

2021

THE YOUNG GEOGRAPHER



THE CLIMATE JUSTICE EDITION



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GREATEST HOPE

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"Give young people a greater voice. They are the future and they are much wiser than we give them credit for."

Desmond Tutu

There seems to be a growing sense amongst many people I speak to that young people today have a pretty rough deal. They do not seem to have the same freedoms previous generations benefitted from, and they face a degree of uncertainty in almost every aspect of life which often makes the future something to fear, a future burdened with debt. Economic debt, particularly in the wake of this pandemic crisis, of wider jobs insecurity and no prospect of pensions; social debt and political disintegration, as the West falls out with itself, and fails to value long-term decision making or actively withdraws from international collaboration; and environmental debt with the crises around climate change and biodiversity loss.

Young people deserve more of a voice. Not necessarily to delegate responsibility, but for those with power to be constantly reminded of the importance of longer-term thinking and to be encouraged to be more thoughtful about the future.

Desmond Tutu's quote above is a call we should heed, and this Young Geographer editorial team have produced a magazine which is a great testament to that wisdom. They have done a wonderful job of getting this edition together, packing this magazine with a wide range of thoughtful articles around their chosen topic of climate justice. Securing articles from a wide array of voices and from all over the world, this magazine is their voice on this vital issue, in a year which will inevitably have a huge focus on climate change, with the upcoming visit of the UN COP to Glasgow in November. I hope we can all take the time to listen.

Having provided this platform, we will now make every effort to ensure it gets an appropriate audience. I hope you will help, by taking the opportunity to read this special edition magazine, and to share it and help them to be heard.

We are grateful to the Gannochy Trust for their help and assistance in developing this project, as well as all our supporters including the Scottish Government. I would like to thank the editorial team for their time and unending enthusiasm in producing this excellent magazine.

Mike Robinson

Chief Executive, RSGS

CLIMATE JUSTICE IN NUMBERS

122

Corporations

account for 71% of greenhouse gas emissions

The richest

1%

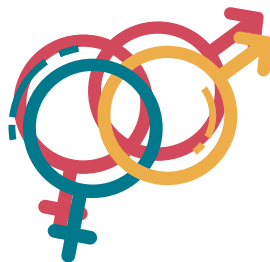
account for double the emissions of the poorest 50%

80%

of biodiversity

is found within land managed by indigenous groups

CLIMATE CHANGE COMPOUNDS GENDER INEQUALITY



- 60% of persistently hungry people throughout the world are women
- 80% of the 26 million people forced to flee their homes annually due to climate change are women and girls
- Universal education and family planning are the second highest potential carbon saving solutions



In Sudan and Niger, climate change has caused **GDP per capita** to fall by more than **20%**.



India was estimated to have **three times** more extreme rainfall events in **2015** than in **1950**.

For the poorest countries, by **2100** average income will fall by **75%**, compared to a world without warming.



Even a **1.5°C** temperature increase could cause the **destruction of entire communities**.

If you would like to know anything else about climate justice or the making of this magazine please get in touch with RSGS or the editorial team.

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The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of the RSGS.

Cover image by Paddy O Sullivan, Unsplash @temper01



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THE YOUNG GEOGRAPHER

WELCOME FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM



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Welcome to the 2021 Young Geographer: Climate Justice edition!

For us, the term 'climate justice' represents the urgent need for the experiences of vulnerable and marginalised communities around the world to be placed at the centre of climate change decision making, media and positions of power. Climate justice is key as we build towards a fairer and greener future.

Climate change is not only an environmental issue: it is inextricably linked to people and issues of justice and equality. Geography, gender, ethnicity, age, economic status, sexuality, ability and more are all factors that, alone or in combination, lead to particular voices being excluded from the global dialogue on climate. Tragically, often those who are excluded are also those who will experience the devastating impacts of climate change most. And when communities are repeatedly excluded or their knowledge and experience undervalued, climate solutions will inevitably only benefit the few.

This Young Geographer is a platform for showcasing the underrepresented faces and stories leading climate justice action. From rising sea levels in Kiribati to waste in Ghana, and from water scarcity in Nigeria to wildfires and pipeline developments in North America, these pages show how climate change and injustice go hand in hand. Whilst there are important roles for governments, organisations and nations to play in achieving climate justice, this Young Geographer focuses on the work of individuals and communities to create a diverse patchwork of solutions.

We hope you enjoy this edition but more importantly, we ask that you reflect on each story and take action as a result. If you are in a position of influence, use it to create opportunities for others. If you have time, volunteer or start your own campaign. See the back page for ideas of how to get started.

If you have a vision for change, realise it. This is the time for us all to act.



HOPE & JUSTICE

MARY ROBINSON

Mary Robinson was the first woman President of Ireland (1990–1997) and is a former United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (1997–2002). A tireless advocate for justice, she was President of Realizing Rights: The Ethical Globalization Initiative from 2002 to 2010. Mary served as the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Africa from 2013-2014, stepping down in July 2014 to take up the post of Special Envoy for Climate Change. She continued in this post until the end of December 2015 which saw the successful conclusion of the COP21 Climate Summit and the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In 2016, Mary served as the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy on El Niño and Climate. Mary is Chair of The Elders, an independent group of global leaders founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007, who work together for peace, justice and human rights.



At the end of 2019, I did not have much hope. While 2020 was set to be a significant year for global climate action, I was dejected; we lacked any sign of the kind of leadership needed to meet climate commitments. Young people were out in the streets marching and demanding change, asking us to secure them a safe future, but governments were failing to heed their call for urgent action on the climate emergency.

2020 was an incredibly difficult year for our world, our lives were turned upside down, yet it has been amid the chaos caused by the coronavirus pandemic that I have found some hope for meaningful climate action. Covid-19 has meant the postponement of key events, not least the COP26 climate summit in Glasgow, but the pandemic has also reminded us of our interdependence, and the importance of international cooperation. We have seen this spirit of solidarity at a local and national level in many countries around the world. We have seen it in some cases between countries as they share resources and expertise. It is this spirit of

togetherness that has given me optimism – for many there has been a renewal of the recognition that we must work together to tackle the biggest crises in the world today.

The Covid-19 crisis has also brought into sharp focus the delicate relationship between people and nature. More often now, when we discuss the climate crisis we are talking about the human impacts and recognising the connections between people and the natural world. In the past, environmental action used to be associated with saving polar bears, and of course protecting species is important, but our concerns must be far greater than this! In 2019, climate marches, grassroots groups and the voices of young people helped to bring home the need to address the climate crisis as a human problem. In 2020 we were all reminded of our shared global humanity.

'Climate justice' used to be a very niche term. Now you will hear the term used much more widely, perhaps because climate change is already a human tragedy unfolding for those who are least responsible

Top to bottom: Mary Robinson - photo by The Elders.
Youth protestors march down Edinburgh's Royal Mile at the September 2019 global climate strike - photo by Richard Dixon / Friends of the Earth Scotland.
A protestor holds their sign - photo by Richard Dixon / Friends of the Earth Scotland.

for the problem. To me, climate justice speaks of the human cost of the climate crisis and of the need to hold polluters accountable for the sake of the most vulnerable people on the planet.

When you hear young people speak who are from small island communities in the Pacific, or from the rural highlands of Ethiopia, or who live in lowland Bangladesh, you quickly learn about the injustice of the climate crisis.

The cruel truth about climate change is that it disproportionately impacts those who have contributed least to the problems we now face: the world's poorest and most marginalised groups. It affects women, indigenous groups, people of colour, people living in the Global South, and others who are also more vulnerable to other forms of injustice. While we are all impacted by climate change, we are not all affected equally. People living at the front lines of the crisis have really brought a sense of this injustice to the world's attention.

There is also an intergenerational injustice to the climate crisis. Young people aged 15 to 24 years represent 16% of the world population, and this number will reach 1.3 billion people by 2030. If you are under the age of 30 and reading this magazine, more than 50% of the total global fossil fuel emissions since 1751 will have occurred in your lifetime. The decisions we make on climate change and other environmental threats today will affect generations to come. This is the first generation to fully understand how serious the problem is, and the last generation that can do something about it. We are not doing anywhere near enough at the moment.

So how do we achieve climate justice? We already have the science that tells us this is an urgent situation; we must listen to the science. We also have

a framework for action – the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, sometimes known as the Sustainable Development Goals – and we have the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Governments and businesses must start addressing climate change with the same resolve and urgency that they are showing in fighting the pandemic.

One of the questions people understandably keep asking is, 'When will things return to normal?' I do not think we can or should return to normal. The truth is 'business as usual' will lead us to a climate catastrophe in a very short time. Rather than returning to what we were doing, I think seeking climate justice now means building back a better world, a world with cleaner air, more liveable cities, and powered by the wind and sun. This means building a kinder, more sustainable economy, one which puts us on track to zero emissions by 2050. Every country needs to fully commit to that. Every city, every town, every business, every community – we all have a part to play.

There are many, many inequities in our world. But when you are suffering, you are more open to understanding the suffering of others and taking action to create change.

For me, justice and hope are inextricably tied together. We have a collective power when we work together to create change and when we act with compassion for the most vulnerable in our world. We are not currently doing what needs to be done to tackle the climate crisis – in order to do so we must find the courage to believe that we can have a much safer, healthier, fairer world. That is the essence of the fight for climate justice for me – with hope, working collectively to create a better future for us all.

"This is my advice to anyone thinking about what they can do to make a difference. Firstly, make climate change personal in your own life and do something to change your own habits, reduce your own consumption. Secondly, get angry! Get angry with those that have more power, governments and businesses; put pressure on them to create change. Finally, get active and use your voice, get involved with advocacy groups. Imagine the better future we need to hurry towards."



FURTHER RESOURCES BY MARY ROBINSON

Read: *Climate Justice: A man-made problem with a feminist solution*

Stories of hope, resilience and climate justice from around the world

Listen: *Mothers of Invention* podcast
Mary Robinson and comedian-writer Maeve Higgins meet women driving climate change solutions globally

Watch: *Why climate change is a threat to human rights* TED talk

CLIMATE REFRAME

AISHA YOUNIS

Aisha is the co-creator of Climate Reframe. She is a full-time student undertaking an MA in Environment, Development and Policy at the University of Sussex. She also works part-time at Doc Society on the feminist climate justice podcast, Mothers of Invention, hosted by former President Mary Robinson, comedian Maeve Higgins, and series producer, Thimali Kodikara.



Climate Reframe is a list highlighting 100 inspirational BAME (Black, Asian, Minority Ethnic) and Indigenous People working within the UK's environmental sector and movement. Their diverse roles include:

- Activists & campaigners
- Business owners & entrepreneurs
- Community organisers
- Cultural creatives
- Environmentalists & naturalists
- Journalists & writers
- Legal experts
- Policy experts & academics
- Political candidates
- Scientists & technologists
- Urban planners & architects
- Youth activists

Why did you start Climate Reframe and what has the impact been? Have you seen a change in whose voices and opinions on climate change are promoted?

Doc Society recognised that there was a lack of representation of BAME climate experts and advocates who are invited to add their voices and perspectives in the media and in climate events.

We wanted to make it easier for media, funders, conference organisers and campaigners to find them and strengthen their work by including their expertise and perspectives throughout 2020. With the help of Suzanne Dhaliwal we were able to bring together people from across the UK to participate. This comes at a particularly important time as Covid-19 increases the challenges that underrepresented and marginalised communities face.

Since its release, Climate Reframe has been shared with almost 200 media and environmental organisations. Those featured have since participated in events on social media, been interviewed on the news, and appeared on panels discussing important topics related to the challenges and work they are leading to address climate change.

Why is it important ethnic minority and other minority voices are promoted in climate discussions?

Marginalised communities (those who are unable/excluded from accessing politics, education and other vital social activities due to their social, economic and physical circumstances) are especially affected by climate change. It is particularly important that their voices and contributions to society are recognised and heard, so that they too can lead in offering the solutions

and policies the UK sets on tackling climate change. It is often the case that these communities have contributed the least to climate change, but are the first to feel its effects, and feel them the hardest. It is only fair that they are able to express their visions for a just and equal future that works for all communities.

You worked on Mary Robinson's brilliant podcast Mothers of Invention, exploring climate justice. Why does climate justice matter to you?

This podcast celebrates and highlights women all over the world offering solutions to climate change. Climate justice is what we try to embody in our approach. It is important to me that climate justice recognises the needs of all communities and ensures that no one is left out of the decision-making processes that will define the future for generations to come.

What would be your advice to young people who want to take climate action but don't know where to begin?

Climate change can feel overwhelming and daunting. As Climate Reframe shows, a lot of brilliant people (as young as ten years old!) are taking important action. You can too. Organisations such as the UK Youth Climate Coalition (UKYCC) and the UK Student Climate Network (UKSCN) have been leading and representing the interests of young people by participating and organising climate strikes and hosting online workspaces. Check out their websites on how to get involved, sign up to their newsletters and read through their actions toolkits.

Further reading:

www.climatereframe.co.uk
www.docacademy.org

CLIMATE JUSTICE IN SCOTLAND

Glen Shiel is just one of Scotland's many wild places worth protecting. Photo by Meredith Adams



Scotland is a 'historic polluter'. This means that for over 200 years Scotland has disproportionately polluted the atmosphere compared to other small countries and contributed to climate change which is particularly damaging to the Global South. Scotland has a moral duty to reduce emissions quickly, to support Global South countries to prepare for climate change impacts, and to ensure that no Scots suffer unfairly during the transition to net zero emissions.



The Scottish Government's Climate Justice Fund has contributed to projects in Malawi, Zambia, Tanzania, and Rwanda from 2012-2016. The positive impacts include the planting of over 122,000 trees and providing sources of alternative income to more than 1,000 people in Malawi. However more must be done. In September 2020 Oxfam Scotland called for the Scottish Government to increase the size of the Fund from £3 million to £10 million per year.



Climate justice is also an issue at home. The changes required to reach net zero emissions and adapt to climate change will not be experienced equally in Scotland, and may intensify inequalities that already exist. To understand the scale of this issue, the Scottish Government established the Just Transition Commission. The Commission's full recommendations will be published in 2021, but their interim recommendations and advice for a green recovery are available now.

2021

This year there are opportunities that cannot be missed.

- Glasgow is hosting the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) in November.
- The Scottish Government is updating the Climate Change Plan to reflect the new 2019 Climate Change Act.
- The concept of a 'green recovery' from the Covid-19 pandemic has been supported by Government.
- The wave of enthusiasm from the school strikes will make climate change a key issue during the May elections.



COP26 will take place in Glasgow in November 2021. COP represents an opportunity for world leaders, climate scientists and negotiators to get together and agree action to tackle climate change. In 2015 COP21 in Paris brought progress by requiring all countries to put forward 'Nationally Determined Contributions' which aim to limit global temperature rise to well below 2 degrees Celsius. However, since the success of Paris, subsequent COPs have failed to bring about the vital change needed. As the host nation, the UK, and Scotland particularly, has a unique opportunity to set the tone of COP26 and ensure that an agreement is reached that delivers on the promises of Paris.

As joint hosts, Italy will be hosting the Conference of Youth, alongside COP26, in Milan.

YOUR LOW CARBON YOUTH COP TRAVEL PLAN

- Step 1: Edinburgh > London
Caledonian sleeper
- Step 2: London > Paris
Eurostar
- Step 3: Paris > Milan





Photo by Iain Robertson, Instagram @yoiain

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CLIMATE ACTIVIST? A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE

YUKARA WEEKES

Yukara Weekes is a 25-year-old international development professional with a passion for intersectional social justice. She has lived in Scotland for six years, works for a global organisation working in partnership with disabled persons organisations, and volunteers for a youth-led climate group.

Social justice necessitates climate justice. It was this discovery that changed my understanding of climate activism forever. Whilst the journey to becoming an activist is personal and non-linear, here are a few things I have learned on my path that might be helpful in paving yours.

Being a Black British woman from a working-class community in a now gentrified part of North London, I have always been passionate about ending injustice. In fact, after studying Politics at A-Level, I decided I would become a social activist and campaign for a fairer world.

When I moved to Scotland this passion remained, but I was also exposed to a different kind of activist: environmental activists, who the press often called 'eco-warriors'. This was a branch of activism I would encounter frequently during my time at university. I'd see representatives around campus, at parties, would overhear them in coffee shops talking about upcycling and recycling, about 'how they couldn't believe that people still ate meat', and 'how shopping at the



A protestor holds their sign. Photo by Markus Spiske, Unsplash @markusspiske

local zero-waste supermarket really wasn't that much more expensive than Sainsbury's'. I couldn't relate. Not only because 'not that much more expensive' really was that much more expensive, but also because I didn't understand how so much energy could be put into a crisis, the impacts of which wouldn't be felt for years to come. What about the injustice happening in UK communities right then and there?

It wasn't until a few years later that I realised climate change was not, as I had learned in school, something that would happen in the distant future. Climate change was already destroying livelihoods, almost always south of the equator. I learned about drought-related famine, about the millions of people being evicted from their homes each year due to droughts, wildfires, cyclones and floods. I woke up.

However, despite now understanding the necessity of acting against climate change, I felt there was a missing link between the rhetoric of the university-type climate activists I had been exposed to and the magnitude of the problem.

"I call for an inclusive climate movement that is situated in a global and historical context and that centres those who are facing the wrath of the climate emergency, despite being the least responsible for it."



Photo by Markus Spiske, Unsplash @markusspiske

The pinnacle of this tension came in 2019 with the rise of Extinction Rebellion (XR) and the 'Fridays for Future' movement led by Greta Thunberg. Throughout that year both Thunberg and XR were in the media spotlight. Six million people attended Fridays for Future's Global Climate Strike that September, whilst one of XR's demands – for governments to declare a climate emergency – contributed to mass declarations worldwide, including from the Scottish Government. Whilst I respected and admired the incredible gains these movements made in combatting climate change, their popularity made even more apparent the gap I felt existed between social justice and mainstream climate activism.

XR's vision of "creating a world that is fit for generations to come" (quoted from their website) necessarily excludes the 150,000 people who are currently dying from climate-related disasters each year. For millions, the dystopian future we envision is already a reality. Similarly, despite a focus on climate justice and equity, Fridays for Future's name suggests a focus on mitigating the future impacts of climate change as opposed to protecting those whose livelihoods are currently being eroded in the Global South.

Now I am definitely not suggesting that either movement lacks global representation or that the urgency of the emergency is downplayed in any way, but what I am suggesting is that more focus should be placed

on advocating for the lives of those already exposed to the perils of the crisis. We should be campaigning for more resources to be channelled into climate-proofing, resilience and adaptation in the most vulnerable communities, as well as fighting for mitigation strategies such as carbon reductions and shifting to renewable energy. Whilst both approaches are undoubtedly needed, if successful, the effects of the latter will ultimately 'save' us here in Europe, whilst being far too late for those whose 'house' is already on fire.

Another example of the danger of not bridging the gap between climate justice and social justice is in the advocating of lifestyle changes without first acknowledging the nuances and potential impacts that these changes may have on others. A promotion of vegan diets as the 'planetary diet' is an example of this. The enormous surge in demand for quinoa and avocados has resulted in the fruit becoming a conflict commodity for violent Mexican cartels, and the grain becoming wholly inaccessible to the Bolivian communities for whom it was once a staple. Of course, I'm not suggesting that being vegan is bad, but making dramatic lifestyle changes without first doing research on potential unintended consequences is not always helpful.

So, what is the point of all this? Why am I bad-mouthing the 'eco-warriors' I met at university and questioning the messaging of XR and the Fridays for Future movements?

The message is simple.

1. As climate activists, we have the responsibility to be critical about what we are promoting, and to educate ourselves on the entire picture. Who is actually experiencing these problems, and have we asked or listened to their proposed solutions?

2. Understand what it is we are advocating for. Does it protect the most marginalised and serve to 'leave no one behind'? Is it something that everyone is able to contribute to, and have we researched and explained the nuances and implications?

3. Are we putting pressure on the right people? Are we calling for system-level change as well as individual change? Are we looking at who is making decisions and where power lies?

I call for a movement that is equitable, intersectional and representative, and one that campaigns for both the current protection and assistance of people living in climate change epicentres, and for the prevention of further damage to our planet.

Being an activist is messy. You will be a hypocrite, and you will get things wrong. But as long as we remember that climate justice cannot exist without an equal commitment to social justice, we can continue to make change and pave the way to a better world. So the next time you are writing a Tweet, or promoting an article, or attending an event, what will you do to ensure that all voices are invited to the table?

WE'RE ALL FAE SOMEWHERE

SELINA HALES, FRSGS

Community-led charity Refuweegee was set up by Selina Hales in December 2015 to provide a warm welcome to forcibly displaced people arriving in Glasgow. Selina moved to Glasgow at 17 to study at Glasgow University and cites her welcome to the city as a motivator behind the creation of Refuweegee. The charity now welcomes over 150 people to Glasgow every month and provides them with welcome packs, essential supplies and friendship.



Preparing welcome packs for new arrivals. Photo by Refuweegee

I felt completely overwhelmed and useless when watching and reading about people being forced to flee their homes because of the war in Syria. Ashamedly, I think it was the first time I'd properly paid attention to the atrocities that happen all too frequently around the globe. Whether it's the result of war, persecution or climate change, forcible displacement is an ever-growing concern and an impossible experience for those unfortunate enough to experience it. Whilst it was predominantly news of Syrian displacement that instigated the creation of Refuweegee, there was never the intention of it being exclusive. We have and always will work with people from all over the world, priding ourselves on being here for everyone with no questions asked.

The feeling of overwhelm turned into a need to do something after I caught the end of a news clip about the closure of the Hungarian border. A father stood with a baby that was only weeks old; having fled a war he was now faced with tear gas and water canons, unable to decide whether to first clean his burning eyes or his baby's. That wasn't a world I felt comfortable sitting back in. I used to think that it was because I was a mother that I found that news piece so difficult to watch but it has nothing to do with my children and everything to do with opening my eyes and sitting with the reality of the world that we share with so many. I realised then how much I'd been avoiding news, both on the screen and in writing. It's too easy now to switch off when you feel overwhelmed, stunned into inaction.

In our busy, bustling lives it is easy to avoid sitting with information. However, when people do take time to take stock, incredibly powerful things can happen; things that were not planned for or intended, but that happen as the result of someone finding their passion, and discovering their desire to force change. And once that is uncovered it is a force to be reckoned with in any individual. Just look at Greta!

So please take a second to sit with the following piece of information: the number of climate refugees and environmental migrants is expected to exceed one billion by 2050. These figures are difficult to digest and even more difficult to record and predict due to there not being a globally recognised term for people who have been forcibly displaced in this way. Whilst "environmental" or "climate refugee" is commonly used this is not a legally recognised term. Currently UNHCR's (the UN Refugee Agency) definition of a refugee includes nothing about those who have been forced to leave their traditional habitat, temporarily or permanently, because of a marked environmental disruption. Research by the Brookings Institute has discovered that of the 70 million people currently displaced from their homes, more than one-third of them are those who have been forced to leave by sudden weather events, including flooding, forest fires and intense storms. It is widely evidenced that these natural hazard events will become more frequent and more intense as a result of climate change. And as with many climate change impacts, it is most often



Photo by Emily MacInnes

those who have contributed least to the climate crisis that are cruelly and unjustly experiencing this forced displacement.

In Scotland we welcome people from all over the world who have arrived here for many different reasons. We know we have welcomed people who have experienced persecution, war, flooding, and unimaginable trauma that is not for us to pick away at. Our role is to welcome, not question, so I cannot put figures on how many of the 150 people we welcome each month are here as the result of climate change. But I can confidently say people displaced due to climate change are here and they will continue to be displaced here and across the globe unless we act.

A very small action can very quickly gain pace and become a movement. My desire to ensure that when people arrived in Glasgow and Scotland they were made to feel welcome and connected with the existing community has become so much more than the original idea. It has given me, and thousands of other people,

insight into the refugee experience and learning that allows us to act more. It wasn't something that I complicated with business plans or funding proposals. It was something that I just began.

I passionately believe that the most important advice that I was given at the beginning was to just begin. Do not follow the route that we are all taught from a young age – ready, steady, go – otherwise you will spend years steadying and never getting to the go part. Instead ready yourself, go and accept that you will steady yourself and others many, many times along the way but most importantly you will be going and you will be doing.

Climate change impacts and forced displacement are not going to stop anytime soon. But we can positively change people's experience of the place they have been forced to now call home; we can help raise awareness and we can challenge misconceptions; we can educate and inform people through stories; and we can all make a difference.

Take Action

For more information and to find out how you can make a difference with Refuweegee please visit us at:

www.refuweegee.co.uk

Facebook /Refuweegee

Twitter @Refuweegee

Instagram @refuweegee



Handwritten letters are included in each welcome pack. Photo by Refuweegee



A CHANGE OF CLIMATE AT SUNNYSIDE

MISS LISA PERRIE, PRINCIPAL TEACHER

Sunnyside Primary School is a Glasgow City Council establishment. Located in the East End of Glasgow, the school decided to set conservation at the core of its curriculum around seven years ago. As well as a core programme of engaging their pupils in the local and global environment, Sunnyside has successfully led many campaigns to bring about change at local and national level. They are proof that creating small ripples does bring about tides of change.

The beads of sweat were now quite evident on both our visitors' foreheads.

True, the temperature in the classroom took some acclimatising to, sauntering between a roasting Scottish 'Taps Aff' day to a sapping humid heat. The beads of sweat were not entirely down to the warm welcome our broken thermostats gave our visitors. Stood at the front of the class, both men looked down to a group of keen, inquisitive and intense Primary 7 sat before them. An ideal audience you'd think. So, why so nervous?

Each worked in departments which were part of the council's 'green strategy'; departments the pupils had written to recently to call for all council properties to turn their thermostats down by 2 degrees Celsius. Our visitors had been dispatched from Glasgow City Council to explain why that request was being knocked back. Not an easy gig, and they knew it. I knew it.

As the class teacher I knew these pupils were armed with all the knowledge they needed to speak up for their cause. Their passion was never in doubt, as seen when they'd campaigned against canned hunting (trophy hunting designed for hunters to succeed), whaling, and cetaceans being kept in captivity. Slowing climate change was another of their passions and I was pretty sure that the lukewarm reception to the bad news our visitors had just broken would lead to a bit of a roasting for our visitors from these young conservationists.

To be honest, I was secretly quite chuffed and looking forward to it.

Furtive glances were being exchanged between the pupils and at times to me as our visitors talked through the reasons for their decision based upon hot water

regulations as well as the air temperature difference in swimming pools and how people would complain if the water in the pool was cold. I kept waiting for the children to challenge their decision, to show how their proposal could still be undertaken in many schools and offices... but it never came.

Their message delivered, our visitors left, relieved and no doubt happy to escape back to the City Chambers. I broke the silence by asking "Why were you so quiet? Why didn't you challenge their opinions?"

"We didn't agree that the reasons they said 'no' were real reasons why it couldn't happen in most places."

"They spent a lot of time talking about things that shouldn't affect what we were asking them."

So why didn't you challenge them?

"Because they're adults Miss and they were our guests, we didn't want to appear rude."

"They are grown-ups who work for the council, we didn't want to tell them that we disagree with them."

And there it was.

The children had been given the knowledge and understanding but their respect for elders had hindered their confidence in delivering that knowledge when challenging adults' views. I knew then, the core of the conservation lessons couldn't only be about the facts and figures but, more importantly, they had to be about giving them a voice. One they knew how to use. One they knew would carry far.

They might not have got the council to listen to their concerns about climate change back then but that class of 2014 did indeed leave a legacy. Realising that they

hadn't managed to save the planet by the time they moved to High School, we took their campaigns and set up the Seven Steps, one for each year group and each focusing on a different biome or class of animal. It was our first step on the road to becoming Sunnyside School of Conservation.

We've used conservation to enhance learning throughout the curriculum, develop our relationships with external organisations, bring new experiences to our pupils and, of course, give our young people the confidence to use their voice and know that it can bring about change.

And that's exactly what we've found. Over the last few years the children have used this voice to engage others in their campaigns through the written word, presentations and social media. They aim to campaign cleverly as we don't see much merit in the stamping your feet and 'we demand' language. We've found, especially in Scotland, that this gets folks' backs up, so instead we've asked companies to work with us... and most have.

A few of our successes include our #NaeStrawAtAw campaign which was recognised and supported by officials at all levels as we successfully removed plastic straws from Glasgow City Council, CalMac Ferries, local businesses, and even chaired meetings with multi-nationals such as McDonald's. One of our earliest and most difficult meetings was with the dairy company, Müller, who provide milk in most schools throughout the UK, but they were impressed by how we engaged them and we were delighted when they agreed to change their on-product plastic straw to a paper one.

We campaigned for mass balloon and sky lantern releases to be banned and this was backed by the council.

We have a very successful #BearAware campaign aimed at reminding people of the simple things we can all do to slow climate change. Our voice was heard by business organisations and we now have an eco-award named after us where Glasgow hotels and venues compete to show how they are tackling climate change and reducing their impact on our environment. We are also involved in the final judging of this.

But our biggest success has been that in finding our voice, we have encouraged other young people to speak out too. All our campaigns are aimed at getting children to take up the baton and do the same in their school or community. From the Highlands to London – our Ocean Defenders have delivered talks and presentations and workshops to Head Teachers, teachers, MPs, MSPs and Councillors, but most importantly to other young people.

Sunnyside has certainly found its voice but the real joy is in hearing it echo and resonate in other young hearts.



Photos by Lisa Perrie. Top to bottom:

Our campaigns being supported by MSPs at Holyrood; reviewing Government climate documents; visiting schools across Scotland.



SOUNDING THE ALARM:

YOUTH STRIKES

HOLLY GILLIBRAND, DYLAN HAMILTON & ESTHER SILVERTON

Holly (15), Dylan (16) and Esther (16) are three of the Scottish Youth Climate Strike's original founders. Together, they organised the September 2019 strikes which are estimated to have been attended by over 40,000 people across Scotland. In recognition of their collective and individual climate action achievements, they received both the Environment Award and Young Scot of the Year Award at the Young Scot Awards 2020.

As Martin Luther King once said, "In the end we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." This quote captures our need to act because when we are older, we want to look back and know we did all we could, even if our politicians chose to do nothing.

The climate crisis is the most important issue humanity has ever faced and yet, nobody is doing enough. Well, when we say nobody, we actually mean the adults in positions of power, because for years, young people have been doing their best to sound the alarm about the climate and ecological emergency. And then, two years ago, a fifteen-year-old girl called Greta Thunberg sat down outside the Swedish parliament on school strike. What else could we do but join her? Across Scotland people began to strike from school on Fridays, and we joined together to form a national network of strikers that became Scottish Youth Climate Strike.

We all felt alone; nobody in our lives was talking about this, or even, it seemed to us, thinking about it. The situation felt desolate, isolating and lonely. But we found each other – millions of other young people who cared. Finally we felt able to make change. And we did.



All photos of the September 2019 Edinburgh youth strike by Richard Dixon / Friends of the Earth Scotland.



After our first global strike for climate Nicola Sturgeon declared a Climate Emergency in April 2019, saying that she was inspired by meeting young climate campaigners who had striked from school.

We began to meet with other politicians to ensure they were acknowledging the severity of this crisis and what they had to do to stop it.

Some did seem to grasp the urgent situation we are in and some didn't, but it was ultimately a great way to engage with those who have the ability and responsibility to make decisions, even if we can't choose who they are yet through voting. Voting, though crucial, is not the only way to have an impact and we will not wait until we reach voting age to take action.

During the school holidays in August 2019, 430 youth climate activists involved in the Fridays for Future movement from all over Europe met for a week in Switzerland. At Summer Meeting in Lausanne Europe (SMILE) we found global solidarity and it was incredibly motivating to see so many people come together and unite behind one banner – to demand a better future, for everyone.

Then, only a month later, we had the biggest climate protest in history, which built on the success of earlier climate strikes and the work of activists globally. The Guardian reported that 4,500 protests took place over 150 countries, and environmental organisation 350.org estimated 7.6 million people took part. In Scotland alone, Friends of the Earth Scotland estimated 40,000 people participated. Less than a week later, the Scottish Government moved their climate targets more than we ever thought was possible just a year earlier. This was an incredible step in the right direction, but we have to do everything we can to stop this crisis. We have to keep up the pressure in whatever way we can, even when a global pandemic takes over.

The school strikes have shown that no one is too small to make a difference. Even though you may feel hopeless and alone, things can and will get better and you have the power to change things. Change happens because of people who care and choose to do something. Massive protests are only a small part of the process. Behind the scenes we're just a bunch of teenagers texting on WhatsApp trying to do our best. To organise a strike we have meetings with people from all over Scotland, sometimes for hours into the night, but it's worth it.

If you have something you believe in, you have to fight for it, and the results of that work are evident when thousands of people march through the streets fighting for climate justice.

Scottish Government Climate Targets

The Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 updated the targets set in the 2009 Act to the ambitious goal of achieving net zero by 2045 at the latest, including interim targets.

Despite missing the latest target (using 2018 figures), source emissions in Scotland are down nearly 45% from 1990, and 50% using the Greenhouse Gas account. This represents significant progress, but with emissions from key sectors such as transport remaining as high as they have ever been, campaigners across Scotland note that much hard work is still to come.

CLIMATE LITIGATION

MATT MCDONALD

Matt studied Geography and Politics at the University of Edinburgh, specialising in environmental politics. Since graduating, Matt splits his time between an environmental charity and teaching young people about nature and wildlife.



Over 100 countries have enshrined the right to live in a healthy environment into their constitutions. 'Climate litigation' uses these rights to demand action to cut emissions and end environmental degradation in a court of law. Spurred on by the success of the 2015 'Urgenda' case, which saw the Dutch Government ordered to cut their emissions by at least 25% in five years, climate campaigners have taken to the courtrooms. Young people have used these cases to argue they will be burdened with a more dangerous and resource-poor planet than the one past generations enjoyed because of a lack of action from Governments they are not yet allowed to vote for. Here are just a few case studies that show climate litigation at work.

Australia

With coal being the dirtiest fossil fuel energy source in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, some countries have worked to remove it from their energy mix. Others have not. The Guardian reported that Australia was the second largest exporter of thermal coal in the world, with 208 million tonnes worth \$26 billion exported in 2018. Australia's domestic consumption of coal is also significant and in 2018 accounted for 30% of their energy use. Despite the high emissions already accounted for by Australian coal, the country continues to plan to expand coal power plants.

In reaction, eight Australian teenagers brought a lawsuit against Australia's Federal Minister for the Environment in September 2020, which aimed to stop a proposed coal mine expansion in New South Wales. The plaintiffs argue that climate change is already causing significant harm and new coal projects will only make things worse. They also point out that their generation will be adversely affected by climate change as climate impacts worsen over time. While at the time of writing there is not yet a result to this case, it is potentially groundbreaking. It could not only stop the expansion of a coal mine but set a precedent for young activists in Australia by giving them a platform to have their voices heard.

Colombia

In 2016, 178,597 hectares of forest were destroyed in Colombia – a 44% increase on the year before. For context, this is about the same as the entire Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park. Deforestation is also the largest source of carbon emissions in Colombia. In response to this disturbing situation, 25 young Colombians brought a case against the Colombian Government to the Supreme Court of Justice of Colombia. They alleged that Amazon deforestation and the rising temperatures in the country threatened their fundamental rights to a healthy environment, food, water, health, and life.

This remarkable case was the first of its kind in Latin America, and in April 2018 Colombia's highest court ruled that: deforestation causes damage to lives of all Colombians (present and future); deforestation is a serious attack on the fundamental rights of Colombians; Colombia's Amazon is "an entity subject of rights" granting it the same protections as a human being; and much more in favour of the young plaintiffs. As a result, both local and national Colombian Governments were ordered to come up with action plans to combat deforestation. As with a lot of climate litigation success stories, the fight is not over when the case is won. Dejusticia, an NGO who supported the young people in the case, reported a year on from the landmark result that the Colombian Government has not taken sufficient action on the orders of the court and that threats to the rainforest continue to grow.

United Nations

Looking at trends in climate change litigation, London School of Economics found an increase in recent years, with 26 new cases brought outside of the USA during the last year. Part of this new era of legal challenges saw 16 young activists from 12 different countries bring an official complaint to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in September 2019.

The complaint argued that five countries have failed to uphold their obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). They point out that each respondent (Argentina, Brazil, France, Germany, and Turkey) has known about the harmful effects of their 'cross-border contributions to climate change' and that as signatories to the CRC they are obligated to 'fulfil children's inalienable right to life'. The case emphasised that these countries are not on an emissions path to keep heating under 3 degrees Celsius despite the Paris Agreement aiming for under 1.5 degrees Celsius. So far Brazil, France, and Germany have responded to the case arguing that the Committee should not hear the case, but this decision has not yet been made.

Given the recent increase in climate litigation, it is too soon to know the long-term impacts of these cases. However, litigation is not going away. It is an increasingly key mechanism young people are using globally to engage with their governments and demand they take swift action to secure a better future.

WHO PAYS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE?

ANNE FUNNEMARK



Anne Funnemark is the Interim Campaign Director for Jubilee Scotland; leading the organisation's campaigns for the cancellation of unjust and unpayable debts which continue to thwart sustainable development efforts around the world. Anne holds a degree in International Human Rights Law from the University of Edinburgh.

Climate change is an inherently global issue. Greenhouse gas emissions (the biggest contributor to climate change) know no borders. Neither do the changes to climate and environment these emissions create. Although rich Global North countries are responsible for the majority of emissions, those affected the most by climate change tend to live in poorer Global South countries, where emissions are significantly lower. Whilst there are disparities in emissions and impacts between richer and poorer communities of the same country, this article will focus on the international level.

At the heart of climate justice is this reality that those who have contributed the least to creating the Climate Emergency are those who are most impacted. For the countries and communities at the front line, impacts of the climate crisis include significant financial costs. The ability to adapt to climate change is influenced by a number of factors, including the ability to finance necessary changes. Additionally, climate-change-induced loss and damage – those impacts of climate change that have not or cannot be adapted to – entail significant financial repercussions. With little responsibility for creating the crisis, those at the forefront of experiencing the impacts should not have to deal with the financial consequences on their own. In many cases a lack of finance means countries are forced to take up significant loans in order to respond to climate induced disasters. This creates unjust climate-debt burdens on already struggling countries. Global cooperation is required to provide fair financing.

Today, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is one of the most important tools we have to create cooperation and ensure action on climate change. The UNFCCC establishes the international legal framework specifically designed to foster global cooperation around climate change. Whilst the effectiveness of international law has limits due to the way in which it is built on states consenting to being bound by it, it is able to place obligations and duties on those states who choose to engage.



'They did it!' The historic COP21 in Paris 2015 concludes. Photo by UNFCCC Flickr

Adopted in 1992, the UNFCCC sets out general principles that states must respect in order to tackle climate change, and specific obligations states must undertake in key areas such as mitigation and financial resources. The framework also establishes the annual Conference of the Parties (COP).

At these conferences, states who have signed up to the UNFCCC come together to review the implementation of the convention and subsequent international treaties and agreements on climate change. These conferences are also where new measures are agreed, and are an opportunity to set new, ambitious targets and entrench legal obligations that take steps towards climate justice. Additionally, civil society, businesses and the public with an interest occupy space outside the 'official' COP, trying to influence the outcome of the talks. The attention paid to these conferences, and the potential they have to create progress in tackling climate change, means they are often used as leveraging events.

At COP21 in Paris in 2015, nearly all of the world's states agreed to sign up to an international treaty – the Paris Agreement. The agreement sets out the aim to keep global warming to less than 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Whilst this demonstrates almost global agreement around common measures to tackle climate change, the Paris Agreement has been criticised for not being progressive enough. In particular, the agreement leaves the implementation of the 1.5 degrees Celsius target to each country through submissions of individually decided Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). So far, these have not been ambitious enough to reach the target. The Paris Agreement also leaves many of the core issues around finance for climate change unresolved. In other words, the agreement does not go far enough to ensure climate justice and protect those at the forefront of the crisis.

The 26th COP, now due to take place in Glasgow in 2021, is set to be one of the most important UN climate conferences in years. We know that in order to tackle climate change, and to ensure that those at the front line are not left behind to deal with the consequences of a crisis they did not create, the conference needs to see principles of climate justice put into action. High-emission Global North countries should take responsibility for the crisis they have created. We need to see commitment to a new global climate finance goal, and significant progress on the issue of finance for climate-change-induced loss and damage. COP26 is a key opportunity to achieve this commitment that should not be missed.

RADICAL HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

CAROLINE HICKMAN



Caroline is a psychotherapist, lecturer at the University of Bath, and a member of the Climate Psychology Alliance. She has been researching children's and young people's feelings about the climate and biodiversity crises in the UK, Nigeria, the Maldives, USA and Brazil for five years through exploring different stories, narratives and images.



Image by Tumisu from Pixabay

We need emotional biodiversity to grow radical sustainable hope.

A full range of emotional responses is needed in response to the crises we are facing. We need our despair, frustration and anger, as well as our determination, joy and courage. In the same way we need environmental biodiversity, including seagrass and rainforests, elephants, wolves, sharks and whales, we also need to be able to feel, think about and process all of our emotional responses to the changing world we are living in. By developing our emotional biodiversity, we can also develop resilience and sustainable activism.

Eco-anxiety (a fear of environmental damage or ecological disaster) is now recognised as an understandable human response to the environment and climate crisis globally. We can feel scared reading news of Australian fires, flooding around the world, devastating landscape and wildlife loss from the Amazon to the Arctic, melting glaciers and rising, warming seas, escalating extinction rates and more. It's understandably overwhelming and sometimes hard to know how to respond to these unprecedented threats.

Mental health is measured by the accuracy of our emotional responses to our perceived external reality, which is telling us to feel scared. We might also feel sadness, anger, grief, despair, shame, frustration, disbelief, hopelessness. This can be uncomfortable if we are unsure how to respond, or consider these feelings as negative. But all of these responses to the climate crisis are valuable and needed. By learning how to process responses rather than feeling overwhelmed by any single emotion, we can build the emotional resilience and intelligence needed for action.

Instead of fearing eco-anxiety, it can be turned into something constructive if reframed as eco-awareness or eco-compassion. It shows we care about the people and species facing climate challenges today. Being in touch with our hearts and having empathy can be a mentally healthy response.

A desire for hope is understandable when conversations about the climate crisis bring us face to face with our own feelings of vulnerability and fragility. But if we are wishing for a future certainty in what are uncertain times, then hope can easily be disappointed, leaving us feeling worn out or disillusioned. An emotional rollercoaster.

Arguments 'for' and warnings 'against' hope are an 'either/or' binary way of thinking. Instead we need to feel both hope and hopelessness sometimes as part of our emotional biodiversity. If we invest hope in any single solution rather than addressing systemic issues, or hope that someone and something will rescue us, then we will be disappointed. And we fear the opposite too – that hopelessness will lead to apathy and people will just 'give up' trying.

The way through this human dilemma is to develop radical hope. Radical hope means feeling courage, seeing the strength of honest vulnerability, imagining creative different futures, but not denying that things are also painful, scary and hard.

We need our hope and our hopelessness, our sadness and optimism, fear and courage, coral reefs and mangroves, earth and the oceans, internal and external activism. We need to feel sad for what we have lost whilst also imagining and fighting for the future.

Feel every emotion, listen to their wisdom and then channel them into creating a better future for all.

Caroline is passionate about getting 'under the surface' metaphorically and literally. In her spare time she loves to be underwater, preferably swimming with sharks, and in her own words, is slightly obsessed with seagrass.

Photos of green turtle (Thailand) and weedy seadragon (Australia) by Jimmy Crawford and baby blacktip reef sharks (Lang Tengah Island, Malaysia) by Ming Wei Low. You can see more on Instagram @scuba.jim and @mingweilow.



ACTIVISTS TO WATCH



EILIDH ROBB

Eilidh is a youth climate justice campaigner with the UK Youth Climate Coalition and Glasgow Calls Out Polluters. Eilidh advocates for the removal of fossil fuel actors from decision-making spaces such as the UN climate talks, and the inclusion of young people in key negotiations on the fate of their future.

"Climate dialogue can feel like a space created by adults in suits for other adults in suits. Young people are often overlooked and underappreciated in these spaces, based on false assumptions about our intelligence. Yet young people's power is our ability to simplify technical chaos into undeniable fact. Once I realised that my strength was my inability to blend in, I started to understand my unique power and what it means to be a young voice calling out decision-makers for their failure to act. While we still very much live in a world run by old white men, the youth climate movement is stepping forward with an incredible line-up of queer, female, and diverse organisers. There has never been a better time for young women to step into positions of power in the climate world; heck, the whole world! Whether that's by diving into local politics, leading protests, or initiating change in whatever spaces of influence we have. Find your people, build a strong support network, educate and grow together. Then you are unstoppable."

Which individuals come to mind when you think of environmental and climate justice movements? Is it household names such as David Attenborough, Gro Harlem Brundtland or perhaps closer to home, the Scottish-born 'Father of National Parks' John Muir? The influential work of inspiring people spanning centuries has been critical in understanding environmental change, protecting wild places and species, and continually striving towards a sustainable future that we have yet to achieve. They have paved the way for the stories of today - stories that must be given the space to come forward and be listened to.

Today, few individuals have had more influence on how the world views the climate crisis than Greta Thunberg. And whilst Greta's Fridays for Future movement has educated and engaged millions, she is not alone. Around the world young people are speaking up, taking action, starting campaigns, and leading movements.

The Young Geographer editorial team caught up with some inspirational young activists to hear their stories, insights, and advice. Their words paint a picture of the difficulties of activism but also call for other young people to join them in the fight for a better, fairer, and greener future. Here's what they had to say.



MIKAELA LOACH

Mikaela is co-host of the Yikes podcast, a writer, climate justice and anti-racism activist, and fourth-year medical student at the University of Edinburgh. She is particularly interested in campaigning for anti-racism, environmental justice and refugee rights. Visit her blog for original articles - mikaelagraceloach.wordpress.com

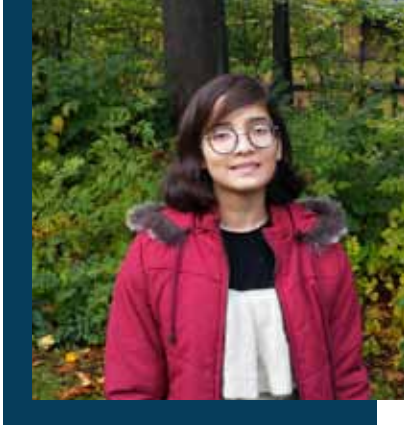
"My encouragement to all young people is this: activism works. Direct action works. Campaigning works. Our voices can and will be heard. People are listening. For me, looking at the work of people like Angela Davis - who has literally been doing activism for half a century - gives me hope. If she can keep going, we can too. There is so much benefit in being a young person in climate justice spaces but we can also learn a lot from those activists, like Davis and many Indigenous land rights defenders globally, who have been doing this work far longer than us. If we listen, always. If we continue to act. If we hold tight to values of climate justice, intersectionality and anti-oppression, then we will create a better world."



AHLYAH ALI

Ahlyah is a Muslim climate activist based in South East England. She campaigns for climate justice and systems change with UK Youth Climate Coalition, and is a Youth Advisor for The Resilience Project, which aims to build resilience into the youth climate movement. Ahlyah has also been featured in the Climate Reframe project (see page 4), which seeks to amplify the voices of people of colour in the UK environmental movement.

"Climate violence is a present reality, especially for communities most marginalised from policy spaces, but also a threat shadowing our futures as young people. Climate science is but one part of the equation; at its core, this is an issue of justice, intersecting with wider systemic inequities. And justice is something we can all understand - and speak up for. Have the courage to join in building a just world. Your voice is needed."



RIDHIMA PANDEY

Ridhima is a 13-year-old global climate activist from Uttarakhand, India. She filed a petition against the Indian Government due to their inaction to protect the environment, and in 2019, along with 15 other child petitioners including Greta Thunberg, Ridhima filed a complaint through the Convention on the Rights of the Child that alleged the failure of UN Member States to effectively tackle the climate crisis violated the rights of children. Ridhima now speaks to school and college students, and at conferences around the world, about climate change and child rights.

"Young people can experience barriers to having their voice heard if people don't take them seriously because of their age, and if the government make decisions regarding the environment without asking their opinion. Young people's opinions must be involved in decision making, especially when it comes to the environment, because our future depends on the decisions taken today."



LILLY PLATT

At the age of 12, Lilly has already demonstrated a tenacious approach to activism and has established herself as an international environmental champion from the Netherlands. She is a dedicated Youth Ambassador for Earth.org, Plastic Pollution Coalition, World Ocean Day Italy, and YouthMundus Festival Initiative. After attending the UN World Ocean Day Panel 2020, Lilly is extremely inspired by their work and plans to work more with them in future.

"It has been two years since the climate strikes began and I am three weeks behind Greta. Whilst the movement has grown, so have the negative comments but don't listen to these! Your actions, even though small, will help the ripple, then the wave that will help save the world. Jane Goodall told me it just takes one person to make a change so keep going. If you want to be an environmentalist or activist you don't need anything but the belief that what you are doing is the right thing and for the right cause."



ELIZABETH WATHUTI

Elizabeth is an award-winning, passionate environmentalist and climate activist from Kenya. Amongst other roles, she is the founder of Green Generation Initiative (GGI), and the Head of Campaigns and coordinator of Daima coalition for the protection of urban green spaces at the Wangari Maathai Foundation. Due to her outstanding passion, leadership and personal commitment to environmental conservation and societal issues, she received the Wangari Maathai Scholarship Award from The Greenbelt Movement, Kenya Community Development Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundation.

"Aside from being the passive victims of the climate crisis, young people have stepped up to the challenge and are fighting back to secure a liveable world and a safe future. We want a future that is equitable, inclusive, and just... this will only be possible if everyone – individuals, civil society, governments, parastatals, and all the people in power – begin to treat the climate crisis as an emergency."



HOLLY GILLIBRAND

Holly is a 15-year-old environmentalist, activist and writer from Fort William. She has been involved in the Fridays for Future movement since January 2019, when she began striking every Friday to demand action on the climate and ecological emergency. Holly has since become a young ambassador for Scotland: The Big Picture, the Future Rewilding Voice for Heal Rewilding and an environmental columnist for the Lochaber Times.

"A key barrier young people face is our inability to vote, which means we can't speak out about the climate and nature crises in elections, even when the actions of our leaders today will impact us for the rest of our lives. Our age can also be used against us - people say we are naive, brainwashed and can't think for ourselves. Especially as a teenager, getting involved in environmental activism can be a difficult thing to do because you are putting yourself out there at a time in your life when being 'different' is often seen as a bad thing. I can't vote but that won't stop me making an impact. Voting, though important (so please do vote), is only one of many ways to make a difference."

GRACE TWUM

Grace is a 19-year-old, Black, Human Geography and Environment student at the University of York. She has been a regional organiser for the People and Planet network, Prophetic activist for Christian Aid Collective, and is currently the Global Coordinator for Just Love York.

"Being a Black, Christian, Geographer has been a struggle in becoming a 'trailblazer' in climate dialogue. After questioning my identity, I pursued platforms that appreciated the intersectional nature of climate and social justice which allowed my voice to be heard and my unique perspective to be appreciated. There is always a place for you to belong."





The shrinking Lake Chad as seen from above at sunset. Photo by aroundtheworld.photography



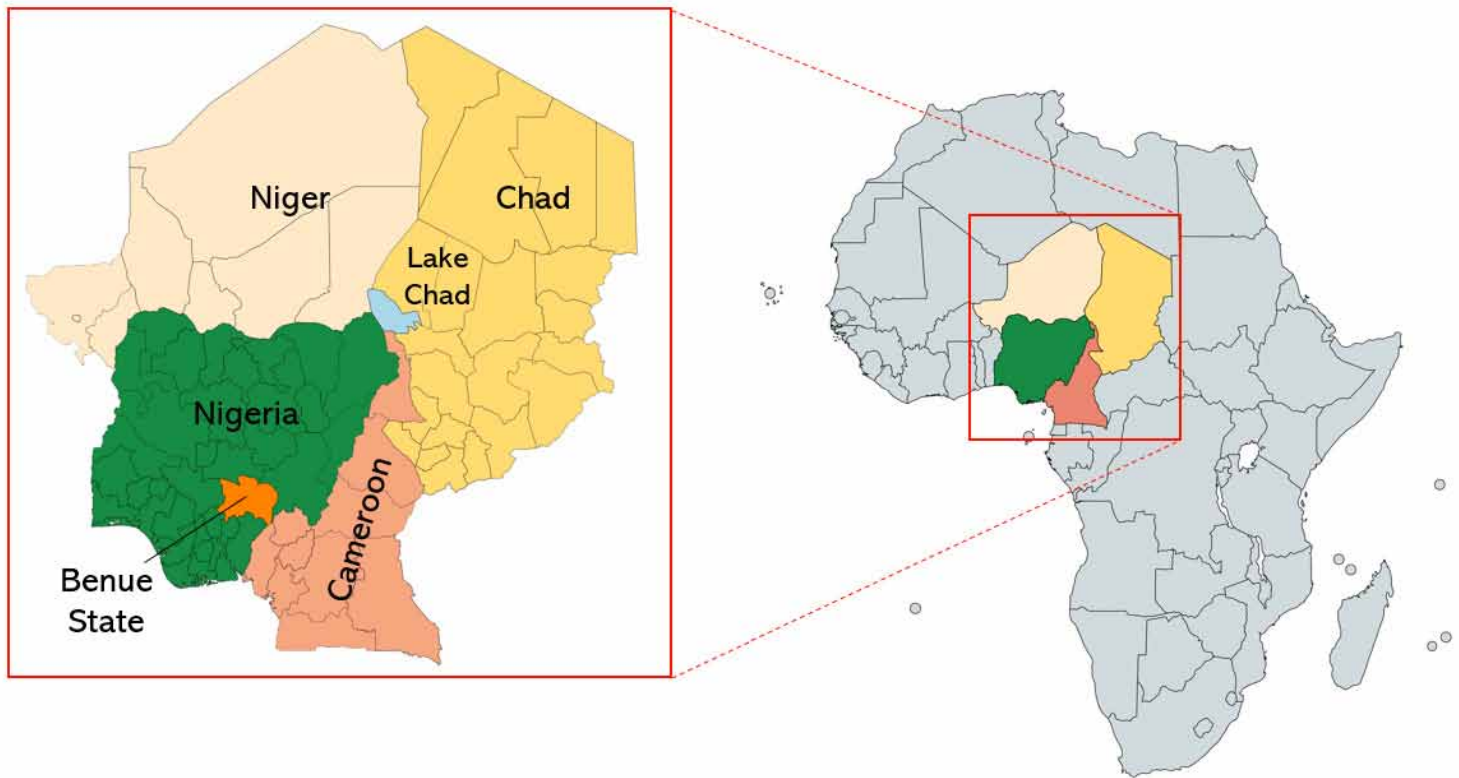
WE ARE AFRICANS: TAKING ACTION & CREATING CHANGE

OLADOSU ADENIKE

Oladosu is a 26-year-old climate justice activist from Nigeria. She has brought the pan-Africa movement – ILeadClimate – into the limelight; which champions using the green democracy initiative for peace building and the restoration of Lake Chad. In 2019, Oladosu was awarded Amnesty International Nigeria's Ambassador of Conscience Award which recognises individuals focussed on protecting human rights and challenging injustice.

My name is Oladosu Adenike Titilope; I am an ecofeminist, climate justice activist, first class graduate in Agricultural Economics, and the founder of the ILeadClimate campaign. I grew up in a small Nigerian community with stable temperatures and predictable rainfall patterns that suited the planting season. There was no flooding or clashes between the farmers and herdsmen. However, the ideal climate of my childhood changed as years went by and the impacts of climate change were felt. Now we are contending with climate change in all of our decisions and its impacts dovetail with socio-economic problems such as terrorism, poverty, food insecurity and more.

For example, my university was located in Benue State, known as the 'Food Basket of the Nation'. It has lush, fertile land and produces most of our food. During the dry season of recent years there have been frequent clashes between the farmers in Benue State and nomadic herdsmen who, due to increasing desertification and drought, are having to travel further and further to find pasture for their cattle. Each group places blame on the other, rather than addressing the main issues at stake, which has led to further harm and risks the development of an ethno-religious war if the crisis isn't addressed. It is not an ethnic issue or a religious issue - it is a climate change issue.



Climate change in Nigeria is a threat to our peace and security. In April 2014, 276 schoolgirls were kidnapped by terrorists in Chibok, Borno State. Four years later, school girls were kidnapped in Dapachi, Yobe State. These states are among the closest to the shrinking Lake Chad and the link between violence and environmental degradation is not a coincidence. Lake Chad borders Nigeria, Niger, Cameroon and Chad, and provides water to over 30 million people. Since the 1960s the lake has shrunk by 90%. About 10.7 million people have been displaced, over 2.3 million face food insecurity and there have been droughts, flooding and increased violence. I believe peace and climate change are inherently linked and the root cause of the problem must be addressed, so advocating for the restoration of Lake Chad to its original size is the same as advocating for peace, which is something I did at COP25 in Madrid. Further, as an eco-feminist, I recognise that women and girls are more likely to experience climate change risks and impacts, so the gender impacts of every potential solution need to be considered.

My activism also reflects the fact that our environment is left behind in human affairs and we need to rethink our systems to change this. In the past, democracy has been for the people, by the people, and of the people. But now we need a democracy that is for the environment as well. Human rights cannot be protected when there is environmental instability. Famine, poverty, and environmental disasters all impact the rights of people to access education, food, healthcare, and everything else that we need to have good wellbeing. We live in peacetime yet it can feel like war: millions of livelihoods have been

crippled and there is a rising death toll due to Covid-19. We will all be impacted in some way as the climate crisis causes catastrophic change, increasingly severe natural disasters and further climate emergencies.

The climate solutions that work for one country might not help others, so to create meaningful change you need to design action that suits local environmental conditions. We can all continually raise awareness and hold leaders to account yet the ability to strive further depends on inclusiveness. For me, education is the first step towards creating a change. So we engage at the top but also importantly at all levels of society; through continuous advocacy, because meaningful action will not happen if those with least agency, such as rural communities, are left behind.

Alongside countries working towards meeting the Paris Agreement's targets, we need communities to keep developing and taking action. The threats of climate change continue to multiply and so multi-dimensional solutions are needed and must be supported. Those offering solutions must be empowered to make them a reality, often through the provision of funding. We have the ideas and we have the willpower to achieve them but often our work is paid for by our own money and it's not enough. It's vital that countries follow through on their commitments to provide funding to support local action against climate change, if such action is to be successful.

No single person can save everyone's future: we need to work together in order to have a meaningful impact. And no voice is too little to make a difference. The movement for change becomes stronger and expands when we are all empowered to do more.

LISTENING TO WOMEN IN RURAL MALAWI

EILIDH WATSON



Climate justice brings a human rights angle to the climate crisis. By working together (rich and poor, men and women, children and adults) it is possible to create a better future for all. It is widely known that climate change effects are felt by those least responsible for the crisis, those in the Global South. The range of solutions that will make the difference to climate change are vast and should put justice at the centre, e.g. improving health, providing education for all and reducing global inequalities. Here Eilidh, a PhD student at the Centre for Climate Justice, Glasgow Caledonian University, discusses her research into climate justice in Malawi.

Alongside addressing climate change, improving access to electricity is a global challenge that requires urgent attention. I believe creative solutions to climate change and electricity access challenges could produce mutual benefits for each other, and so I am exploring this relationship as part of my PhD studies. I accept that superficially, these two themes might seem to be at odds with each other. Our unhealthy relationship with fossil fuels to meet our energy demands has caused significant harm to our shared home. However, improving access to electricity is vital, and must be achieved with clean and renewable technologies. Across the Global South, there are still many people who do not have access to clean or affordable energy for heating and cooking or lack reliable access to electricity entirely.

Limited or unreliable access to electricity is an energy justice issue, whereby the poorest and most marginalised, who are affected by climate change impacts the most, frequently live with no electricity. Meanwhile, improving electricity access has been demonstrated to have direct and indirect benefits for gender equality, education, poverty, health, as well as for safety and security. My research argues that improving pathways and access to clean and affordable energy will not only benefit the planet and protect it for future generations, but also positively transform the lives of millions of people.

The interrelated issues of climate justice and energy justice can be seen from a gender perspective in rural parts of Malawi, where around 80% of the country's population reside. Of those, 97% have no reliable access to electricity and for the few that do, the supply is inconsistent. Here, it is commonly accepted that women are the ones responsible for securing energy sources for the home, and the impacts of climate change are making this more challenging.

Women are more likely to spend increased time collecting energy resources, such as firewood, which curtails other activities, including education or professional work. Furthermore, they are more likely to experience

respiratory health problems, as they are exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution from poor ventilation associated with burning charcoal and firewood when cooking. These energy justice issues compound existing gender equality challenges in Malawi. Addressing this inequality with climate conscious solutions is therefore very important for Malawian women and girls.

Currently, there are a wide range of technological solutions available that can assist in providing sustainable and clean electricity. However, technology alone does little to address the root causes of insufficient access to electricity. It fails to consider the needs and views of the Malawian women, resulting in low adoption levels.

Whilst improving access to clean and reliable electricity in rural communities in Malawi will have benefits for all, there are direct health, environmental, and social benefits for women. Some positive steps have been taken to improve energy access in rural areas through the Government's rural electrification programme. However, more needs to be done to collaborate directly with women, who have first-hand knowledge and experience of energy issues. Working together to find solutions can greatly improve the quality of life of women and girls and provide more equal opportunities to pursue their personal goals.

Through collaborating with women in rural communities, I aim to adequately convey their experiences, perspectives and solutions to inform policy and technological implementation of climate conscious energy solutions in Malawi. For a long time, women have been viewed as victims of energy poverty and climate change; I believe they should instead be part of the solution and be given space to use their knowledge and experience to help shape their own futures.

"Never underestimate the value of listening and truly hearing someone. Taking time to listen speaks volumes in itself."

INVESTING IN PARTNERSHIPS THAT EMPOWER

REBECCA DUNN

Rebecca is the Store Manager of gift and crafts store Ten Thousand Villages in Pasadena, California. Founded in 1946, Ten Thousand Villages was the first fair trade retailer in the world. A responsibility to people and planet is core to their business model, which has adapted to meet the growing market without sacrificing ethical and sustainable practices. The organisation works in 30 developing countries, supporting 20,000 artists and their families. Many of these artisan partnerships have been in place for decades; securing livelihoods whilst sharing their talents and crafts with the US market. By investing in partnerships with those who are traditionally excluded from the global economy, Ten Thousand Villages is taking steps toward breaking the cycle of poverty. The Young Geographer team sat down with Rebecca to hear some of her stories about the organisation's impact.

BREAKING DOWN THE BARRIERS OF STIGMA

Right on the border of India and Nepal is a bustling workshop called Little Flower. The artisans that work there are skilled silk spinners and cotton weavers. Their scarves are high quality, their blankets will keep you cosy, and their hand-dyed pillows are almost too good to take a nap on.

The fair trade group employs around 70 artisans, mostly women, and is part of MESH's (Maximising Employment to Serve the Handicapped) network of workshops across India that empowers people with physical disabilities or leprosy.

There is a harsh stigma against those who have contracted leprosy in India, despite the fact that it is curable. Those who have leprosy often go untreated for long periods, can lose the use of hands or limbs, are discriminated against, and are sometimes abandoned by their families. Without access to jobs, many turn to begging. MESH provides empowering opportunities for people who would otherwise find it difficult to secure steady and fair employment.

By empowering the talents, perspectives and gifts of those who are often excluded from society, we create a wealth of creativity and innovation together. When you invest in an inclusive economy by supporting the work of our fair trade partners, everybody has the opportunity to flourish.

EMPOWERED WOMEN EMPOWER WOMEN

A woman's ability to earn an income strengthens her position in her family and community. In fact, research shows that when women are empowered, sustainable economies develop, as shown by the women of Uganda Crafts. Founded and led by Betty Kinene, who was struggling to provide for her own family, Uganda Crafts has created opportunities for women since 1983. They are a member of the World Fair Trade Organization and have built a robust export business of traditional baskets, that support the livelihoods of single mothers and widows.



Photo by Ten Thousand Villages



Photo by Ten Thousand Villages

CASTING A LIGHT ON THE CASTE SYSTEM

The United Nations Human Rights Council describes the caste system as "an occupational system, whereby people, according to their descent, undertake certain professions that are generally considered to be menial." As a result, members of society face job discrimination, as well as being marginalised in almost all aspects of life including education, housing, and access to clean drinking water and healthcare.

When Laura and Enzo married and bought a plot of land in Bangladesh, they specifically wanted to work with marginalised members of the 'untouchable' Rishi caste to create income generating opportunities. They knew that, given the chance, the Rishi could use their skills to earn money for themselves instead of being reliant upon charity. With this belief in mind, they founded the fair trade nonprofit organisation Rishilpi. Now the group employs and empowers about 2,000 skilled artisans who invest their surplus income earned from weaving baskets into community development programmes like schools and clinics.



GREATEST HOPE

SPOTLIGHT ON CLAIRE ANTEREA JAMIE LIVINGSTONE, FRSGS

Jamie Livingstone has been Head of Oxfam Scotland since 2013, leading a team working to end poverty in Scotland while contributing to campaigns on inequality, conflict and the climate emergency. He is a former print and broadcast journalist, a Board member of Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, and a Fellow of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society.

Claire Anterea's greatest hope is that her country stays on the map. For Claire, the threat of her home being swallowed by the sea is increasingly real. She lives in Kiribati, a large ocean state comprised of 32 atolls and one raised coral island, in the central Pacific Ocean.

Almost the entire land area, including the main population centre of South Tarawa, lies less than three metres above sea level. Kiribati is considered one of the most vulnerable countries on Earth to the impacts of climate change.

"My islands are only 50 metres, 100 metres wide," Claire told my Oxfam colleagues. "If I move in further and further and the sea keeps on eating my islands, I will reach the other side of the land. I'm scared. And I'm scared for my people."

People like Claire, who live in the world's atoll nations, face a truly existential threat. It's a cruel irony that while the world's poorest communities are being hit first and worst by the climate emergency, they did least to cause it.

According to new Oxfam research, the carbon emissions of the richest 1% globally are more than double those of the poorest half of the world. While this wealthy minority plunder the planet through over-consumption, it is poor communities and young people who will pay the price, now and in the future.

That's why the richest people everywhere, including in Scotland, have a moral duty to act and to act quickly.

Global emissions have fallen during the pandemic but, if they rebound, temperatures will crash through the critical threshold of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial level in just nine years, hitting vulnerable communities even harder.

In late 2021, representatives from 195 countries will arrive in Glasgow for landmark UN climate talks, known as COP26. While the UK is President of the talks, as home to the host city, the Scottish Government has a one-off opportunity to influence global climate action.

Encouragingly, Scotland can point to legal climate targets which are amongst the strongest in the Global North: by 2045, only producing the volume of emissions we can remove from the atmosphere through activities like maintaining peatlands – so-called ‘net zero’. And, given the need for fast action, our 2030 target to cut emissions by 75% compared to 1990 is particularly significant.

However, we cannot be complacent: while Scotland's emissions have already halved since 1990, this year's annual target was missed and emissions began to creep upwards again.

With 68% of people in Scotland believing climate change is an “immediate and urgent problem” – and the biggest increase recorded among 16 to 24-year-olds – the Scottish Parliament must ramp up action. It must do so in ways, like home insulation, that recognise that those with the least also suffer most in Scotland: 279,000 households here face “extreme fuel poverty.”

But as one of the first countries to industrialise, action must include repaying our mounting debt to the communities internationally who are most affected by our actions.

The Scottish Government's innovative Climate Justice Fund supports the world's poorest communities to cope but has remained frozen at just £3m a year since 2016; losing value despite spiralling climate devastation.

Oxfam analysis shows rich countries are falling far short of their promise to support poor countries to adapt to the climate crisis while also helping them to cut their own emissions.

The Scottish Government must lead by example, by increasing the Fund to at least match the International Development Fund – currently £10 million a year, around 0.02% of Scotland's nearly £50 billion annual budget. It should set the strongest possible international example by increasing the Climate Justice Fund through progressive taxes on high emitters, high earners, or wealth.

Every political party must then use May 2021's Scottish election to demonstrate to the people of Scotland, and a watching world, that our commitment runs deeper than ambitious long-term promises.

Scotland may be 10,000 miles away from Kiribati, but decisions taken in capitals like Edinburgh, and at meetings like COP26, will be felt most acutely by people like Claire Anterea.

“I know my voice is tiny,” she says. “But if those leaders in the world listened to our story, listened to our struggle each day, if they listened to us with their hearts, I believe that would make a difference.”

“You are the leaders and voters of tomorrow; but you are also critical to the world's future today and therefore can't afford to wait to make your voices heard. The world is on fire and climate change threatens to steal your future. But change is possible; movements of ordinary people can and do change history. The abolishment of slavery. Women's right to vote. Liberation from apartheid.

Now people are uniting to rise again to tackle the biggest challenge humanity has ever faced; the global climate crisis, and young people have a crucial role to play.

Your leadership can create the space for others to follow. With COP26 coming to Glasgow this year, now is the time for young people across Scotland to step forward and tell our political leaders that the plundering of our planet ends right here, right now. Because all of our futures depend upon it.”

Photos by Ula Majewski/ OxfamAUS

Page before: Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati: Claire Anterea, 39, stands in front of the lagoon.

Below left: Jamie Livingstone, Head of Oxfam Scotland

Below right: Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati: Claire stands by a broken seawall near the airport, on the ocean side of South Tarawa. There used to be land behind her, but now the sea has eaten it away. Claire works for KiriCAN (Kiribati Climate Action Network) and is one of the country's leading climate advocates.



ANNIHILATION OF NATIONS - WHAT CAN PEOPLE DO WHEN THEIR COUNTRY IS DISAPPEARING?

KITTY DUTTON



Sea walls are one of the coastal defence systems designed to protect against sea level rise. Photo by Pok Rie, Pexels

The Republic of the Maldives is an island nation in the Indian Ocean and is the flattest country on Earth with a highest point of only three metres above sea level. By 2100, around 80% of its land could be underwater due to rising sea levels caused by climate change. To put this into context, this would be the equivalent in Scotland of everywhere but the Highlands being lost to the sea. The Maldives is not alone in this threat; other island nations, such as Kiribati in the Pacific Ocean, and flat coastal countries, such as Bangladesh, are facing the same fate.

So, faced with potential extinction, what can these countries do to survive? First, they have been trying for decades to stop sea levels rising by limiting greenhouse gas emissions and the warming they cause. As most emissions are caused by larger, developed countries like the UK, limiting emissions by enough is not something small island states can directly control. Instead they have had to raise awareness of their plight and appeal to other countries to act. In 2009, Mohamed Nasheed - then president of the Maldives - made international headlines by holding a cabinet meeting underwater to highlight the threat of global warming.

They have also worked together to gain more influence. After the 2015 UN climate change conference, COP21, every country in the world signed up to the Paris Agreement - a commitment to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius and at most 2 degrees Celsius. This 0.5 degrees Celsius difference may not sound like much but it could be the difference between survival and annihilation for many small island states. The more stringent 1.5 degrees

Celsius target was only included because the small island states formed a negotiating bloc and worked together to make it clear that they would prevent any agreement being reached that would not save their countries from destruction.

Even if warming is limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius - and that's a big if - there will still be some sea level rise threatening low-lying countries. Many have invested in engineering solutions to help minimise the damage that this will cause. For example, sea walls can be built to help prevent flooding and to absorb damaging energy from waves. These walls are very expensive to build though. An even more expensive option is to construct entirely new artificial islands at greater heights above the sea, but most countries would need a lot of financial aid to do this.

As well as hard-engineering solutions like these, countries are investing more in nature-based solutions. For instance, restoring wetlands, mangroves, marshes, and oyster reefs can help absorb energy and significantly reduce the height of waves, whilst also binding the soil with their roots to stop it being washed away. Such natural solutions are very effective and are often more accessible to poorer communities than expensive man-made structures.

The final, worst-case scenario is for the islanders to leave their countries and move somewhere new. It cannot be overstated how great a loss this would be - a loss of culture, of community, of history, of the place where people were born, grew up, where their ancestors lived and are buried, and yet it is the terrible decision that the leaders and residents of these

countries now must face. The Maldives considered purchasing land in other countries (including India, Sri Lanka, and Australia) for the entire country to move to, though has since decided to prioritise engineering solutions instead. Kiribati, on the other hand, is pursuing a policy of 'Migration with Dignity'. Former President Anote Tong encouraged his people to develop skills to find work in other countries. Kiribati has also purchased land within the nation of Fiji. This land is not enough to resettle the entire nation but it will allow Kiribati to grow food if their soil is contaminated with salt water from coastal flooding. Even if every person on Kiribati could move to Fiji, they wouldn't be allowed to be a country anymore but would have to obey the Fijian government and laws. The people would survive but their country would not.

There are no easy solutions to the problems faced by small island and low-lying coastal states. They are facing the worst effects of a problem that is not their fault. The countries responsible for climate change that have benefitted from burning fossil fuels, including the UK, have a moral duty to make amends. While it's not possible to truly compensate people for the loss of their country, there are some things we can do to help. First, we can limit our emissions as quickly as possible to stop sea level rise. Second, we can help develop and pay for some of the engineering solutions these countries need to stop sea water destroying their lands. And third, we can open our borders and offer islanders, forced from their land by the climate change we caused, a new place to call home.

CONTESTED BOUNDARIES: PEOPLE, LAW, AND OIL PIPELINES

SAM PRAUS & JASMINE EPPELSHEIMER

Sam is Co-Director and Jasmine is Assistant Producer of feature-length documentary 'NECESSITY: Oil, Water and Climate Resistance'. NECESSITY traces the fight in Minnesota against the expansion of pipelines carrying tar sands oil through Native lands and waterways. The documentary follows Indigenous leaders and non-Indigenous allies who use direct action methods to protect their sacred land and demand justice. One key question is posed: is civil disobedience necessary in a climate emergency?

This is a story of everyday people and their fight to save the planet. It's a David and Goliath struggle against one of the world's most powerful industries: companies involved in the transport of fossil fuels through a vast interlocking network of pipelines, ships, trains and terminals.

As climate change protests and activism continue to gain momentum, the focus on legal strategies within the climate movement has gained new urgency as well. Through NECESSITY, we consider what legal tactics are required and what activists need to know about their legal risks and rights? What are the lessons to learn from Indigenous knowledge on the front lines of the climate movement? What vision of change are these activists calling for?

As scientists call for dramatic reductions in fossil fuel usage to avert a global catastrophe, oil companies continue to ramp up production and transport. The oil infrastructure that supports this need is extensive. Pipelines challenge colonial borders between states, countries, treaty-imposed boundaries and cross through reservations and traditional Anishinaabe hunting and fishing areas.

Producers face a formidable foe, however, as citizens in different regions of the country literally put their bodies on the line to stop the flow of oil. This direct action is for a reason - it is Indigenous groups and communities of colour who suffer the most immediate, disproportionate and severe consequences of the climate crisis. These consequences include impacts on physical and mental health, as well as displacement and environmental degradation.

The climate emergency requires new ways of thinking about so many aspects of life, from health care, housing, food production and consumption, to jobs and communities. But it also requires new ways of thinking about films and storytelling. Often climate change documentaries focus on the scope of the threat, rather than the experiences of activists or those on the front line of resistance. As educators and academics as well as filmmakers, the team sought to go beyond documenting climate impacts.

Instead, the documentary aims to deepen viewers' knowledge of the climate crisis' roots in environmental



racism, as well as the legal rights and risks of activists. In learning about these issues, the film equips viewers to consider direct action and other legal strategies, and shows how the 19th century treaty rights and Indigenous struggles to protect tribal lands are relevant to climate resistance today. The plights of tribal communities resisting fossil fuel infrastructure are, in ways, part of a larger struggle for the survival of all humanity. And in recognition that bold action is needed to tackle the climate crisis and that people engage in group forms of resistance upon realising goals cannot be reached alone, the term 'necessity' was selected as the title.

This decade is a time of peril and possibilities, a time of tremendous urgency that requires thoughtfulness as well as passionate commitment. Youth and elders alike need to be prepared, to know their rights, and to learn from history and from the lessons of those on the front lines.

We hope those who watch and discuss the film come away with a greater readiness to support and engage in direct action - both as a result of the inspiring stories and vistas of the film and because they understand better the history and legal grounding of this movement.

Stay connected and follow how the stories unfold on Facebook & Instagram: @necessitythemovie



WILDFIRES & JUSTICE

ALLEAH SCHWEITZER

Alleah Schweitzer MA coordinates the Farm to Early Care and Education programme with the University of Idaho Extension. As a key collaborator in Idaho's farm to school movement, she is dedicated to strengthening community food systems through the empowerment of young children, families, educators, and local farms. Alleah specialises in curriculum development, nutrition education, and organic gardening to build long-term equity and resilience strategies in the communities she serves.

Climate change happens in my backyard. This is the disturbing fate one accepts living on the west coast of the United States in 2020. As professionals working in the fields of wildlife biology and resilient food systems, the warning signs were evident to my partner and I before 2020. Three years ago, we left the relentless carnival of traffic, smog, and record-breaking temperatures in our bustling California city for the rural, mountainous state of Idaho. The summer of 2020, it didn't matter where we lived on the west coast – polluted air filled our lungs once more.

Many believe that the worst fire season in Californian history began when a freakish storm of 14,000 lightning strikes ignited more than three million acres of combustible vegetation in August. Respectfully, I disagree. As untimely and as exceptional as that lightning storm was, the fires began when the United States, and other wealthy nations for that matter, embraced the socio-economic tradition of resource extraction, environmental exploitation, and colonisation. The accumulation of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere, driven by society's extensive use of fossil fuels, are to blame for rising global temperatures that

trigger hotter and drier conditions in places like the western United States, Australia's South Coast, the Amazon rainforest, southern parts of Africa, and even the Arctic Circle. More heatwaves and prolonged droughts mean we will contend with more frequent and ferocious wildfires globally. According to Daniel Swain, a climate scientist at University of California, Los Angeles, "climate change...is changing the character of the wildfires irrespective of ignition sources. There are so many ways to start a fire." Lightning or not, parched grasslands and forests are ticking time bombs.

As unusually high temperatures gripped the Pacific and intermountain west, grasslands burned and mountains vanished behind a thick veil of white haze. Despite our home stinking of campfire smoke for over a month, we considered ourselves lucky - we still had a home. But that doesn't mean we escaped the wildfires' emotional toll. In one summer, we mourned with friends over the loss of their family's house to the Lightning Complex Fire. We consoled my fiancé's parents in San Jose when they barricaded themselves indoors for five weeks because of hazardous air quality. We felt sorrow for our friend in Portland when her dog developed pneumonia





Photo by Pixabay, user 272447

from excessive smoke inhalation. We lost sleep over our firefighting friends risking their lives to battle increasingly dangerous infernos. If these are the experiences of privileged, middle-class Americans, one cannot begin to imagine the despair disadvantaged families feel when navigating the unprecedented fire season of 2020 as well as the global Covid-19 pandemic.

Although the fires threatened millions of Americans, they did not impact us equally. The social, economic, and health burdens fell hardest on underrepresented front line workers, low-income communities, people of colour, and vulnerable populations such as children and the elderly.

Farmworkers across the west, many of them immigrants or undocumented workers, continued to work in unhealthy conditions without the security of affordable healthcare. In California, prison inmates were paid a paltry sum of \$2 an hour to support fire crews whenever labour was scarce. Homeless wildfire evacuees from California and Oregon had little choice but to shelter in overcrowded evacuation centres during the Covid-19 pandemic. Hazardous air quality jeopardised the health of people with asthma and respiratory conditions. But Americans' wellbeing is not inextricably linked to the land

as it is for many Indigenous peoples around the world. As we forge ahead on the path of indifference, burning fossil fuels for the economic benefit of a few wealthy nations, how will Indigenous subsistence societies be unjustly burdened by our actions?

If the wildfires can teach us one thing, it is that disadvantaged groups will disproportionately suffer from the adverse effects of climate change. Even the backyards of the richest nations are not immune when leaders fail to respond and lead proactively. Denying climate science, snubbing Indigenous knowledge, and failing to unite behind green solutions resulted in apathy at the most critical hour.

But hope, change, and resilience are still possible at the local level. Following the unprecedented bushfires on Australia's South Coast this past January, Aboriginal communities including the Walbanja revealed that their tradition of controlled 'cultural burning' is being embraced by private landowners and management agencies.

When we focus on regenerating native landscapes, embracing Indigenous wisdom, and revitalising community involvement, our future looks a little brighter.

"I encourage anyone leading our climate change response to recognise the role of emotions like fear, guilt, and helplessness as powerful immobilisers of individual and collective action. We will inspire meaningful solutions through common creativity, hope, and empowerment."



CLIMATE JUSTICE BOOK CLUB

EVE GEORGIEVA



Eve works as a senior service designer in the Scottish public sector. She aims to help design a more sustainable world which makes life easier for people. Eve is on the Board of Trustees for 2050 Climate Group, a youth-led charity in Scotland empowering young people to take action on climate change. In her spare time, Eve is a mentor with a charity supporting care-experienced and disadvantaged young people.

The recent wave of the Black Lives Matter movement re-emphasised the urgency for White people to educate ourselves about how to be proactively anti-racist. This work is particularly important in the climate sector as environmental justice is directly linked to racial justice. Like many others, I wanted to put time aside to listen, understand and reflect.

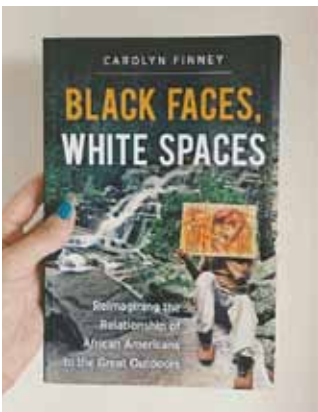
Taking inspiration from Jessica J Lee who started the #alliesinthelandscape reading club on Twitter, I formed a Climate Justice Book Club. The club focuses on readings that help us understand how race shapes our experiences of the outdoors. We're a group of 11 active readers who meet regularly to discuss each month's readings.

Whilst deciding on which book we should read first, I came across my first challenge. I needed a book that is widely accessible to purchase in different UK locations as well as available in different formats, such as paperback, audiobook and digital. I had my heart set on *Trace* by Lauret Savoy, but it was impossible to find. It was a stark reminder of how Black authors are underrepresented within the publishing industry. Recent reports have shown that only 6% of published authors in the UK are people of colour.

This means that books by Black writers about nature are not as widely accessible to purchase as books on the same topic by White authors. I felt that this was a crucial reason for the Climate Justice Book Club to exist.

In the past two months, our focus has been on understanding and our readings were:

- *Black Faces, White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors* by Carolyn Finney.
- A short online excerpt from *How to be Anti-Racist* by Ibram X Kendi.



Black Faces, White Spaces explores why African Americans are underrepresented when it comes to environmental organisations, outdoor activities, and recreation in the United States. The author looks at cultural studies, critical race and gender relations, ethnography, and geography to show how legacies such as Jim Crow laws (laws that enforced racial segregation), slavery and racial violence have all shaped our own understanding of nature and the outdoors.

The book discusses how the power of memory shapes our interactions with the environment. Acts of terror are remembered, both for the place where it happened and the act itself. For many, the disconnect to some outdoor spaces or places is linked to the collective memory of Black people and individual memories of personal experience.

The book shows that it is difficult for African Americans to have an uncomplicated relationship with nature. The racialised experiences of nature were systemically mediated by institutions, policies, and social norms. Our environmental narrative lacks consideration of the historical story of pain and prejudice experienced by Black people.

Environment organisations are primarily White and middle class. A 1975 study in the United States found that 98% of environmental volunteers were White. Despite being over 40 years later, UK figures have shown similar numbers in recent years. Last year the Sierra Club (one of the oldest and largest environmental organisations in the USA) apologised for the racist and White supremacist remarks by club founder John Muir - comments he made more than a century ago.

The legacies of White people are also perpetuated by popular media. Simple things like postcards - can you remember the last time you saw a postcard of outdoors with a Black person or a person of colour? Ingrid Pollard wrote how she feels about visiting the Lake District: "... it's as if the black experience is only ever lived within an urban environment.

I thought I liked the Lake District; where I wandered lonely as a black face in a sea of white. A visit to the countryside is always accompanied by a feeling of unease; dread."

White environmental organisations need to prioritise working on anti-racism from the inside and learn how to make anti-racist policies. As Ibram X Kendi states, do-nothing policies are racist policies, as the predominantly non-White Global South is a victim of climate change more than the Whiter Global North. Our ultimate goal should not be integration but equity and equality. Build reading Black authors into your life and I challenge you to buy more books from Black-owned bookstores.



Photo by Amelia Masters, Instagram @ameliacaudia

"The (re)learning we need to do is an opportunity that was presented by 2020, not a chore. Take the time to read, discuss, reflect, act and rest. We can't learn everything right now so focus on making lists, taking the time to read, sitting with discomfort, and writing reflections."

Reflection questions

- How did the readings impact you?
- What are the areas in which you might act differently?
- When was the first time you read a book about nature/landscape by a Black author?
- If you haven't read many or any, why might that be?
- Which voices shaped your ideas of wonder in nature?
- What are your experiences of land and belonging, and how does this compare to Black people's experiences?
- How can you make space for and elevate Black voices in your field sustainably?

Read more of Eve's book suggestions at eve-georgieva.medium.com

ANTHROPOCENE: THE HUMAN EPOCH

Film Review by Yasmin Luqman

Anthropocene: The Human Epoch (2018) bleakly portrays the dire effects of human influence on our natural world. The film brilliantly juxtaposes scenes at the beginning and end showing the results of elephant poaching in Nairobi, Kenya; sandwiching them around a number of cases of climate change effects on communities around the world. The film begins with a scene in Nairobi showing a group of Kenyans setting up piles and piles of elephant tusks. The viewer could reasonably anticipate that the people are poachers who are preparing to sell the tusks to be turned into precious ivory jewellery and luxury goods. It later transpires they are activists and the group has gathered to burn the tusks and take a stand against elephant poaching. Prior to this final pseudo-plot twist, a man surrounded by intricately carved tusks describes the value of ivory, but reveals they are actually mammoth tusks that have been perfectly preserved for thousands of years, adding an additional chilling example of unlimited human greed. On the murky surface, the key theme throughout is

the effects of human-made climate change on our natural world. This was clear through the copious examples of mining, extraction, deforestation, and waste mismanagement. However, these are all effects of late-stage capitalism. Mass global consumption of non-renewable natural resources combined with the impact and lasting effects of colonialism has ultimately led to a system where people in positions of wealth can consume and consume without considering from where their food, belongings, and energy originates. Those in poorer countries – and more likely than not former European colonies – deal with the side effects of this mass consumption and waste. Overall, the film's message is clear: that action is desperately needed to prevent further destruction to the planet and particularly to the most vulnerable people on it. It achieves this through magnificent cinematography and a few sombre voiceovers, but much of the message is communicated through the film's imagery.

KOFI & LARTEY

HARRIETTE WRIGHT

Harriette is an award-winning film and commercials producer. After a decade creating films for some of London's top ad agencies, Harriette decided to shift focus to her love of documentaries. Her first short film, Kofi and Larthey, which is about two boys growing up on an electronic waste dump, swept up an impressive selection of awards including Best of Fest at Aesthetica Film Festival 2019 and is now in production as a feature documentary.



Film has a unique power to seep into our unconscious and stay with us long after the minutes that roll on screen. And while facts and figures can be confronting and thought-provoking, human stories that mirror the relationships, emotions, moments of our own lives, can mean the difference between an audience watching passively or inducing a shift in perspective. Seeing some part of ourselves in a story can ignite an empathy that moves us to act.

Kofi and Larthey tells the story of two best friends and one man's mission to get them off an electronic waste dump and into the world. The documentary is set in Agbogbloshie, Ghana, one of the largest e-waste dumps on Earth – where used electronics (mobile phones, refrigerators, computers, televisions etc) from across the globe are shipped and dumped like landfill. The items are then burned down to extract valuable metals which can be resold. This method is efficient and cheap but the toxic fumes that the burning plastics release cause serious harm to the environment, the health of scrap workers and the surrounding community.

The scale of this daily burning is extraordinary and it impacts a community of over 40,000 people. As a result, it is common to find serious and sometimes terminal diagnoses among those who live and work in Agbogbloshie, and for local children to suffer impairments as their brains develop. Whilst the process is quick, cheap and profitable for scrap workers, it is far from the ideal way for us to be dealing with used electronics. Many of the items that end up in Agbogbloshie could have been recycled in the country where they were bought without damage to the environment, but at a cost that some individuals and companies are unwilling to bear.



As the waste dump grows, so does media coverage of Agbogbloshie. Reports highlight the environmental crisis there but there is little exploration of what lies beyond that black smoke curtain. With international media dubbing Agbogbloshie “the most toxic place on Earth” and an “E-Waste Hell”, a sensationalised story has developed which marginalises the community and ignores their spirit and pride. If you dig a little deeper you’ll find various bustling industries, and a hardworking community that are proud of their livelihoods; some of whom rely on the economy of the dump to survive.

In the film we meet Kofi and Lartey when they are 12 years old. They they have been out of school for some time and spend their days collecting scraps on the dump. At the end of each day their findings are weighed and exchanged for cash that they take back to their families. A local man called Abdallah, who runs a local Children’s Centre, takes Kofi and Lartey under his wing. Frustrated by the one-dimensional reporting from international journalists, Abdallah asked himself “What stories are they telling with our photos? If people are coming in with big cameras and taking our photos, why don’t we learn more about cameras, take photos ourselves and tell our own stories. I think we can tell the stories better.” He finds some second-hand cameras and gives them to Kofi and Lartey to film the world around them with the hope that this will ignite a passion for learning and encourage them to go back to school. The very technology that is normally dumped is used to empower the voices of the people usually forced to burn it for survival.

By making a personal story from two boys and their mentor’s perspective, we hoped to draw attention to the global environmental crisis that informs their circumstances. We didn’t want to make a spectacle of the e-waste situation in Ghana. Through this film we wanted to talk about electronic waste which is growing at an exponential rate throughout the world and about the people, many of whom can’t access these electronics when new, forced to deal with their harmful disposal. We hope that by sharing Abdallah and the boys’ story people will consider whether they are part of the problem, and be encouraged to learn and change the way they think about the objects they bring into their lives.

Kofi and Lartey is a human story at its core; one that engages us through universal themes of perspective, friendship and identity. Kofi and Lartey are an incredible example of the strength of humanity in dire situations, and an example that our children, just like our planet, are the future. I urge you to watch, listen and share – share the stories of those whose voices aren’t as loud as the global media, but whose experiences must be heard.



Follow the journey...

Instagram: @kofiandlartey - Facebook: @kofiandlarteyfilm -
Website & Trailer: www.kofiandlarteyfilm.com/

Since our time in Ghana with the boys in 2016, Lartey has continued to film with his camera. We are now working with him to develop a feature-length documentary with him taking over as lead filmmaker and showing how his life is unfolding in Agbogbloshie as he grows into a young man. Keep your eyes peeled!

EXCLUDED FROM NATURE & THE CHANCE TO PROTECT IT

MYA-ROSE CRAIG



If we are to be successful in stopping climate change then we cannot continue as we have been for the last 30 years.

Of environmental professionals in the UK, only 0.6% are Visible Minority Ethnic (VME), when the national average is nearer 20%. The vast majority of these are from affluent, middle-class backgrounds, many having attended independent and public schools, and so are well connected within the British 'establishment' including the environmental and wildlife film-making sector. These types of links cannot be underestimated, whatever your ethnic background.

At a basic level, there is no access to nature for VME or inner-city young people. If you have never connected with nature, it is hard to care about the environment and so to campaign to stop climate change or species extinction. I have organised 12 nature camps for VME children, teenagers and families and have managed to get every single



person engaged with nature. However, they are totally excluded from the environmental movement, including Youth Strikes and Extinction Rebellion (XR) Youth. They travel across the city to attend high-achieving, White, affluent schools but describe huge racism in their schools impacting on their ability to do well. For example, they are denied the chance to study facilitating subjects at A-Level but instead are directed towards less academic subjects. Racism also stops them from environmental campaigning; for example, in one school, pupils are only allowed to attend youth strikes if a parent has written a letter explaining how the pupil and their family have strong links to climate activism. This means that White middle-class children can attend the Youth Strikes, as their parents are prepared to write letters, but that VME teenagers – whose parents do not understand the importance of the strikes and often have language barriers – are not able to do so. If the teenagers then try to attend the youth strike without a letter, they are put into isolation for the day and threatened with expulsion if they attend again.

It feels to me that the environmental sector is soaked in wealth with privileged young people promoted and highlighted because of their contacts. I have found that as a VME young person, I have had to do ten times as much to get the same recognition. There is always a 'reason' for the lack of recognition of VME young people. It is really important that we are not lumped together, as there is a huge disparity in disadvantage between communities of East African, Indian and then Nigerian descent performing best in terms of educational achievement, well above White children, and Pakistani and Bangladeshi performing worst. Tokenism is also rife within the sector, with those VME young people who do not talk about racism or diversity being selected as 'compliant faces'. Also, choosing people purely because they are VME and not on merit is

counterproductive and discredits us VME people who have worked hard for a place at the table.

The privilege within the environmental sector permeates down into XR and Youth Strikes. Both organisations are based on White privilege. XR is based on a culture of arrest and thanking the police for their lovely behaviour with no recognition that if they had been VME the police response may have been violent. Similarly, the Youth Strikes and Fridays for Future movement are only accessible to those allowed to miss one day of school a week because of supportive schools, teachers and educated parents who home school. I believe that the youth strikes movement is failing to do anything about VME young people being excluded.



I think those choosing young activists to write or speak must look at their work in an objective way and must stop looking at just a social media following, as that does not demonstrate expertise.

The 2019 State of Nature report chose twelve of the "most committed and passionate" young conservationists. There was no objective assessment in the selection process and the two selected to take the report to Downing Street were both White and attend public school. Until the environmental sector stops promoting the same kinds of privileged people, whatever their ethnicity, and chooses VME tokens it cannot be taken seriously on race, diversity and inclusion.

Mya-Rose Craig, who blogs as Birdgirl, is an 18-year-old British Bangladeshi conservationist and environmentalist. She is campaigning to stop climate change, ensure global climate justice and stop biodiversity loss - which she believes are closely interlinked - and to prioritise the human rights of Indigenous peoples.

CLIMATE CHANGE BEGINS AT HOME

PROFESSOR DAVE REAY

Dave is Professor of Carbon Management & Education at the University of Edinburgh. He directs the Edinburgh Centre for Carbon Innovation (ECCI) and is an advisor on climate change for the Scottish and UK Governments.

Dave's latest project involves managing a large area of coastal land in Scotland to regrow native tree species and trap a lifetime's carbon.



This year in Glasgow we're set to have one of the most important meetings on climate change ever. World leaders will set out what (if anything) their nations are doing to cut emissions and how well they are delivering on promises of a green recovery from Covid-19.

This huge climate meeting – called COP26 – will last for two weeks. It will have the full razzmatazz of celebrities, loads of media coverage, and probably a lot of demonstrations too. It will have impassioned speeches, tears and hugs (or maybe just fist bumps given Covid risks). It might even achieve a heap of new national commitments to go climate neutral. What it won't do is then deliver on them. That's down to you, me and everyone else on the planet.

For all the apparent power of politicians and big business, they can't tackle climate change without us. Raise taxes without our buy-in and risk demonstrations bringing the country to a standstill. Launch a fancy eco-friendly clothing brand that no one buys and your business is toast. What we do at home or on the move, what we buy, what we eat, and what we demand of our schools, employers and governments; our hands are on all these powerful levers to tackle climate change.

Of the total greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland each year, around 40% are a direct result of households. These come from our use of electricity and the fuel for home heating, our travel, and our waste. Most of the other 60% comes from producing the products we buy, the food we eat, and from things like transporting goods, running schools, offices and hospitals, and all the other services we use. In every single area there's something you can do, even if that something mainly involves demanding change.

What we buy and what we eat are no less crucial. Supporting sustainable brands (and boycotting those that aren't), repairing and reusing stuff, going veggie; all these individual actions send ripples right across Scotland and around the world. If enough of us change then the whole system must change too.

Just learning more about your own carbon footprint - including where the emissions come from and how you can reduce them - is a simple but crucial step forward. Online calculators like WWF show you how your footprint compares to the global average and allows you to track progress as you shrink your emissions.

The more we learn about what we can do individually, the more we also find out about the things getting in the way.

Questioning these barriers to going low carbon - from lunch menus that haven't been updated since the 1970s to cycle lanes more dangerous than a Grand Prix pit stop - is all part of tackling climate change. Actions speak louder than words, but words are pretty handy too.

Greta Thunberg has shown just how loud a voice one person can have on climate change. Each of us, whether to our friends, family and followers, or to our teachers, bosses and elected leaders, must also speak out for the change we want. Climate change may well begin at home, but it doesn't have to stop there.

"As a climate change scientist I've always tried to 'Walk the Talk' on tackling climate change - not flying, going veggie and the like. But what's really important is making sure you 'Talk the Walk' too: tell friends and family about what you are doing and get them involved, applaud your school or government when they get it right and call them out when they don't. The most powerful weapon you have to fight climate change is your voice. Use it."

Action points

- Visit www.footprint.wwf.org.uk/ to calculate your carbon footprint.
- Visit www.wearedonation.com/ and pledge to change your food, travel or shopping behaviours, plus learn about the impact of change on your carbon emissions as well as health and finances.
- Follow Dave on Twitter: @keelingcurve.

A VISION FOR SCOTLAND IN 2050 JENNY SCOTT

In collaboration with design studio AndThen, the 2050 Climate Group network set out to create their vision for Scotland in 2050 and a roadmap for getting there. Over 50 young leaders took part in the project over WhatsApp. Their ideas shaped three key objectives which the charity are now using to target their work and engage young leaders in building a climate positive future.

Jenny is a litigation solicitor based in Glasgow. In her spare time she volunteers for 2050 Climate Group and is passionate about fighting for climate justice. Her interest in climate justice sparked during her law degree and since then she has sought to educate and empower others to join in action against climate change.



According to our Young Leaders, a sustainable Scotland should lead by having:

- a sustainable, local and decarbonised energy source, including the decarbonisation of heat and increased reliance on renewable energy and localised green energy production;
- a joined-up approach to transportation, where Scotland invests in affordable, sustainable public transportation and provides infrastructure for active travel whilst reducing reliance on cars;
- a redesign of politics where communities and policymakers are open to creative ideas to solve the problems we're facing by redefining value, creating a circular economy, and considering a restructure of the government we currently have;
- compassionate education for people at all levels, particularly at a young age, to equip them with a focus on a duty of care and responsibility towards the environment.

One of the key elements of 2050 Climate Group's work is to tackle climate justice head on and achieve a 'Just Scotland'. Just Transition is the removal of pollutant industries whilst also providing the support that workers will need through this transition. A just society makes sure that workers' rights and livelihoods are not left behind in creating a sustainable future.

- There should be a push for systematic changes to be compassionate, respectful and democratic.
- Investment should be focused on infrastructure which allows for fair access for all to be connected physically and digitally.
- We must redefine wealth and value. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) as the main indicator of success should be replaced with aligning success metrics with wellbeing. The wellbeing of people should aim to be improved by creating more meaning in their role in society.
- Housing must be accessible and affordable for all and land distribution rebalanced to reflect equality. Investment should be made into infrastructure, such as internet connectivity, transportation and liveable neighbourhoods, while policy decisions should be made for, and by, the people.



Although Scotland has ambitious targets of Net Zero by 2045, is that really enough? Scotland needs:

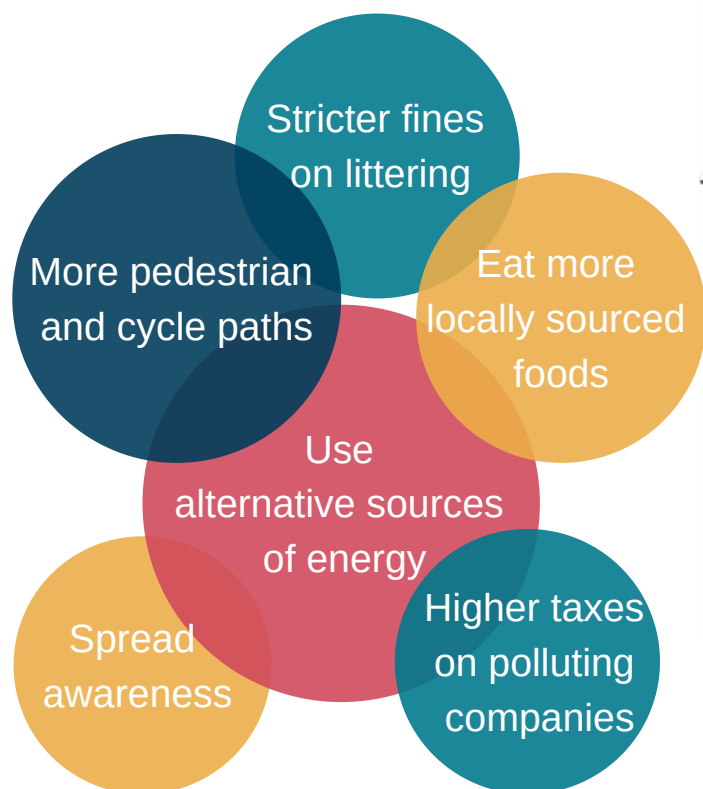
- to take responsibility for the carbon it is producing worldwide by ensuring that our emissions globally are also neutral;
- a more united approach to tackle the problems we face. Conversations, partnerships and collaboration must be mobilised to drive bottom-up, inclusive change;
- a huge behavioural shift in the way we currently live our lives; leading to progressive approaches like a new circular economy (a wasteless society), radical change in global transportation (emphasising active travel), and a change in how we approach our land usage (using nature as a solution).

Scotland in 2050 will be a society that reflects all of the above. We have a long way to go before reaching our goals, but it is important to focus our energy on the changes that need to be made. If you think back 30 years and how far we have come, we should be confident that Scotland will achieve sustainability and a just society, and be beyond Net Zero by 2050.

WHAT YOU WANT DONE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

We sent out a survey asking young people across Scotland for their thoughts on which actions they want to see to tackle climate change, on what the Scottish Government should do, and about what role individuals can play.

Over 150 young people took part and here's what they had to say.



Most of the people that replied to our survey think that young people have a role to play in reducing emissions. Some excellent ideas offered included:

- choosing sustainable transport, like walking, cycling, or sharing car rides;
- reducing consumption, reusing materials and choosing to recycle whenever this is an option;
- turning off the lights when you leave the room;
- educating older people on what they can do and encouraging them to take action as well.

There were many great ideas about what other generations could learn from young people about climate change:



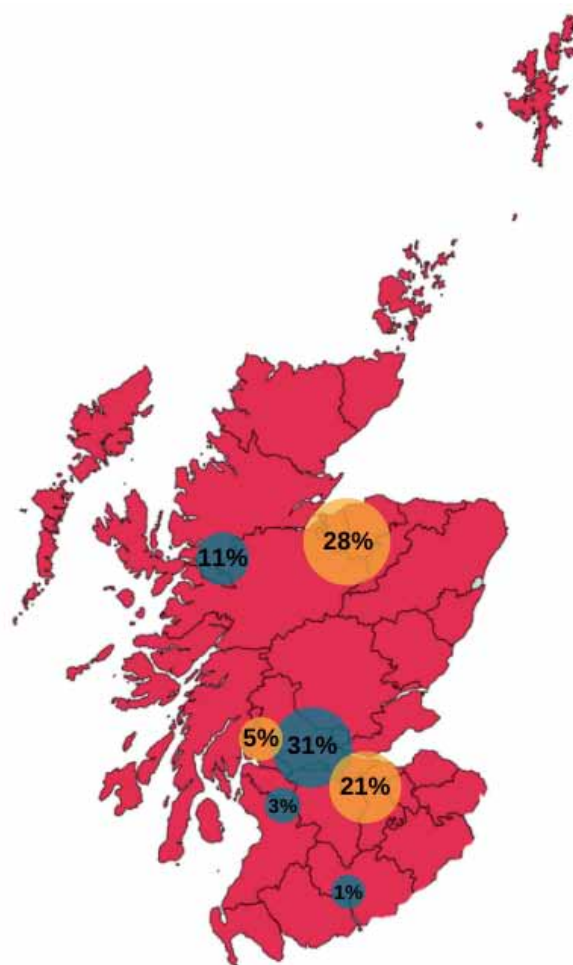
How to recycle: many people want to do this but find it confusing. Maybe you can help?



That having more money and power means you have a greater responsibility to create change.



It's easy to make small changes and these add up to make a big difference!



WHERE DID PEOPLE RESPOND FROM?

"Young people should never doubt their ability to make the world, their country, or their local community a better place. It takes persistence, resilience, hard graft, belief and compassion. Finding a way to turn justifiable rage at inequity into 'good trouble', that is kind and improves lives is what leadership is all about. So find your team and those who will support you - and get to work."

Louise Macdonald OBE | Chief Executive | Young Scot

If you're a **Young Scot Member** you have earned 300 Rewards points for reading the Young Geographer. Log into your membership portal to redeem your points or enter points code: **VM2FJ00X**. Not a Member yet? Go to young.scot to sign up.



GET INVOLVED!

Take action

- Attend or volunteer at one of Mya-Rose's **Black2Nature** camps which support visible minority ethnic individuals to connect with nature. Visit birdgirluk.com for more information.
- Complete the RSGS's new **Climate Solutions** course, which offers a simple and quick way to gain significant understanding of one of the most important issues of our generation: climate change. It will help prepare individuals and organisations for this transformation, and outline where the opportunities lie. You can sign up at www.rsgs.org/climate-solutions.
- Find **local campaigns** in your area to support, or start your own!
- Consider joining a **charity board** as a Young Trustee, or the **Scottish Youth Parliament** to advocate on behalf of your local young people.

Learn more

The world of climate justice continues to change, which means we all have a responsibility to continue learning, expand the range of perspectives we engage with, and develop our opinions. We know people like to learn in different ways but whether your preference is for books, films, podcasts or other, there is something for everyone.

- Listen to podcasts '**Outrage + Optimism**' (weekly reflections on the climate debate) and Mary Robinson's '**Mothers of Invention**' (stories of women around the world taking action).
- Participate in the **Take One Action** festival which uses film to explore stories and ideas about social change. In addition to the festival, visit the online film directory at takeoneaction.org.uk to watch past films on a range of climate justice issues.
- Read the **Financing Climate Justice** report published in partnership by Jubilee Scotland, Oxfam Scotland, Stop Climate Chaos Scotland, and SCIAF to understand how the Scottish Government can make a meaningful impact at COP26 and what funding mechanisms are necessary to achieve climate justice.

Join the conversation

Online communities are a great way to connect with others and learn from their experiences, especially at grassroots level. Many successful climate justice campaigns have centred on building an online network of supporters and volunteers. Here are some of our suggestions of individuals and organisations to follow and get involved with their work.

- Leah Thomas **@greengirlleah** - focuses on the connection between environmental injustices and injustices against marginalised or vulnerable communities.
- **@intersectionalenvironmentalist** - explores how different aspects of our identity (such as gender or ethnicity) impact how we interact and therefore protect the environment.
- All of the young people featured in the **Activists to Watch** article on pages 18 & 19.