



**FORum**  
**for**  
**YOUTH**

# DOWN to EaRth

## YoUth CoNfeRence

**Friday 22nd February**  
**The Wilderness Centre, Mitcheldean**

### **Discussion Groups summary**

Topic 1: What are the issues – where has this all come from? *Introducing the subject of climate change.*

1. What did you know about this before?
  - We knew that climate change was increasing each year and was becoming more of an issue
  - How the CO<sub>2</sub> was increasing in the earth's atmosphere
  - Ice is melting, more toxic waste, sun rays making atmosphere thicken, water level rising, polar bears dying
  - We knew a lot as we have been taught about it at school. Also one member of the group has seen the whole video before.
  - It warms the earth
  - We knew that the greenhouse gases kept the sun near the earth heating it up
  - Climate heating up, increase in CO<sub>2</sub>, harming earth, caused by pollution
  - Global warming down to greenhouse gases
  - Seen the film before so we knew most of it, learn it at school
  - We knew that the sun rays are getting trapped in the ozone layer and causes the earth to warm up
  - A lot, the earth is heating up and ice caps are melting
  
2. Why do you think this matters?
  - Climate change melts the icecaps which means more flooding and extreme weather with changing ecosystems
  - It's changing the world for the worst, after a while it could be irreversible
  - Because species will die, water level will kill people, flood
  - It matters because the whole world is changing and if we don't do anything about it, there is going to be disastrous consequences, such as more natural disasters and extinctions.
  - If it gets too hot, we will die
  - The ice is melting, raising the height of the water, flooding us all
  - Affects future generation, ruin earth, affects habitat/environment
  - People will dehydrate, plants/animals/resources will die
  - Affects our future and that of our children – not isolated, affects everyone
  - Because the earth is getting hotter and it is melting ice and it is because of people polluting the world
  - Because could kill us all



3. Has this clip helped you understand what the issues are?
- Yes it has because it has addressed different areas of global warming
  - Yes, the fundamental issue of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions
  - Yes in parts
  - Yes, it has helped us understand it better as it is described in an informative, simple but effective way
  - Yes
  - Yes because it showed global warming in detail
  - Knew before
  - It helped us see a picture of what is happening
  - Knew it already but doesn't harm to have it repeated
  - Yes, it helped us confirm what we was not sure about
  - Yes
4. How do you think this relates to your life?
- Global warming is a worldwide issue which will affect everyone
  - Affects whole world – heats everything
  - Affects animals and population
  - If we don't make the necessary changes then our future generations could suffer - also current population, such as the recent Hurricane Katrina which killed millions of people
  - Summer will be warmer, Florida will drown, ice-caps will melt
  - The next generation will be badly affected by global warming
  - Warning to reduce emissions, in future you should walk or ride your bike so it won't take up gas
  - Things might become restricted, people need to know if the earth is ok
  - Alters what will happen in the future – will we be able to live on earth? – we need to do something now to stop it
  - The temperature is rising and this causes burns and things and melt
  - I live on the earth
5. Do you have a part to play in the rise of CO<sub>2</sub> levels?
- If everyone participates in lowering CO<sub>2</sub> emissions we can make a big impact in stopping climate change
  - Yes – cars
  - Lifts to places, recycling more
  - Yes, everybody has, we are using the energy produced by fossil fuels, which seriously pollute the atmosphere. Also, cars burn fuels which add to CO<sub>2</sub> levels.
  - Yes
  - Yes, recycle, cutting down driving cars and electricity
  - Yes, everyone can contribute by reducing emissions e.g. walk/bike not car
  - Yes – driving
  - Everyone does – everything we do has an impact because we use up resources and emit gases but we can all change/help to protect the planet
  - Yes because we use cars to travel places
  - Yes, using cars, etc.

Topic 2: Realistic Solutions. *Explore the ways in which climate change can be related to our own lives and how changes can be made.*

6. What options does the film present us with to consider?



- Renewable energy, lower emission, cars, reduce consumption
  - Cut down on car fuel, bring in special cars
  - To cut down on using cars and vehicles that produce a lot of carbon dioxide
  - We've changed our future before, we can do it again
  - Drive higher mileage cars, walk/ride rather than drive, use energy efficient appliances, do something!
  - Energy efficient appliances, carbon capture, efficient cars – regulations, standards
  - Reduce emissions – hybrid cars, bikes – political opinion
  - Solar power
  - Change or die!
  - Reducing CO<sub>2</sub>, recycling, attitudes towards recycling
7. What other options should we consider? Is "do nothing" an option?
- Doing nothing is not an option because CO<sub>2</sub> gases will keep affecting climate change
  - Run cars on LPG – look for alternative energy sources
  - Cut down on using cars and vehicles – doing nothing is not an option
  - It is, but it won't do anything positive
  - Do something yourself, if you see a light on, turn it off – ask people to buy more energy efficient appliances
  - Renewable energy, recycling, bio-fuels
  - Walk, bike, renewable energy – fuel for cars, electricity
  - No
  - Doing nothing is an option but whether it's the right one is something to discuss
  - Walk more, use public services more, increase public transport, stop smoking, less cars on the road, turn TV off instead of on standby
8. Why do some people think that climate change is not a priority?
- Because companies which are increasing climate change will lose money
  - They're selfish, don't believe it
  - Because they are dumb and because you can't see the effects until it's too late
  - It isn't obvious – the extent of problem isn't highlighted
  - Because some people think it will go away – just a phase. Because they are selfish and they will be gone by the time global warming really gets into action
  - The effects it may have on the economy – higher priority issues i.e. poverty!
  - It won't happen immediately – takes a long time – change of lifestyle
  - You can't see the effects til it's too late
  - They love their cars and the world is in poverty
  - Because it is not affecting them at present – they can't see the physical changes
9. Can the actions of the individual make a difference?
- Individuals can influence people to make changes to their lifestyle
  - Yes
  - Yes
  - Yes – altogether makes a huge difference if everyone does a small bit
  - Yes
  - Yes, but only if everyone works together – people need to change their attitudes – little things can make a difference
  - Not much – but if everyone did something it would i.e. recycle, energy saving appliances
  - Yes



- Yes, Al Gore is making a difference
- Yes

10. Should we influence policy makers to try and change what is happening? How?

- Yes because these are the people who have the most power to make changes. Petitions and appeals could change their views
- Vote at elections
- Yes by predicting what can happen
- Lobby MPs – Greenpeace, I Count, Friends of Earth – make known what is happening – get community involved
- Yes
- If we put pressure on the government then changes should be made – surely they need to carry out the wishes of the community?!
- Yes – they can influence private sector – conferences, schooling, protests
- Yes – using non-electric things
- Yes
- Yes – more pressure on recycling, compulsory – actions need to be enforced