

Developed by EU Learning, www.EULearning.ca
An activity of the Centre for European Studies, Carleton University
www.carleton.ca/ces and canada-europe-dialogue.ca
ces@carleton.ca <http://labs.carleton.ca/canadaeurope>
Use is free of charge. Source must be acknowledged if materials are distributed.
EU Learning is made possible by a grant from the European Commission.

LESSON PLANS (Student Handout 1 of 4)

Title: EU Climate Change Policy

Description: Climate change is one of the most important issues that the human race is currently facing. The growing challenges of energy and how we consume it are a widespread worldwide political debate. Europe, in particular, has tackled climate change head-on, with a number of ambitious policies and planning. Domestically, the EU has developed a plan for reducing GHG far below 2-celsius pre-industrial levels. The EU is also a key player at international negotiations, while working at the same time with developing nations by providing funding and investment in green solutions to those imperatives most at risk from climate change.

Course Breakdown:

Sections:

1. Introduction- A general overview on climate change. Why climate change is important to the EU, and to the world.
2. EU Domestic Policy- A summation of its brief history, treaties, development and planning, and the political response.
3. EU International Negotiations- A look at the history of the EU negotiations for a world agreement to tackle climate change through an analysis of the Kyoto, Copenhagen, and the recent Paris Agreements.
4. Individual States- What have individual states done to tackle climate change? How do they compare and contrast with each other?

Section 1- Introduction

European Union Climate Change Overview

Overview/Intro:

The European Union has long been committed to international efforts to tackle climate change and has felt a duty to set an example through robust policy-making at home. At the European level, a comprehensive package of policy measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions has been initiated through the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP). Each of the EU Member States has also put in place, its own domestic actions that build on the ECCP measures or complement them.¹

The European Commission has adopted many climate-related initiatives since 1991, when it issued its first community strategy to limit carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and improve energy efficiency. These include: a directive to promote electricity from renewable energy, voluntary commitments by car makers to reduce CO₂ emissions by 25%, and proposals on the taxation of energy products.²

How does climate change threaten the EU?

The current global average temperature is 0.85°C higher than it was in the late 19th century. Each of the past three decades has been warmer than any preceding decade since the data collection began in 1850.

The world's leading climate scientists purport that human activities are almost certainly the main cause of the warming observed since the middle of the 20th century.

An increase of 2°C, in comparison to the temperature of pre-industrial times, is seen by scientists as the threshold, where if exceeded, there will be a much higher risk for dangerous and potentially catastrophic changes that will occur within the global environment. For this reason, the international community has recognized the need to keep warming below 2°C.

The EU cites the following as major issues surrounding climate change:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

¹ *European Union Climate Policy*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eccp/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).

² Ibid

Activity 1:

Rank in order the top 5 industries responsible for GHG in Europe:

Residential/Commercial	_____
Agriculture	_____
Energy	_____
Transport	_____
Manufacturing/Construction	_____

Section 1 Video(s):

[Greenland is Melting](#): Presented by Vice Media (first half of the video)

Key Terms:

Green House Gas (GHG)

Coastal Communities

EU Climate Lesson Plan Sources

- Böhm, Steffen. *Why are carbon markets failing?* 2013. <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/blog/why-are-carbon-markets-failing> (accessed 11 16, 2016).
- European Union. *Causes of Climate Change*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/change/causes/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- EU Climate Change Policies and Adaptation*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- EU Climate policies and strategies for 2020*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2020/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- EU Climate policies and strategies for 2030*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2030/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- EU Climate policies and strategies for 2050*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/strategies/2050/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- EU Energy Security*. 2016. <https://ec.europa.eu/energy/en/topics/energy-strategy/energy-security-strategy> (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- EU International Climate Change Finance*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/international/finance/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- European Union Climate Change Policy- ETS*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/ets/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- European Union Climate Policy*. 2016. http://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/eccp/index_en.htm (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- Global Climate Change Alliance*. n.d. <http://www.gcca.eu/> (accessed 03 29, 2016).
- Government of Canada. *Canada's Climate and Energy Policy*. 2016. <http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy/energy-resources/15903> (accessed 03 20, 2015).
- Government of Denmark. *Danish Climate and Energy Policy*. 2015. <http://www.ens.dk/en/policy/danish-climate-energy-policy> (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- Government of Germany. *German Energy Transition*. 2015. <http://energytransition.de/> (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- Government of the United Kingdom. *A new direction for UK energy policy*. 2015. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-direction-for-uk-energy-policy> (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- Green Climate Fund. *Green Climate Fund Homepage*. 2016. <http://www.greenclimate.fund/home> (accessed 03 20, 2016).
- United Nations. *Copenhagen Accord*. 2009. http://unfccc.int/meetings/copenhagen_dec_2009/items/5262.php (accessed 03 28, 2016).
- UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol*. 2016. http://unfccc.int/kyoto_protocol/items/2830.php (accessed 03 20, 2016).