



*The European Green Deal:
A timely plan for necessary action*



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What is the European Green Deal?

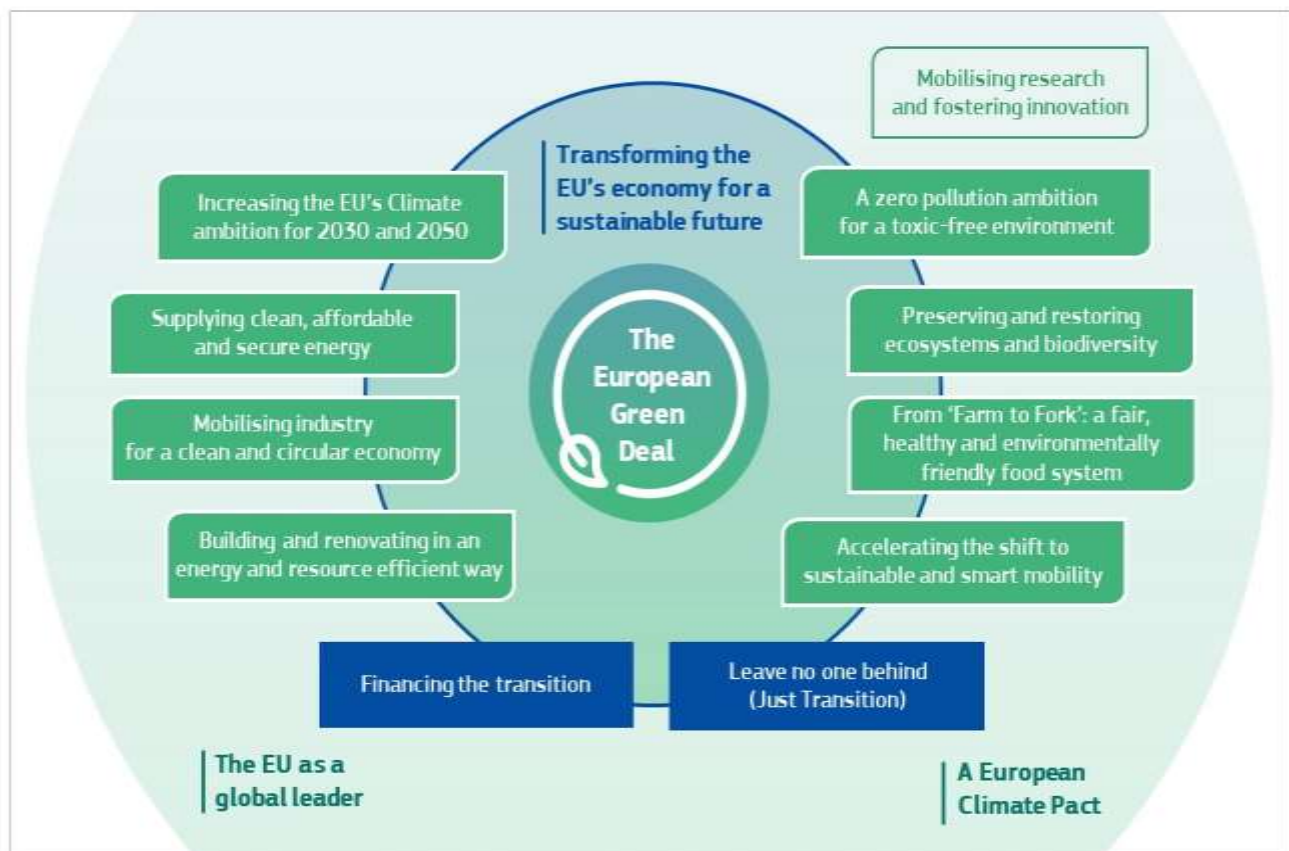
The European Green Deal is a plan announced by the European Commission in December 2019 to propel **economic growth** while making Europe the first **climate-neutral** continent in the World. The plan involves different strategies to propel the economy responsibly, caring for the health and well-being of people through an increased attention to the **environment**.

The central goal of the Green Deal is to develop a **sustainable economy**, transforming the risks and problems of the

present climate situation into opportunities for innovation and growth.

This includes accelerating shifts towards clean energy and sustainable mobility, developing a wasteless economic model and preserving the natural capital of the European Union.

It also involves efforts in international relations. Europe is not alone in the globe and, as a global leader, the European Union must engage and inspire others, through alliances and partnerships to share expertise, influence and financial resources looking to avoid a climate catastrophe.



The plan requires government investment of between 0,5% and 2% of the European Union's Gross Domestic Product every year. This means between 1/200 and 1/50 of all the riches produced within the European Union each year.

According to Eurostat, the European Union had a GDP of around 13,9 Trillion Euro in 2019. So over the 30 years the plan is expected to last, more than 4 trillions of Euro will be invested in the Green Deal.

Why a Green Deal now?

The state of the planet

It is no longer surprising to talk about our collective need to take action to change the environmental situation. The global temperature is rising, affecting sea levels and weather patterns, which puts land, agriculture and entire ecosystems at risk.

This affects humans in drastic ways. Heat waves, floods and fires affect the availability of workable land and clean water. This leads to more forced migration, but also to a rise in climate-related deaths.

According to a study by Oxford University, the food-availability impacts alone are expected to take the lives of around 529,000 people each year by 2050.

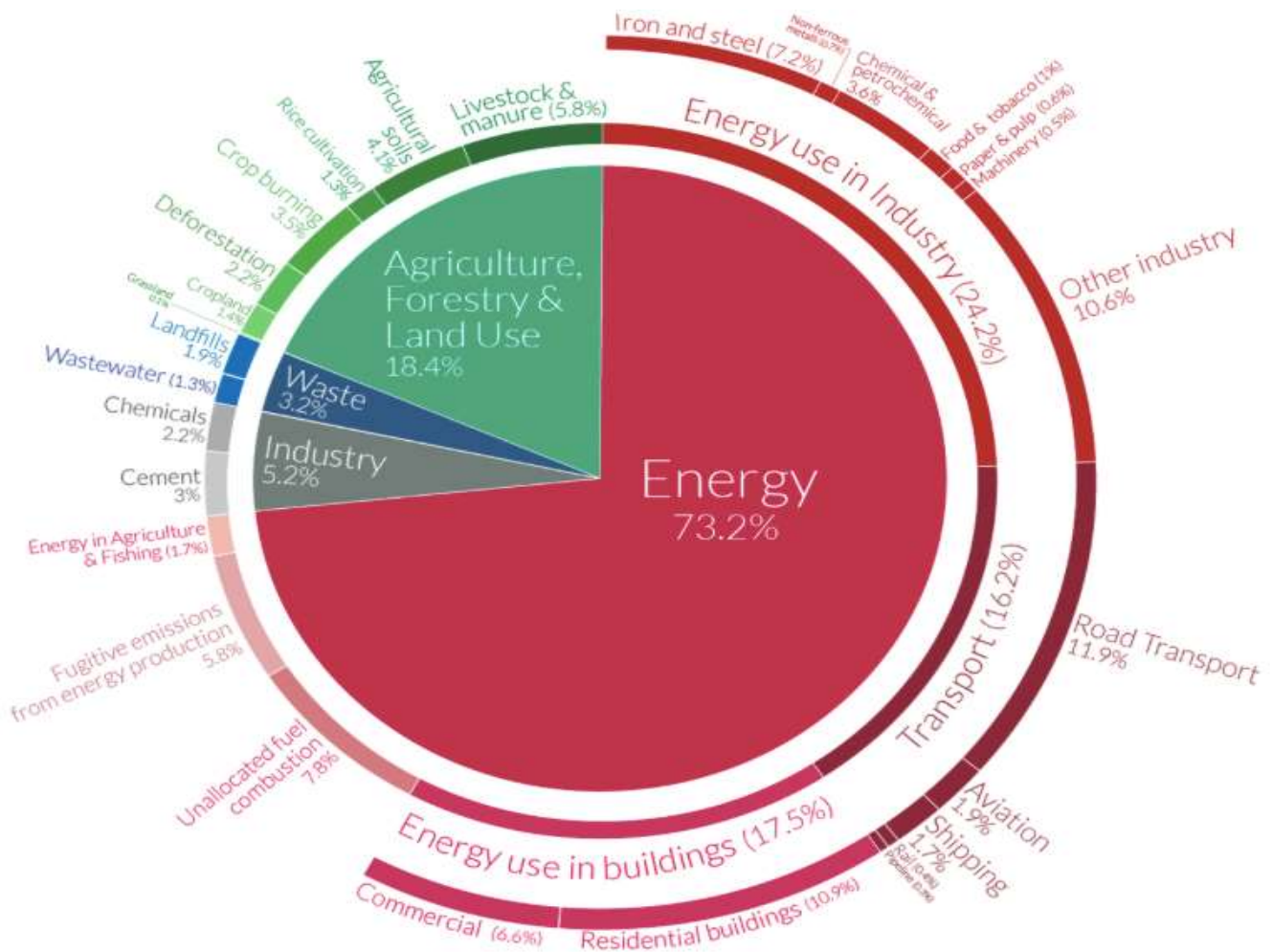
The root of these problems is greenhouse gas emissions from human activity, from household and transportation energy consumption to industry and agriculture.

We are facing the prospect of climate catastrophe because the way we produce and consume is just not sustainable. The European Green Deal aims at tackling exactly this problematic situation, shifting towards sustainability.

What is sustainability?

Something sustainable is simply something that can continue to happen. When we think of a sustainable way of life, sustainability is nothing more than allowing for future generations to live as we do.

Global greenhouse gas emissions by sector: this is shown for the year 2016 – global greenhouse gas emissions were 49.4 billion tonnes CO₂eq.



Source: Clime Watch, the World Resources Institute (2020). Licensed under CC-BY by the author Hannah Ritchie (2020).

Green Deal: an Economic Plan

The European Green Deal is not simply a plan to reduce greenhouse emissions. It has the clear objective of propelling economic growth and societal well-being as it provides the necessary change towards sustainability.

When we think about sustainability, environment and economics are two sides

of the same issue: there can only be true well-being with a sustainable way of life, grounded in good economic conditions.

The social and economic relevance of the plan can be viewed from its very name. The European “Green Deal” is inspired by the “New Deal” implemented in the United States after the crash of the New York Stock Exchange, in 1929 to promote profound changes in the



***“Humanity is waging war on nature. This is suicidal”
UN Secretary General António Guterres, Dec. 2020***

economic structure of the United States.

The “New Deal” helped the American country recover from the 1929 crisis and lower income inequality during the 1930s, providing a first model for the Welfare State that marked most of the 20th Century.

Likewise, the European Green Deal asks for quick and substantial change, through public and private investment to impact the course of history.

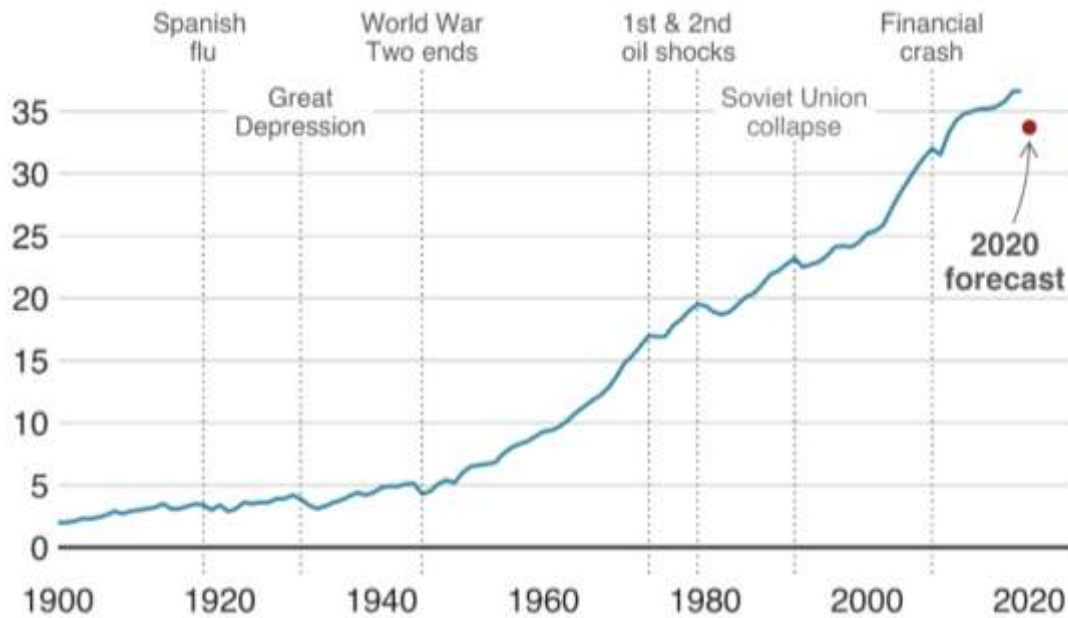
What about the pandemic?

The COVID-19 pandemic brought on new challenges to climate action. The global

economy has been hit hard, and public resources have been directed at managing the health crisis. As such, it seems more difficult to direct investments towards the climate crisis.

Still so, the European Green Deal has become even more important. The economic halt is believed to lead to a slight decrease in Carbon emissions in 2020. The present situation could be a big opportunity to propel the economic plan.

Global CO₂ emissions, 1900–present: billion tonnes of CO₂ per year



Source: Global Carbon Project & CDIAC - BBC

Now may be the best time to promote substantial change. The economic halt may offer an opportunity to change the use of energy in households and industry, as an investment during times of low production. Given travel restrictions, it may also be the best moment to rework production chains based on long-distance transportation into local, circular models, with more efficient use of resources.

Transforming EU for a sustainable future

The European Green Deal involves several actions that are focused on turning the urgent climate and environmental related challenges into a unique opportunity to

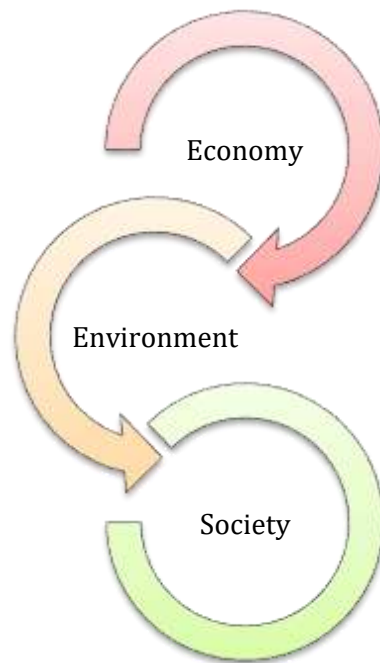
The EU aims to strengthen its competitive economy and capacity to mobilize and influence other global actors. The goal is to protect people from environmental-

Pandemics and Climate Change

One of the indirect impacts of climate change is an increase in the chance of epidemic and pandemic breakouts. As the natural environments are lost and agricultural land becomes less available, there is more contact between humans and wildlife, especially bats and rodents, increasing the chance of human contagion by new viruses.

European Union to be a sustainable, fair and prosperous society.

related risks and impacts, maximizing **health, quality of life, competitiveness and resilience.**



Green Deal Transformative Politics

- Transforming the Energy sector into Clean, affordable and secure energy

As the biggest contributor to greenhouse gasses emission, the energy sector represents a crucial point of the European

Green Deal. as it should be developed on renewable sources and be affordable for consumers and businesses.

The plan aims to ensure an energy market that is fully integrated, interconnected and digitalized, grounded on renewable sources and affordability to consumer

The main goal is to increase climate ambition for 2030, and the European Commission has the role of assuring that the Member States are doing their best on it.

Member States have been following the Regulation on the Governance of the Energy Union and Climate Action, and they presented a climate plan by the end of 2019. In 2023, the Member States will begin updating their national energy and climate plans. The European Commission

is revising these proposals and asking for additional measures when it is necessary.

It is also important that cross-border and regional cooperation be strengthened as it is key to achieve the benefits of the clean energy transition at affordable prices.

Did you know?

According to a Report by the International Renewable Energy Agency, clean energy has become the cheapest option since 2018.

- Transforming the Industry Sector into a Clean and Circular economy.

The New Green Deal requires a **full mobilization of Industry**, in the short term (5 years). The industry sector is still responsible for half of the total greenhouse gas emissions and more than 90% of biodiversity loss and stress.

The main goal is to **accelerate** a sustainable transition of EU's industry, expanding sustainable and job-intensive economic activity.

The sector should function through a **circular economy plan**, minimizing waste and prioritizing resource efficiency. Beyond recycling, it is necessary to develop business models that rely on renting and sharing goods and digital technologies to improve energy efficiency.

What is “circular economy”?

Circular economy is a way of thinking about the economic system. It is based on the classic idea that “nothing is created or lost, everything is transformed”. With this in mind, circular economy models demand that producers and policy-makers think about waste, and the sustainability of production and consumption in a closed system. It replaces linear economy open models, that are structured in static phases of production, consumption and waste.

It is crucial to decrease the amount of plastic production and assure that producers take responsibility for their actions. When waste cannot be avoided, impacts on the environment and on climate change must be minimized as much as possible.

- Transforming mobility into a Smart mobility

Transports are responsible for a quarter of greenhouse gas emissions. The New Green Deal aims to **reduce 90% in transport emissions by 2050**. The goal is to have more affordable, accessible, healthier and cleaner mobility habits by promoting:

- a shift from road inland freight carried to rail and inland waterways
- automated and connected multimodal mobility system
- a smart traffic mobility managed by digitized systems
- energy taxation: the price of transports should reflect its impact on the environment and health.
- low-emissions or zero-emissions vehicles and vessels.



- Transforming the Food System into a Friendly and Healthy System

EU's has implemented the **Farm to Fork** strategy, which includes an evaluation of the food chain and a development of a **more sustainable food policy**.

Farmers and fishermen are key to support the EU's efforts and ensure sustainable practices:

- precision agriculture
- organic farming
- agro-ecology and agro-forestry practices
- assuring welfare of animals

The Commission aims to keep an open dialogue with stakeholders and develop measures, including legislatives, to **reduce**

gas emissions, and **improve nutrient management** and **water quality** in the food system.

Farmers should significantly reduce the use of chemical pesticides, fertilisers and antibiotics, and they should be awarded for that. **Technology** should also improve the sustainability of food production.

Farm to Fork strategies mean to focus the development of circular economy models in local and regional environments. With this shift, it is possible to lower transportation environmental costs, but also the use of storage spaces and the loss of perishable products. Local consumption also has a positive effect in the local economy, creating jobs in the field and integrating the community.

Citizens should also be part of this transformation! Consume local products!



- Preserving and restoring ecosystems and biodiversity

It is crucial to preserve and restore Europe's ecosystems and biodiversity to help to **increase the absorption of CO₂**, **reduce the incidence and extent of forest fires** and promote **bioeconomy**.

Climate change is pressuring forest ecosystems, so the EU needs to promote sustainable re- and afforestation and the restoration of degraded forests.

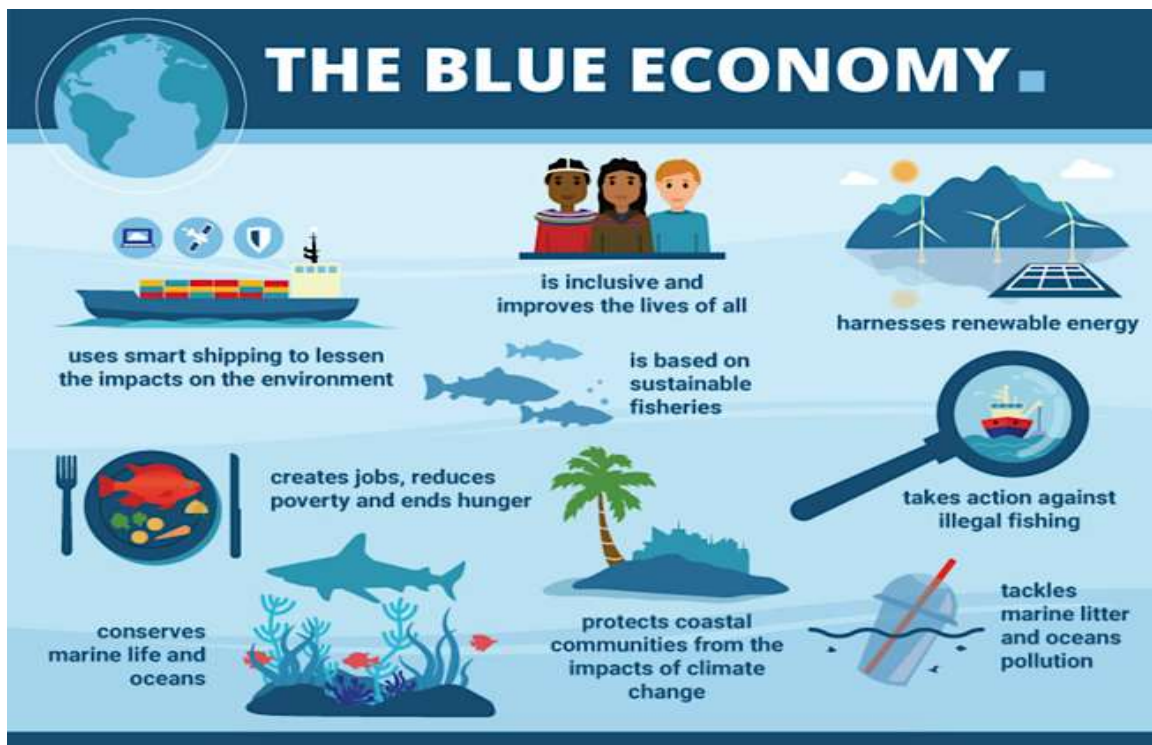
The Commission will prepare a new EU forest strategy covering the whole forest cycle.



Carbon is one of the most abundant chemical elements in nature. It is necessary for most of nature to live, and make up, for example, around 18% of each human body. Growing life forms absorb carbon, while decomposing processes release it into the atmosphere.

Therefore, **regrowing forests is a best practice to reabsorb carbon**, creating new natural reserves that mobilize this element into life.

The Commission will focus on a sustainable **Blue Economy**, developing sustainable ways to explore Ocean resources. This includes paying attention to the role Oceans play in the carbon cycle, and the possibility of exploring new sources of protein that can relieve pressure on agricultural land.



- Transforming finance and investments into Green

The European Green Deal targets will require around Euro 260 Billion of additional annual investment. This significant investment requires the **mobilization of both public and private sectors.**

A Sustainable Europe Investment Plan will be presented by the Commission. Considering that additional funding will be connected to good green

proposals, the Commission has already proposed some directives. These include:

- directing 25% of the European Union budget towards making climate mainstream in each and every programme by the EU.
- working with the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group to

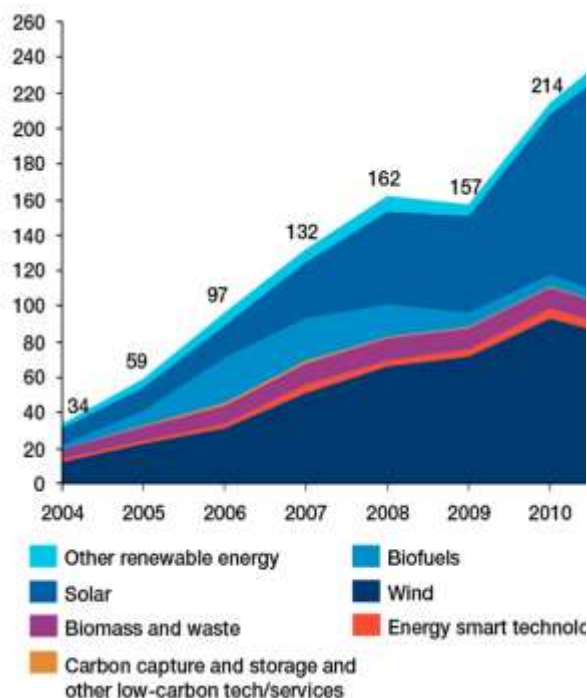
double this climate-budget target to 50% by 2025.

- directing at least 30% of the InvestEU Fund to contribute to the fight against climate change.
- making information on sustainable investments easier to identify by investors and companies, through the development of an EU green bond standard.

Alongside these measures, the Commission has also announced it will work to integrate climate and environmental risks to the financial system. This will be a way of correcting perceptions on the sustainability of results, taking the impacts of climate change into the economy seriously.

The Commission will also work with the Member States to benchmark **green budgeting practices.**

Environmental considerations and risks should be taken into account in annual budgets and medium-term fiscal plans. Tax reforms should boost economic growth and resilience to climate shocks and contribute to a **just transition**.



- Transforming research, innovation and education

The EU needs to increase the large-scale deployment and demonstration of **new** the European Investment Bank, the Commission is working to develop new financial instruments with the aim of leveraging €3 billion in investment in school infrastructure **technologies**, sustainable **solutions** and **disruptive innovations**.

Horizon Europe as well as other EU programmes play a central role of leveraging national private and public investments to fund new solutions for climate and environmental issues.

One top priority is to be able to manage and predict environmental disasters.

EU's research should be based on **experimentation** and **interdisciplinary**, as conventional approaches will not be sufficient.

The education sector should engage with students, parents and the wider community offering access to knowledge, skills and attitudes on climate change and sustainable development.

The Commission aims to help Member States to assure that schools' buildings are operating in sustainable ways. Alongside.

The Green Deal goals require high quality innovative research that combines societal pull and technology push. Digital infrastructures, artificial intelligence solutions might facilitate the understanding of environmental challenges, and guide evidence-based decisions.

- The green deal diplomacy

The EU plays a crucial role as a **leading global actor** to promote actions against global environmental degradation. The European Green Deal aims to promote a diplomacy politics that involves:

- **convincing** and **supporting other global actors** to pursue a more sustainable development.
- setting a credible **example** in diplomacy and trade policy.
- engaging in **international diplomatic channels**, bilateral and multilateral, to promote ideas about environmental sustainability and climate change awareness.

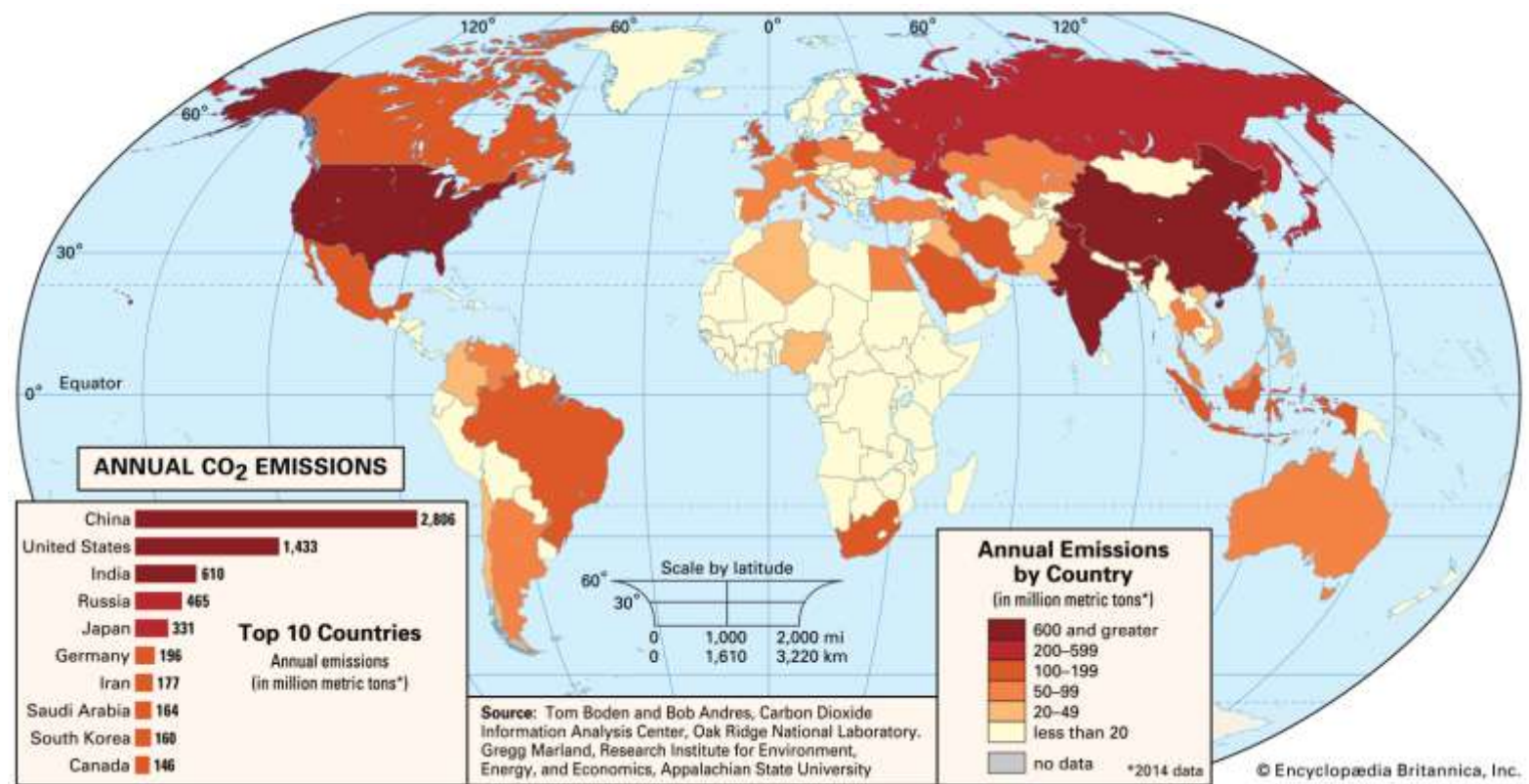
Taking a leadership global position in climate and environmental actions involves tailor-made geographic strategies that reflect different contexts and local needs. Developed economies, last

developed countries and small islands in developing states, for example, require different policies and strategies.

Currently, the Member States and the EU take part in several **important global organizations** and international **agreements** that address the global climate challenge program in a **meaningful way**.



The G20 economies are responsible for 80% of the global greenhouse gas emissions

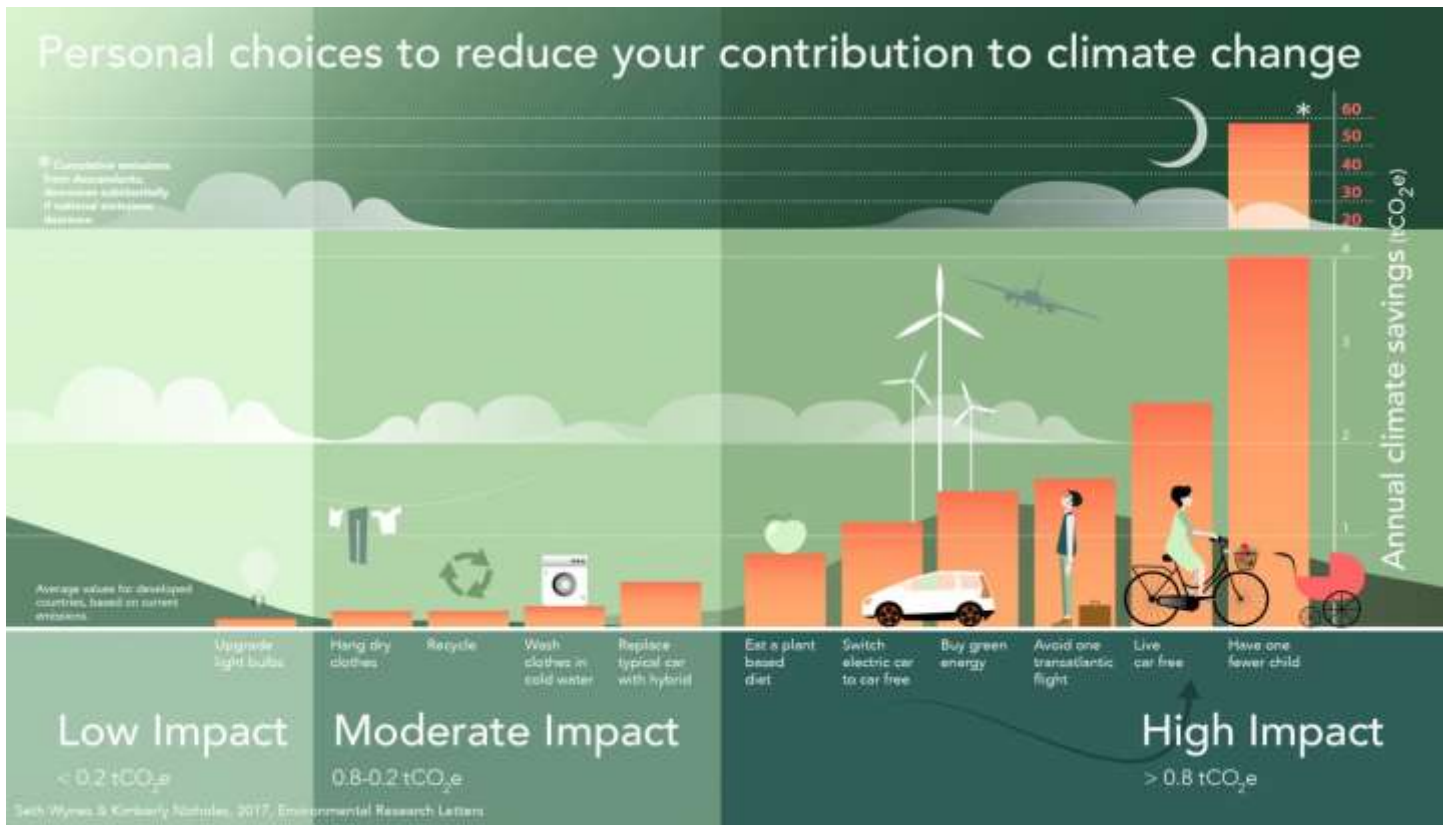


The EU aims to continue and step up important bilateral agreements with partner countries, such as the 2020 EU-China, and support its immediate neighbors to work on a green agenda.

As for last developed countries, the EU is working on a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa Union to make climate and environmental issues key strands in relations between the two continents. The Africa-Europe Alliance aims to assure sustainable investments and jobs to support Africa's progress towards a green and circular economy.

The EU will also rely on diplomacy and financial tools to ensure green alliances in Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. EU trade agreements, for example, play an important role in those international relations.





What can I do as a young student?

There are different actions you can take to help mitigate the climate breakdown happening right now. As a young citizen and student, you play a crucial role in tackling climate change and environmental sustainability.

Our future society depends on our daily actions, and together we can make a difference. As a young student, you can engage and take several actions every day that have an effective impact on the global climate and environment.

Reduce your electricity use

Greenhouse emissions are produced when we use electricity and gas.

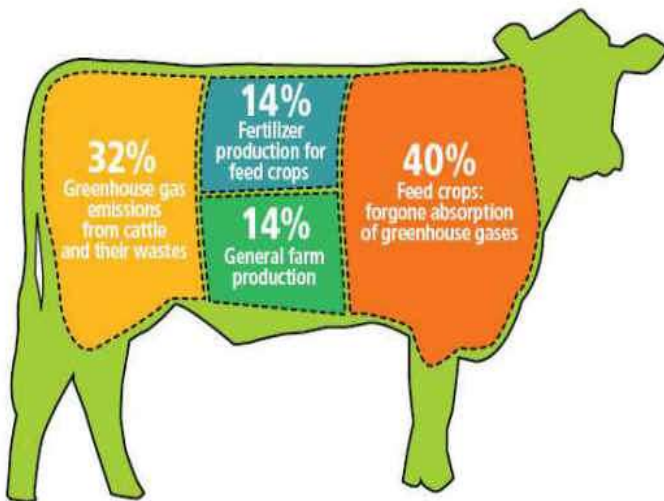
- Switch off lights when not in use.
- Have shorter showers, or shower before going to bed (there is less fossil fuelled electricity generation after 9 pm).
- Unplug electronics from the wall socket when they are not in use.



Eat less meat

Red meat production produces significantly more greenhouse emissions and requires more water than the production of chicken meat, fruit, vegetable and cereals. Additionally, 30% of the world's land area is used for livestock production, and it is one of the key reasons to cut down forests.

- Cut down on meat or try having a meat less day each week!



Shop at your local fruit and vegetable market

You can help to reduce greenhouse emissions from transport by consuming local food. You can also:

- Plant your own vegetables
- Buy local and in-season foods

Reduce, reuse and recycle

Reducing how much you buy is good for the environment (and your wallet)!

- Buy only food you need and reduce your organic waste. When organic material waste decomposes it produces methane which is a potent greenhouse gas.
- Buy products without any packaging, and take reusable bags with you.
- Swap your box and containers for reusable ones.
- Use recycling bins in your area for glass and plastic that you cannot reuse.



Know your area and your Government politics

How could climate change affect your region?

Be informed about what is happening in your region now and what could happen in the future. If you live, for example, in a coastal area, it is important to know about the impacts of the sea level rise on coastal hazards such as erosions and flooding.

You play a leading role in taking actions to pressure your local government to support climate and environmental sustainability. As a young student, you should claim sustainable and responsible actions from your government and local institution.

Responsible actions are crucial to face climate and environmental issues that are shaping the world in which ours and future generations will live.

Young people from different parts of the world are demonstrating and taking actions to charge local authorities to transform our future. Greta Thunberg, for instance, has become a famous environmental activist charging global leaders to take effective actions to fight against global degradation and climate change.



Mobilize your community to take environmental issues seriously and charge authorities to take part in a green transition.



Share these actions with your friends and community!



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