



# Climate Change and Global Learning

## Introduction

From year to year, it's hard to ignore the changing weather patterns that are affecting our planet. With the 2015 Paris Agreement, and the recent climate conference in Marrakech, climate action is high on the international agenda. This activity kit develops pupils' understanding of the human impact of climate change, encouraging pupils to recognise how climate change and other global issues are interlinked, and to recognise their role in tackling this challenge.

- The **'Getting started'** section provides introductory questions for pupils to familiarise themselves with the topic of climate change.
- The **'Getting critical'** section explores the human impact of climate change, how it might contribute to other global learning themes, and helps pupils identify ways they can take action.
- The **'Resources'** section offers teaching resources and further information.

## In the curriculum (KS2)

- **English and literacy:** Developing understanding through exploring ideas; justifying ideas with reasons; extending vocabulary; developing grammar and punctuation through written compositions.
- **Geography:** Climate zones, natural hazards, economic activity, the distribution of natural resources.
- **Science:** Nutrition, health, changing environments, food chains.

## Getting started: What is climate change?

Ask pupils what they understand by the term 'climate change'? Where have they heard it? It might be at school, on TV or perhaps on the news. What is the difference between 'weather' and 'climate'? And what is the difference between 'climate change' and 'global warming'?

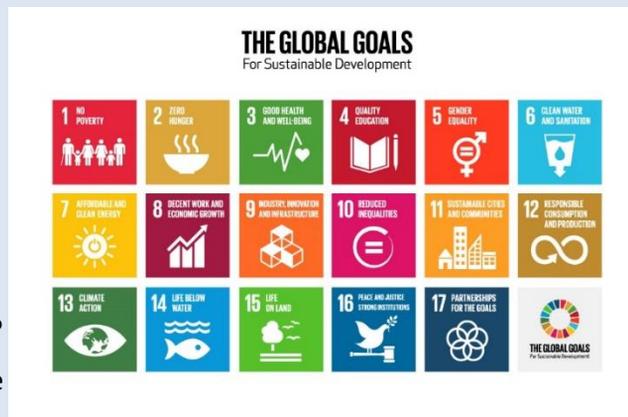
The UCAR website has a good summary ([eo.ucar.edu/kids/green/](http://eo.ucar.edu/kids/green/)): **"Climate is the average weather in a place over many years. While the weather can change in just a few hours, climate takes hundreds, thousands, even millions of years to change."**

Confirm with pupils that **climate change** refers to general changes in climate patterns, such as temperature, rainfall and winds. Scientists have warned that the world's climate has changed a lot, which has affected many living and non-living things. **Global warming** (and global cooling) refers to any change in the global average surface temperature. Many warmer regions are now getting colder, and many places that were colder are now getting much colder or even warmer. Can pupils think of any places in the world where this is happening?

Explain to pupils that human activities are contributing to these changes. Ask pupils to give examples of such activities; they might mention activities such as the burning of fossil fuels, or the cutting down of rainforests.

Display a graphic of the new UN Sustainable Development Goals, a set of 'global goals' that the world has agreed on to end poverty. Which of the goals do pupils think are connected to climate change? Pupils will re-visit this activity after further exploring the topic.

Download the Global Goals images here: [globalgoals.org/media-centre/](http://globalgoals.org/media-centre/)



# Getting critical

## Activity 1: The human impact of climate change

Many people across the world are being threatened by climate change. Although it affects everyone, it is hitting the poorest and most vulnerable people the hardest.

These photos demonstrate some of the main threats that arise from climate change. Begin by showing pupils the photos, and asking them to identify what is happening in each. Do pupils have any questions they want to ask about the photos? (Follow the links under the photos to download them and find out more about the context of each one.)



Rising sea levels: [bit.ly/rising-sea-levels-pic](https://bit.ly/rising-sea-levels-pic)



Drought: [bit.ly/drought-pic](https://bit.ly/drought-pic)



Storms: [bit.ly/storms-pic](https://bit.ly/storms-pic)



Floods: [bit.ly/floods-pic](https://bit.ly/floods-pic)

Display the words **home**, **health**, **education** and **livelihood** on the board. Working in groups, pupils put themselves in the position of people threatened by climate change, and discuss how this would affect their lives. For each climate event – **rising sea levels**, **drought**, **storms** and **floods**, pupils explore the impact on:-

- Their **home** – where they seek shelter and rest.
- Their **health** – what they eat and drink, and how they get help if they are unwell.
- Their **education** – how they get to school, and what they need to learn.
- Their **livelihood** – how they make a living, and support themselves and their family.

Some people have suggested that climate change is contributing to world conflicts, such as the current war in Syria. Can pupils think of any reasons why this might be the case? Encourage pupils to make connections between climate change and other global learning themes by asking them how climate change might also contribute to migration, and exacerbate poverty. For example, for a farming family dependent on crop production, a drought might force them to migrate in order to make a living.

## Activity 2: Climate action

Goal 13 of the SDGs, 'Climate Action', sets urgent targets for all countries around climate change. These include helping countries adapt to a changing climate and plan ahead for natural disasters; educating people and raising awareness; and committing to support developing countries that are particularly affected.



Show pupils the video "*Dear Matafele Peinem*", a poem written by Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner from the Marshall Islands, and used to address the Opening Ceremony of the UN Climate Summit in 2014. During the video, ask pupils to note down the positive actions that people are taking across the world to tackle climate change.

[youtu.be/DJuRjy9k7GA](https://youtu.be/DJuRjy9k7GA)

Give pupils the choice of either writing to their local newspaper, or preparing for an interview with their local radio station. In this piece, pupils should draw readers'/listeners' attention to the challenge of climate change, and how it is affecting the world's poorest and most vulnerable people. They could outline some of the ways world leaders and ordinary people are responding to this challenge, and suggest ways that people in their local community can take action.

Re-visit the graphic of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Having explored the topic a little more, can pupils spot any other goals that have a connection with climate change? Encourage pupils to recognise that all of the goals are related in some way to this topic. For example, Goal 17 'Partnerships for the Goals' will be crucial if positive climate action is to be achieved.

## Resources

### Teaching resources

Action Aid has a range of Key Stage 2 teaching resources exploring climate change: **Living in a world of water**, **Drought 360°** and **World Food Day** [bit.ly/2g9aJET](https://bit.ly/2g9aJET)

Oxfam's **Climate Challenge** for 7-11 year olds explores the human impact of climate change: [bit.ly/2fU1sRU](https://bit.ly/2fU1sRU)

Practical Action: **Flooding – Causes and Consequences**: [bit.ly/2fgE3rY](https://bit.ly/2fgE3rY) and **Climate change resources**: [bit.ly/2g9ar0u](https://bit.ly/2g9ar0u)

**World's Largest Lesson** – information and resources to support teaching about SDGs Goal 13, Climate Action: [bit.ly/2fTXOaA](https://bit.ly/2fTXOaA)

### Other useful links

The **UCAR** website for kids, '**Living in the Greenhouse**', is useful on 'weather' and 'climate': [eo.ucar.edu/kids/green/](https://eo.ucar.edu/kids/green/)

This **BBC news article** provides further background information about climate change: [bbc.in/1PPq8In](https://bbc.in/1PPq8In)

This free classroom poster from **Rayburn Tours** shows the 5 countries most affected by climate change: [bit.ly/2guH3pW](https://bit.ly/2guH3pW)

This **Royal Commonwealth Society** blog provides information about Commonwealth countries threatened by sea level rise: [bit.ly/2fjxtEt](https://bit.ly/2fjxtEt)

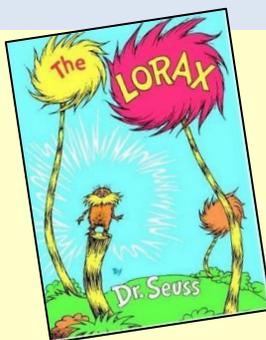
'**Syria's Climate Conflict**' is an online comic/graphic novel about the climate change links to Syria's civil war (may not be suitable for younger children): [bit.ly/1YODuYu](https://bit.ly/1YODuYu)

The **global dimension in my classroom** activity kit is brought to you by Think Global [www.think-global.org.uk](http://www.think-global.org.uk).

We aim to support all teachers to bring a global dimension to their classroom. Join thousands of teachers and [register with our schools network](https://www.think-global.org.uk/register) to receive free resources and up to date information about training and support.

**Author credit:** Catherine Richardson and Lisa Lee at Think Global did the research and writing for this Activity Kit.

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### Books

**The Lorax** by Dr. Seuss  
(see also the film at [bit.ly/1BWYHWc](https://bit.ly/1BWYHWc))

**The Giving Tree** by Shel Silverstein  
(see [amzn.to/2gauXlh](https://amzn.to/2gauXlh))

