

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

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 (Teacher Plan 1)

Title: EU Climate Change Policy

Section 1- Introduction

European Union Climate Change Overview

Introduction:

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

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

² Ibid

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.³

The EU cites the following as major problems:

- Human produced GHG is responsible for climate change
- Rising sea levels threaten coastal communities
- Extreme weather hurts food production
- Heat waves causes thousands of deaths in Europe
- Water and food shortages can fuel conflict (i.e: Syrian Civil War, Darfur War)
- Small increases in temperature could make extinct 20%-30% of the world's species
- Cost of doing nothing (health care costs, heat wave deaths, flood repair, rising sea levels) is estimated at \$100 billion per year by 2020

Activity 1:

Rank in order the top 5 industries responsible for Green House Gasses (GHG) in Europe:

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

Answer:

1. Energy (31%)
2. Transport (20.3%)
3. Residential/Commercial (14%)
4. Manufacturing/Construction (11.6%)
5. Agriculture (10.2%)

Section 1 Video(s):

[Greenland is Melting](#): Presented by Vice Media (YouTube: Open hyperlink)

Key Terms:

Green House Gas (GHG)- Emissions created by human activity. An example is the carbon released from transportation, such as airplanes and cars.

Coastal Communities- A residential area of Europe, which rests lower than sea level (example- Venice, Italy). These coastal communities are at risk of climate change i.e flooding. It costs millions to keep these communities levied from water levels.

³ Ibid