



“LET’S BE THE CHANGE !”

We, young people aged 13-16 years old, from **9 different European countries**, gathered in **Lisbon in May 2018** to work on the most critical environmental issues at **the 3rd “Let’s Take Care of the Planet” European Youth Conference.**

Mindful of the **Sustainable Development Goals** promoted by the United Nations, we shared the environmental problems our countries are facing. We came to the conclusion that **only collective action is the solution.** In fact, most of the problems are **common** for every country.

From every young student in Europe to every politician, decision-maker, journalist, scientist, and to every citizen of the world – we challenge you to **act immediately!**

Our planet’s health is in danger and it’s affecting many vital resources (water, air, soil and biodiversity)

The planet needs our help!

We now realize that **clean water has become a scarce resource** and we feel responsible for **reducing the waste of water and saving it.** To meet this responsibility, we built **dry toilets** in our middle school in **Die, France**

We realized that there is a huge quantity of carbon emissions caused by transports and factories causing **global warming.**

We feel concerned about **reducing global warming for us and the future generations.**

To contribute to this objective that is also **SDG 13 Climate action**, we feel it’s important to save energy like we did in our schools in **Naples and Lecce, Italy** by creating all types of bins and a prototype of bin with sensors for **a correct separate trash collection.**

We also think it is paramount to **use renewable energies** and to begin to do it in our schools to show the example like we did in **Istanbul, Turkey** by setting up **solar panels next to the windows.** **To keep acting on this issue, we are ready to use other means of transport like bicycle to reduce carbon emissions.**

We feel responsible for having a **conscious society that takes care of the health of the soil so that we can benefit from balanced food.**

To do our part on this issue, we created in our school in **Buzau, Romania** a vegetable garden at school to know where it comes from and our fellow students from **Barcelona, Spain**, created compost at school to reduce food waste.

We thought about encouraging food from GMO free agriculture in our schools.

The newest research show that an increasing amount of **pollution in the air** have resulted in a **growing number of children suffering from asthmatic problems.**

We feel responsible to **decrease the amount of atmosphere pollutants let out by transportation of school students** e.g. cars. In **Lisbon, Portugal**, we have already changed our habits by meeting up once a week between classmates at a station called **Pedibus** and we all go walking to school so we can avoid going with our parents by car.

In Denmark there are special roads for bikes, always a safe place to park, and a special traffic light for bikes as well, this makes riding your bike a much better and simpler choice. In fact, **about 80% of the Danish population ride their bike at least 3-4 times a week**. In *Aarhus, Denmark* the school have provided about 600 parking spaces for the student's bikes.

In other countries we thought about **providing parking spaces for bikes** as well so it would become more attractive for students to ride their bikes to school. To afford this we could **earn money by setting up events and campaigns to sensitize about the air quality issue** happening in the world.

In order to **raise awareness about efficient energy management and usage**, a school in *Vilnius, Lithuania* organised an international conference and in *Georgia* some students participated to talks about energy consumption to find ways to use energy more efficiently.

Preserving our natural resources and conserving the variety of the local animals and plants is another issue that is dear to us. For instance, in *Portugal*, **seasonal wild fires** are very frequent and thus threaten both our forests and our natural ecosystem. To do something about this issue, many of us from different countries, we **planted different trees** in our schools. In the future, we would also like to **encourage the use of biopesticides (like the use of wasps to reduce pest population while preserving vegetation)**.

The Let's Take Care of The Planet project gives us the opportunity to learn about other countries, cultures, but also about **ourselves**. Even if we have different cultures, we found **common points** like the desire that we all have to take care of the planet. We are expecting **real actions instead of empty talk** from adults and decision makers.

We are ready to fight in the same direction as the Sustainable Development Goals throughout concrete collective actions.

What about you?!

***“If not us, then who?
If not now, then when?”***

<http://www.careplanet.org>



French organisation Monde Pluriel has been coordinating the project “Let's Take Care of the Planet” in France and Europe since 2009 and fosters intercultural exchanges in the field of sustainable development.

The 3rd European Youth Conference is the fruit of a yearlong partnership between Monde Pluriel and ASPEA, environmental education association from Portugal.