

1st Prize / Grand Prize Winner

Letter from a doctor

by Veda Fernandes, aged 11 (United Arab Emirates)

Dear Mr. UN Secretary General,

I request your intervention with my critically ill patient, Earth. Here is her case history.

Code Red!! Rushing into the ER, I took in the paramedics giving first aid to a green and blue orb. Earth's vitals were critical; she was gasping for breath. Symptoms: Elevated temperature of 50F, greenhouse-gastritis at 50% above normal, high CO₂ concentrations, deforestation, icecaps melting and sea-level rising to 20cm!!! The causative organism was homo-sapiens. Diagnosis: a classic case of Clima-changeitis, which leads to a slow and painful death.

I put Earth on life-support stat - critical care involved reducing greenhouse gases, mainly carbon-dioxide. An immediate transfusion of sustainable energy to replace fossil fuels was affected. Three doses of 500 mega-gallons of anti-plasticibiotic was injected intravenously, leading to reduction, recycling and reuse of disposables. Natural tree-planting therapy ensured short term increase in oxygenation.

I was relieved to note that Earth's vitals were momentary stabilised. Laboratory tests showed significant changes in homo-sapien eco-behavior post the emergency intervention: countries collaborated at Paris to limit future temperature rise to 2oC.

However, long-term therapy for Earth is imperative. On discharge, I prescribed a strict regimen, which aims to create a sustainable ecosystem on the recuperating Earth.

Cardio-greenery resuscitation is advised for eternity - land-use zoning creates eco-cities, bio-belts and conservi-zones to maintain the bio-balance on Earth. Revitalising therapy of flora, fauna and endangered species is infused into Conservi-zones. The Arctic and the Antarctic are declared as 'Bio-belts', off limits to humans. Carbon sequestration is advised through land-use carbon inventory tracking. As wildlife and green cover expand, oxygenation levels rise and CO₂ falls.

A complete change in Activities of Daily Living (ADL) is mandatory. Eco-transportation replaces fossil-fuelled modes. Magneto-monorails connect eco-cities. Hydrogen-fuelled buses and trams offer public transport and electric, or biofuel pods are private transport. Public Electric/biofuel charging stations add vitality.

Low-carbon supplements are compulsory to prevent long-term adverse carbon reactions. Clean energy from solar and wind generators power all buildings. Indigenous foliage, watered by desalinated or recycled water, shades roof tops, balconies and streets.

To maintain the momentum of treatment, R&D in low and zero-carbon breakthroughs is required. Tax policies are to reward carbon innovation by homo-sapiens. Quality of Care Indicators are measured regularly through a Global Eco-Green Centre.

With this comprehensive care, I am confident Earth's future is eternal.

Thank you,

Dr. Veda Fernandes (Eco-speciologist)

2nd Prize

My Plan for Climate Action

by Martha Tendo Nakirandha, aged 11 (Uganda)

Kitante Primary School,

P.O. Box 3959,

Kampala, Uganda.

Saturday, December 10, 2016.

The UN Secretary-General,

United Nations Secretariat,

New York, NY 10017.

Dear Mr. Antonio Guterres,

MY PLAN FOR CLIMATE ACTION

I write to you from Uganda to share with you my plan for climate action. Climate change has caused suffering in the world. I watch on television stations and see people starving and others drowning because of floods. All these are caused by negative climate change. In Uganda, livestock is dying as there is no pasture and water for them. Milk and meat are expensive and we have malnutrition in some areas of my country.

Temperature has increased in Kigezi highlands and now there are mosquitoes that spread malaria. At school, I learnt that rain seasons are not reliable and many countries receive less rain than in the past. These were caused by human activities like deforestation, swamps reclamation, industrialization, air pollution and the rest.

I request that you convince world leaders to follow my plan for climate action. First is educating their people to conserve vegetation. We need afforestation, reforestation and agroforestry. This will bring rain and people will crops for food to stop starvation. People need education on dangers of deforestation so that they can stop it.

Secondly, I request you to ask heads of state to give people clean sources of energy. These are hydro-electricity, solar power and wind energy. These should be at low price. These forms of energy don't pollute environment so they reduce global warming. For example, this will reduce cutting of trees to get firewood and charcoal.

Also, make laws at the United Nations that leaders should follow to control fast population growth in their country. When people are not very many, there is less destruction of the environment. Therefore, countries will have forests to form rain. Trees will use carbon dioxide during photosynthesis and reduce global warming. I learnt this at school.

Please, advise leaders to give scientist money to do research so as to introduce foodstuff that require less heat to be cooked. Example in Uganda are irish potatoes, yams and matoke

crops.

Climate change has caused too much rain in some areas. In Uganda, too much rain and deforestation have caused landslides on slopes of mountain Elgon. Governments with the same problem should plant trees on mountain slopes and resettle affected people in safe places.

If my plans are followed, we could reduce the bad effects of climate change. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Nakirandha Martha Tendo.

3rd Prize (joint)

My Plan for Climate Action

by Abdul Rafay Mumtaz Sheikh, aged 11 (Pakistan)

Climate change is a substantial issue that has affected the environment globally. With Pakistan becoming increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, like floods and droughts, a recent BBC Climate Asia Report has found that around 72 per cent of people don't trust the government to help them respond to these challenges. They have no confidence in the government taking action on issues of food, water, energy and extreme weather. Indeed, for the current government, which is battling terrorism and energy shortages, climate change is clearly not a priority and the ambitious National Climate Change Policy that was launched by the previous government in March 2013 has now been shelved.

However, I would handle the situation by using following plan:

First, reducing, reusing, and recycling at school and in the classroom conserves energy, minimize pollution, and reduce greenhouse gases.

Second, planting trees, shrubs and other native plants helps your school reduce its carbon footprint by shading the school building (reducing energy use), providing carbon sinks (plants take in CO₂), and also providing essential habitat for wildlife (which is often displaced due to climate change and habitat loss).

Third, driving cars and buses is a major contributing factor to climate change. Have students explore alternatives to driving private cars to school including walking, biking and public transportation. Have students develop an anti-idling campaign to reduce excessive idling in front of schools, or develop a bike- or walk-to-school-day.

Fourth, by working with cafeteria staff to locate and, serve local foods whenever possible, school will reduce the amount of energy used to produce and transport food. Most food travels thousands of miles before it is served. Local foods are not just more energy-efficient; they also tend to be fresher and less processed, promote healthy eating habits and support the local economy.

Fifth, many schools today are exploring alternative energy sources including solar, wind and geothermal sources. For example, students can develop a solar challenge to research and educate others about solar energy and then work to raise funds to qualify for solar panels.

Sixth, "green" or environmental careers are one of the fastest growing sectors in the job market. Most "green" careers are focused on protecting and conserving the environment. As older students begin to think about college and career opportunities, explore the vast array of green jobs that are available.

Therefore, being a student, representing a school, I would put forward my aforementioned plan and try my level best to implement it and turn it to be fruitful for the best favor my country, continent and the world.

3rd Prize (joint)

Dear UN Secretary General

by Aryav Odhrani, aged 8 (United Arab Emirates)

Dear Mr. UN Secretary General,

I am Planet Bong. I used to be like Earth - lush with life, but climate change destroyed my Bonglings and me, so now I am warning all Earthlings to urgently do something about this rapid climate transformation before Earth's fate too becomes like mine.

When I first started looking into the causes of climate change, I learned that there were too many natural gases in the atmosphere: methane, nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, Chlorofluorocarbons! All this sounded too confusing to me. If I myself couldn't understand this, how could I help you? Then I realised that it all came down to something simple: You Earthlings are too used to machines and electronics, and are burning too much coal and petrol which is negatively affecting the climate. That's the bad news. The good news is that because it's human induced it can also be ended by humans.

Nevertheless, just because you can control it, don't take the situation lightly! Your planet is already showing severe signs of damage. In the past few decades there has been an increase in forest fires, thinning glaciers, floods, mudslides, and much more! Take action immediately!

I do appreciate the efforts taken to halt climate change such as The Paris Climate Talk (well done for getting 195 countries to sign agreements to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions!), and eye opening movies, like Before The Flood, many countries are still not on board the UN Climate Change Ship. However, I'm afraid of the ideas of the incoming US President elect against Paris Climate Talks.

Whilst you are waiting for them, each Earthling must do some things to save Planet Earth. 1. Save water - not just by taking showers instead of baths but also by putting a brick in a bag into a commode and maximise uses of sensor taps. 2. Eat more vegetables instead of meat. Non vegetarian food may be healthy and yummy but do you also know that it takes less resources to make a salad than to make a meat sandwich. Similarly, if the world turns vegetarian, your carbon footprint and the world's food-related emissions will reduce by 60%. 3. Use sustainable energy- Use solar panels, wind power, wave power, water power, to produce electricity naturally to greatly reduce climate change and 4. Do the Three Rs - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle! I'm sure this will desire results to your planet.

To conclude, I urge each Earthling to make a conscious effort to stop Climate Change. As Howard Zinn quoted "Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world."

Yours Sincerely,

Planet Bong

4th Prize (joint)

Let's change our actions now

by Eun jin Kwon, aged 9 (South Korea)

Because of people, the earth is getting hotter. Animals and plants are losing their habitats. There are more and stronger storms, or heat waves. Countries are losing land and people are losing their homes. We need to stop emitting so many greenhouse gasses into the air.

First let's change our mobility habits. I will walk, use a bicycle and take a bus to get to school or around the city. I will encourage mom and friends to do the same. We need to get more people driving electric cars.

Second, our food habits need to change too. I will eat little meat and eat many vegetables. To grow food for cows, we cut trees. Trees give oxygen and take carbon dioxide. Also, cows burp and release carbon dioxide. I will ask my teacher if we can have food festivals to teach about cool eating habits. Maybe we can have a school garden too.

Third, we must learn how to buy smart. I will buy local products to reduce the mileage of the product and buy good products that last a long time. When I am finished with the product, I will recycle it or if it is still good, I will give it to people who need it. People need to know more about the products they buy. We need to know they are made in an environmentally friendly way.

Fourth, making homes energy efficient can help protect the environment. When I am not using the lights, watching TV or using the computer, I will turn them off. I will have shorter showers. I will talk to my mom about solar panels, and other ways to use less energy and water.

People need to change their actions now. If we act now, we can save animals and plants, have normal weather patterns, and save people's homes. I hope many people will try to have a small carbon footprint.

4th Prize (joint)

My thoughts on climate change

by Finn Timmermans, aged 9 (United Arab Emirates)

Dear UN Secretary General,

Congratulations on becoming Secretary-General. Everybody listens to what you have to say, especially in your first speeches. You are the voice of the world. My name is Finn. I am 9 years old. This is what I would like you to say and hear from the children that ARE the future. It is deplorable that some people deny climate change is occurring and is caused by humans. Before the Industrial Revolution CO₂ (which traps and radiates back heat) was about 270ppm. In 1960, 313ppm and now - 400ppm. The Earth is warming. Arctic sea ice

shrank to its second lowest level on record this year. Instead of the words "climate change" we (you) should use "climate damage" to get more attention. Countries have signed pacts pledging to cut down gas pollution but I want the plan to go further to improve air quality. There is a saying (when I go to the beach), take nothing but photos and leave nothing but footprints. My motto would be to leave the beach actually better e.g. Take home some rubbish! I want to hear the words "carbon footprint" used less and replaced with "carbon handprint." What are we doing to reverse and eliminate greenhouse gases? We, using scientific innovation, need to actually take out CO₂ from the air and re-use it to make everyday products. NRG energy company have made a pair of sneakers that are 75 per cent made from power plant gas waste. In New Zealand, the Whanganui River has recently been given legal personhood status. It is believed it has a pulse, a breath, a heartbeat - a life. It has the legal rights to be protected (like a human). I believe air, water and land should be given personhood status. They could have their own UN lawyers and their own UN representatives (e.g. on the Security Council). Their rights would be protected as per the UN charter. It would be an international crime to hurt them. Let's do more. See my link for some of my ideas and more information: <https://youtu.be/e7IONBFVNaY>. The world is definitely still not doing enough to stop climate DAMAGE. We need to take responsibility NOW for the future. By Finn Timmermans

5th Prize (joint)

My Plan for Climate Action

by Miriam Karungi, aged 11 (Uganda)

Kitante Primary School,

P.O. Box 3959,

Kampala, Uganda.

Sunday, December 18, 2016.

Dear UN Secretary-General,

MY PLAN FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Mr. Secretary-General, let me report to you that today, many things have affected climate in my country. There has been a lot of cutting of trees for many reasons, overgrazing, bush burning, vehicles in dangerous mechanical conditions and some industries pollute air and many others. Some districts have too much rainfall, others have less. Some places have high temperature and rain seasons keep changing. But, my grandfather told me that long ago rain seasons were reliable and temperature wasn't very hot. This is climate change. The change has caused drought, famine, floods, desertification, and soil erosion.

In my opinion, we can solve these climate problems. I ask you kindly to use my plan below to tell presidents what to do to improve climate in their countries. In my action plan we can solve the problems firstly by planting trees. Trees help to form rain which can reduce the dry seasons. People will grow crops to get food and money.

Global warming can also reduce because trees use carbon dioxide during photosynthesis.

Secondly, pastoralists like Karamojong of Uganda and Masai of Kenya should stop overstocking. This will fight overgrazing. Overgrazing leads to less rain formation and soil erosion.

I request you to convince Governments to have compulsory and free education up to secondary school. At least people will learn to use natural resources well to avoid climate change and its dangers.

In Uganda, we use charcoal stoves and firewood to cook. We have hydro-electricity but I tell you it is very expensive. Even some areas have never seen an electric pole! Help presidents to lower the cost of electricity and distribute it everywhere. Maybe, we can conserve vegetation.

I request you to give scientists money to come up with crops that mature quickly to fight famine. Maybe, people can harvest crops before droughts come.

Mr. Secretary General, let the UN lend money to my country to build a better weather station so that Ugandans can get accurate weather forecasting. Sometimes farmers are told to grow crops expecting rain yet finally only drought follows and crops dry up.

There is a need to follow laws that stop destruction of the environment. But because of corruption rich people just cut forests and destroy swamps but they aren't arrested. It is only the poor who are arrested for that. We need equal treatment here.

Through you, can countries with problems like ours use my plan to have a better life?

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

Karungi Miriam

5th Prize (joint)

My Plan for Climate Action

by Jeff Kevin, aged 10 (India)

Dear Mr. UN Secretary General:

My Plan for Climate Action

An effective plan for Climate Action should be practical and it should make a positive impact towards change. Environmental experts, various professionals and national leaders are working together to devise various measures to combat climate change. It's important to deal with climate change with a multi-dimensional approach. I'm going to focus on one such

dimension here. Most of the disasters as a result of climate change we've witnessed so far are the result of human behaviour rather than due to natural changes. I'm going to explore how a positive change in the human behaviour towards climate action can be realised.

'ACT' Movement:

"Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody ever does anything about it."- Mark Twain

Climate action should be a movement and not a one-off event. It's important to plant the seed in the hearts of people and nurture them on a regular basis until they bear fruits. Many young people are concerned about climate change today. However, most of them are not taking any action about it. An ACT movement is the need of the hour.

A for Awareness: Creating awareness about climate change

C for Compassion: Being compassionate about all living beings and the future generation

T for Transfer: Transfer the knowledge about Climate Action by being a role-model and through knowledge-sharing sessions

We must ACT now to bring a positive change in our people.

'ACT Pilots' to lead:

"Be the change that you wish to see in the world" - Mahatma Gandhi

Students who are aware and enthusiastic about climate change need to be selected and they need to be nurtured and empowered with the required knowledge and skills. It's not just about educating them about climate action but using them as an agent of change. These students will lead the ACT movement and they can be called 'ACT Pilots'.

The ACT Pilots will inspire other students in their school and country. These inspired students will definitely ACT on to realize some positive results towards climate action in their family and community.

To conclude, among various other initiatives of climate action it's also important to ACT now and the ACT Pilots will play a major role in this. This will definitely inspire more people to take necessary actions to combat climate change. If given an opportunity, I'll present more about this idea during the debate session. We can also have an experience sharing session next year where the 'ACT Pilots' like me can share our climate action experiences.

With regards

'ACT Pilot' JeffKevin ArunPrakash