

Learn – Connect – Act

A discussion on Environmental Learning



Hello everyone,

Let's talk about something important – our planet!

The health of our planet impacts all aspects of our lives - from the quality of the air we breathe, food we eat and water we drink, to where we can live and how much it all costs us. However, climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution are threatening our planet, and us, like never before.

But here's the thing – there is hope! You are not powerless. Youth today are passionate and ready to make real and meaningful change. And access to quality environmental learning is key.

“Young people are seeing headlines in the news that are terrifying and make them feel powerless - our education needs to give us the skills, the knowledge, the coping mechanisms, to turn those feelings into agency and action.”

- Phoebe Hanson, 20 years old, United Kingdom

Yes, sometimes it feels like our education isn't preparing us for the real world. And yeah, maybe you have turned to social media for information, but let's be real – it's not always the most reliable source. And that's why we need different and better ways of learning about our environment.

Environmental learning should be about finding solutions and getting hands-on experiences in a fun and interactive way. It's not just about sitting in a classroom – it's about getting out there and experiencing nature firsthand! Whether it's through field trips, community projects, or just spending time outdoors, there are so many awesome ways to get involved and learn something new. Plus, it's important to recognize that traditional Indigenous knowledge is just as crucial as the science for understanding the environment.

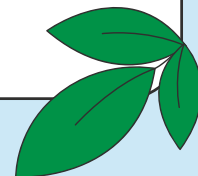
Environmental learning is about everyday things like health, justice, economic opportunities, mental well-being, lifestyles, and quality of life for all Canadians. It's really important! But Canada is not performing well when it comes to climate education. We need to step up our game and ensure that environmental learning is happening across Canada in ways that are meaningful for everyone.

That's why Environment and Climate Change Canada wants to hear from Canadians about their ideas about environmental learning. This is about you and for you - so have your say!

Here are some reflection questions for you on environmental learning:

- What sort of environmental topics do you like learning about?
- How do you like to learn about the environment?
- What – or who – motivates, inspires, or empowers you to take part in environmental projects or activities?
- Where do you get your information about environment and climate change? If social media, which platforms?
- Would you be interested in a green career?

Your responses will help shape the future of environmental learning in Canada.



Key Terms Related to Environmental Learning



1

Biodiversity: The variety of all living things and their interactions. It measures the differences in genes within a species, as well as the differences among species and ecosystems.

2

Sustainability: Sustainability means doing things in a way that meets our current needs without harming the Earth. It's like finding a balance to make sure that future generations can enjoy the same things that we do.

3

Climate Change: All the excess burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil, and gas is causing our earth's temperature to rise. This is leading to changes in weather patterns, rising sea levels, and other problems. Check out this video on YouTube to learn more:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlQ-MEZgRGY&t=6s

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yC2FqcUnNJY

4

Eco-Anxiety: When people feel stressed or worried about the negative news/facts around environmental crisis and climate change.

5

Indigenous Knowledge: The knowledge and skills that have been developed and practiced by Indigenous Peoples through their interactions with the natural world for generations.

6

Net-zero: The goal of achieving a balance between the negative impact we have on the environment and the positive actions we take to reduce that impact. Essentially, it means to do good things for the environment so that we do not cause more harm than good. Learn more about it on:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=o-n_76SK2Fw&t=gs

7

Circular Economy: A big recycling loop where we use resources wisely, we make things that are made to last longer, and we find creative ways to reuse and recycle stuff instead of throwing it away. It's about keeping materials in use for as long as possible and reducing waste. Learn more about it on:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0pzwgYvk3Q

www.youtube.com/watch?v=m9k8A957srw

8

Nature-based solutions: The actions that protect, manage and restore natural places like forests and oceans while providing benefits to humans and their well-being.

9

Green Jobs: The jobs that help the environment. They're all about working in fields like renewable energy (like solar panels and wind turbines), sustainable agriculture (like growing fruits and vegetables without using harmful chemicals), or environmental conservation (like protecting wildlife and natural habitats) to make the world a better, greener place to live.

