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# EARTH HERO



• Ecosystem • Forest • Animal • Environmental Issue • Actions



# ACTIONS

## (WAYS TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE)

The issue of climate change can no longer be taken lightly. In our previous article, we have highlighted on the negative effects of climate change and how it is endangering the lives of earth's flora and fauna, including human beings. To recap, climate change occurs due to the greenhouse effect, a natural process by which the atmosphere keeps some of the Sun's heat, allowing the earth to maintain the conditions essential to life. The leading cause is due to rising daily human activities have caused further greenhouse effect and it impacts the planet's temperature to rise even more. As we are part of the cause of climate change, we should play our part to solve the

global warming. The key in finding solutions is knowledge and information on this issue.

Now that we have recapped what climate change is, we can explore ways to combat the issue. To make a difference, it does not need to be a big event or cost a huge amount of money. We can start small by applying simple steps in our daily lives. One way is to reduce our emissions. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), each litre of fuel that your car uses equals to 2.5 kilos of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) produced and released into the atmosphere.



Imagine how much CO<sub>2</sub> is released into our atmosphere each year. One way we can

reduce our transportation emission is by using sustainable transportation, such as cycling or using public transportation more often. Alternatively, we can carpool with our family members or friends if we are travelling towards the same location. By reducing carbon emissions, we can help to slow down the effects of climate change and reduce air pollutants in the atmosphere. It improves air quality and thus, benefiting the health of humans and all living things on the earth.



We can also start making improvements at home. Nowadays, we can easily get machines that help us filter the air we breathe, filter the water we drink and even help us do household chores such as sweeping the floor. However, all of these appliances increase our energy usage. We can reduce it by choosing smart appliances that are energy efficient i.e. those appliances with Energy Star certification stickers. The more stars the appliance has, it will help us to save more energy and, of course, money. We can also make use of natural light during the day instead of switching on the light. Draw up the curtains and open our windows. When we're not using an appliance, do remember to always pull the plug from the socket. Do you know that electricity is still being used when you leave behind your devices plugged in, or on standby mode? In fact, these seemingly unimportant actions can cost us 12% more on our electricity usage. Other than that, go easy on the air conditioning. We are living in a tropical country and sometimes our weather can be terribly hot even at night. Chances are, we will sleep with the air conditioning turned on. Instead of letting our air conditioner

be switched on all night, you can use the “sleep mode” or timer function. This can help us to reduce our energy consumption. Saving energy lowers air and water pollution and conserves natural resources, which in turn generates a healthier living environment for people everywhere.



Our next way is by putting the six Rs into practice. The six Rs stand for Rethink, Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repair and Recycle. The first R is **Rethink**, urging us to ask ourselves what we can do differently. This can be applied especially during shopping. When we want to buy a product, we should ask ourselves, “Do I really need this product?” This is crucial because our natural resources are limited. Therefore, by choosing only the things that we need, we can help to sustain our natural resources. The second R is **Refuse**. When we know that we don’t need a product or free gift, we can refrain from buying or taking it. We do not want to be generating more waste. The third R is **Reduce**. This R can be the most difficult ‘R’ for us to apply because it involves to change our existing habits. However, it can be done slowly and consistently. A simple exercise could be like asking for no straws when we’re in a restaurant. This might be small but those few extra steps we take to refuse a single-use plastic will help us

prevent waste from being added to the landfill. The next R is **Repair**. Before we recycle or reuse any material, we can check if the material can be fixed. An easy example is cloth. Millions upon millions of clothing items or textiles end up in landfills each year. A lot of this waste could be reduced if we took the time to do simple repairs. For example, patching a hole in jeans, sewing on a button, gluing a chipped plate back together, etc. The next R, **Reuse**, means using a product more than once. We can use returnable glass milk bottles or even glass bottles such as old jam jars for food storage. The last R is **Recycling**, which is one of the ways to handle waste materials that can't be reused. It prevents waste from being sent to landfills and turns waste into new products. An easy way to start recycling is by separating the waste according to different materials so that they can be recycled efficiently. For example, used glass bottles can be recycled into new bottles or they can be used as materials in road construction.



To combat the issue of climate change, we must also take action to save our remaining forests. This is because forests are a stabilising force for the climate. They adjust ecosystems, provide shelter for biodiversity, play an essential part in the

carbon cycle, sustain livelihoods, and provide environmental services for sustainable growth. We may join environmental clubs at our school and participate in activities that promote forest protection. We need to make our voices heard so people in power will listen to the need to better protect and increase enforcement to safeguard our forests. We may also join tree planting activities and initiatives. When we plant more trees, we can help to reduce the greenhouse effects on the earth and at the same time, help to conserve our important forest. We can also show our support for the many organisations with a vision to save and protect the environment by joining activities and events organized by them. Collectively, we could gain more knowledge and be more effective in handling global issues.

Last but not least, we can be part of the climate voice by spreading the message to the public and raising awareness about what is happening in our area and any other region affected by climate change. Let's encourage each other in applying all the simple acts mentioned in this article. In the words of Margaret Mead, "*Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful and committed citizens can change the world*".