



## School Competition

This world is still beautiful, still full of wonder. There is still so much life, so much to protect. Once we start appreciating the beauty of the world around us, this will help us not only to focus on destruction but act. **Talking about environmental issues, normalizing conversations about how climate crisis affects our daily lives, is one of the most important steps. The key question is: do we see the planet as something to use up, or something to protect and sustain?** We need to act sooner rather than later. There may not be perfect solutions, but being willing to engage and try is what really counts.

### Understanding the Climate Crisis

The climate crisis is one of the most urgent global challenges. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and biodiversity loss threaten ecosystems and human communities worldwide. While governments and scientists work on solutions, individuals also play a crucial role in creating a sustainable future.

### Key Facts & Statistics

- In 2024, the average concentration of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in our atmosphere was 427 ppm—the highest in human history and more than 50% higher than pre-industrial levels of CO<sub>2</sub>. [1]
- 2024 was the hottest year on record. The global temperature has increased by 1.28°C since pre-industrial times—beating the record set in 2023. [2]
- Deforestation contributes to about 15% of total global carbon emissions [3]
- More than 1 million species are at risk of extinction due to climate crisis [4]





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### Why Sustainability is important?

Change can start in your own home, creating a local ripple that grows into a global wave—leading to a better future for all. Sustainability ensures that future generations inherit a healthy planet. It involves reducing waste, conserving energy, protecting natural habitats, and adopting eco-friendly lifestyles.

### What is the Photovoice Method?

The photovoice method ([Wang et al., 1998](#); [Sutton-Brown, 2014](#)) is a way for citizens to identify and document good practices and challenges that they meet in their daily life within their region by means of photography. It is a means to communicate about personal and community concerns, exposing social problems and igniting bottom-up social change.

### How to Approach my project?

- Observation: Look around your community for climate-related issues (e.g., pollution, bicycles, solar panels, loss of green spaces).
- Documentation: Take compelling photos that highlight problems and potential solutions.
- Storytelling: Write a 150-word story explaining your image, focusing on its impact and importance.
- Reflection: What message do you want to send to the older generation?



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### Brainstorming Project Ideas

#### Themes You Can Explore:

- Urban Sustainability: The role of green spaces, bike lanes, and public transport.
- Climate Activism: Student-led initiatives for a greener future.
- Waste & Pollution: The impact of plastic waste and pollution in local communities.
- Energy Solutions: Solar panels, wind energy, and sustainable city planning.
- Biodiversity & Conservation: Protecting endangered species and ecosystems.

#### Example Pictures:

- Plastic-Free Future: How My School is Reducing Waste
- Why Renewable Energy is the Future
- Fast Fashion



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### Helpful Resources

- NASA Climate Change (<https://science.nasa.gov/climate-change/>) - Climate research and data visualization.
- Climate Change Center Austria (<https://ccca.ac.at/en/homepage>) - a research network supported by Austria's most important research institutions
- IPCC Reports (<https://www.ipbes.net/>) - Scientific insights on climate change
- Fridays for Future (<https://fridaysforfuture.at/>) - Global student movement for climate action.
- World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/climate-change-and-health>)

### Final Thoughts

This competition is more than just taking photos; it's about making an impact. By sharing your vision, you contribute to a global conversation on sustainability and inspire change in your community. We can't wait to see your community through your own eyes! 🌍 📸

### Literature

- [1] National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. (2025, January). Global Monitoring Laboratory. <https://gml.noaa.gov/ccgg/trends/global.html>
- [2] National Aeronautics and Space Administration. (2025, January). Temperatures Rising: NASA Confirms 2024 Warmest Year on Record. <https://www.nasa.gov/news-release/temperatures-rising-nasa-confirms-2024-warmest-year-on-record/>
- [3] Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment. (2023, February). *What is the role of deforestation in climate change and how can 'Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation' (REDD+) help?*. The London School of Economics and Political Science. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/explainers/whats-redd-and-will-it-help-tackle-climate-change/>
- [4] Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. (2019). Summary for policymakers of the global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services <https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment#:~:text=The%20IPBES%20Global%20Assessment%20on,accepted%20by%20the%20IPBES%20Plenary.>

Questions? Contact [eva.nikolopoulou@fhstp.ac.at](mailto:eva.nikolopoulou@fhstp.ac.at)

