



# GREENING INTERNATIONAL YOUTH WORK

AN EASY HANDBOOK

*for youth workers and young people*

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# INTRO

## AN EASY HANDBOOK

*for youth workers and young people.*



# GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THIS HANDBOOK

# #1 DEGROWTH

The approach of degrowth is to use less, to consume less and reduce your climate impact. If you follow this approach, you will be able to minimize environmental damage and conserve natural resources. For example, only a limited number of copies of this handbook have been printed, and if there is further demand, only the number requested will be printed.

# #2 DISSEMINATE

Educate yourself and inspire others to join you. Do it together, as this will be much more fun. This handbook aims to educate and motivate people, helping to develop their ideas and disseminate them as tangible eco-social actions.

# #3 ECO-DESIGN

Start using sustainable alternatives that are organic, fair, local, energy and water-efficient, as well as non-polluting or recycled products.

Lower as much as possible the emission of greenhouse gases like CO<sub>2</sub>, and compensate for unavoidable emissions accordingly. For example, this handbook was made a local printing service which uses Risograph printing. All of Riso's inks are vegetable oil-based. Riso ink dries through absorption into uncoated paper stock rather than through heavy chemical dryers or heat. Thanks to this, power consumption remains very low throughout the printing process. Furthermore, this handbook was made using recycled paper called "Fenice" from PEREGO CARTA company. This high-quality ecological paper contains 100% post-consumer recycled fibers and is FSC certified.

# OUR UNDER- STANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY

*Sustainability, as defined by the United Nations, is "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."*

WORLD COMMISSION ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND  
DEVELOPMENT (1987)

For Naturefriends and the project consortium that created this handbook, sustainability must be pursued at both the social and environmental levels simultaneously. We believe that with the approach of degrowth, eco-design, and disseminate, we can achieve a more just and sustainable future and shape the socio-ecological transformation together. We especially recognize the need for action in the global North to achieve justice, given that the global South is already suffering the brunt of climate change, which has been caused primarily by the actions of the global North.

# ECO-SOCIAL ASPECTS OF (YOUTH) MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities are a specific type of tourism, which we can refer to as educational tourism. Despite the predominantly negative influence of tourism on social and environmental sustainability, we believe it is of utmost importance for young people to meet and exchange knowledge about their lived realities with people from other places. This helps empower them to take action in their local and regional communities.

These exchanges and youth mobilities are an important way of tackling the ongoing rise of right-wing populism around the world and to promote social and ecological diversity.

Therefore, we encourage all youth organizations to continue planning youth mobilities, but to take their social and environmental impact into account.

These 7 chapters aim to support you in the implementation of more sustainable youth mobilities, as our goal is to:

Green. International. Youth Work.

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that journey.



# CHAPTER Nº 01

# TOURISTIC TRANSPORTATION

Touristic transportation involves using any means of transport for travel during leisure time activities or vacation.

The primary cause of touristic transportation is the desire for people to visit new places, experience different cultures, enjoy natural landscapes, or relax in distant locations. This movement has grown due to globalization, increased disposable income, improved transportation infrastructure, and the digitalization of travel planning. While it enriches lives and boosts economies, it also leads to significant environmental challenges. These include high CO<sub>2</sub> emissions which contribute to global warming, and local pollution which affects air quality and public health. Sustainable travel options and technologies are being explored to mitigate these impacts.

Human-driven climate change is seen as one of the major threats to humanity because of its direct and indirect consequences.

The state of humanity is directly interrelated to the surrounding ecosystems, threatened by extreme weather events and the general destruction of landscapes, which reduces food, health, and habitat security for all living beings, locally and globally. As a result, many species are endangered - one out of five are considered to be at risk of extinction. By 2030, it is expected that there will be 1,998 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted annually just from touristic activities.

This will contribute significantly to climate change. Furthermore, reflecting on who has the ability to travel reveals a significant imbalance between the global North and the global South, due to factors such as passport restrictions, resources, and time available for travel. Thus, tourism also contributes to climate injustice.



# FACTS

8%

Tourism in general is responsible for 8% of all global greenhouse gas emissions.

90%

Out of those emissions 90% are connected to transportation.



KHATIB (2023)



Transport-related emissions from tourism represented 5% of all human-made emissions in 2016 and will increase to 5.3% by 2030.

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

THINK ABOUT THE MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION YOU ARE USING.

## 2

USE GROUND TRANSPORTATION WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

## 3

AVOID UNNECESSARY TRAVELS. CAN A SMALL MEETING BE HELD ONLINE INSTEAD?



4

**MAKE IT AN ADVENTURE TOGETHER WITH YOUR GROUP.**

5

**DEVELOP A TRAVEL POLICY WHERE IT IS WRITTEN THAT GROUND TRANSPORTATION SHOULD BE USED AND THAT ONLY IN EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES WILL PLANE TRAVEL BE ALLOWED (OVER 2000KM OR UNSAFE TRAVELS, NO CONNECTIONS, ETC.).**

6

**THINK ABOUT THE ACTIVITIES ON-SITE AND IF THEY NEED TRANSPORTATION, OR IF YOU CAN AVOID IT.**



that journey.

METHOD BOX NO.1

# STAR OF SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION



CONDITIONS

AGE: 12+

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: A MAP,  
CERTIFICATES

TIME: NO LIMITS

TYPE: TEAM-BUILDING

HOW

Create a map to see where people have travelled from, what their route was and how many kilometres and hours they travelled for. The people with the largest amount will get a nice certificate for being an eco-hero.



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.2

# CHALLENGE

### CONDITIONS

AGE: ANY

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: PENS, PAPER

TIME: NO LIMITS

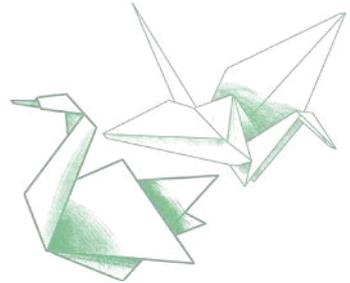
TYPE: TEAM-BUILDING

### HOW

Make the journey enjoyable by creating tasks and challenges for people to complete along the way. At the end of the game, when everyone has arrived, use these tasks as part of the getting-to-know-each-other activity.

HERE ARE SOME SAMPLE TASKS:

- 1- Find a very unusual place within a train or bus station and send a photo to your team.
- 2- Find something that surprised you on the journey and take a picture of it or write it down.
- 3- Bring something sweet from any stop you're making and let the others guess in the getting-to-know-each-other session where you got it from.
- 4- Take a picture of yourself in front of a train station, etc.
- 5- Make an origami bird and give it to a stranger on the way.



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.3



# MY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION EMIT.....

## CONDITIONS

AGE: 8+

GROUP SIZE: 15-25

MATERIAL: PREPARED  
STRINGS AND THE  
AMOUNT OF CO<sub>2</sub>  
EMISSION PER PERSON,  
PAPER

TIME: 20 MINUTES

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

## HOW

Cut strings of different lengths and attach CO<sub>2</sub> emissions values to them, each representing the emissions from various means of transportation. Write each transportation method on separate pieces of paper. Then, have the group discuss which string corresponds to which transportation method and let them arrange the strings accordingly.

FOR THE REFLECTION SESSION, ASK THEM SOME QUESTIONS:

- 1- What surprised you the most?
- 2- Were you expecting that result?
- 3- How do you interpret this result?



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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the feeling of home.



# CHAPTER Nº 02

## ACCOMMODATION

Touristic accommodations are paid establishments offering people the opportunity to spend time in a location that is not their residence. There are various types of accommodations, including hotels, short-term stays, holiday homes, camping sites, and recreational places.

Touristic accommodations can significantly affect local communities by negatively impacting housing availability and affordability for locals. In urban areas particularly, the availability and affordability of housing are decreasing. One reason for this can be the offering of short-term rentals of apartments as holiday homes. Meanwhile, hotels, hostels, Naturefriends houses, and youth hostels are designed for tourism.

EUROSTAT (2023)

BORNIOLI, A., VERMEULEN, S. J., HAAREN, J. V., VALENTE, R., & MINGARDO, G. (2022)

GURRAN, N., & PHIBBS, P. (2017)

Renting out apartments for short periods is frequently unregulated, which can negatively affect a community's social dynamics and the health of local residents because of the constantly changing neighbors and the different pollution types linked to tourist activities. Short-term rentals often lack oversight, leading to increased prices and limited local services for residents, alongside noise and waste issues.



# FACTS

## 21%



Tourism accommodations (such as hotels) are responsible for 21% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions within the tourism sector.

## x2



An average tourist within Europe uses over 300 l/day of water, against approximately 150 l/day for an average European resident.



Eco lodgings such as  
EU Ecolabel tourist  
accommodations  
use 50% less energy  
than standard  
accommodations.

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

OPT FOR ACCOMMODATIONS AT NGO-RUN PLACES, SUCH AS NATURE-FRIENDS HOUSES.

## 2

INVESTIGATE YOUR ACCOMMODATION'S APPROACH TO SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY.

## 3

SHARING A ROOM WITH OTHERS REDUCES THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT SINCE HEATING, LIGHTING ETC. IS NEEDED FOR FEWER ROOMS.



4

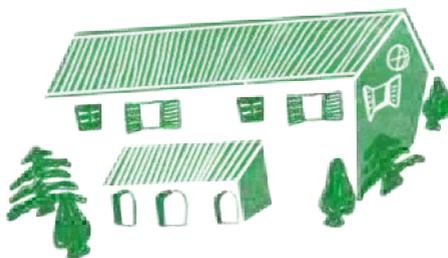
TAKE UNFINISHED PRODUCTS BACK HOME, DON'T ASSUME THAT THE NEXT GUESTS MIGHT NEED YOUR LEFT OVERS.

5

THINK ABOUT HOW EASY IT IS TO GET TO THE PLACE OR ORGANIZE A WALK TO THE SITE AT THE START TO AVOID ADDITIONAL EXPENSES FROM A LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT OPTIONS.

6

VERIFY WHETHER THE ACCOMMODATION IS PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OR SIMPLY EXISTS AS A TOURIST DESTINATION.



the feeling of home.



## METHOD BOX NO.1

# CREATE SIGNS!

### CONDITIONS

AGE: ANY

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: PENS, PAPER

TIME: NO LIMITS

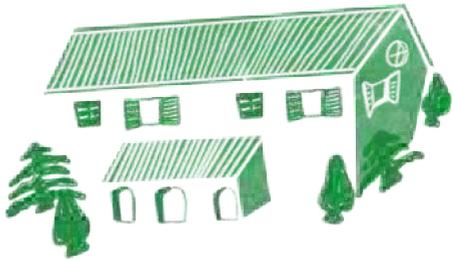
TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

### HOW

Do a brainstorming session with your group on how their stay at the chosen accommodation can be made more sustainable. After brainstorming, create fun or serious signs to remind everyone of certain aspects, such as turning off the light, taking shorter showers, etc.

A TIP:

Request that the accommodation keep these reminders in place to positively impact future guests.



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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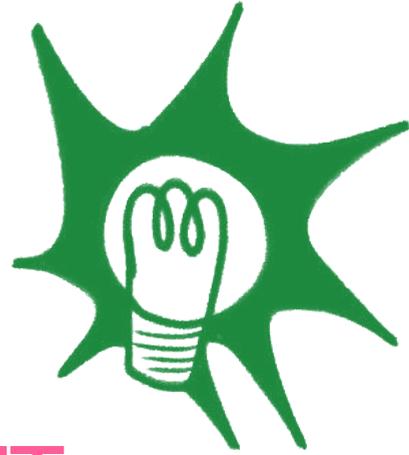
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## METHOD BOX NO.2

# CHECKING OUT THE HOUSE

### CONDITIONS

AGE: ANY

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: PEN, PAPER

TIME: NO LIMITS

TYPE: TEAM-BUILDING

### HOW

Tour the accommodation with your group to identify sustainable practices or spots that could use some work. Work together to find ways to boost sustainability throughout your stay. Think about setting aside a day to put these ideas into action.

## TIPS &amp; QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

For a more educational approach, organize a treasure hunt around the venue with clues leading to sustainability tips. Once they find the answers on making the venue more sustainable, you can ask the following questions:



- 1- What signs of sustainability can you find in this house?
- 2- Where might the house need improvement?
- 3- What small steps to achieve a better environmental impact could be taken?

## PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

GIVE YOUR IDEAS TO THE HOUSE OWNERS AND INVITE THEM FOR A TALK ABOUT

THIS TOPIC WITH YOU.

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here&now, together.



# CHAPTER Nº 03

## ACTIVITIES

Activities refer to the excursions, projects, hikes, and things you do while engaged in a youth mobility.

Activities undertaken in the context of youth mobilities such as seminars, training courses, festivals, conferences, sporting events and much more play a significant role in creating effective youthwork. Such activities, by bringing together young people from different locations, permit the sharing of experiences, ideas and culture. They enable young people to work hand in hand in order to build diverse and consequential projects, to learn from each other and to inform others. Additionally, such gatherings often spotlight critical global issues, encouraging collective action and awareness. However, the environmental footprint of these events, including travel and venue operations, calls for sustainable planning and execution to mitigate their impact.



The environmental impact of such activities varies depending on the type of activity, the transportation used to get there or the potential interaction with wildlife. For instance, hiking is more eco-friendly than bus tours, and snowshoeing is less impactful than downhill skiing, which involves tree removal and artificial snow. Moreover, overtourism leads to serious environmental damage while dependence on tourism, especially in seasonal jobs, presents challenges such as unstable employment.



LAAKSONEN, A. (2010)

BAUM, T., &amp; LUNDTORP, S. (2001)

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

CONSIDER HOW ACCESSIBLE YOUR ACCOMMODATION IS AND HOW WELL IT FITS WITH YOUR PLANNED ACTIVITIES.

## 2

REFLECT ON THE IMPACT OF YOUR ACTIVITY ON BOTH SOCIETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT.

## 3

AIM TO LEAVE NO NEGATIVE TRACES AFTER YOUR ACTIVITY.



## 4

ENGAGE WITH LOCALS AND BOOK VIA DIRECT COMMUNICATION PLATFORMS INSTEAD OF BOOKING THROUGH PROFESSIONAL AGENCIES.

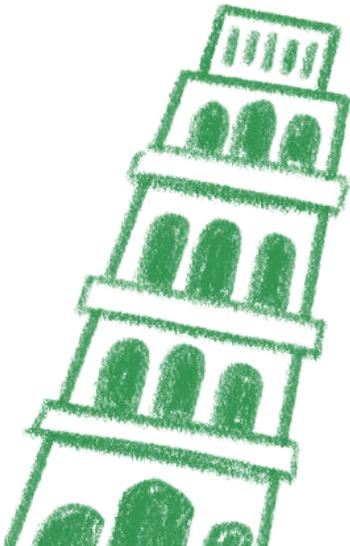
## 5

CALCULATE YOUR IMPACT USING OUR APP "CLIMATES - NATURFREUNDE-JUGEND" AND ACT ACCORDINGLY.

# FACTS

4%

Touristic activities emit approx. 4% of tourism's overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions





# 85%

Snowshoeing emits approx. 85% less emissions than downhill skiing thanks to no usage of snow ploughs and cannons.



here&now, together.



## METHOD BOX NO.1

# CALCULATE YOUR FOOTPRINT

### CONDITIONS

AGE: 12+

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: SMARTPHONE + INTERNET

TIME: 60 MINUTES

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

### HOW

Exploring the exact impact of our actions can be quite revealing. To achieve this, use our **"cliMATES - Naturfreundejugend"** app with your group and compare your actions with those of others.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1- Were the results as you expected?
- 2- What would you do differently next time?
- 3- How can you make your own activities more sustainable?
- 4- How can you assist your sending organizations in using the CliMATE's app?
- 5- How can you promote this application within your network of youth activists?

PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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growing our food.



# CHAPTER Nº 04

## FOOD CONSUMPTION

Food consumption refers to the substances that humans eat.

Bringing food to people's tables requires a lot of energy and water. The amount of energy needed varies significantly depending on the diet. A vegetarian or vegan diet uses much less land and energy to produce food compared to a meat-based diet.



WEXLER, J. (2022)

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS. (2013)

A meat-heavy diet significantly increases CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, negatively affecting the environment and contributing to climate change. Livestock farming, which is resource-intensive, not only demands extensive land, water, and energy but also leads to deforestation and biodiversity loss. This sector emits considerable amounts of methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and CO<sub>2</sub>, potent greenhouse gases, with methane being particularly impactful due to its high heat-trapping capacity. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations states that the livestock sector is responsible for about 14.5% of global anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

# FACTS

57%

Animal products are responsible for 57% of global food-related emissions, compared to plant-based foods which contribute 29% of the total.



GERRETSEN, I. (2022)



19% of all food-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are due to the transportation of food from the place of origin to the plate.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION (2023)

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

COOK DELICIOUS VEGETARIAN/VEGAN MENUS FOR YOUR GROUP. THIS WILL HELP BREAK THE STEREOTYPE THAT VEGAN/VEGETARIAN MEALS ARE NOT AS TASTY AS MEAT-BASED ONES.

## 2

IF USING CATERING SERVICES, REQUEST ONLY VEGETARIAN OPTIONS.

## 3

COOK TOGETHER: MEALS PREPARED AS A GROUP ENHANCE THE SOCIAL EXPERIENCE AND ARE OFTEN MORE APPRECIATED.



4

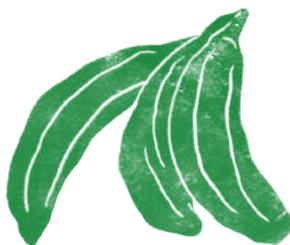
INVEST IN A VEGETARIAN AND VEGAN COOKING BOOK AND EXPLORE USING IT WITH YOUR GROUP.

5

THE USE OF PESTICIDES ON FOOD CAN SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT THE HEALTH OF HUMANS AND WILD-LIFE; OPT FOR ORGANIC FOOD TO AVOID THIS.

6

PARTNER WITH A LOCAL FARM TO USE THEIR FOOD SURPLUS OR OTHER ITEMS FOR YOUR MEALS. PRIORITIZE BUYING LOCAL AND SEASONAL PRODUCTS.



growing our food.

## METHOD BOX NO.1

# COOK TOGETHER!



Involve the group and plan your meals together. Go shopping and prepare meals with them. Does it take too much time? Create your program around it, as it is part of the educational journey as well. Many Naturefriends houses are equipped with kitchens that allow for self-catering, offering the perfect opportunity for hands-on learning and fostering a sense of community among participants. This approach not only enriches the group experience but also aligns with the principles of sustainability and self-sufficiency.

***NATUREFRIENDS HOUSES:***

YOU CAN FIND AN ONLINE MAP OF NATUREFRIENDS' HOUSES AROUND THE GLOBE AT [WWW.NF-INT.ORG/EN/THEMEN/NATUREFRIENDS-HOUSES](http://WWW.NF-INT.ORG/EN/THEMEN/NATUREFRIENDS-HOUSES)



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.2

# FOLLOW THE PATH OF THE BANANA

## CONDITIONS

AGE: 12+

GROUP SIZE: UP TO 25

MATERIAL: PICTURES OF  
LORRIES, PLANES AND A  
WORLD MAP

TIME: NO LIMIT

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

## HOW

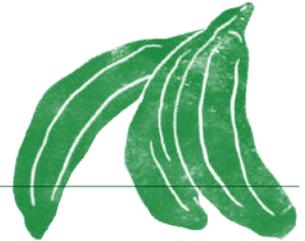
Let people guess where the banana comes from, how it is grown, and how it gets transported to its destination, as well as how much CO<sub>2</sub> emissions this causes. At the end, compare it with a local product from the region where you are staying (An apple, for example). With this exercise you can highlight of impact of transportation in the good sector and the importance of regional and seasonal products.

By examining the differences in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between the imported banana and the locally sourced apple, the group will gain insight into the environmental implications of food transportation. This activity serves to emphasize the benefits of choosing regional and seasonal produce, encouraging more sustainable consumption habits among the participants.

SOME THOUGHTS FOR THE REFLECTIONS SESSION:

- 1- What surprised you the most?
- 2- Have you thought about this difference before?
- 3- What solutions would you propose for your everyday life after this?

PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:



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# CHAPTER Nº 05

## WASTE POLLUTION

Waste pollution refers to all materials and substances discarded by humans which end up in nature, often due to inadequate or insufficient waste management systems. Waste can appear in various forms, such as solid waste and non-solid waste like chemicals.



Vacation accommodations often use single-use plastic, generate a lot of food waste from buffets, and may not have effective waste management systems. All this leads to waste being transported to overflowing landfills or other places like oceans or forests. The Great Pacific Garbage Patch, with its extensive spread of plastic waste in the Pacific Ocean, covers an area more than half the size of Germany, or roughly three times the size of Italy. It comprises around 1.8 trillion pieces of plastic, totaling approximately 80,000 tons, showcasing the alarming extent of plastic pollution and its profound implications for marine life and global environmental health.

Waste pollution is harmful to both the environment and humans. Water contaminated with solid waste or chemicals significantly impacts human and wildlife health, putting them at risk. Plastic pollution in the ocean, in particular, is responsible for the deaths of marine wildlife, thereby endangering natural ecosystems. Living close to waste sites can also lead to severe illnesses in humans, especially in children and young people.



# FACTS

34%

Polyethylene bags make up to 34% of the overall solid waste from touristic activities.





In some places, tourists produce up to twice as much solid waste as local residents.

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

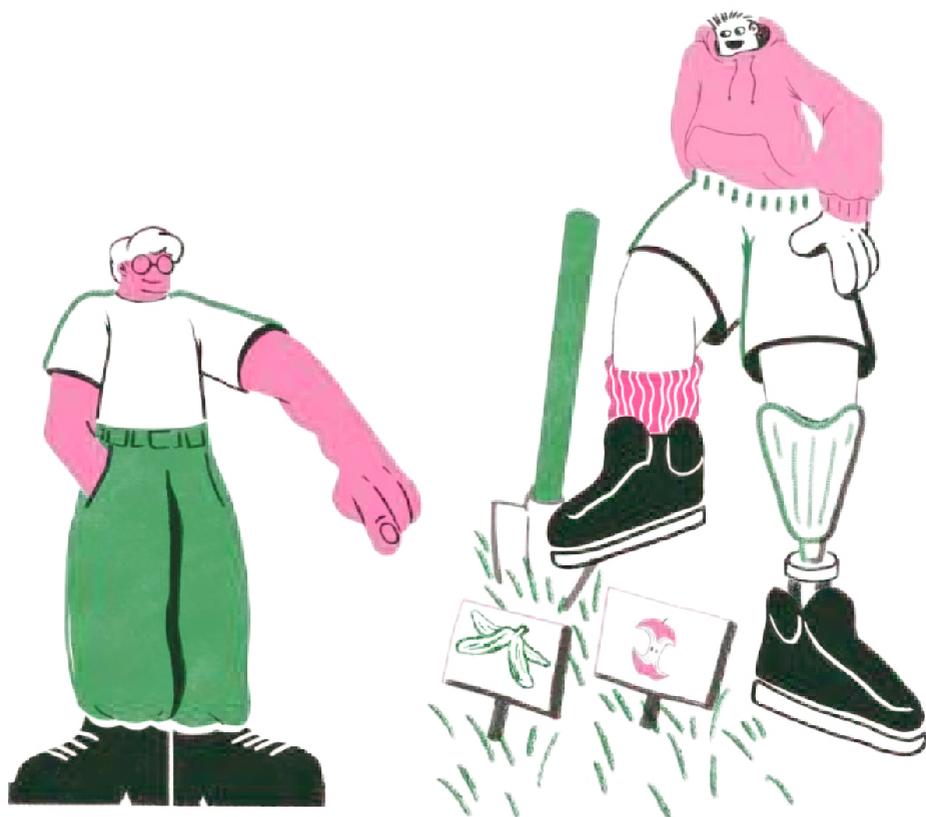
AVOID WASTE BY USING REUSABLE ITEMS LIKE LUNCH BOXES OR BOTTLES. TELL YOUR PARTICIPANTS TO BRING THEM ALONG FROM HOME.

## 2

IF TAP WATER IS SAFE, USE IT INSTEAD OF BUYING SINGLE-USE BOTTLED WATER.

## 3

CALCULATE THE AMOUNT OF FOOD NEEDED BASED ON THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE.



4

WHENEVER POSSIBLE,  
CHOOSE PRODUCTS  
WITH LESS OR NO  
PLASTIC PACKAGING.

5

CONNECT WITH  
LOCAL FARMERS;  
THEY SOMETIMES  
HAVE LEFTOVERS  
THAT ARE PERFECTLY  
GOOD BUT NOT SELL-  
ABLE DUE TO NOT  
MEETING CERTAIN  
REGULATIONS ON AP-  
PEARANCE. OR, THEY  
MAY BE INTERESTED  
IN PARTNERSHIPS.

6

INVESTIGATE YOUR  
VENUE'S WASTE MAN-  
AGEMENT PRACTICES  
OR TAKE YOUR TRASH  
TO THE NEAREST  
WASTE MANAGEMENT  
FACILITY.



less is more.

## METHOD BOX NO.1

## SWAP PARTY



## CONDITIONS

AGE: 12+

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: OLD AND USED THINGS LIKE CLOTHES, SHOES, PENCILS, ETC.

TIME: AN EVENING

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

## HOW

Before your mobility event begins, it's crucial to announce this activity, as participants are encouraged to bring items they no longer need or want but are still in usable or wearable condition. Ask everyone to bring their items to a designated area. Arrange this area neatly, possibly by categories, to provide a clearer overview and facilitate the swap. If this activity is part of a larger event, consider issuing tickets so that participants can only take as many items as they have contributed.

This swap is an excellent opportunity to initiate discussions on the fashion industry's impact, explore the 7Rs of the circular economy, and share standout examples of circular economy practices at both local and global levels. Additionally, the conversation can extend to electronics and their impact on waste management, including strategies for reduction.



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.2

# WASTE JOURNEY



## CONDITIONS

AGE: 10+

GROUP SIZE: 5-30

MATERIAL: PREPARED  
PICTURE CARDS

TIME: NO LIMIT

TYPE/MAIN ACTIVITY

## HOW

Participants will learn how long it takes various items to compost. Present different items, such as bananas, tissues, plastic bottles, etc., to the group and have them guess how long each takes to fully decompose. You can tailor this activity to the group's needs.

After the activity, prompt reflection with questions about how many years it takes for a plastic bottle or other objects to decompose. This discussion can deepen understanding of waste decomposition and its environmental impact.

PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:



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## METHOD BOX NO.3

# LET'S TRY TO DECOMPOSE.

### CONDITIONS

AGE: 6+

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: WASTE,  
SHOVEL

TIME: NO LIMIT

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

### HOW

Collect various waste materials, either brought from home or picked up at the activity location. Your group should then bury this waste, marking its location accurately to keep track of it. After a predetermined time, dig up the waste to see the decomposition process. Be mindful of the possibility of micro-plastic contamination in the soil and take precautions against it. In a long-term project, you will observe the effects, or absence thereof, of the decomposition process.



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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#naturefriends

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let it shine.



# CHAPTER Nº 06

## LIGHT POLLUTION

Light pollution is the artificial brightening of the night sky caused by human-made lights, such as streetlights.



Light pollution is mostly caused by humans, particularly in the global North. LED lights, when directed towards the sky instead of the ground, contribute significantly to light pollution. Urban areas are mainly affected due to the dense population using various light sources like TVs, mobile phones, laptops, and lamps. This artificial light disrupts our natural sleep cycles, allowing us to work and enjoy leisure activities regardless of the natural day and night rhythm. Did you know that because of light pollution, approximately one-third of humanity cannot see the Milky Way from where they live?

The impact of light pollution extends beyond humans, significantly affecting wildlife. Diurnal animals struggle to rest at night due to insufficient darkness, while nocturnal creatures are disoriented by the unfamiliar light, affecting their sense of direction. Not only animals but also plants, flowers, and trees suffer from light pollution, leading to reduced fertility. This disturbance has a profound effect on natural ecosystems.



# FACTS

80%

In 2019, 80% of people worldwide were adversely affected by light pollution.



99%

In the EU and US, as much as 99% of the population was affected by light pollution.



# Melatonin

Electric light generally increases the average daily exposure to light by 4-6 hours. The increase in light exposure decreases the amount of time that is available for melatonin production

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

OPT FOR LOCATIONS WITH LESS LIGHT POLLUTION: NATURE-FRIENDS HOUSES ARE EXCELLENT CHOICES SINCE THEY ARE USUALLY NOT IN THE CENTER OF CITIES BUT IN AREAS WITH LESS POLLUTION.

## 2

MANAGE YOUR PERSONAL LIGHTING: IF YOU BRING LIGHTS, MAKE SURE THEY ARE DIRECTED TOWARDS THE GROUND, NOT THE SKY.

## 3

FOCUS YOUR LIGHT WHERE IT'S TRULY NEEDED! ENCOURAGE PARTICIPANTS TO TAKE ENOUGH TIME FOR THEIR EYES TO GET USED TO THE DARK WALKING PATH RATHER THAN TURNING ON LIGHT DEVICES.



4

SWITCH OFF LAPTOPS, PROJECTORS, TVS, AND OTHER SCREENS WHEN THEY'RE NOT IN USE.

5

SUPPORT OUR EFFORTS BY DISCUSSING THE ISSUE OF LIGHT POLLUTION WITH YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITIES AND AUTHORITIES WITH REGARD TO CITY LIGHTS.

6

INVESTIGATE ALTERNATIVE COST-EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGIES SUCH AS SENSOR LIGHTS, WHICH CAN KEEP ROADS WELL-LIT ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.



let it shine.



## METHOD BOX NO.1

# NIGHT SKY WALK

### CONDITIONS

AGE: 12+

GROUP SIZE: 2 – 20

MATERIAL:  
MAP OF THE STARS

TIME: 30 MIN+

TYPE: REFLECTION

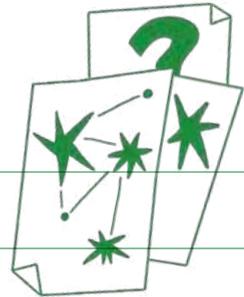
### HOW

Bring maps along and walk through the night, stopping at various points to observe how the perspective changes. If possible, lead your group on two walks: one in an urban area and another in a rural or mountainous region. Afterwards, compare observations between the two settings. Additionally, prompt participants to reflect on what they observe and what remains concealed during their personal journey in this activity.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1- When was the last time you saw a clear night sky?
- 2- What was the difference between the two scenarios?
- 3- What causes this difference?
- 4- What can we do about it?
- 5- How did it make you feel? This question can be answered on a piece of paper at the end of the activity.
- 6- Do you know how to navigate based on the night sky? Is the North Star even visible?

PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:



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## METHOD BOX NO.2

# LIGHT UP YOUR MIND

### CONDITIONS

AGE: 8+

GROUP SIZE: 15-30

MATERIAL: QUESTIONS,  
PAPER, PENS

TIME 20 MIN+

ACTIVITY TYPE:  
MAIN ACTIVITY

### HOW

You'll set up different stations for groups. In each round, the moderator presents five questions related to identifying star constellations. Groups have two minutes to discuss and draw/write down their answers. After answering the questions, the answer sheets are collected, and points are tallied by evaluators, with roles rotating among the groups. Correct answers are revealed after each round. The quiz can have as many rounds as desired by you and your group.

## EXAMPLES OF FUN QUIZ QUESTIONS:

1- What is the name of the constellation that looks like a big spoon or ladle in the sky?

Answer: Big Dipper

2- Which constellation is known as "The Hunter" and has three stars in a row that make his belt?

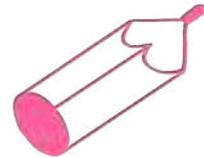
Answer: Orion

3- What is the name of the constellation that looks like a big dog and has a very bright star called the "Dog Star"? Answer: Canis Major

4- What is the name of the constellation that looks like a big square and represents a flying horse? Answer: Pegasus

5- Which constellation looks like a lion and has a bright star called the "Heart of the Lion"?

Answer: Leo



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.3

# BAT EXCURSION

### CONDITIONS

AGE: 8+

GROUP SIZE: 2-30

MATERIAL:  
ULTRASOUND  
DETECTORS

TIME 30 MIN+

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

### HOW

Take your group on a bat-watching excursion. To locate them, you'll need special detectors because bats use ultrasonic waves to navigate. During your walk, try to find them using these detectors.

### HINT

Bats are particularly fond of eating moths, which often gather around light sources. However, there's a risk that these light sources can get warm and harm the bats, as they cannot tell the difference between natural and artificial light.



#naturefriends

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# the sound of silence



# CHAPTER Nº 07

## NOISE POLLUTION

Noise pollution is defined as human-made sounds which negatively influence the health and well-being of humans and wildlife.

The sounds made by cars, ships, airplanes and the like are the second biggest cause of health problems due to human-made environmental factors, after air pollution.

But it's not just the sound of traffic that matters: human-made noise is everywhere, from grocery stores and construction sites to background noise from radios and TVs.



EUROPEAN ENVIRONMENT  
AGENCY (2024)

KIGHT, C. R., & SWADDLE, J. P.  
(2012)

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZA-  
TION. (2011)

Excessive noises can harm people's mental and physical health, leading to heart problems, restlessness, and sleep disturbances. Animals also suffer from the effects of excessive noise. Sounds like exploding fireworks can scare them, triggering their flight instinct and leading to dangerous situations such as crossing roads or becoming trapped and injured in their panic. Noise pollution currently exceeds recommended levels in many urban areas, with the World Health Organization (WHO) estimating that over 80% of people living in cities are exposed to noise levels that exceed its guidelines for acceptable levels of environmental noise.



# FACTS



**85 dBA**

Permanent exposure to noise over 85 dBA (shouting) can cause hearing loss.



# 2nd

Traffic noise, including road, rail and air traffic, is the second most important cause of ill health in Western Europe.

# YOUTH MOBILITIES

Youth mobilities can positively influence eco-social sustainability by encouraging the consideration of resources and their importance. Keep these factors in mind:

## 1

CREATE QUIET ROOMS FOR PEOPLE TO RECOVER FROM NOISE, IF POSSIBLE.

## 2

USE HEADPHONES WHEN LISTENING TO MUSIC.

## 3

RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT NOISE POLLUTION AND CREATE A CALM ATMOSPHERE.



# 4

INCORPORATE  
MOMENTS OF SI-  
LENCE INTO YOUR  
ACTIVITIES OR  
PROGRAM DESIGN;  
ACTION ISN'T  
EVERYTHING.



the sound of silence.



## METHOD BOX NO.1

# SILENCE WALK

### CONDITIONS

AGE: 6+

GROUP SIZE: 2+

MATERIAL: NONE

TIME: 5 - 30MIN OR  
WHOLE DAY

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

### HOW

Take your group into nature and ask them to walk without making any noise for a certain amount of time. If the group feels comfortable, ask them to close their eyes, place their hands on the shoulders of the person in front, trusting each other and walking slowly.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1- What sounds did you hear during the silent walk?
- 2- How did staying silent during the walk make you feel?
- 3- How did it feel to be in a calmer environment?
- 4- When was the last time you had complete silence around you?
- 5- When was the last time you trusted someone else to guide your way? How did it feel?

PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.2

SILENT  
DISCO

## CONDITIONS

AGE: 8+

GROUP SIZE: 6+

MATERIAL:  
HEADPHONES AND  
MUSIC

TIME: ANY

TYPE: MAIN ACTIVITY

## HOW

Create a space and invite people to bring their own headphones and music, or provide headphones for those who might not have them. This allows everyone to listen to their own music without disturbing others with the noise that loud music would create. The second step is to encourage moving according to the vibe of your music. When participants feel comfortable, suggest they close their eyes while moving around and dancing to their music.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1- How was it knowing that other people might not tune into the music you were listening to?
- 2- How did it feel when you had to look around and not know what others are vibing with?
- 3- When you close your eyes and trust the safety of different dance rhythms and movements, how does it feel?



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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## METHOD BOX NO.3

# ROOM OF SILENCE



## CONDITIONS

AGE: ANY

GROUP SIZE: ANY

MATERIAL: A ROOM

TIME: NO LIMIT

TYPE: TEAM-BUILDING

## HOW

Create a room of silence where people can retreat to when they need a break or seek a calm environment that is (almost) noiseless. Soundproof rooms are ideal, but any room designated as quiet, where silence is respected and no noise is introduced, is a great beginning. This ensures individuals have their own personal space.



PUT DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS FOR THE NEXT USERS:

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SCRIBBLE HERE YOUR ANSWER:  
WHAT PROBLEMS STOPPED YOU  
IN THE PAST FROM  
PUTTING THESE  
RECOMMENDATIONS INTO  
ACTION?



# MY METHOD BOX

# MY METHOD TO ADD:

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

CONDITIONS

HOW

AGE: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GROUP SIZE: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MATERIAL: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

ACTIVITY TYPE: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

\_\_\_\_\_

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# MY METHOD TO ADD:

CHAPTER \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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CONDITIONS

HOW

AGE: \_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

GROUP SIZE: \_\_\_\_

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MATERIAL: \_\_\_\_

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ACTIVITY TYPE: \_\_\_\_

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REFLECTION QUESTIONS

\_\_\_\_\_

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SCRIBBLE HERE YOUR ANSWER:  
WHAT IS YOUR IDEA FOR YOUR  
NEXT ACTIVITY?  
DON'T LET IT FLY AWAY IN THIS  
HIGH-SPEED WORLD.

# OFFSETTING VS. INSETTING CO<sub>2</sub>

## CARBON OFFSETTING VS. INSETTING CO<sub>2</sub>

Carbon offsetting has been recommended by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) as a method to absorb some of the CO<sub>2</sub> released into the atmosphere, compensating for emissions that are supposedly unavoidable. This concept has gained popularity in daily life.

For example, when booking accommodations or transport, there might be an option to pay a certain amount to offset the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the journey. This has led to the creation of a dedicated carbon market where individuals can purchase "carbon credits" to offset their emissions, aiming for carbon neutrality. However, the effectiveness of this approach is questionable due to the flawed operation of the current market. Issues like double counting, where both the buyer and provider of the offset claim the CO<sub>2</sub> reduction, and additionality, where actions such as tree planting would have occurred regardless, result in an overestimation of CO<sub>2</sub> reduction.

## JUST GREENWASHING?

The practice of buying "carbon credits" to fund projects that reduce or sequester greenhouse gases is problematic and has been misused. It tends to serve the public relations needs of major polluters more than the climate, allowing them to continue their harmful activities while maintaining a facade of environmental responsibility. This approach can act as a license to continue destructive behaviours, under the guise that offsetting makes them permissible. The emphasis on offsetting as a solution overshadows the critical need for emissions reduction and, more importantly, avoidance. With the pressing issue of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>, the choice should not be between reduction and compensation but rather focusing on avoiding emissions altogether. Offsetting should be considered only after all efforts to avoid or reduce emissions have been exhausted, as it's intended for handling unavoidable impacts.

Low-income countries, which contribute minimally to global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, suffer disproportionately from the consequences of the actions of industrialized nations. Projects to offset emissions from the North are often implemented in the global South, leading to significant biodiversity loss, ecosystem disruption, and human rights violations, including land expropriation and forced displacements for monoculture farming.

## CO<sub>2</sub> INSETTING

Carbon 'insetting' aims to do more good rather than merely doing less harm within an organization's value chain. It involves nature-based solutions like reforestation,

agroforestry, renewable energy, and regenerative agriculture to remove carbon from the atmosphere. Some insetting projects also enhance the well-being of indigenous communities.

For further information on this subject, please refer to our **Mangroves - Natural heroes to combat climate change** paper.



Or go to:

[www.naturfreundejugend.de/materialien/rubrik/-/show/409](http://www.naturfreundejugend.de/materialien/rubrik/-/show/409)

# ECO SPRINT!

After learning about the different ways tourism and mobilities can affect our environment, you're ready to start your own activity. We've made a guide for you on how to make an activity that's good for the society and the environment.



# BEFORE THE ACTIVITY

- Talk to your team about the sustainable approach and make compromises together! Co-create new sustainable ideas.
- Inform participants about your sustainable approach!
- Make sure that the approach is understood and people within the team know why it is important! Give it space for group discussion and joint discoveries on the topic.

# TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION

- Create a travel policy within your organization to make your journeys more sustainable
- Make ground transportation mandatory whenever possible and safe
- Recommend easy sustainable travel options like night trains, Interrail passes, coach passes etc.
- In case of non-sustainable travel make sure to compensate for your emissions adequately, for example via the NFI climate fund ([www.climatefund.nf-int.org](http://www.climatefund.nf-int.org))

# ACCOMMODATION

- Find accommodations that are run by local community members
  
- Have a look at their approach on environmental sustainability by checking whether or not they have:
  - Renewable energy sources
  - Waste water system(s)
  - Waste management system(s)
  - Eco-friendly heating system(s)
  
- Also, check if they are:
  - Non-for profit oriented
  - Specialised for youth activities
  - Available for sustainable activities in the area with locals
  - Reachable by public transportation
  - Fair employers

A TIP: Naturefriends houses will offer you affordable and sustainable accommodation. <https://www.nf-int.org/en/themen/naturefriends-houses>

# FOOD

- Offer vegetarian and vegan food only
- Cook together and already collect recipes before the start of the activity
- Create an internal food policy for your organization's activities, considering all needs and expectations
- Ask participants to bring lunch boxes and reusable bottles to avoid plastic wrapping and food waste
- Buy organic food whenever possible. Ask for contacts with local farmers and see if you can get some ingredients from them
- In case of external catering, make sure that they are able to implement your food policy for the duration of the activity

# ACTIVITIES ON THE SPOT

- Check out the area for possible activities
- Check how reachable your activities are either by walking or public transportation
- Make sure that at least 80% of the activities are considered sustainable (hiking, walking, swimming in a lake, etc.)

# IMPLEMENT AN ACTIVITY

We've put together a training program designed to help trainers in the international youth sector teach about "Greening International Youth Mobilities." This means finding ways to lessen the negative environmental impacts of youth travel and activities. This training is meant for project managers, event organizers, youth workers, youth leaders, and anyone else interested in running a youth mobility project in the most eco-friendly manner. Our program covers everything you need for the training course. It includes the teaching approach and methods, how the program will go, an overview, details about the sessions, and extra information on getting certified, offsetting carbon emissions, staying consistent, and being practical.

Trainers are encouraged to tailor this guide based on their own knowledge and experience, making sure it fits the unique needs of their participants.

# WHAT WILL YOU FIND IN THIS CURRICULUM?

- Teaching approach and methods
  - How the program is structured
  - Training goals
- Detailed program and session descriptions
  - Information on certification
  - How to offset carbon emissions
- Advice on being consistent and practical
  - Additional resources



Or go to: [https://www.naturfreundejugend.de/materialien/rubrik/-/show/408/greening\\_international\\_youth\\_work\\_curriculum/](https://www.naturfreundejugend.de/materialien/rubrik/-/show/408/greening_international_youth_work_curriculum/)

# COMPETENCIES DEVELOPMENT

We encourage youth organizations to prioritize competency development when creating the content and methods for their youth mobility programs. Competencies include a mix of knowledge, abilities, skills, experiences, and behaviors that lead to effective performance in an individual's activities. We suggest using a couple of competency development frameworks:

1

**GreenComp: the European Sustainability Competence Framework.** GreenComp serves as a reference for sustainability competencies. It offers a shared understanding for learners and provides guidance to educators by advancing a unified definition of sustainability competence. This framework meets the increasing need for individuals to enhance and develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for sustainable living, working, and acting. It supports educational and training programs across all stages of lifelong learning. Designed for learners of all ages and educational levels, GreenComp is applicable in various learning environments—formal, non-formal, and informal. Sustainability competencies empower learners to become systemic and critical thinkers, develop a sense of agency, and establish a knowledge base for those concerned with the wellbeing of our planet now and in the future.

2

**UNESCO's Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) approach.** ESD focuses on cultivating competencies that allow learners to reflect on their actions, enabling sustainable action in complex scenarios. This approach encourages taking new paths and engaging in socio-political processes, building knowledge and awareness necessary for actions that drive societal transformation in alignment with the 2030 Agenda.

For guidance on how to implement these frameworks, please visit the respective websites.

# CONCLUSIONS

Youth mobilities are crucial for the growth of young people and youth workers. Thus, we should continue organizing them and carry on with our efforts.

However, it's important to consider our social and environmental impact and minimize the negative aspects as much as we can. This handbook will help you do just that, so:

Keep going and let's make international youth work more eco-friendly.

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# GREEN. INTERNATIONAL. YOUTH WORK.

With this long-term project, Naturfreundejugend and its partner organizations aimed to contribute to making international youth work more respectful of the limits of our planet.

With the European Green Deal, the European Commission has taken an important step towards making European society and economy more sustainable. In doing so, it followed a demand that young people had been making for a long time, for example, in the European youth target number 10, “A sustainable, green Europe.”

For us, the Erasmus+ youth programs and the European Solidarity Corps (ESC) in particular are of great relevance. These programs are designed for the future, as is the concept of sustainability. The 2030 Agenda with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at the 2015 World Summit on Sustainable Development, provides a suitable basis for this. According to the SDGs, global economic aspects, social inequalities, the sustainable management of natural resources, and conservation of ecosystems can only be thought of as interconnected.

SDG 13 in particular was the focus of the project. It is about taking immediate action to combat climate change and its impacts. In view of this task, international youth work faces major challenges. Solutions have to be found for future climate-neutral work. In the coming years, the greenhouse gas emissions caused by international youth work have to be greatly reduced. For this, we have developed concepts that can be transferred to as many organizations as possible.

This happened in two ways in our project: 1) The fight against climate change became the subject of international encounters and voluntary activities, and 2) Practical knowledge was conveyed. However, these individual measures were also assessed and optimized with regard to their environmental effects. This project aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions of international youth exchanges, training, and volunteer teams. Overall, it was shown that 40 percent of GHG emissions (in accordance with the EU target for 2030) could be saved or offset by measures.

We wanted to give youth workers the possibility to lower the impact that international youth work has on the environment by providing them with a number of different tools: personal experiences through international activities, a handbook of methods, a curriculum, framework for mangrove restoration and an app for calculating international youth work impact.



Read more on:  
Topics GIYW at [www.naturfreundejugend.de](http://www.naturfreundejugend.de)

# OUR (BELOVED) PARTNERSHIP



As an independent youth organisation, NFJD engages with questions of justice, stands up for the rights of children, fights for climate justice and a sustainable transformation of society. Democracy and participation are at the heart of our educational work. Young people need to be enabled to take part in political decision-making. We demand: do not talk about them, talk with them! We value diversity and we go for colourful and active groups of young people. Together we explore new forms of living in solidarity and youth-led political initiatives.

[www.naturefreundejugend.de](http://www.naturefreundejugend.de)



GIAN-GIO is an informal group within the network of GIAN (Gruppo Italiano Amici della Natura) which is a non-profit and non-governmental grassroots environmental organization based in 4 regions in Italy. GIANGIO's main pillars are connected to solidarity, sustainability, and non-formal education. Since 2017, GIANGIO has connected young people in Italy to other nations and fights against climate change on different levels. Its local network reaches 7 localities within small and medium size municipalities. Via this local section, GIAN manages to conduct activities and initiatives that are also promoted to increase and improve human relations by fostering, for example, exchange between different cultures, different social backgrounds and different approaches to nature.

[www.giangiovani.org](http://www.giangiovani.org)



Asociación Biodiversa is a non-profit and non-governmental grassroots environmental organization based in Asturias, Spain. It has been providing meaningful learning experiences in nature for young people and adults since 2011.

Its mission is to promote care for nature and the environment through education and awareness raising. Its vision is a planet in which humans live in harmony with themselves, each other, and their environment.

[www.asociacionbiodiversa.org](http://www.asociacionbiodiversa.org)



IYNF - International Young Naturefriends (Czech Republic) IYNF is an international organisation bringing together Young Naturefriends and their organisations across Europe. It was established in 1975 and currently has 18 member and 14 partner organisations. With more than 120,000 young members organised in over a thousand local groups, it is one of the major European youth organisations. The fundamental reason for IYNF's existence - or what they jointly want to become - is an international network to connect and inspire Young Naturefriends for living values of respect, solidarity, equality, sustainability and love and care for nature.

[www.iynf.org](http://www.iynf.org)



ASAN - Association Sénégalaise des Amis de la Nature (Senegal) founded in 1983, is the first organisation in African continent entirely dedicated to nature protection. ASAN aims to protect and restore the environment, end poverty through good management of natural resources, promote sustainable tourism, and fight against climate change. ASAN achieves these missions through a participative approach and direct collaboration with the communities. ASAN is one of the funding organisations of "African NaturFriends Networks" (RAFAN) and a member of the International Naturefriends Movement.



## GREEN INTERNATIONAL YOUTHWORK

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