



CANADIAN YOUTH ACTION GUIDE FOR

AGENDA



21



DESIGNED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS & EDUCATORS



Introduction

Today's youth see the major issues that face them and their world as a challenge and want to share in the solutions. Students need the skills to identify what needs to be changed and to plan appropriate and cooperative action within their schools and communities. The activities and ideas in this Canadian Youth Action Guide were suggested by young Canadians through a series of cross-Canada focus groups. Some of their thoughts appear as quotes throughout the Canadian Youth Action Guide. The focus groups were facilitated by Environment Canada, ERE Éducation, Health Canada, Learning for a Sustainable Future, the National Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. The distribution of this guide and the Rescue Mission book was facilitated by the Canadian Consortium for Rescue Mission listed on page 28.

Young people have the right to express an opinion in matters affecting them, to have that opinion heard and to seek, receive and impart information through any media.

(United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child)



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What is Agenda 21?

At the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), the Earth Summit, which was held in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, leaders from 178 nations met to discuss the state of the environment and identify courses of action to ensure the Earth's survival. The proposals put forward at the Conference were issued as *Agenda 21*, a plan of action which proposes a path towards a sustainable future for both humans and all other life forms on Earth. *Agenda 21* offers a message of hope, inviting us to plan and to take action now in order to safeguard the legacy we hope to pass on to future generations. Ensuring a sustainable future will require, from all of us, a greater awareness of the problems we face, as well as the determination to find solutions.



* Educators may reproduce the material in the Canadian Youth Action Guide with appropriate credit.

Why a Canadian Youth Action Guide for Agenda 21?

The *Canadian Youth Action Guide for Agenda 21* allows young people, parents and educators to look at the implications of Agenda 21 for their own community. It offers a way to take stock of the local situation, to look for solutions, and to plan the changes needed to contribute to a sustainable future.

To become masters of our own future we must begin now to develop the types of knowledge, skills and attitudes that promote a healthy environment and equitable development.

More specifically, we must:

- gain a better understanding of environmental issues and problems and the development practices which contribute to them;
- gain an understanding of the mechanisms of economic development, in order to examine all options available at local, national and international levels;
- understand that human behaviours can contribute to environmental degradation which impacts on human health;
- define a vision of sustainable communities, develop a positive attitude towards it, and obtain a commitment to initiate the changes needed to achieve it;
- develop the skills required to research and structure information, identify options, and develop a consensus, in order to take joint action;
- ACT!

A Context for Learning

The activities in this Youth Action Guide will encourage the understanding, skills and values needed for sustainability.

Although each activity specifies a certain age level, educators should feel free to adapt them to suit other age levels. The activities present opportunities for language arts (interviewing, creative writing, poetry), math (observation, measurement, recording data), science (observation, analyzing), social studies (knowledge of community and its stakeholders), visual arts (drawing, poster design, community displays), etcetera.

A clear context for integrated learning, the activities presented are community based and ideally reinforce the skills and values needed for future citizens.

We are placed on the earth (our Mother) to be caretakers of all that is here. Because we are part of Creation, we cannot differentiate or separate ourselves from the rest of the earth. The way we interact with the earth, how we utilize the plants, animals and the mineral gifts, should be carried out with the seventh generation in mind. We cannot simply think of ourselves and our survival; each generation has a responsibility to ensure the survival of the seventh generation.

(Our Responsibility to the Seventh Generation, International Institute for Sustainable Development, 1992)

DISCOVERING YOUR COMMUNITY

(levels 3-6)

Goals

- To develop a profile of the local community and its environment.
- To recognize the linkages between environment and human well-being.
- To express hopes for the future and to find simple and concrete means to achieve them.

Activity

Step 1. Initial perceptions and choice of topics

Students develop a profile of their community. What are the factors that make it a distinct community (aspects of the natural and built environment, the way of life of the people, etcetera)? Why is it a good place to live? Is there anything that could be improved?

Step 2. Observing reality

In groups, students will choose one of the suggested *improvements* and undertake an investigation to prepare a report on the present situation.

Each group will become a *reporter team* to investigate their topic in the immediate



REPORTER CARD

Name _____

Site _____

Date _____

Description _____

My Picture

neighbourhood. For example “the school yard could be improved by tree planting”. Students can use *reporter cards* suggested above and illustrate the situation with simple pictures or use videos and tape recorders to illustrate and support their findings.

Step 3. Analyzing reality

Each reporter team presents their report to the entire class for discussion.

As a class, the students chose one or more situations which they would like to see improved.

Step 4. Transforming reality

Students brainstorm ideas about what they can do individually or as a group to improve the situation. Students can use the action card illustrated below to identify changes in actions, behaviours and attitudes. Students can use drawings, paintings, poetry to describe and illustrate a vision of the future in which the situation has been changed.

Step 5: Communicating results

Students could make a small booklet with the cards to distribute to other students and teachers, parents and the community, or a poster display for libraries and stores.

Students could conduct an awareness campaign dealing with the problems which are having an impact on the natural and human environment.

Students could develop means of reporting on-going action taken, e.g. a bulletin board, small newsletter, etcetera. Remember to disseminate the results on the Canadian SchoolNet (see page 22).

ACTION CARD: My hope for the future

DRAWING OF THE FUTURE	STEPS WE CAN TAKE:

It is reassuring that there are other young people around the world that are concerned about the environment. It's great to know what others are doing to change the situation in their parts of the world. This can inspire local action here in Canada.

(Vancouver student focus group)



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN: A CHECKLIST

This checklist can help students and educators plan for community action related to environment, development and health issues.



- 1. Clearly define your goals.
- 2. Conduct a survey to gather information on the situation in your community.
 - Identify the problem.
 - Determine the causes of the problem.
 - Establish the action to be taken.
- 3. Determine the scope and limitations of your action.
 - How will the community benefit from your action?
 - What are the costs associated with carrying out the project?
 - What are the main obstacles that will be encountered? Can they be overcome? If so, how?
 - How much time do you have to achieve your goals?
 - How will the results of the action be disseminated?
 - How will you assess the project results?
- 4. Consult with the community to obtain the support required to carry out the project.
 - Who are the key people or key organizations (e.g. schools, school boards, municipal council, chamber of commerce, volunteer organizations, etcetera) that can support your project?
 - What type of support can they provide?
- How will you involve them in your project?
- Allow for others' input to modify your plan.
- Ensure that all members of your group agree with the plan.
- 5. Put your action plan in writing.
 - Define the major steps in the action plan.
 - Assign the various tasks among the group members.
 - Establish a schedule with a deadline.
 - Present a budget and verify expected sources of funds.
- 6. Implement your community action plan.
- 7. Conduct an evaluation of your community action.
 - Were your goals met?
 - Were the results of your action plan what you expected?
 - Did you accomplish your action plan within your budget?
 - What were the strengths and weaknesses of your action plan?
 - How did your community react to your actions?
- 8. Disseminate the results of your community action.
 - Publish the results in local newspapers, prepare posters and folders, and disseminate the results on the Canadian SchoolNet.

AGENDA 21 and the LOCAL COMMUNITY

(junior or senior high school students)



Goals

- To identify the main challenges set out in *Rescue Mission Planet Earth*.
- To identify problem situations in the community related to the environment, health and development.
- To develop analytical skills with respect to human development practices contributing to these problems.
- To identify strategies for contributing to sustainability in the community.
- To implement a community action plan designed to promote sustainable development.

OBSERVING Reality

team Members _____

MAIN PROBLEMS
OBSERVED _____

ENVIRONMENT	ECONOMY	SOCIETY	HEALTH
-------------	---------	---------	--------

JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY

Note to group leader

The journey of discovery must be viewed, first and foremost, as a tool for students to collect information about their community, its environment, its economy and its health. As students come to understand how their community functions and their relationship with the community they can begin to identify actions to be taken.

Rather than a journey, a simple series of questions could suffice, provided the students are well acquainted with their community.

The journey should preferably take place in the immediate vicinity of the school. Wherever possible, it should be varied, i.e. designed so that the students discover the various functions of their community (residential, commercial, governmental, industrial, recreational, and so on). A number of stops should enable students to develop a more detailed interpretation of the landscape.

Activity

Step 1. Initial perceptions and choice of topics

The students should complete the activity *Defining a Sustainable Future* on page 12 and share their ideas.

In groups, students should prepare an observation grid (see example on page 9) with four headings: environment, economy, society and health.

Under these headings, students select one or more issues from *Agenda 21 and Rescue Mission Planet Earth* which have applications in the local community (e.g. waste management, Chapters 19-22), prepare a brief explanation of the reason for selecting it, and present it to the class.

The class should agree on a list of topics most relevant to their community.

Each group selects a topic for investigation in the community.

Step 2. Observing reality

In groups, students undertake a *Journey of Discovery* to report on aspects of the selected issues in the local community and, as far as possible, some of the causes of the problems. Students can fill in the observing reality chart (based on their journey).

Their task is to observe, note questions as they arise, draw links between their reality and the challenges presented in *Agenda 21* and *Rescue Mission Planet Earth*, and make a note of issues that could be the focus of community action.

Discussing these issues with students from different schools in our community was really productive and empowering. This is definitely a positive learning experience that can be spread to all age groups.

(Edmonton student focus group)

Step 3. Analyzing reality

Once back in the classroom, after the journey of discovery, the teams report their observations to the full group. The class should pick out the main problems encountered in the community and identify those that most urgently require action.

For each problem selected for discussion, students should prepare a table with four columns, based on the example *analyzing reality* on page 11.

During this step it may be possible to identify, at the outset, a problem that is common to the entire class. This option makes it possible to move on more quickly to the *transforming reality* step.



Step 4. Transforming reality

Students should suggest one or more activities which they might undertake to contribute to solutions. The activities should be manageable in terms of the students' time and effort and should have the potential for achieving recognizable benefits.

Students then carefully plan the steps in the activity to be undertaken. Use the Community Action Plan on page 7 and check off the boxes for steps 3, 4, and 5. The *analyzing reality* chart may help students to organize the process and help in the evaluation of their work.

The Millwood High School, N.S., Focus Group suggested a Wasteless Wednesday action where you take away garbage cans and encourage people not to create waste – if they do they have to carry it around with them all day.



Step 5. Communicating results

After the community activities, students should report to the whole class and use step 7 of the Community Action Plan to evaluate their project.

Students can use photographs, drawings, texts, and poetry to illustrate *Agenda 21* as reflected in their own community, to make a presentation on the progress and results of the class activity.

Throughout the process, students could prepare texts outlining the situations encountered or publish opinion pieces in student papers or local newspapers.

Finally, it is suggested that the results of your community action plan be disseminated on the Canadian SchoolNet.

Analyzing Reality			
Title _____ (Problem identified)			
Factors that contribute to the problem (causes)	Changes Required (for each factor)	Actions to bring about change	People who should be involved



DEFINING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Introduction:

This activity can assist students in developing a vision of a sustainable future for their own part of the world and some of the actions needed to achieve it.

Let's begin by asking ourselves what kind of future we would like to see. Write down your definition of a sustainable future:

A sustainable future is possible provided three conditions are met. These are:

A sustainable environment

An environment in which the Earth's resources sustain life and health, support progress, and are able to renew themselves.

A sustainable economy

An economy in which development decisions, policies and practices do not deplete the Earth's resources and are implemented with respect for the cultures of the world.

A sustainable society

A society whose members live in harmony with each other and with nature, locally, nationally and internationally.

Indicate the measures needed to bring about these conditions and ensure a sustainable future for the local community.

To promote a sustainable environment, we need to:


To promote a sustainable economy, we need to:

To promote a sustainable society, we need to:

We found the material in the Canadian Action Guide to be comprehensive and challenging. The focus group was effective for its purpose and helped to get us motivated. Now, we can expand beyond this focus group to involve more students and to bring youth insight to others' attention.

(Toronto student focus group)

the ENVIRONMENT & Development



(senior high school students)

Goals

- To gain awareness of the interdependence of nations, of inequalities in the distribution of wealth, and of disparities in the area of development.
- To acquire an individual and collective sense of responsibility for the environment and development.

Activity

Step 1. Initial perceptions and choice of topics

The students should discuss their definition of a sustainable future and the conditions needed to achieve it (see activity *Defining a Sustainable Future*, p. 12).

The students should discuss the different obstacles to sustainability in developing and in industrialized countries. What are the differing priorities for development in the North and the South?

Step 2. Observing reality

The students form 8 teams representing one each of the main regions of the world: North America, Latin and South America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Oceania.

Using *Rescue Mission, Agenda 21* and other resources, the students draw up a profile of the main environment and development realities and issues in their assigned region. The Agenda 21 summary on pages 16-21 and the Resources section on page 24 may be helpful. This profile can take the form of the *observing reality* example on page 14.



Step 3. Analyzing reality

Each team offers the entire group a portrait of its assigned region. Differences and similarities between regions are discussed. Profiles could be enriched with visual aids or a guest speaker.

The students develop consensus on some of the major global issues of environment, economy and society.

The students discuss the main factors which contribute to each issue, notably development policies and practices, and activities and attitudes of the population, governments, and industries.

Finally, students make a list of the changes that must take place on a global scale in the short and long term, if a sustainable future is to be a reality.

Students can use the Analyzing Reality example on page 15 to assist them in identifying changes and actions in their region.

OBSERVING Reality			
Region of the World:	Opportunities & Strengths	Main PROBLEMS/ISSUES ENCOUNTERED:	
		ENVIRONMENT	DEVELOPMENT



Step 4. Transforming reality

The class should divide into groups to form *Round Tables* with the task of developing and recommending global strategies to contribute to solutions of one of the global issues which have been identified. The *Round Tables* should consist of *members* of the United Nations and representatives of different regions of the world, representing countries of the North and South.

Each group should present their recommendations and the class should develop consensus on their viability.

Finally, students can identify priority actions which could be taken at global and regional levels to begin to implement the recommendations.

It is important to remember that the negotiating process is not a competition to see who can give up the least (or most). This is a time for cooperation, for compromise and for a positive approach to the task of reaching a solution.

We like the idea of learning the process for getting organized and planning actions as opposed to just talking about it. If 10 students could come up with these many ideas, just imagine what could happen once the Canadian Youth Action Guide is on SchoolNet!

(Selkirk student focus group)

Step 5. Communicating results

Students can organize an exhibit on the environment and development situation which prevails in the main regions of the world, and invite the public to attend.

Students can invite representatives of the regions examined to the school to give a first-hand account of their experience.

Students can draft articles or letters dealing with these issues and have them published in the student paper or local papers.

Students can invite representatives from groups concerned with environment and development issues to make lunch-hour presentations.

Share the summaries as well as the conference's conclusions via the SchoolNet.

Students can get involved with non-profit organizations that deal with environment and development issues.

Analyzing Reality			
Title _____			(Problem identified)
Factors that contribute to the problem (causes)	Changes required (for each factor)	Actions to bring about change	People who should be involved

AGENDA 21: A SUMMARY



What is Agenda 21?

The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also called the Earth Summit, took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. This largest-ever world meeting brought Heads of State and government officials together with international organizations and representatives of non-government organizations (NGOs) from around the world.

A 700 page global plan of action called *Agenda 21* was produced as a result of the Earth Summit: it represents the consensus reached by 178 States on how we can secure OUR future. *Agenda 21* is like a blueprint (or maybe we should call it a "greenprint"!) for global partnership aiming at a high quality environment and a healthy economy for all peoples of the planet.

Agenda 21 addresses the critical issues we face as a global community: continuing damage to ecosystems, the worsening of poverty, hunger and ill health, increasing world population and illiteracy. *Agenda 21* is composed of 40 chapters that identify each challenge and propose simple realistic solutions towards sustainable development which is: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Around the world, governments, businesses, non-governmental and other organizations

are already putting the ideas from *Agenda 21* to work. It is crucial to maintain the momentum of the Rio process and implement the agreements that were reached. This task will require not only the leadership and funding of governments and business, but also the vision, cooperation and work of every citizen. Sustainable development cannot be achieved without all sectors of society working together.

Part One – Linking Society, Economy and Nature

This section focuses on the importance of international cooperation to implement and speed up our progress toward sustainable development. It stresses the necessity for the governments of each individual developed and developing country to implement new policies, laws and strategies aimed at socially responsible development. However, governments cannot do it alone, they will need to work with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and individuals.

Chapter 1

Preamble to Agenda 21: No nation can secure its future alone, but all countries can assure themselves of a safer, more prosperous future by dealing with environment and development issues TOGETHER in global partnership.

Chapter 2

The Role of TRADE: Trade and environment should be mutually supportive since international economic relations and the economic policies of every country have great relevance to sustainable development.

Chapter 3

Combating POVERTY: Poverty is caused by hunger, illiteracy, inadequate medical care, unemployment and population pressures. The poor need access to basic education and health care, safe water and sanitation, and to resources, especially land.

Chapter 4

Changing CONSUMPTION PATTERNS: New concepts of wealth and prosperity which are more in harmony with the Earth's carrying capacity need to be developed, particularly in the industrialized countries. Individuals need to accept that they have choices when making decisions about their own consumption patterns.

Chapter 5

POPULATION Dynamics: The world's population is expected to exceed 8 billion by the year 2020. Countries need to know their national population carrying capacity and deal with the combination of population growth, health of the ecosystem, technologies and access to resources.

Chapter 6

Protecting and Promoting HEALTH: Every year in the developing world, nearly 15 million children under 15 die from infection and malnutrition. Human health depends on a healthy environment, clean water supply, sanitary waste disposal, adequate shelter and healthy food. The overall goal is health for all by the year 2000.

Chapter 7

Sustainable HUMAN SETTLEMENTS: By the year 2000, half the world's population will be living in cities. Governments should reduce migration to the big cities by improving rural living and see that the homeless get access to land, credit and low-cost building materials.

Chapter 8

MAKING DECISIONS for Sustainable Development: There is a tendency to treat the environment as a "free good" and to pass the cost of environmental damage to other parts of society, other countries or future generations. Nations and corporate enterprises should integrate environmental protection and restoration costs in their decision-making.

Part Two – How Can We Protect Our Resources?

Chapter 9

Protecting the ATMOSPHERE: Our atmosphere is under increasing pressure from greenhouse gases that threaten to change the climates and chemicals that reduce the ozone layer. Greater energy efficiency out of existing power stations is needed as well as developing new, renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, hydro, ocean and human power, while reducing reliance on non-renewable sources of energy such as fossil fuels.

Chapter 10

Planning and Management of

LAND-USE: Increasing demand for land and its natural resources is creating competition and conflicts. Sustainable use and management of land should include landscape ecological planning, traditional and indigenous land practices and the active participation in decision-making by people affected by land planning.

Chapter 11

Combating DEFORESTATION:

There is a need for concerted international research and conservation efforts to control the harvesting of forests by promoting indigenous technologies and agroforestry and expanding the shrunken world-forest cover.

Chapter 12

Combating DESERTIFICATION:

Desertification and drought result in poverty and starvation, which brings about more soil degradation. One of the major tools to fight the spread of deserts is the planting of trees and other plants that retain water and maintain soil quality.

Chapter 13

MOUNTAIN Development: About 10% of the Earth's population live in mountain areas, while about 40% occupies watershed areas below. Measures are needed to protect mountain ecosystems from erosion, landslides and the rapid loss of habitat, animals and plant life.

Chapter 14

AGRICULTURE and Rural

Development: The world's long-term ability to meet the growing demand for food and other agricultural products is uncertain. The priority must be to maintain and improve the capacity of agricultural lands with new technologies to support an expanding population.

Chapter 15

Conservation of BIODIVERSITY:

The use of biological resources to feed and clothe us, to provide us with housing and medicines accelerates the loss of biodiversity. Urgent and decisive action is needed to conserve and maintain genes, species and ecosystems.

Chapter 16

Sustainable BIOTECHNOLOGY:

The success of biotechnology programs depends on highly trained scientific professionals who use traditional knowledge and modern technology to change the genetic material in plants, animals and microbes and create new products such as vaccines, increase soil fertility and crop resistance, improve treatment of sewage, etc.

Chapter 17

Protection of the OCEANS: Oceans are under increasing stress from pollution, over-fishing and general degradation. Nations must control and reduce the pollution of the marine environment and maintain its life support capacity.

Chapter 18

Protecting and Managing WATER:

In the developing world, one person in three lacks safe drinking water and sanitation – basic requirements for health and dignity. A cleanup of the most obvious sources of pollution is needed in order to have safe water and sanitation for all by the year 2025.

Chapter 19

Management of TOXIC CHEMICALS:

There are presently no less than 100,000 commercial man-made chemicals. Countries need to develop and share expertise for a sound management of toxic chemicals and prevent illegal international traffic in toxic and dangerous products.

Chapter 20

HAZARDOUS WASTES: Developing countries have come under pressure to accept unpleasant imports of hazardous waste which pose a risk to people and the environment. Developed countries have an obligation to promote the transfer of sound technologies and reduce hazardous waste.

Chapter 21

SOLID WASTE and SEWAGE: Growing quantities of garbage and sewage from our cities pose threats to our health and environment. An urban waste prevention approach needs to be implemented so that by 2010, all countries should have national plans for waste management.

Chapter 22

RADIOACTIVE WASTE: The use of radioactive substances is growing in nuclear power production of electricity, medicine, research and industry and so is the waste. It is important to ensure training and financial support to developing countries that have nuclear programs to ensure safe and responsible management.

Part Three – WHO CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Chapter 23

Preamble: Sustainable development is primarily the responsibility of every government, but the commitment and involvement of all social groups is critical to the effective implementation of the objectives, policies and mechanisms agreed to by all governments at the Earth's Summit.

Chapter 24

WOMEN: Governments are urged to give girls equal access to education, to make health-care systems responsive to women's needs and to bring women into full participation in social, cultural and public life.



Chapter 25

CHILDREN and YOUTH: Children and youth make up nearly one-third of the world population. Governments are urged to combat abuse of the rights of youth, especially females in certain cultures, and to ensure that all children have access to education.

Chapter 26

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE: Indigenous people comprise about 4% of the world's population and their numbers are decreasing. Governments and international organizations should protect their rights and patrimony, recognize their traditional knowledge and resource management practices and enroll them in full global partnership.

Chapter 27

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS: Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) form a network in both developed and developing countries and play a vital role in the shaping and implementation of participatory democracy which is integral to the implementation of sustainable development.

Chapter 28

LOCAL AUTHORITIES: Local authorities, such as municipal governments, should consult citizens and community, business and industrial groups on local programs, policies, laws and regulations to achieve *Agenda 21*'s objectives.

Chapter 29

WORKERS and TRADE UNIONS: Workers will be among those most affected by the changes needed to achieve sustainable development. Through elected representatives, workers must be involved in promoting socially responsible economic development.

Chapter 30

BUSINESS and INDUSTRY: Responsible behavior in the private sector is a prerequisite to achieving sustainable development. Entrepreneurship can play a major role in improving the efficiency of resource use, minimizing wastes and protecting human health and environmental quality.

Chapter 31

SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY: Scientists and technologists (engineers, architects, industrial designers, urban planners, and other professionals) have special responsibilities to search for knowledge and to help protect the biosphere.

Chapter 32

FARMERS: Farmers are directly responsible for one third of the land surface of the Earth. They require economic and technical assistance that will encourage them to implement self-sufficient, low-input and low-energy agricultural practices. Women, who do much of the world's farming, should have access to tenure and the use of land, to credits and technologies.



Part Four – Where Do We Start?

Chapter 33

FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Developing nations need free trade and access to markets in order to achieve sustainable economic growth. Special attention should be given to nations whose economies are in transition.

Chapter 34

Transfer of TECHNOLOGY: Scientific knowledge can help prevent shortages of energy, water and non-renewable resources. Developing countries should access environmentally-sound technology and know-how through a collaborative international network of laboratories.

Chapter 35

SCIENCE for Sustainable Development: In the face of threats of irreversible environmental damage, improved knowledge of the Earth's systems is crucial as well as the integration of the natural, social and engineering sciences.

Chapter 36

EDUCATION and PUBLIC AWARENESS: Education gives people the environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behaviour needed for sustainable development. Because sustainable development must ultimately involve everyone, access to education must be increased for all children and adult illiteracy must be reduced.

Chapter 37

CREATING CAPACITY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

All countries share the need to strengthen national capabilities. Developing countries especially need to build their own capacity to implement *Agenda 21* in cooperation with UN organizations, developed countries and with each other.

Chapter 38

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: A large responsibility for following-up with *Agenda 21* rests with the United Nations organizations. It is recommended that the UN create a high-level Commission on Sustainable Development which would draw on expertise of UN organizations, international financial organizations and NGOs, industry, business and scientific groups.

Chapter 39

INTERNATIONAL LAW AND MECHANISMS:

It is essential that all countries and all sectors within countries, participate in the negotiation of international agreements that create effective international standards for environmental protection.

Chapter 40

SHARING INFORMATION AND DATA FOR DECISION-MAKING:

In order to base decisions on sound information, the availability, quality and accessibility of data needs to be improved between developed and developing countries.

SCHOOLNET

Other Canadians will want to know about the action you take and you too will find the actions of others stimulating and informative. For this reason you are invited to put a summary of what you are doing on SchoolNet. If you don't yet have access to SchoolNet, then you might ask your public librarian or a university or college library if they have access.

SchoolNet provides a series of learning resources to schools with access to Internet. This national project is a cooperative initiative of industry, the academic sector and provincial, territorial and federal governments.

When it was officially launched in September 1993, SchoolNet was expected to electronically link up 300 schools during the 1993-94 school year. Only one year later, over 4,000 schools have come on-line! SchoolNet's goal is to link the over 16,000 schools, native schools, libraries, universities and colleges in Canada to the electronic highway.

Some of the resources and services SchoolNet provides to students and teachers includes:

- access to over 50 discussion groups;
- innovative projects designed by teachers;
- a virtual environment created to stimulate learning;
- an interactive, question-and-answer database;
- a career selection guide;
- access to hundreds of science and technology resources, library catalogues and international databases;
- access to computer equipment and software purchases;
- access to training and trouble-shooting service;
- SchoolNet National Atlas.



SchoolNet services are available to the public free of charge in French and English through two internet information distribution systems: Gopher (schoolnet.carleton.ca) and World Wide Web (WWW) (<http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca>).

Accessing SchoolNet

The SchoolNet virtual School can be found on the WWW at: <http://schoolnet2.carleton.ca>

For information contact:

National SchoolNet Office
(General Inquiries)
Industry Canada
235 Queen Street, Room 801F
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0H5
Tel: 1-800-268-6608
Fax: 613-941-1296
Email: schoolnet@ic.gc.ca



SchoolNet Support Group
(Technical Inquiries)
Tel: 1-800-461-5945
Email: schoolnet-admin@schoolnet2.carleton.ca



RESCUE MISSION PLANET EARTH: DESIGNED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, PARENTS & EDUCATORS

The Canadian Connection

Huntsville Public School took part in an international project called *Rescue Mission Planet Earth*. The project involved rewriting Agenda 21, the document tabled at the Earth Summit in 1992. The project was coordinated by Peace Child International in England and involved young people worldwide. The result of the project was *Rescue Mission Planet Earth: A Youth Edition of Agenda 21*, now available in over nine languages.

Out of 10 000 kids in over 100 countries, students from Huntsville Public School helped write chapters on poverty and consumption patterns. Their task was challenging given that the Agenda 21 documents were written in legalese and were difficult for anyone to understand let alone a child! The students researched environmental issues, wrote many papers on the topics and took part in an international tele-conference with Rescue Mission Headquarters in England. During the conference the students exchanged information about Canada's environment with other students from England, Poland, the Philippines and Tanzania.

After they finished their part of the project the students from Huntsville didn't stop there. The students spoke at various functions around Huntsville, in local churches, at their graduation and at the first school board meeting of the year. They petitioned against potential building on the only waterfront left in Huntsville's town centre. Through the summer, they had information tables at market days, farmer's markets and other flea markets. They've met with their local Member of Parliament, the Minister of the Environment, Sheila Copps, and other dignitaries on Parliament Hill.

The students plan to continue their work on Rescue Mission and to raise awareness and understanding about the environment. The students said "the project was the highlight of our years at school and we learned so much from it. I hope that everyone will recognize the importance of educating children about our environment. We hope to see it taught in every classroom around Canada because we are the next keepers of the world, and without education, we may be the last".

Benji Jordan, Sheila Mathies, Ian Crosson, Derrick White, Jeremy Wyville and the kids of Rescue Mission Canada. For more information please contact Susan Hawkins at Huntsville High School, 705-789-5594, fax 705-789-9381.



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Design: Shoreline Communications

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the young people who advised on the development of the insert:

Ottawa student focus group:

Kristi Babulic, Gloucester High School,
Alison Ryan, Bell High School,
Catherine Connelly, Bell High School,
Emily Martin, South Carleton High School,
Ali Cameron, Colonel By High School,
Claire Schagerl, Gloucester High School,
Ajoa Mintah, Merivale High School,

Nova Scotia student focus group:

Jennifer Arsenaault, Millwood High School,
Brad McClare, Millwood High School,
Sarah Roach, Sackville High School,
Sara Coffin, Sackville High School,
Joey McDonald, Charles P. Allen
High School,
Moneesha Sinha, Charles P. Allen
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Barrett Morrison, Sir John A. Macdonald
High School,
Michelle Benoit, Sir John A. Macdonald
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Toronto student focus group:

Ramona Parkash-Puni, Markville
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Shannon White, Gordon Graydon
Secondary School,
Vito Scavetta, Cawthra Park
Secondary School,
Paul Zanettos, Meadowvale
Secondary School,
Sandra Benjamin, Cawthra Park
Secondary School,
Matthew Whittaker-Van Dusen, Malvern

Collegiate Institute

Anne Tran, Jarvis Collegiate Institute,
Jason Tinkler, Danforth Collegiate,
Kiet Tong, Riverdale Collegiate Institute,

Manitoba student focus group: (Lord Selkirk Secondary School)

Jason Poloski, Carla Kraljevic,
Melissa Stewart, Sonja Jensen-MacDonald,
Jolynne Moar, Cindy Rhymer,
James Cotton, Ryan Cormack,
Ryan Block, Patrick Sarginson,

Alberta student focus group:

Shawn Gardener, Jasper Place High School,
Dawn Gray, Queen Elizabeth High School,
Lila Shibley, Queen Elizabeth High School,
Jill Perovencal, Queen Elizabeth High School,
David Green, Strathcona High School,
Jodie deMoissac, Holy Trinity High School,
Jeff Yu, Holy Trinity High School,

British Columbia student focus group:

Mariya Krywaniuk, Crofton House School,
Amy Salmon,
Bronwyn Armstrong, Carson Graham
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Sonny Phenphonsy, Johnston Heights
Secondary School,
Iris Yong, Johnston Heights Secondary School,
Parminder Johal, Johnston Heights
Secondary School,
Anne Khouri, Johnston Heights
Secondary School,
Voytec Suchocki, Carson Graham
Secondary School,
Bree Wellwood, Carson Graham
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Québec student focus group: (École des Trois-Portages)

Michèle Arcand, Ashlee E. Beattie,
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Marie-Hélène Brassard,
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Alexandre Dimanche, Nathalie Fournier,
Benjamin Gould, Elyse Genesse,
Mylène Huot, Mélanie Krasienko,
Jonathan Laflamme, Élianne Lafrenière,
Isabel L. Raby, Marc-André Lebel,
Jean-Roch Lefebvre, Valérie Major,
Daniel Nielson, David Paquet,
Marie-Eve Paquette, Daniel Pilon,
Luc Racine, Marie Roukas,
Catherine St-Amour, Mathieu St-Germain,
Louis Thérien, Martine Vachon,

We also wish to thank the following people who helped to coordinate the focus groups:

Martine Brunet, Learning for a Sustainable Future
George Doucet, Lower Sackville, Nova Scotia
Don MacLeod, Millwood High School,
Nova Scotia
Eleanor Dudar, Toronto Board of Education,
Ontario
Earl Choldin, Alberta Global Education Project
Sara Coumantarakas, Alberta Global Education
Project
Sarah Griffin, TG Magazine, Ontario
John F. Perry, Lord Selkirk Regional School,
Manitoba
Pat Clarke, BC Global Education Project
Helene Minishka, Youth for Global Awareness,
British Columbia
Darwin Donachuk, Sustainable Development
Coordination Unit, Manitoba
Hélène Chartrand, École des Trois-Portages,
Québec
Nicole Racine Lazure, École des Trois-Portages,
Québec
Ian Philips, Centre for Traditional Knowledge

Funds and in-kind support for the free distribution of the Canadian edition of Rescue Mission Planet Earth (including its Canadian Youth Action Guide) to primary and secondary schools and youth organiza- tions across Canada were provided by:

Arm and Hammer
Bank of Montreal
Canadian International Development Agency
Canadian School Boards Association
Canadian Association of Principals
Canadian Home and School and Parent-Teacher
Federation
Canadian Global Change Program of the Royal
Society of Canada
Canadian Teachers' Federation
Canadian Commission for UNESCO
Centrale de l'Enseignement du Québec
Centre for Traditional Knowledge
Environment Canada
Federation of Canadian Municipalities
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Generation 2000
Green Teacher Magazine
Health Canada
Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Industry Canada
International Development Research Centre
Learning for a Sustainable Future
National Round Table on the Environment
and the Economy
Ontario Hydro
Proctor and Gamble
SchoolNet
Toronto Board of Education
UNESCO Canada/MAB
UNESCO Paris and the following Ministries
of Education:
Alberta
Manitoba
Anglophone and Francophone New Brunswick
Newfoundland
Nova Scotia
Ontario
Prince Edward Island
Quebec
Saskatchewan
Northwest and Yukon Territories

