

World Environment Day - Anatomy of Action

Generation Climate Europe - Biodiversity Working Group

We can all make a difference

For World Environment Day, the “Land and Sea-use” team of the Biodiversity Working Group prepared you 5 actions you can do to protect biodiversity in your day-to-day life. Those five actions aim to make your part to halt the biodiversity loss. Since 1970, 60% of all the vertebrates on Earth disappeared because of the overexploitation and exploitative use of lands and seas.

The 5 Actions

All you have to do is :

- ✓ Choose an action (or several),
- Commit to it (or them) for a month,
- Share pictures using the hashtags (#BeTrendy...) and tag your friends !

Action 1: Go Veggie #BeTrendyGoVeggie

Action 2: Opt for Organic Food #BeTrendyEatOrganic

Action 3: Do Compost #BeTrendyDoCompost

Action 4: Second Hand Clothes Only #BeTrendyWearVintage

Action 5: Opt for Sustainable Seafood #BeTrendySavetheOcean

#ForNature #Youth4Environment



Go Veggie #BeTrendyGoVeggie

Go Veggie by stopping your consumption of meat and fish is a super news for the planet ! **Each year 60 billions terrestrial animals and 100 billions sea animals are killed for our alimentation.** This leads to intensive farming, which is responsible for massive deforestation especially in the Amazon forest. By destroying the “lung of the Earth”, breeding impacts negatively earth’s biodiversity by cutting down trees, plants, killing insects and animals. **This system also damages our water resource** by using more than 70% of our drinking water for farming especially for breeding. In addition this polluting diet massively rejects greenhouse’s gas that are directly responsible for climate change. **But “go veggie” is also great news for you !** A lot of studies have made a link between consumption of red meat and diseases like cancer.

So Go Veggie, protect yourself and the planet !

Opt for Organic Food #BeTrendyEatOrganic

Organic farming is a method in which synthetic fertilizers and pesticides are forbidden. Thus, to fertilise its soil, the farmer will preferably use organic or natural products. In organic farming, crop rotation and companion planting are also often used. **This type of farming is much more biodiversity friendly than conventional agriculture.** Indeed, the non-use of pesticides allows much more biodiversity around the fields and in the soil. Then plants are **healthier** to consume and are trend more resistant to pests. Moreover, this non-use of pesticides or synthetic fertilizers **benefits the quality of groundwater.** And organic techniques with the use of old varieties allow also to reduce the water need of plants and participate in the protection of the water resource for human consumption and agriculture. And this is going to become crucial in the context of global warming. However, all organic labels do not have the same impact on the environment.

Some big companies do produce organic food in huge lines of greenhouses that are heated all the year long to produce tomato or strawberries even in winter. Most of the time the commitment and impact of small organic producers is better for the environment and biodiversity. To avoid this and favour small organic farmers, the most effective way is to **choose the most local and seasonal food as possible.**

Do Compost #BeTrendyDoCompost

Composting is **an easy action to protect biodiversity and cut down waste !** It is possible to do it even if you live in an apartment without a garden. Compost is produced by the decay of organic matters (plants, vegetables, fruits, grass, dead leaves...). Humans have always used compost in agriculture because it is **the most natural and richest fertiliser.** However, since decades, industrial agriculture along with synthetic fertilisers have replaced natural ones and contributed to the impoverishment of soils as well as impacted biodiversity. **Synthetic fertilisers have therefore affected humans and non-humans** as those chemicals have polluted groundwater, participated in climate change (due to the emission of nitrogen especially) and air pollution (synthetic fertilisers reject fine particles).

Hence, we need to get the use of compost back to protect biodiversity while enriching soils. Adding compost will not only fertilise over the long term, it also feeds the soil with a diversity of nutrients and microorganisms that will improve plant growth.

Urban people could argue they don’t have time for composting their rubbish or do not have the place to do it in apartments, but composting is **much easier than people think.** You can easily find a worm composter for apartments that are not bigger than a bedside table or install a compost bin on your balcony. If you really don’t have the place at home, municipal composters are often put in place in neighbourhoods.

Second Hand Clothes Only #BeTrendyWearVintage

The fashion industry is not only **emitting an increasing amount of CO2 but also contributing to a rapid decline in biodiversity**. It contributes to drivers of biodiversity loss such as habitat loss and degradation, overexploitation of resources, pollution, and climate change. However, the sector's complex value chains make it hard to comprehend where and how biodiversity is negatively impacted. At the stage of raw materials, cotton represents, with 30-40% of the total production, the most common material used to produce fibre for textiles. While it occupies 2.4% of global cropland, thereby driving habitat loss and degradation, the pollution associated with cotton production is even more alarming. Despite occupying a relatively small share of cropland, **cotton accounts for 22.5% of the world's insecticide and for 10% of all pesticide use, thereby destroying species and ecosystems**. Raw materials sourced from animals, such as leather, drive deforestation and thereby habitat loss on a whole different scale. As the most profitable part of the animal, leather is not necessarily a byproduct. The livestock sector occupies 80% of the agricultural cropland globally and thereby destroys precious ecosystems such as the Amazon. **The pollution connected to livestock is likely the largest sectoral source of water pollution**, leading to eutrophication, degradation of coral reefs and the emergence of antibiotic resistance.

These statistics are shocking, and we did not even look at other parts of the value chain such as manufacturing, transport and disposal. All these stages are connected to **significant use of energy, water and other resources** and negatively impact nature and its capacity to sustain our life. The good news is, you can make a change by **reducing your consumption** and by **buying second-hand clothes**. While clothes may become cheaper by the day, their environmental cost is unmeasurable. Let us **put an end to the culture of fast fashion**, learn to value clothes and to find charm in old pieces that can be exchanged and reused or recycled into something new! By rethinking your consumption of clothes, you can **make a change and allow the earth to regenerate itself**. Plus: vintage clothing and creative recycling will make you much more fashionable than buying new outfits every season

Opt for Sustainable Seafood #BeTrendySavetheOcean

Our oceans are under threat. **Currently 90% of world fish stocks are already fully or over-exploited from fishing**. Destructive fishing practices are damaging sensitive habitats and accidentally catching other marine wildlife such as seabirds and turtles. **Moreover, climate change, pollution incidents, and habitat destruction threaten the integrity of our ocean ecosystems**.

Opting for sustainably sourced and farmed seafood can maintain healthy fish stocks. Choosing seafood from sustainable sources encourages supermarkets and restaurants to demand it from their suppliers and in turn help support sustainable fishing markets. **You are also reducing demand for threatened seafood, like those that are red rated on the *Marine Conservation Society's Good Fish Guide***. You can therefore play an important role in securing the future of our seas and marine wildlife.

There are a number of ways that to ensure you're making sustainable choices when buying your seafood:

Ask where your seafood is caught and farmed: Responsible fish farming, e.g. shellfish can help to take the pressure off wild capture fisheries and in some cases can be a more environmentally responsible choice.

Choose fish caught using methods with lower environmental impact: Choose fish caught using methods with lower environmental impacts such as hand-lining or potting.

Look for eco labels: Many certifications will not only tell you about the sustainability of the fishery or farm, but also help ensure the traceability of the product. Look for the **Marine Stewardship Council (MSC)** logo for wild capture fisheries and for farmed fish look for the **Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC)** logo or Organic certification.

Choose variety: We are too reliant on the "Big Five": cod, haddock, tuna, salmon and warm-water prawns. One of the easiest ways to help us achieve sustainable seafood being the only choice in the future is to choose alternative species that have been caught and farmed responsibly e.g. hake or coley instead of cod or rainbow trout instead of salmon.

Avoid threatened species: Avoid buying European eel and other red rated fish which are heavily overfished such as Mediterranean swordfish, spurdog, wild seabass and wild Atlantic halibut.

Use the *Good Fish Guide*: *The Good Fish Guide* has a handy traffic light system which tells you which sustainable green fish to choose, which unsustainable red rated fish to avoid and yellow/amber rated fish to choose occasionally to limit pressure on fish stocks.

