated.

One of my favourite parts of being the special rapporteur is I get to work with young activists around the world, people who are inventing apps to reduce food waste, people who are taking part in the Fridays for the Future climate movement, and even young people who are suing their governments for failing to protect their right to a healthy environment.

I hope that you’ll all join me in working to protect your right to a healthy environment and to protect our beautiful planet Earth.
The CRC is there to protect your rights and your right to a healthy environment. The right to a healthy environment is fundamental to make sure that all other rights are respected.

You have the right to a healthy environment and should grow up in an unpolluted and non-toxic space.

Everything is connected: an action somewhere can have an impact in many other places.

The environment includes your home and your community, the natural world and the world that will be our future.

 HERE SOME QR CODES TO EXPLORE MORE ON THIS TOPIC:
LEVEL 2

Environmental issues that put you and your rights at risk

IN THIS LEVEL:

PAGE 16
Look at what is happening to our planet and at the injustice this creates

PAGE 17
Explore how environmental destruction, including climate change, impact young people’s and children’s rights

PAGE 19
Meet Kelsey Archer Barnhill, a deep-sea scientist, who talks about the rights to a healthy ocean

PAGE 20
Key takeaways from level 2
In many places in the world the environment is being destroyed.

There are many examples:
- Dumping waste, pollution and sewage in rivers
- Toxic air and pollution in cities from cars and manufacturing
- Plastics in the ocean and overfishing
- Deforestation and loss of green spaces and nature
- Loss of biodiversity

Environmental destruction is a cause of climate change and its effects:
- High and extreme temperatures and heavy rainfall events are increasing
- The ocean and seas are warming, rising, and becoming more acidic. There is more flooding
- Droughts
- There are more large forest and wildfires
- Many animals are leaving their natural habitat, their homes, to try to find places that are safer and have food.

Climate and environmental injustice means that some countries, communities or groups of people are impacted more than others:
- Children are more affected than adults because they are still growing up, their bodies and minds are developing.
- All children are affected, but some are more negatively affected: for example girls, children with disabilities, children from Indigenous communities, children living closer to factories or in poorer neighbourhoods with less green spaces.
- Children living in some places and countries are more likely to experience extreme weather events.

It's not fair but young people and children are suffering the consequences of environmental destruction, even if they did not create these environmental problems. They often have less access to environmental information.

Everyone should have the possibility to live on the healthiest planet possible, including future generations. It is our right.
How does **environmental destruction**, including climate change, **impact young people’s and children’s rights?**

These stories show how environmental issues impact young people and children in many different ways, including but not only their health.

Malala used to live in Tuvalu, an island in the Pacific Ocean. She and her family had to leave as her house was submerged by water because of the rising water levels in the ocean. She misses her home and her friends very much.

Caio, lives in London and breathes a lot of polluted air because he lives near lots of traffic. He is developing respiratory problems and often misses school to go for health check-ups. He would like to be an astronomer when he grows up, but he can’t see the stars because of pollution.

Krutika and her friends play football in a field close to a landfill. There are no other spaces in their community where they can play football. Now the waste smells very bad and is close to where they play. They dream of getting a clean and safe football field.

Miro and his family can no longer go to the river where they used to wash their clothes. This is because the river is very polluted. Industries at the top of the valley are responsible for the pollution of the river. The industries continue their activities, but Miro and all people in his community can’t spend time in their environment where they live, that was considered sacred by their ancestors.

Colel has cerebral palsy and she is particularly sensitive to heat and cold. Her body cannot regulate its temperature. She loves playing in the park, but heat weaves have become unpredictable where she lives and she can no longer go there. Spending time in nature is very important for young people as they grow up – green spaces should be protected also because children need places to relax, play and enjoy the natural world.
Growing up in a healthy environment means having clean air to breathe and water to drink and use. It means having healthy food to eat and safe spaces to live, play and grow up.

Do you remember the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)? This document lists your rights, which include the right to health, survival and development, food, clean water, housing, education, to play, but many other rights too. For all these rights to exist and be real for you, you need to grow up in a healthy environment. All young people and children are entitled to all the rights in the CRC.

Every time you will find a blue bar like the one below, some of your rights listed in the CRC will be displayed.

**YOUR RIGHT TO NON-DISCRIMINATION**

**ARTICLE 2**

You have all the rights listed in the Convention, no matter who you are, where you live and come from, what language you speak, what you think, what you look like, which gender you identify with, if you have a disability, if you are rich or poor. In just a few words, no young person and child should be treated unfairly for any reason.

Environmental injustice, which means that some people are affected more negatively by environmental destruction and climate change, is a big threat to the rights of children and young people.

**GOVERNMENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE EQUALITY BY PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WHO ARE AFFECTED THE MOST.**
Hello! My name is Kelsey Archer Barnhill. I’m a deep-sea scientist who is passionate about exploring and protecting our ocean. The ocean makes up 70% of our earth, so if you care about the planet, you have to care about the ocean. We are all connected by the sea. It controls our climate, provides food for billions of people, is home to hundreds of thousands of species, and absorbs 40% of fossil fuel emissions.

Did you know that we have better maps of the surface of Mars than we do of the sea floor? I found this fact out when I was a teenager and it inspired me to become a deep-sea scientist. I was shocked that there were still parts of our earth that remained unexplored. In order to protect environments from human activities, we first have to understand what is there!

To fully understand the importance of a healthy ocean, first we need to explore our ocean. And to do that we need to keep doing deep sea discovery so we can better understand and protect the marine environment and the resources it contains – such as the fish we eat – for future generations. You, as young people and children, have rights to a healthy environment, this, of course, includes having rights to a healthy ocean.
Environmental destruction and climate change are serious threats to the health of the planet.

Environmental injustice means that some people experience the consequences of climate change and the pollution of the environment more negatively.

Young people and children are at higher risk of developing diseases and negative consequences because they are still growing up.

A polluted environment and environmental injustice are a threat to the rights of young people and children.

HERE SOME QR CODES TO EXPLORE MORE ON THIS TOPIC:
Level 2 notes:
Note down your thoughts and ideas
If you feel eco-anxious, it is okay to be worried. There are people who can help you.

**What is eco-anxiety?**

Eco-anxiety is worrying about the impact of climate change and loss of biodiversity and, in general, the fear for the future of the planet.

This anxiety can have a negative impact on our mental health, especially young people.

**Is there something I can do?**

Yes, you can talk to people who share your interest in the environment and share your concerns and feelings. Activist groups can be helpful.

Listening to a lot of bad news can cause stress and fear so taking a break from news or social media is good for your mental health.

Talk to adults you trust – they might give you advice about how to manage the negative emotions you feel. If you are feeling very sad, stressed or angry by climate change, you might find it helpful to get some professional help.
LEVEL 3

We are not all responsible in the same way

IN THIS LEVEL:

PAGE 24
Look at who is responsible for environmental destruction

PAGE 25
Learn about what governments, industries and others, must do to protect the environment and your rights

PAGE 29
Meet Josefa Tauli, an environmental activist from the Philippines

PAGE 30
Key takeaways from level 3
Who is responsible for environmental destruction, including climate change?

There are many reasons for the destruction of the environment, but governments and industries have the biggest responsibility. Some industries are more responsible than others.

- Fossil fuel industries are creating most of the world’s greenhouse gas emissions. Fossil fuels are very dangerous for the planet, creating pollution and increasing the temperature of the Earth’s atmosphere, causing global warming.
- Industries that make non-recyclable products are responsible for the overflow of waste on our planet, in our fields, rivers and ocean.
- Industries are responsible for deforestation and destroying natural spaces, harming animals and reducing the “green lungs” of the world.

Governments have waited too long to take actions, and often do not punish those who are harming the environment or stop harmful behaviour by industries and our societies.

Now, there are some positive changes.

The majority of countries have recognized the right to a healthy environment, like environmental rights and the right to education in laws and rules. Nearly all the countries of the world adopted the Paris Agreement, which asks countries to set limits to global warming. However, it is difficult to agree on actions to reduce emissions.

There are some positive examples, but scientists have shown that the only solution is to stop using fossil fuels.

What’s been done up to now is not enough to prevent a climate crisis and to stop environmental destruction on their own. Governments, industry and society must keep our planet safe & healthy.
Environmental destruction and climate change is a violation of your rights.

It affects your health, how you live and your future.

**YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW**

It is very important that you are informed and aware about what is happening to our planet and who is responsible.

There are two articles of the CRC dedicated to this:

**ARTICLE 13**

You have the right to express your thoughts and opinions freely, unless it harms other people, and to be informed, including about the health of the planet and of the environment around you.

**ARTICLE 29**

You have the right to an education that can teach you, among other things, about the environment, to understand your rights and to respect the rights of other people.

Communities and governments must listen and learn from you and involve you in environmental projects and decisions.
GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRY, THE UNITED NATIONS, SCIENTISTS, SCHOOL AND SOCIETY CAN HELP PREVENT A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND STOP ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION. BUT HOW?

GOVERNMENTS MUST:

- Regulate and punish industries and individuals who are harming the environment
- Make sure that you receive environmental education and information about the environment and listen to what you have to say
- Invest money to make sure your right to a healthy environment is fulfilled

INDUSTRIES MUST:

- Monitor how their activities impact children and the environment
- Stop activities that harm children and the environment
- Be part of the solution by promoting green operations and products

THE UNITED NATIONS MUST:

- Make sure children’s rights are respected, including the right to a healthy environment
- Include young activists in dialogues on environmental protection

There’s a body within the United Nations system dedicated to the environment: it is called United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP also supports children to participate in activities and learn about the environment.
GOVERNMENTS, INDUSTRY, THE UNITED NATIONS, SCIENTISTS, SCHOOL AND SOCIETY CAN HELP PREVENT A CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND STOP ENVIRONMENTAL DESTRUCTION. BUT HOW?

SCIENTISTS AND RESEARCHERS SHOULD:
- Do research and educate everyone about the risks to the environment, and their impacts on children

SOCIETY SHOULD:
- Speak up against the damaging activities of industry
- Support the causes of and collaborate with youth activists, to protect their rights

SCHOOLS AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD:
- Use education to increase your knowledge about the environment and your rights
- Help you understand what is happening to our planet

WHAT ABOUT YOUR ROLE?
You can be part of the debate and share your ideas. Some children and young people are proposing solutions: banning cars with outdated systems (diesel, etc.), limiting the number of cars, introducing free city bikes, ordinary and electric ones, applying the concept of roof afforestation and roof gardens, green corridors between traffic lanes.

You can also take actions to help protect the environment. You are part of this planet and your participation matters. When many people come together, they can make a difference.
Some good news

Here are some positive examples of how governments have acted to protect our ocean, lands and rivers, all the plants, animals, people and every living thing:

**NEW ZEALAND**

In 2017 New Zealand gave Mount Taranaki the same legal rights as a person. For indigenous people in New Zealand, the mountain is like an ancestor or a family member.

And now, if someone damages it in any way, they can be legally prosecuted.

**BANGLADESH**

Bangladesh is also known as “the land of the rivers” and in 2019 it became the first country of the world to grant all of its rivers the same legal status as humans.

This means that if a person is accused of harming the rivers, they can be taken to court.

**ECUADOR**

In January 2022 Ecuador with its close neighbours Colombia, Costa Rica and Panama made a safe marine route for turtles and other ocean creatures, threatened by climate change and industrial fishing, to migrate safely and be protected.

They decided this at the 2021 annual climate summit organized by the United Nations.
Hello there! My name is Josefa Tauli and I’m an Indigenous Ibaloi-Kankanaey youth from the Cordillera region in the Philippines. I am a policy co-coordinator with the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, which is a global network of young people active on biodiversity and working together towards a future in harmony with nature.

In the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, I help to coordinate the participation of young people in decision making spaces about nature so that we can make sure that we are listened to in decisions that affect us. You need to remember that our voices matter because these decisions affect our impact, our lives and futures as children and young people.

We now know that environmental issues and social inequalities are very much intertwined. We cannot solve one without solving the other. And because of this, we can now come up with solutions that are deeper, that are more caring, that are nuanced enough for a complex problem. Always remember that you’re not alone. You’re really in this with children and youth all over the world who are fighting together for a better future that we deserve!
Young people and children can be part of the solution. They must be listened to and supported by adults.

Industrial activities and governments not taking action are mainly responsible for environmental destruction, including climate change.

Governments, industry, the United Nations, scientists, school and society can prevent a climate emergency and can stop environmental destruction.

We are not all equally responsible for environmental destruction.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM LEVEL 3

Here some QR codes to explore more on this topic:

- The Paris Agreement
- A video with Greta Thunberg’s message
- The website of UNEP
LEVEL 4

Your participation matters

IN THIS LEVEL:

- PAGE 16: Look at how young people and children are fighting for environmental justice and for their rights
- PAGE 17: Get inspired and learn about how you can participate
- PAGE 19: Develop your plan of action/involvement and meet 2 young environmental activists
- PAGE 20: Key takeaways from level 4
All over the world, young people and children are speaking up about their rights. They are protesting for different reasons, and many are fighting for environmental justice.

They’re asking for decisive actions now. Young activists are using their rights – to information and to protest – and demanding governments make sure there is a right to a healthy environment for all. They are also called child environmental human rights defenders, as they protect and promote human rights relating to the environment, including the ocean, lands and rivers, all the plants, animals, people and every living thing.

In 2019 young petitioners aged 8-17, from around the world presented an official legal complaint to the United Nations.

Hilda Flavia Nakabuye has experienced the consequences of climate change growing up. She is now a climate and environmental rights activist in Uganda and is asking global leaders to act on climate change.

Skye Neville started a petition in Wales to stop selling magazines with disposable plastic toys. Thanks to her action, a big supermarket chain stopped selling those magazines.

Young people and children around the world are experiencing the impact of environmental destruction and climate change and are taking action. You can do it too – you can participate and you have a right to express your views.

Think about where you live. Do you think there are any unhealthy, dangerous or toxic elements in your environment? Talk to your friends and your community and think about how to improve the situation. There are many ways you can fight for your right to a healthy environment.

Your participation matters!
Wherever you live, environmental destruction and climate change can affect your life in different ways. Like many other children and young people around the world, you can participate, from making small changes in your life to campaigning and becoming an activist and a defender of the environment.

**YOUR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE**

**ARTICLE 12**
You have the right to be heard on issues that affect you. This means that you also have the right to be heard in court in front of a judge.

**ARTICLE 13**
You have the right to express your thoughts and opinions freely, unless it harms other people, and to be informed, including about the health of the planet and of the environment around you.

**ARTICLE 15**
You have the right to join or start groups or associations, and meet with others. Many young people and children around the world are meeting and campaigning together for the environment.

**YOUR FRIENDS AS WELL AS ADULTS, INCLUDING RESEARCHERS, EDUCATORS, ORGANIZATIONS AND THE UN CAN SUPPORT YOU AND HELP YOU FIND PROJECTS AND INFORMATION TO FIGHT FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND YOUR RIGHTS. **You have a right to express your views and participate, and you can do your part to protect the planet.
Get inspired about what you can do to participate

YOUR RIGHTS TO JUSTICE

If you are already experiencing the consequences of environmental destruction and climate change, you can, with the support of adults around you, bring your case to court. Human rights courts give meaning to your rights and the opportunity to get justice.

**ARTICLE 12**
You have the right to be heard on issues that affect you. This means that you also have the right to be heard in court in front of a judge.

**ARTICLE 19**
You have the right to be protected from anything harmful that happens to you.

**ARTICLE 39**
You have the right to get help if you have been hurt, neglected, treated badly.
Develop your plan of action/involvement:

here are some tips on what you can do.

LEARN ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES AND SPREAD THE WORD

Read and study about what is happening to the environment. Ask your school teachers to start teaching environmental and climate change awareness and promote them in your community! You can invite them to use this booklet. Share your knowledge with your friends and to whoever you think should know about the right to live in a healthy environment.

GET INVOLVED: JOIN A CAMPAIGN OR START ONE OF YOUR OWN

You could sign existing petitions and campaigns on a cause that you believe in. You can, together with your friends and with the support of adults you trust, create your own campaign or event for the cause you would like to fight for, to protect the environment. Consult this guide which gives you detailed tips on how to organize yourself and participate, and on how to always stay safe.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS, IDEAS AND EXPERIENCES ON SOCIAL MEDIA

If you are old enough to have a social media account, you can create awareness about the environment and your rights with some posts, videos, songs, photos, and anything creative! Share this booklet with your friends or talk about environmental issues on social media – use hashtag #ourrightssourplanet and tag @articolo12_ @unep @tdh_ch

COMMIT TO SMALL ACTIONS

There are some small but concrete and helpful steps you could take to help the planet. For example, you could:

- Use reusable water bottles
- Sort the garbage and recycle everything you can
- Turn off lights, TVs, computers, when you do not use them
- If possible, walk or ride your bike instead of taking a car
- Plant or buy bee-friendly flowers
- Pick up plastic and other waste from public places
**Develop your plan of action/involvement:**

Here are some tips on what you can do.

**JOIN A GROUP**

You could join youth organisations or groups and support them in different ways. Fridays for future, Earth Uprising, Assembly are examples of youth organisations that fight against climate change and for a healthy environment. Youth climate strikes are a good example of how young people raise their voice on environmental issues and participate in political processes.

**ASK FOR STRONGER ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITMENT FROM THOSE WHO MAKE DECISIONS**

Through groups and associations, such as Child Rights Connect, you can make your voices heard and reach out to your government to ask for stronger actions to stop the climate crisis and environmental destruction. For support, you can also contact national organizations that promote the rights of children, or ombudspersons for children’s rights in your community or country. With them you can also present an official legal complaint to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.
MEET THE ACTIVISTS

**MADHVI CHITTOOR**

a climate justice activist from the United States

Hello! I am Madhvi Chittoor, 11 years old from Colorado, USA. I have been a climate justice activist, a zero waste to eco ethics champion and also known as No Styrofoam Ninja since five years of age.

Pollution has no borders. I watched a CNN documentary called Midway The Plastic Island when I was five years old that inspired me to take action against plastic and Styrofoam pollution. Then my activism and fight branched out into other types of pollution like air, water and soil.

I’m very passionate about fighting for children’s fundamental rights to clean air, clean water, clean soil and great health. My activism has brought about large-scale policy changes and environmental good. Climate justice is intergenerational justice!

![QR Code](image)

**ANIVA CLARKE**

an environmental activist from Samoa

Hi! My name is Aniva and I’m from the beautiful island of Samoa in the South Pacific.

I am an environmental activist because I believe it is extremely important that we protect our beautiful Pacific islands and the world from the impacts of climate change and the effects that it has caused.

I have personally seen the effects of climate change as I’ve grown up. I’ve noticed the sea water has risen higher and higher every single year.

As a part of my environmental work, I set up one of my environmental clubs in Samoa at my primary school called Eco-Toa. We initiated Samoa’s first zero waste lunch and use our platform to advocate climate action within our school. I am now running a regional program of Eco-Toa and set it up as a social media platform to encourage people to share and use their voice and advocate for climate action.

![QR Code](image)
There are young activists all over the world fighting for a right to a healthy environment and are taking actions. They are also known as child environmental human rights defenders.

Governments, the United Nations and other organizations need to create the opportunity for children and young people to participate in making decisions about the environment and climate change.

Adults need to listen to and support any child who wants to contribute.

There are many ways you can take action - your participation matters!

HERE SOME QR CODES TO EXPLORE MORE ON THIS TOPIC:

A training on child environmental rights defenders

On #ChildrenVs Climate crisis petition

On the #MyPlanet PlanetMyRights youth-led campaign

ON YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS:

Earth Guardians earthguardians.org

Earth Uprising earthuprising.org

Assembly assembly.malala.org

Fridays for future fridaysforfuture.org
Level 4 notes:
Note down your thoughts and ideas
**Acidic ocean and seas**
Acidic water can have negative impacts on surfaces underwater. For example, corals grow slower and coral reefs becomes weaker. Acidic water can also break down the shells of ocean creatures, such as oysters and clams. The main cause of ocean acidification are human activities to do with the burning of fossil fuels.

**Activism**
It is an action to change something you think is unfair or important and one way to make your voice heard. Activism can be about making big or small changes. Some people say they are environmental activists or political activists.

**Biodiversity**
It is formed by the words “biological” and “diversity”. It refers to the great variety of animals, plants and microorganisms and also the ecosystems and habitats that there are on planet earth.

**Climate change**
This is big changes to the weather and temperature over the long term around the world. Climate change has many negative effects, including droughts, water scarcity, fires, rising sea levels and flooding, and storms.

**Fossil fuels**
Oil, coal and natural gases are fossil fuels which, when burned, release harmful gases, increases the temperature of the earth’s atmosphere and create pollution.

**Global Warming**
The increase in the temperature of the earth’s atmosphere caused by greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and other pollution that the trap the heat of the sun

**Greenhouse gas**
They are gases that can trap heat in the earth’s atmosphere and allow the earth to be warm and to support life. But human activities are adding too much of these gases to the atmosphere, causing the temperature of the earth to rise and is causing global warming.

**Injustice**
It exists when there is unfairness or inequality and there are different forms of injustice all over the world. For example, injustice can be related to the environment, to poverty, to racism, to gender inequality and to politics.

**Paris Agreement**
It is an environmental agreement, signed by 196 countries, that aims at limiting global warming to below 2, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

**Petition**
It is a formal request normally made to governments or official authorities to change things. A petition needs to be signed by many people so that it can have an impact.

**The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**
It is a group of experts that make sure the Convention on the Right of the Child is respected everywhere and that all children can have their rights.

**UN Environment Programme (UNEP)**
It is a leading UN organization working to protect the environment and people from environmental harm such as environmental destruction and climate change. UNEP also works to with children and youth all around the world to make sure their voices are heard.
GAMES

An offline and online game on your right to live in a healthy environment
**Crossword puzzle**

**Across**

1. People who fight for justice and for their rights
2. It is caused by pollution and environmental destruction
3. A global environmental agreement that aims at limiting global warming
4. The process of cutting down forests
5. You live on this planet
6. Its level is rising because of climate change and environmental destruction
7. It contains the list of your rights
8. How the environment you grow up in should be
9. **Down**

2. It is caused by pollution and environmental destruction
3. A global environmental agreement that aims at limiting global warming
5. The worry about the impact of climate change and loss of biodiversity and the fear for the future of the planet
Here is the QR Code to the game “Play your right cards”. Help Malala, Krutika, Caio, Colel, Miro and their friends find solutions to environmental injustices. Play your best cards and help them to use their rights to protect the planet!
Crossword solution

ACTIVISTS

PAM

DEForestation

CITS

SEA

N

XIREN

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HY

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CRC

HEALTHY

G

E