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WELCOME TO THE ECO LEADERS GUIDE!

Over the next few pages, you'll find '**Chapter 5: Implementing Your Advocacy Campaign and Influencing People**' from the Eco Leaders Guide. Use the hyperlinks below to quickly navigate to specific sections, activity guides, worksheets, templates, or other resources.

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USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Eco Leaders Guide

WWF's Environmental Education and Youth Advocacy Toolkit for the Mekong Region



Disclaimer:

This toolkit is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the responsibility of WWF and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

Acknowledgements:

This 'Eco Leaders Guide' was developed with the invaluable assistance of 11 passionate and talented young people from four countries in the Greater Mekong Subregion – Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Thailand. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to them for their time, ideas, positive energy, and unwavering commitment to being leaders and change-makers in their respective countries for a sustainable future in the Mekong Region. They are:

- Sokleap Lean (Cambodia)
- Kong Raksmei (Cambodia)
- Souphavanh Sensouphanh (Lao PDR)
- Bouasone Keosinouan (Lao PDR)
- Konelasy Vilayphon (Lao PDR)
- Ei Kabyar Moe (Myanmar)
- Phyo Thet Naing (Myanmar)
- Aung Myat Thu (Myanmar)
- Pasut To-ying (Thailand)
- Wichaya Punsawar (Thailand)
- Rachatawun Nirunsin (Thailand)

We also wish to thank the principal authors, Robert Steele and Watkana Thongrueng of Sustainability Asia (Thailand), who worked in close collaboration with the team from WWF-Myanmar and WWF-Asia Pacific: Saw Linn Htet, Gigi Myo Theingi and Heron Holloway. Special thanks to Daniel Thomas for his meticulous copy editing of the toolkit contents and to RICE for the layout.

This toolkit was developed as part of the USAID-WWF Mekong for the Future (MFF) program, which aims to increase civil society and youth involvement, fostering cross-border collaboration, and ensuring effective cooperation among local communities, governments, and experts to address key issues such as renewable energy, climate resilience, and maintaining healthy rivers, streams, wetlands, and lakes.

A validation workshop was conducted on 18 and 19 March 2024, which included participation from invited youth environmental curriculum and advocacy experts who provided valuable feedback for the final toolkit. We gratefully acknowledge their contributions.

- Callum Mackenzie, Co-Founder & Managing Director, Yunus Thailand Foundation
- Kamal Gaur, Asia Region Education Advisor, Save the Children
- Siriporn 'Vivi' Sriaram, Co-founder, Blue Renaissance (Thailand)
- Souksaveuy Keotiamchanh, Founder/ Director, Zero Waste Laos
- Wanchai Roujanavong and Dr. Ratchada Jayagupta, Thailand's representatives to the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the inspiration we received from other youth advocacy toolkits, including those by UNICEF, the Toolkit for Young Climate Activists in the Middle East and North Africa Region/Arab States Region, the UNICEF Advocacy Toolkit (2010), UNICEF's My Advocacy Workplan, and Care International's Toolkit for Youth on Adaptation & Leadership.





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Publication details:

Published in January 2025 by WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature (Formerly World Wildlife Fund), Gland, Switzerland (“WWF”).

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Recommended citation:

WWF (2025) *Eco Leaders Guide – WWF’s Environmental Education and Youth Advocacy Toolkit for the Mekong Region*. WWF, Gland, Switzerland.

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CHAPTER 5

IMPLEMENTING YOUR ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN AND INFLUENCING PEOPLE

INTRODUCTION

Chapter 5 is all about building and motivating an environmental advocacy team around shared passions and issues. In this chapter, you'll discover various advocacy methods and activities that match your team's strengths and community needs. It is also full of tips, techniques, and tools to help you connect with people on a deeper level, align with

their values, and inspire support for real change. You'll learn how to organize rallies, exhibitions, concerts, talks, workshops, and effective social media campaigns. Plus, we'll guide you on influencing policy-makers, mastering negotiation, and using international agreements to boost your efforts and impact national policies and corporate behaviors.

TOOLS IN THIS CHAPTER



Building Your Advocacy Team

TOOL:

- 5.1 Building Your Volunteer Advocacy Team



Conducting an Advocacy Campaign

TOOL:

- 5.2 Planning Your Advocacy Event/Activity
- 5.3 Learning What Others Are Doing Through Online Advocacy
- 5.4 Planning for Your Own Online Social Media Advocacy Engagement
- 5.5 Press Release Template
- 5.6 Understanding & Engaging with Policy
- 5.7 Developing Your Advocacy Pitch

BUILDING YOUR ADVOCACY TEAM

Getting a group of like-minded people to form a passionate team around an environmental issue isn't easy. It starts with inspiring them and building their awareness and knowledge about the issue. Then, you'll need to help them develop the necessary skills and create a solid plan of action. This includes engaging stakeholders, raising funds, and defining clear roles and responsibilities. It's also about creating opportunities for meaningful contributions and fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. Finally, building a strong sense of team spirit is crucial for working efficiently and effectively together towards your goal. By mobilizing people, advocacy campaigns amplify their voice and impact, making it more likely to achieve the desired outcomes and bring about change.



Some Key Lessons in Building Your Advocacy Team

Start by Creating a Shared Vision and Shared Values

It's important for the team members to share their personal values and vision. By combining these individual perspectives, you can create a shared vision with values that will help the team work together towards its goals effectively.

Establishing Clear Roles

As already mentioned, to have an effective and successful advocacy team, it is really important to have clear roles and responsibilities for each different task within the campaign clearly identified. People filling the different roles should have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and what their responsibilities are as part of the overall advocacy team and campaign.

Consider these four Cs before when determining the roles for your team:

- **Clarity:** Is the role clearly defined, including responsibilities and time commitment. Will the person taking on the role know exactly what's expected of them? Sometimes roles can be unclear or change over time. The key is always making sure everyone knows what they are expected to do.
- **Commitment:** Does the person want to take on the role? Are they committed to doing what it takes to succeed?
- **Confidence:** Is the person confident they can do a good job? What support, training, or resources do they need to feel confident?
- **Capacity:** Can the person actually do what's being asked of them? Are they the best fit for this role?

How to Create a Volunteer Recruitment Announcement

- **Step 1: Find the Perfect Template:** Start by choosing a great template for your volunteer recruitment poster. There are many free options available from respectable sources. Check out websites like Canva for professional and eye-catching flier templates that match the look and feel that you want.
- **Step 2: Show Your Organization's Identity:** Make sure your flier reflects your organization's identity. Include your organization's name, logo, slogans related to your volunteer program, and your brand colors. Recognizable branding helps build trust and makes potential volunteers more likely to apply.
- **Step 3: Add a Catchy Headline:** Your headline is the first thing potential volunteers will see, so make it stand out. Think about what would catch your eye if you saw it on a wall full of posters. A strong, attractive headline is key to grabbing attention.
- **Step 4: Highlight the Purpose or Goal:** Focus on what you want to highlight, whether it's inviting supporters to an event or promoting a new program. Your flier should clearly explain the volunteer recruitment program and encourage immediate action. Clarity of purpose is crucial for an effective recruitment flier.
- **Step 5: Create a Motivating Call to Action:** Your flier should inspire action with a clear call to action. Here are some examples:
 - Volunteers needed!
 - Visit our website to get involved.
 - Be part of our movement. Call today.

These simple yet direct calls to action guide the reader on what to do next. Make sure to include key details like your website, phone number, or email address so they know exactly how to get involved.

- **Step 6: Include Pictures and Graphics:** Use vivid pictures and eye-catching graphics to make your flier stand out. Bold colors and high-quality images relevant to your cause will draw attention and attract potential volunteers. Visual appeal is crucial for grabbing and keeping interest.
- **Step 7: Add Your Contact Information:** Always include your contact information on your flier. Put your address and phone number in a visible spot, preferably in bold. You can also add your social media handles or website. This makes it easy for potential volunteers to reach out with questions and learn more about how to get involved.

Tool 1: Building Your Volunteer Advocacy Team

This tool/template helps you with thinking about how to assemble your dream advocacy team, starting with brainstorming who to invite to join your team; how to best announce your recruitment efforts; who will be recruiting advisors and mentors for your youth team; and what qualifications to expect of your youth applicants. Each of these thinking steps are very important for building a good team of committed and inspired youth to create positive change.



Keeping Your Team Motivated

Working with an advocacy campaign team can be one of the most exciting and rewarding experiences you'll ever have. However, achieving success can take a long time, and you might not always reach your ultimate goal. There will be highs and lows along the way, so it's crucial for the team to stay motivated no matter what. Some tips for keeping your team motivated include:

- Celebrating individual and team successes
- Communicating well. Setting up regular team meetings/calls
- Discussing as a team how to deal with confrontation and disagreement internally and externally
- Taking responsibility. If you all feel like you're in it together, you will be a happier and more effective team
- Having some "free" time. You may be making the world a better place, but you are also only human, so you have your own lives, needs and issues to deal with
- Make sure to have FUN!

Coaching and Mentoring

Being supported, having someone to chat with, and feeling like you are developing both personally and professionally are crucial aspects of being part of a good team. A good way to strengthen your team support system is to have each member be a coach and mentor for others.

A simple and effective mentoring process for your team is to use the GROW model. Have mentors ask the following questions:

- **G** = What are their **Goals**?
- **R** = What is their current **Reality**?
- **O** = What **Opportunities** and **Obstacles** are there between the reality that they experience and their goals?
- **W** = What **Work** can they do to make the most of the opportunities and also overcome their obstacles?
 - ✓ Discuss any actions that they will take before the next meeting
 - ✓ Chat through any other questions and agree on another time to meet. These meetings should take place every 6-8 weeks on average



MOBILIZING SUPPORTERS

As you work on your advocacy campaign, you'll want to get both individuals and groups involved and participating in your activities. For example, think of the riverbank clean-up events organized by [Trash Hero in Thailand](#). Getting supporters to join your advocacy activities has many benefits: it significantly boosts the impact and reach of your efforts. A large, engaged group of supporters increases the visibility and legitimacy of your cause, making it more likely to attract attention from the public, media, and decision-makers.



Consider the “Ladder of Involvement” when planning for long-term supporter mobilization

The “Ladder of Involvement” is used in advocacy to describe the gradual process of engaging and deepening the commitment of supporters or volunteers in a campaign or activity. This metaphorical ladder illustrates the steps or stages through which individuals might progress, from having a minimal level of awareness or interest in an issue to becoming deeply involved and possibly taking on leadership roles within the advocacy effort.

THE LADDER OF INVOLVEMENT

Ownership: At the top of the ladder, individuals fully embrace the cause as their own. They may take on leadership roles, spearhead initiatives, or become ambassadors for the issue, dedicating substantial time, energy, and resources to the advocacy campaign.

Commitment: Individuals who reach this rung are highly committed to the cause. They might regularly volunteer, donate, or advocate for the issue within their own networks. They are reliable supporters who contribute significantly to the campaign's efforts.

Involvement: At this stage, supporters start actively participating in campaign activities. This could include volunteering for events, participating in workshops, or contributing to discussions.

Engagement: With increased interest, individuals may engage with the cause by participating in minor, low-risk activities such as signing a petition, sharing content on social media, or attending a webinar.

Interest: Once aware, individuals may develop an interest in learning more about the issue. They might follow the organization on social media, subscribe to newsletters, or attend informational events.

Awareness: The first rung involves making individuals aware of the issue or cause. At this stage, your communication efforts should aim to inform and capture the interest of potential supporters.



By understanding where individuals are on the ladder, you can design your strategies in a way that encourages supporters to climb higher and increase their involvement and commitment to the cause. It recognizes that supporter engagement is a dynamic process and will require different tactics to move individuals from awareness to deeper levels of involvement.



Networking and Building Alliances and Partnerships

Networking offers new connections, but much more benefit comes from genuinely building relationships and creating allies. Establishing a network of dependable allies is often less spontaneous and more calculated than networking. Your allies are the more intimate, reliable individuals in your life who provide friendship as well as support, help, guidance, information, and safety. With their special skills and methods, they enhance your strengths and make up for your deficiencies. They can also assist you in seeing things from a different angle. When you need someone to just stop and listen, when you need emotional support, or when you need to work through an idea, your allies are there for you.

Working with other organizations, groups and people that have the same goals and objectives as you do may help you achieve your own goals and objectives that you couldn't accomplish alone. Networking and coalition building are critically important for youth advocacy on environmental issues for several reasons:

- **Strength in Numbers:** Joining forces with like-minded individuals and organizations amplifies the collective voice, making it harder for policy-makers and the public to ignore. A larger group can mobilize more resources, including people, skills, and funding, which can significantly enhance the impact of advocacy efforts.
- **Knowledge and Resource Sharing:** Networking allows youth advocates to share knowledge, strategies, and resources. This exchange can lead to more effective and innovative approaches to tackling environmental challenges. Learning from the successes and failures of others can save time and resources, and shared resources can make campaigns more feasible and impactful.
- **Increased Credibility:** Being part of a larger coalition can lend credibility and legitimacy to the cause. It demonstrates that the issue is not the concern of a single group but is shared by a wider community. This can make advocacy efforts more persuasive to both the public and decision-makers.
- **Diverse Perspectives and Skills:** Collaborating with a variety of stakeholders brings diverse perspectives and skills to the table, which can enhance the creativity and effectiveness of advocacy campaigns. Environmental issues are complex and interconnected; addressing them often requires multidisciplinary approaches.
- **Greater Reach and Visibility:** A coalition can leverage the networks of all its members, significantly expanding the reach of advocacy messages. This is crucial for raising awareness among the general public and engaging with policy-makers at all levels.

- **Political Influence:** A broad coalition can exert more political pressure than individual groups acting alone. It can more effectively lobby for policy changes, participate in public consultations, and influence political agendas.
- **Sustainability of the Movement:** By building a network, youth advocates can ensure the sustainability of their movement. Even as individual activists move on (due to age, relocation, or other commitments), the network remains and continues the advocacy work.
- **Support and Solidarity:** Advocacy work, especially on contentious issues like environmental protection, can be challenging and sometimes confrontational. Being part of a network provides moral and emotional support, helping activists to stay motivated and resilient in the face of obstacles.

In summary, networking and coalition building are not just beneficial for youth advocacy on environmental issues—they are essential. They enable more effective, resilient, and sustainable advocacy efforts, which are crucial for driving meaningful change in environmental policies and practices.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO LOOK FOR GOOD ADVOCACY PARTNERS?

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO LOOK FOR GOOD ADVOCACY PARTNERS?



LONG OR SHORT TERM

Think about whether you are looking for a long-term partnership or for someone you can work with in the short term, e.g. on a single event or activity.

JOIN WITH OTHER NETWORKS

To make contacts and get access to information and resources.





FIND OUT WHO IS DOING WHAT ALREADY

If an existing group is already doing good work around the issues that you are focused on, consider collaborating with them.

BE CREATIVE

Just because you are working on freshwater ecosystems, climate changes or renewable energy topics and issues, it doesn't mean that you shouldn't look for partners who are not focused on the environment, but on other issues. Combining your strengths may create something exciting and influential.





LOOK AGAIN AT YOUR STAKEHOLDERS FROM YOUR EARLIER ANALYSIS

Are there any people, groups or organizations that you might think about inviting to collaborate and/or partner with?

CONDUCTING AN ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

Advocacy work is all about influencing public opinion, policy decisions, and laws on social, environmental, or political issues. It involves coordinated activities like public engagement events, social media outreach, lobbying, and other such events to raise awareness, gain support, and persuade decision-makers and the public to take action for your cause.

Campaigning aims to bring about change, whether it's passing new laws, changing policies, protecting human rights, or addressing environmental issues. The goal is to achieve specific outcomes that reflect the campaigners' values and objectives, using various strategies to build momentum and have a real impact.

REASONS FOR CONDUCTING A CAMPAIGN

- To raise awareness and educate people about your issues.
- To raise the profile of your organization, group and your work
- To increase public pressure on decision-makers
- To grow the number of supporters and recruit more people to help you.
- To initiate public conversation or debate around an issue.

What are the reasons for organizing an advocacy campaign?

Conducting an advocacy campaign is all about raising awareness, influencing public opinion, and driving change on important issues. It's a strategic effort to bring a specific problem to the attention of the public and policy-makers, mobilizing support and pushing for solutions or policy changes.

Through targeted messaging, engagement activities, and advocacy, campaigns highlight the importance of an issue, educate the community, and encourage actions that help resolve the concern. Whether it's about environmental conservation, health initiatives, or social justice, campaigns play a crucial role in shaping discussions, policies, and behaviors toward achieving desired outcomes.



Types of Public Advocacy Campaign Actions



1. RALLIES AND MARCHES

Engaging and talking with a diverse range of individuals is essential for the effectiveness and success of advocacy work.

The Benefits of Organizing a Rally or March

A rally or some kind of march can play several critical roles in the broader effort to bring about change:

Visibility and Awareness: Rallies and marches draw public attention to specific environmental causes, making them more visible to the general population, policymakers, and the media. They can highlight urgent issues, such as climate change, deforestation, pollution, and biodiversity loss, raising awareness among those who might not be informed about the severity of these problems.

Unity and Solidarity: These events bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds, uniting them under a common cause. This show of solidarity is a powerful statement that the concern is shared by a broad segment of society—not just niche groups or activists. It demonstrates widespread support for environmental protection and sustainability, reinforcing the message that action is needed by everyone, including governments and businesses.

Pressure on Decision-makers: Large gatherings and public demonstrations can apply significant pressure on political leaders and decision-makers. They serve as a visible and vocal reminder of the public's demand for urgent action on environmental issues. This can influence politicians and corporate leaders to adopt more environmentally friendly policies and practices.

Empowerment and Engagement: Participating in rallies and marches can empower individuals, making them feel part of a larger movement and giving them an active role in advocating for change. This engagement can foster a sense of responsibility and agency, motivating further action and involvement in environmental causes.

Media Coverage: These events often attract media attention, spreading their message further. Media coverage can extend the reach of the rally or march, bringing its message to a wider audience, including those unable to attend.

Networking and Coalition-building: Rallies and marches provide opportunities for activists and organizations to network and build coalitions. They can share resources, strategies, and support, strengthening the environmental movement as a whole.

Education and Communication: These gatherings can also serve as platforms for educating the public about environmental issues and the specific demands of the movement. Speakers, informational materials, and interactions among participants can disseminate knowledge and inspire further learning and action.



2. MUSIC, THEATER, POETRY AND OTHER PERFORMANCES

Artistic expressions can be a powerful way to raise awareness, inspire action, and create a deeper emotional connection with environmental issues. Music, theater, poetry, and other performances enrich environmental advocacy by connecting with people emotionally, simplifying complex issues, inspiring action, and influencing culture.

Here's how they contribute:

Emotional Engagement: Art has the unique power to evoke emotions and connect with people on a personal level. Music, theater, and poetry can make complex issues like climate change, deforestation, and pollution feel relatable and real. This emotional connection can motivate people to learn more and take action.

Communicating Complex Ideas: Artistic performances can break down complex environmental issues into easy-to-understand stories. Through storytelling, metaphors, and symbolism, artists can highlight the importance and urgency of these problems.

Inspiring Action and Hope: Environmental messages in art often encourage awareness and action. They emphasize the possibility of change and the power of working together, inspiring audiences to join efforts in environmental conservation and sustainability.

Reaching Broader Audiences: Performances can attract people who might not usually engage with environmental advocacy. A concert, a theater play, or poetry reading can introduce new audiences to environmental issues, expanding the reach and impact of advocacy efforts.

Creating Community and Solidarity: Art brings people together, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose. In advocacy, feeling part of a collective effort is vital for sustaining engagement and activism over time. Performances can serve as rallying points, building solidarity among diverse groups.

Cultural Influence: Art can influence culture and change social norms. By placing environmental themes into music, theater, and poetry, artists can contribute to a broader cultural shift towards sustainability and environmental responsibility.

Memory and Legacy: Artistic expressions leave lasting impressions, placing messages in society's collective memory. They can honor past struggles and victories in environmental advocacy, serving as reminders of the journey and beacons for future action.

Political and Social Commentary: Through satire, allegory, and direct commentary, performances can critique current policies and attitudes towards the environment. This can provoke thought, stimulate public debate, and pressure policymakers to consider more sustainable and eco-friendly options.



3. PUBLIC MEETINGS

Public meetings are very important for environmental advocacy because they bring people together to share information, engage with the community, and take collective action. Whether they happen in town halls, community centers, or online, these gatherings offer many benefits and play key roles in pushing for environmental sustainability and protection:

Raising Awareness: Public meetings are great for educating the community about environmental issues like pollution, climate change, deforestation, and biodiversity loss. They help spread important information and scientific findings to a wider audience.

Community Engagement: These meetings give people a chance to directly engage in environmental discussions and decisions that affect them. This involvement encourages a sense of ownership and responsibility toward local environmental challenges, fostering a proactive approach to sustainability.

Facilitating Dialogue: Public meetings create a space for open dialogue between community members, advocacy groups, scientists, and policymakers. This can lead to a better understanding of issues and the development of more comprehensive and inclusive solutions.

Mobilizing Support: By bringing together individuals who care about the environment, public meetings can rally support for specific environmental campaigns or actions. They can inspire collective action.

Influencing Policy: Public meetings provide a way to influence environmental policy. Advocates can present their concerns and proposals directly to decision-makers. Showing strong community support for certain actions or policies can pressure officials to adopt more sustainable practices or legislation.

Building Coalitions: These gatherings allow for networking and building coalitions among environmental groups, community organizations, and other interested parties. Stronger coalitions mean a more unified and powerful advocacy effort, capable of driving significant environmental changes.

Identifying Local Solutions: Public meetings are valuable for brainstorming and finding local solutions to environmental problems. Community members can share their knowledge and experiences, contributing to solutions that fit the specific ecological, social, and economic context of the area.

Empowerment: Participating in public meetings can empower individuals and communities, making them feel heard and valued in the environmental advocacy process. This empowerment encourages further engagement and activism, creating a positive cycle of involvement and action.



4. TALKS AND PRESENTATIONS

Talks and presentations, like those at TEDx events, are very important for environmental advocacy. They serve as powerful platforms for spreading ideas, educating the public, and inspiring action. These presentations have a big impact because they reach a wide audience, are easy to access, and use the persuasive power of storytelling.

Here's how they contribute to environmental advocacy:

Educating and Informing: Talks and presentations provide an opportunity to educate a wide audience about environmental issues, scientific research, and sustainable practices. Speakers can break down complex topics into understandable segments, making it easier for the general public to grasp the urgency and intricacies of environmental challenges like climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution.

Inspiring Action: By sharing compelling stories, successes, and even personal journeys, speakers can inspire individuals to take action. The motivational aspect of these talks can lead to increased engagement in environmental causes, from individual lifestyle changes to participation in larger advocacy efforts.

Spreading Innovative Ideas: TEDx and similar forums are known for showcasing innovative solutions to global problems. Presenters can introduce novel approaches to environmental conservation, freshwater ecosystem management, and climate action, encouraging the adoption of these ideas by a broader audience.

Building a Community of Support: Talks and presentations often bring together like-minded individuals who are passionate about environmental issues. This can foster a sense of community and support among attendees, facilitating networking and collaboration among activists, experts, and enthusiasts.

Influencing Public Opinion and Policy: High-impact presentations can influence public opinion, creating a more informed and concerned citizenry. This shift in public sentiment can, in turn, pressure policy-makers and businesses to prioritize environmental sustainability and adopt greener policies.

Highlighting Grassroots Movements and Voices: Talks and presentations can provide a platform for voices that are often underrepresented in mainstream environmental discussions. This includes Indigenous Peoples, local community leaders and grassroots activists, whose experiences and knowledge are crucial for understanding and addressing environmental issues.

Creating a Record of Advocacy: Recorded talks serve as a lasting record of advocacy efforts and ideas at a given time. They can be referenced in the future for education, inspiration, and as a historical document of environmental activism.



5. PUBLIC STALLS AND EXHIBITIONS

Public stalls and exhibitions are great tools for environmental advocacy, offering unique chances for education, engagement, and mobilization. They make environmental issues easy to understand and interactive, encouraging informed discussions, participation, and action towards a more sustainable future. Here's how they help the cause:

Direct Engagement: Public stalls and exhibitions let environmental advocates interact face-to-face with the public.

This personal connection is very valuable for building relationships, answering questions and having in-depth discussions, making the message more persuasive and memorable than digital campaigns.

Educational Opportunities: Public stalls and exhibitions include educational materials, displays, and activities that inform people about environmental challenges like climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss. They present sustainable practices in a way that's easy for everyone to understand, from kids to adults.

Showcasing Solutions: Exhibitions are great for showing off sustainable technologies, practices, and products. They introduce people to renewable energy options, conservation techniques, and eco-friendly products, making sustainable living feel more real and achievable.

Community Involvement and Empowerment: Involving local communities in these events, whether through participation, organization, or as the target audience, empowers individuals and builds a sense of community around environmental issues. This encourages collective action and support for local environmental initiatives.

Visibility and Awareness: By taking place in public spaces, these events attract a diverse audience, including those who might not actively seek out information on environmental issues. This boosts the visibility of environmental concerns and spreads advocacy messages wider.

Cultural and Artistic Expression: Exhibitions can include art, culture, and creativity to convey environmental messages. Art installations, performances, and interactive exhibits engage audiences in unique and impactful ways, leaving a lasting impression.

Feedback and Learning: Direct interaction with the public allows organizations to gather feedback on their campaigns, messages, and approaches. This feedback is invaluable for refining strategies and understanding public perceptions and concerns about environmental issues.



6. PETITIONS

Petitions are a key tool in environmental advocacy. They help rally public support and can influence policy and corporate practices. While one petition might not change everything, it's a crucial part of a bigger strategy to push for environmental protection and sustainability goals.

Amplifying Voices: Petitions bring together individual voices into a powerful collective force, showing widespread public concern about specific environmental issues. This united expression can be particularly impactful, demonstrating to decision-makers that many people want change.

Influencing Policy and Legislation: When a petition gets a lot of signatures, it can pressure policy-makers, governments, and corporations to consider, change, or introduce new policies and practices that support environmental sustainability. Petitions can highlight the public's demand for action on issues like climate change, conservation, and pollution control.

Raising Awareness: Signing and sharing petitions can educate people about specific environmental challenges and the need for action. Those who might not have known about an issue can learn about it through a petition and spread the word to others.

Building Community and Solidarity: Petitions help build a sense of community among people who care about environmental issues. By signing a petition, individuals realize they are not alone in their concerns, fostering a sense of belonging to a larger movement.

Providing a Platform for Engagement: For many, signing a petition is the first step towards more active engagement in environmental advocacy. It can lead to further participation, like attending rallies, volunteering, or supporting environmental organizations.

Creating a Record of Concern: Petitions serve as a tangible record of public concern that can be used in advocacy efforts, negotiations, and discussions with decision-makers. They provide concrete evidence that the public is paying attention and demanding action.

Flexibility and Accessibility: The digital age has made creating and signing petitions easier than ever, allowing for rapid sharing and participation across geographical boundaries. Online platforms enable environmental campaigns to reach a global audience, gathering support from around the world.



7. WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS

Workshops and training sessions are key to environmental advocacy. They give you the knowledge, skills, and inspiration needed to take action and make a real impact in protecting our planet. Through these experiences, you can learn how to effectively contribute to sustainability efforts and become a strong voice for change in your community.

Organizing different types of in-person, or even online, workshops around your environmental issue can help you, your team and target stakeholders in numerous ways:

Building Knowledge and Awareness: Workshops and training sessions offer essential information on environmental issues like climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, and sustainable practices. They help you understand the scope of these challenges, their causes, and their impacts on ecosystems, human health, and economies.

Skill Development: These sessions provide practical skills for environmental advocacy and action. Learn how to organize and mobilize communities, engage with policy-makers, use social media for advocacy, conduct environmental research, and incorporate sustainable practices into daily life.

Empowering Communities: Workshops and training sessions empower individuals with knowledge and skills, enabling communities to tackle local environmental issues. Empowered communities can develop and implement solutions, advocate for their interests, and participate in decision-making processes.

Fostering Leadership: Workshops and training can identify and nurture environmental leaders who can lead local initiatives, mobilize others, and represent their communities in broader environmental movements or negotiations.

Behavioral Change: Education and training lead to a deeper understanding of the environmental impact of our actions, encouraging more sustainable behavior among participants and their networks.

Strengthening Advocacy Efforts: Learn how to effectively advocate for environmental issues by building compelling campaigns, communicating with different audiences, and influencing policy and practice. This strengthens the overall impact of environmental advocacy.

Networking and Collaboration: Workshops and training provide opportunities to connect, share experiences, and build networks. These connections can lead to collaborations and partnerships that amplify the impact of environmental advocacy.

Adapting to Local Contexts: Specially planned workshops and trainings address specific environmental issues relevant to particular communities or regions, ensuring the content is applicable and directly beneficial to participants.

Promoting Sustainable Development: By focusing on sustainable practices and solutions, these educational sessions contribute to broader goals of sustainable development, ensuring that environmental protection aligns with economic and social progress.

Tool 2: Planning Your Advocacy Event/Activity

The Planning Your Advocacy Event/Activity tool template will assist you in thinking through a series of questions that you will need to address as you plan for any event or activity as part of your overall environmental issue advocacy campaign. You can use this template to help you with brainstorming and planning all of your campaign activities. Questions focus on the following:

- Topic and theme
- Target audience
- Purpose of the event and expected outcomes
- Event activities
- Venue
- Type of support you will need
- Who to partner with for this event
- Next steps



8. USING ONLINE DIGITAL MEDIA FOR ADVOCACY

Social media and other digital channels are great tools for spreading ideas, raising public awareness, and gaining support for your cause. With more people using their phones to access the internet, digital engagement is a quick, affordable, and easy way to reach a large audience. Digital platforms let you connect with your peers and others throughout your country, and worldwide, and help you discover different perspectives, points of view and ways of tackling similar environmental issues through advocacy and awareness-raising actions. Social media can encourage young people to build networks of solidarity while boosting creativity and innovative thinking.

Be Cautious and Protect Yourself Online

Although digital platforms are powerful channels and modes of communication, they should be used quite carefully. For example, you should always use social media with awareness and caution. Avoid becoming victim to the social media temptation of engaging in pointless online debates with others or wasting hours scrolling through posts aimlessly. Additionally, carefully verify the accuracy of any information you find online. Double check the information or story that you are thinking about sharing, to make sure that it is truthful and accurate.

Conducting Online Campaigns

Conducting your campaign online is an excellent way to reach many more people than you would have in the past. The online space is ideal for advocacy work. The online digital media best for running online campaigns include Facebook, Instagram, X, Tik Tok, and YouTube, as well as online petition websites (e.g. Change.org), virtual marches and many more.

What Are the Advantages of Online Campaigning?

- **It's Easy** — Technology is developing fast and there are more and more ways to get people involved in your campaign.
- **It's Quick** — You can respond to news and events, send messages to supporters, share information at the click of a button.
- **It's Cheap** — It's all there for you. Emails, social media and a whole lot of web-based tools are there for you to use for free.
- **Reach** — It's where people are. People spend time on the internet and by using social media you can reach huge numbers online, your supporters can spread what you share with others in their networks, and so on...
- **Making Connections** — Social media can help connect your supporters to each other. This makes them feel that they are part of a community and motivates them by feeling they are part of something bigger than themselves.
- **Easy to Act** — Engaging supporters in action can start with something simple, like signing an online petition. There are simple entry points that can lead to greater involvement.
- **Data** — You can easily store and build up a database of information about your supporters and help them move up the ladder of involvement.



Things to Consider When Starting a Digital Online Advocacy Campaign

When starting a digital online environmental issue advocacy campaign, several key considerations are crucial for its success:

- **Have Clear Goals and Objectives:** Know exactly what you want to achieve with your campaign, such as raising awareness, influencing policy, or changing behaviors.
- **Know Your Audience:** Identify who you want to reach and understand their values, concerns, and online behaviors. This will help you design your message and choose the most effective online platforms for engagement.
- **Compelling Messaging:** Develop clear, persuasive, and engaging messages that resonate with your audience. Your messaging should highlight the urgency of the issue, the impact on the audience, and a clear call to action.
- **Choosing the Right Platforms:** Select digital platforms that are popular with your target audience, whether it's social media, blogs, email, newsletters, or online petitions. Consider a multi-platform approach to maximize reach.
- **Use of Multimedia Content:** Use a mix of text, images, videos, and infographics to make your campaign more engaging and shareable. Visual content can help simplify complex issues and make a more impactful statement.
- **How to Stimulate Engagement:** Encourage interaction by asking questions, creating polls, and responding to comments.
- **Monitor and Adapt:** Use analytics to track the performance of your campaign. Be prepared to adapt your strategies based on what is working well.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** Partner with influencers, organizations, and activists who share your goals. Collaborations can extend your reach and lend credibility to your campaign.
- **Ensure Accuracy and Credibility:** Make sure all information shared is accurate and credible. Misinformation can damage your campaign's reputation and effectiveness.
- **Be Consistent and Persistent:** Environmental advocacy can require sustained effort. Maintain a consistent presence online and keep pushing your message to build momentum over time.

Tool 3: Learning What Others are Doing Through Online Advocacy

Learning from the experiences of others can give your own advocacy campaign strategy new ideas and creative energy, as well as helping to building a sense of community among different environmental advocacy groups.

This tool provides a series of questions to help guide you and your advocacy team in exploring the online world to identify what others—in other countries as well as your own—are doing with online advocacy.



Visit this [website](#) to see some highly rated environment campaigns from 2022.

Using Hashtags

A **hashtag** is a word, or phrase, with the symbol of a hash (#) in front of it. It means certain types of post can be tagged and so be easily identified when searching online. For example, **#ClimateOfChange** is one of the main hashtags for this campaign.

If you need to **add a hashtag to your specific action**, check out in advance if it's already been used or not. It's ideal to have something that's not too hard to say or spell. Hashtags can group your posts with a particular wider issue, such as **#ClimateJusticeNow**. Be aware that the advised number of hashtags per single post is different in each internet platform.

On X (formerly Twitter) some analysts suggest that a maximum of two hashtags per tweet will enhance engagement. Including more hashtags in a single tweet can actually harm your reach.

On Facebook and LinkedIn, the same rule applies. However, Instagram is somewhat different.

On Instagram, you are allowed 30 hashtags per Instagram post and you're actually recommended to use them all! Hit return a few times so they appear at the bottom of your text, as they don't look so pretty. Don't forget to use hashtags in stories too.

THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO BUILD YOUR CAMPAIGN

Social media is a powerful tool for building and spreading advocacy campaigns, offering a wide reach and the ability to engage directly with supporters and policymakers. To maximize its effectiveness while going through potential risks, here are some recommended "dos" and "don'ts":

Dos

- ✓ **Do Define Clear Goals:** Start with specific, measurable objectives. Knowing what you want to achieve will guide your content strategy and help measure success.
- ✓ **Do Know Your Audience:** Design your message so that it addresses the interests, needs, and behaviors of your target audience. Different platforms attract different demographics, so choose and customize your content accordingly.
- ✓ **Do Use Engaging Content:** Use a mix of text, images, videos, and infographics to make your message compelling and shareable. Stories that evoke emotions tend to resonate more and encourage sharing.
- ✓ **Do Be Consistent:** Maintain a regular posting schedule and keep your messaging consistent across all platforms. This helps build recognition and trust with your audience.
- ✓ **Do Engage With Your Audience:** Respond to comments, messages, and mentions. Engagement increases your visibility and fosters a community around your cause.
- ✓ **Do Collaborate:** Partner with influencers, organizations, and other stakeholders who share your values to extend your reach and credibility.
- ✓ **Do Use Hashtags Wisely:** Relevant hashtags can increase the visibility of your posts to a wider audience interested in your topic.
- ✓ **Do Monitor and Adapt:** Use social media analytics to track the performance of your campaign. Be ready to adapt your strategy based on what works best.

Don'ts

- ✓ **Don't Ignore Negative Feedback:** Address criticisms and concerns professionally. Ignoring or deleting negative comments can harm your campaign's credibility.
- ✓ **Don't Spread Yourself Too Thin:** Focus on platforms where your target audience is most active rather than trying to be everywhere.
- ✓ **Don't Forget Privacy and Safety:** Be mindful of privacy and safety concerns, especially when sharing information about individuals or sensitive topics.
- ✓ **Don't Make Unsubstantiated Claims:** Ensure that your posts are accurate and credible. Misinformation can quickly damage your campaign's reputation.
- ✓ **Don't Overwhelm Your Audience:** While regular posting is important, bombarding your followers with too much content can lead to unfollows. Find a balanced posting schedule.
- ✓ **Don't Neglect Visuals:** Avoid posting large blocks of text without visuals. Posts with images or videos tend to perform better in terms of engagement and reach.
- ✓ **Don't Engage in Online Arguments:** While it's important to address misinformation and defend your cause, avoid getting into heated arguments. Always communicate respectfully and constructively.
- ✓ **Don't Ignore Copyrights:** Respect copyright laws by using original content or obtaining permission to use copyrighted material.

Tool 4: Planning for Your Own Digital Advocacy Campaign

Social media is a great way to bring people together around a common cause. Campaigns and important policy battles have certainly been won (and lost) online. This type of interaction can be quite quick to develop, but can also take a lot of time, depending on the issue and what is happening around it.

This tool/template provides you with a list of questions that you are encouraged to answer with your core advocacy social media and communications team members. Brainstorming initial ideas to use when taking your campaign online will be very helpful in developing your Advocacy Event Activity Plan later.



9. WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH MAINSTREAM MEDIA

When using the term “media” here, we are referring to more traditional media such as radio, television, and print media (newspapers, magazines), as well as web-based media. Of course, there is currently a change happening where more young people increasingly interact with social media platforms rather than engage with mass or traditional media. However, traditional media can still be a very powerful tool for your advocacy work, especially with certain stakeholder groups, including decision-makers. Whatever form of media you decide to use, there are a few things to know and skills to develop, including:

- What makes a good story?
- How to get noticed?
- How to write a press release?
- How to give an effective interview to media representatives?

What Is News and a Good News Story?

This is the most basic and important question to ask of any news story. It must inform about something that we either didn't know before, or build on our existing knowledge and understanding about something.

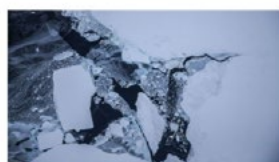
If you were responsible for writing a news story that catches the attention of the public, what would it be? What things make for a good news story? Remember that there are always at least two sides to every story, and no matter how passionately you feel about a subject, there are hundreds of other people who are equally passionate about their own topics or interests, and you are all competing for media attention.

Is It Newsworthy?

Essentially, newsworthy content is that which is considered important, interesting, or engaging enough to be brought to the attention of the wider public through news outlets.

Newsworthy content typically meets one or more of the following criteria: relevance to the audience, timeliness, significance or impact, proximity to the audience, uniqueness or novelty, conflict or controversy, and human interest. These factors help determine whether a story is likely to capture the attention of the public and the media, thereby being worth covering.

World's ice melting five times faster than in the 90s



Credit: Mario Tama/Getty Images

Characteristics of Newsworthy Stories

A Big Story — As well as being news. The media are always interested in stories about: conflict, tragedy, hardship and threats to the community, as well as scandal and individual achievement.

A Trend — Small, single, one-off issues are not of much interest to news outlets. Reporters are more interested in stories that have something to say about society as a whole, and how it is changing over time (whether quickly or slowly).

A Surprise — A story that shows evidence that goes against what most people believe always gets some attention.

Easy to Understand — Can it be explained and understood in one paragraph?

Accessible to All — Your story should be interesting to as wide an audience as possible, not just the people who already support your issue. As the saying goes, do not only “preach to the choir.”

Memorable — The story is so powerful that it is not easily forgotten.

It has a Hook! — Does your story relate to something that is already in the news or is it something people are already talking about?

The table below shows ways to get noticed by the media (reporters and editors). What are they thinking?

AT EVENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite journalists to your events well in advance of the event (not last minute).• Introduce them to any key speakers or guests.• Make them feel looked after by giving them good seating arrangements, etc.
ON THE PHONE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call them, as journalists are the type who like a tip by phone, rather than email.• Work out your 1-minute pitch and messages before calling them.• Do not speak to journalists unprepared. If they call you first, tell them you will call back, then prepare yourself.
BY EMAIL / LETTER
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write a press release to send them by email (see Tool: Press Release Template).• Make sure to send your email or letter to the right person.• Follow up with a phone call to make sure that they received your email or letter.

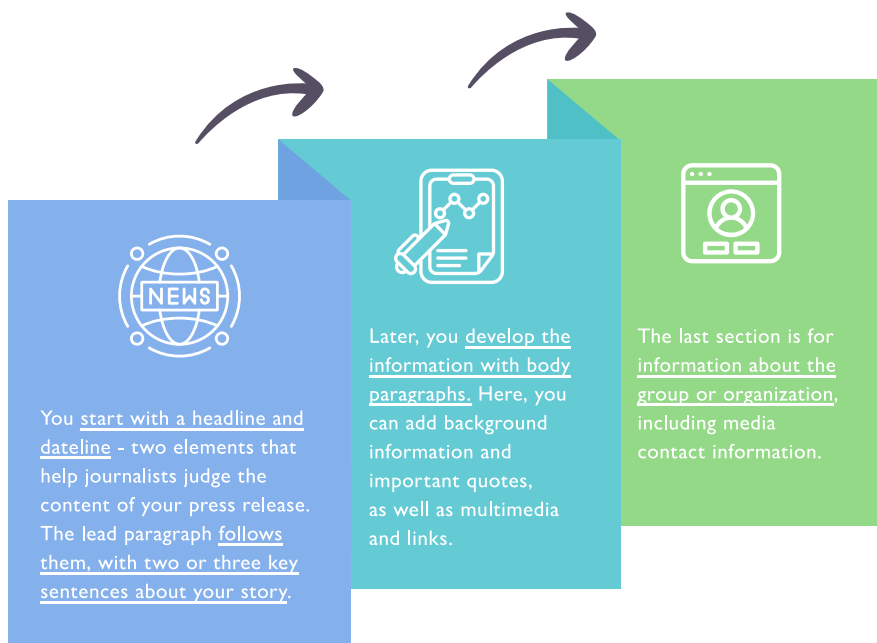
WHAT JOURNALISTS CONSIDER WHEN DECIDING WHETHER TO PAY ATTENTION AND GIVE THEIR TIME TO YOUR GROUP AND YOUR EVENT?



Some points that journalists consider when deciding whether to pay attention and give their time to your group and your event.

Writing a Press Release

A press release is an official statement that your group or organization will use to make an announcement for public release, with the aim of getting journalists' attention so that they will attend and report on your event (which isn't guaranteed). Press releases are recommended as they are a significant element of your group's public relations strategy. Your press release must be concise and stick to the facts. While the tone is formal, you can use images, statistics, numbers, and quotes to keep readers engaged.



Tool 5: Press Release Template

Here you will find a press release template, designed specifically for youth environmental advocates to alert and invite the media to their events. This template will help you to effectively communicate your message, ensuring your events gain the attention and coverage they deserve.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE	
2nd Annual Environmental Education & Awareness (EEA Laos Alliance) Exchange Dialogue	Your name or the name of your campaign.
Date: 14-15 November 2023 Embargo: 02 November 2023	The time and date that the information can be made public.
Care Today for Tomorrow... Sharing Tools, Approaches and Successes of Environmental Education in Lao PDR	Headline—Keep it short and sweet.
<p>In a groundbreaking shift towards preserving the country's unique biodiversity heritage preservation, Laos has taken a pioneering step by significantly developing and mainstreaming environmental education (EE) into formal and non-formal education, marking a transformative approach in the nation's battle against environmental degradation. This visionary initiative underscores Laos' commitment to cultivating a generation that is not only aware of the pressing environmental challenges facing the country, but is also equipped with the knowledge, skills, and passion to advocate for sustainable solutions. EE is key to building future where environmental conservation is not just a policy priority, but a way of life for every Laotian citizen.</p> <p>The EEA Dialogue Exchange Conference is intended to bring together institutions, organizations and groups from government, academia, civil society and private sector that support and apply environmental education awareness and communication approaches, tools and activities as part of their environmental protection, conservation and/or development strategies in Lao to share their experience and perspectives with each other and to identify a path forward in continuing to develop and scale EE across the country.</p> <p>The Conference will showcase a mixture of activities to support the sharing and exchange of ideas, tools, experiences, etc. among different sectors and organizations, including a Moderated Panel Discussion, an exhibition area for organizations to display and share their own tools, approaches and projects related to environmental education, along with concurrent breakout workshops from the organizational partners of the EEA Alliance network, in addition to a special program showcasing the experiences and perspectives of the EEA youth volunteers and interns on issues of plastic waste and climate change action. On the evening of the 14th there will be a special dance music and poetry performance by Fang Lao Dance Troupe as well as an environment themed screening of short films by Mind Media.</p> <p>Dr. Somsanook Achavong, Director of the National University of Laos' outreach unit (NREP) Faculty of Forestry Science states that the conference last here was "the highlight of her year and is so looking forward to sharing and learning with so many amazing practitioners."</p>	<p>The 1st paragraph is crucial—It should be summarize Who, What, Where, Why and How.</p> <p>Paragraphs 2 and 3—Use to expand on any newsworthy points.</p>
About EEA Alliance Network	Quotes—Use to get key points across.
<p>The Environmental Education and Awareness (EEA) Alliance is a national network of like-minded organizations from government, academia, civil society and the private sector who are committed to working together in a spirit of co-creation and cooperation to develop, promote and mainstream Environmental Education (EE) as key environmental conservation strategy for the sustainable development of Lao PDR.</p> <p>Facebook Page: https://www.facebook.com/eeaalliance Laos</p>	Notes to editors—Add any additional info and links that would be useful.
Ms. Visouda Chanthavong @ Visouda.Chanthavong@gfa-group.de M: 020 86 664 129	Contacts—Provide details of whom to contact for more information.

Talking with the Media — Interview Skills

An interview is a good opportunity to get coverage and spread your advocacy messages with journalists, podcasters, vloggers, and the media.

Know Who You Are Talking to

- Try to get to know the journalist or interviewer beforehand (check their profile online).
- Get to know their publication, website, social media platform, or program.
- Figure out who their primary target audience is. Who are they writing for?

Know What You Want to Say

- Select your key messages (best not to have more than three).
- Prepare your introduction and finishing statements (don't be spontaneous about these).
- Know your facts, data, personal anecdotal stories and any case study examples that you might want to use.
- Know the source of your evidence (facts), as you may be challenged on what you say.
- Prior to the interview, ask if you can have some of their questions beforehand.

Practice What You Want to Convey

- Practice saying your key messages.
- Have a friend or colleague give you a practice interview.
- Think beforehand about what might be the difficult questions that the interviewer will ask you.
- Practice "bridging or linking," meaning that whatever question is asked to you, you can answer through one of your main messages.

Learn from Every Interview You Give

- If it doesn't go well, don't be too hard on yourself.
- Ask for feedback from the interviewer if it is possible.
- Learn from what you did well as well as your mistakes and things you feel were not strong in the interview.
- If you are a note taker or keep a diary or journal, write down your impressions of the interview, what went well, what didn't, and lessons learned for next time.

Always Be Professional in Interviews

- Remember the 3Cs of confidence, clarity and control—this is what you must show in every interview.
- Try to get your key messages communicated early in the interview. Do not wait for later, as the time may not come.
- Try not to use a lot of special "jargon" or language that is not used by most people. Keep it simple.
- Do not get flustered if you do not know something (you can say you will find it out and get back to them).
- Always handle your interview with calmness, mindfulness and courtesy.
- Summarize your final words in the interview by repeating your key messages, but do not sound robotic.
- Most important: be human ... be you! Being authentic and passionate (not emotional) is more important than being perfect.

10. POLICY ADVOCACY

As mentioned in the toolkit's introductory chapter, the main goal of advocacy is to influence public policy, social systems (like public opinion), and individual behaviors in order to protect the interests, rights, and well-being of specific groups or the general public. This is done by protecting the environment and working for a sustainable and clean environmental future. Advocacy involves raising awareness, building support, and persuading decision-makers to change or create new laws, policies, or practices. Specifically, we want to raise awareness, gather public support, and push for legislative and regulatory changes to balance human activities with environmental conservation.

By advocating for the environment, we aim to protect natural habitats and ecosystems, safeguard species, and ensure a healthy planet for future generations. Public opinion and public policy are constantly influencing each other in variations that depend on societal context.

When people take decisions, they often don't have all the information about the issue concerned and rely on various shortcuts. Most people form their opinions about complex issues by interpreting the information they receive from authorities such as politicians, government officials, scientists, the mass media, and increasingly, social media. This information helps shape their understanding of an issue. Public opinion forms through a balance of awareness and deeply rooted values and socioeconomic factors. Policies can communicate information to the public, especially when they receive a lot of media attention or when they directly affect people's lives. In a democratic system, if policies don't align with the public interest, there is pressure on policy-makers to amend or create new policies.

Whether policies influence public opinion or vice versa, there is a definite feedback mechanism at work (as demonstrated in the "Policy–Public Opinion Feedback Loop" graphic). Therefore, it is important for advocates trying to change how societies, communities, and individuals think about, respond to, and behave toward the local and global environment, to

understand the dynamics between policy and public opinion. This knowledge ensures that advocacy campaigns and actions address both factors effectively.

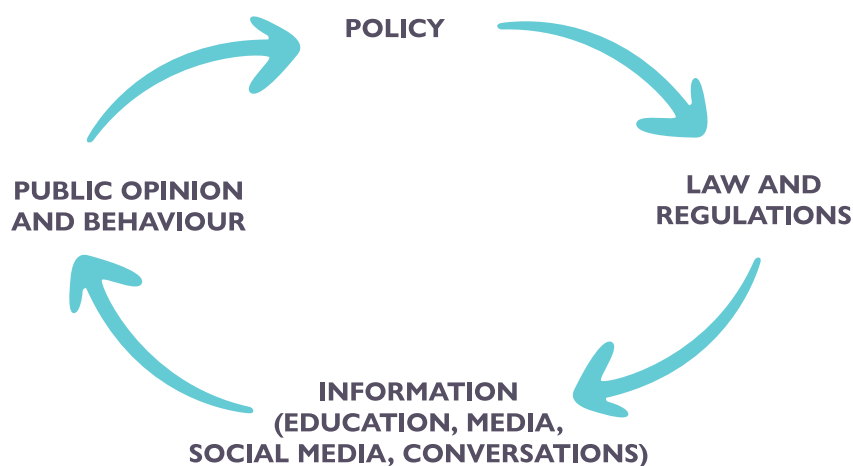
What is Policy and Why is it Important to Influence it?

The term "policy" can refer to several related but distinct concepts, depending on the context in which it's used. A policy is a guide for decision-making and a commitment to a course of action. Some policies can become law. For example, the dumping of raw sewage and waste is illegal in most countries now.

- In the context of government, public policy refers to the actions taken by a government to address public issues. It can include legislation, regulations, decisions, and actions designed to solve specific problems or achieve certain objectives within a society. For example, environmental policy might include regulations to reduce air, water and soil pollution and to protect natural resources such as forests and wildlife.
- Within organizations, policies are the rules and guidelines created to outline the operations and decision-making processes of the organization. They provide a framework for consistent decision-making and standard operating procedures. For example, a company's human resources policy might detail how to handle employee grievances or outline the process for promotions and raises.

Environmental policy is a set of laws, regulations, and guidelines created by governments and organizations to manage the impact of human activities on the environment. The goal is to protect natural resources, promote sustainable development, and prevent ecosystem damage.

Environmental policy covers a wide range of issues like air and water pollution, waste management, biodiversity conservation, climate change, and the sustainable use of natural resources. By setting standards, enforcing rules, and encouraging eco-friendly practices, environmental policy aims to balance economic development with the need to preserve the environment for future generations. Working together at local, national, and global levels, these policies strive to create a healthier planet and a more sustainable future for everyone.



Policy-Public Opinion Feedback Loop

How Policy is Made and Implemented?

Policy making and implementation is a complex process involving multiple stages and stakeholders. It usually follows a structured path, starting from identifying a problem to evaluating the policy's outcomes after it's implemented. Here's a simplified overview of the process:

Step 1: Agenda Setting — The first step is recognizing a problem or need that requires government action. Issues can be brought to the political agenda through public opinion, interest groups, experts, media coverage, or government officials.

Step 2: Policy Formulation — Once an issue is on the agenda, relevant stakeholders (government officials, experts, interest groups, and sometimes the public) work together to create policy options. This involves researching, discussing, and proposing different ways to address the issue, considering the potential impacts, costs, and benefits of each option.

Step 3: Decision-Making — This step involves choosing a policy option from those that have been developed and proposed. Legislative bodies (like parliament or congress) usually make these decisions, but it can also involve executives (presidents or prime ministers) using their regulatory authority. The process often includes negotiations, modifications, and compromises before reaching a final decision.

Step 4: Policy Implementation — This step is all about putting the chosen policy into action. Various government agencies or departments develop and enforce rules, allocate resources, and take necessary actions to enact the policy. Effective implementation requires clear guidelines, enough resources, and ongoing coordination.

Step 5: Policy Evaluation — After the policy is implemented, it's evaluated to see how well it addressed the initial problem. This involves collecting data, analyzing outcomes, and assessing whether the policy met its goals. Evaluation can lead to recommendations for continuing, changing, or ending the policy.

Step 6: Feedback Loop — Feedback from the evaluation phase can send the process back to earlier stages. This might mean adjusting the current policy, creating a new one to address shortcomings, or deciding no further action is needed. This feedback loop helps continuously refine and adapt policies to better meet society's needs.

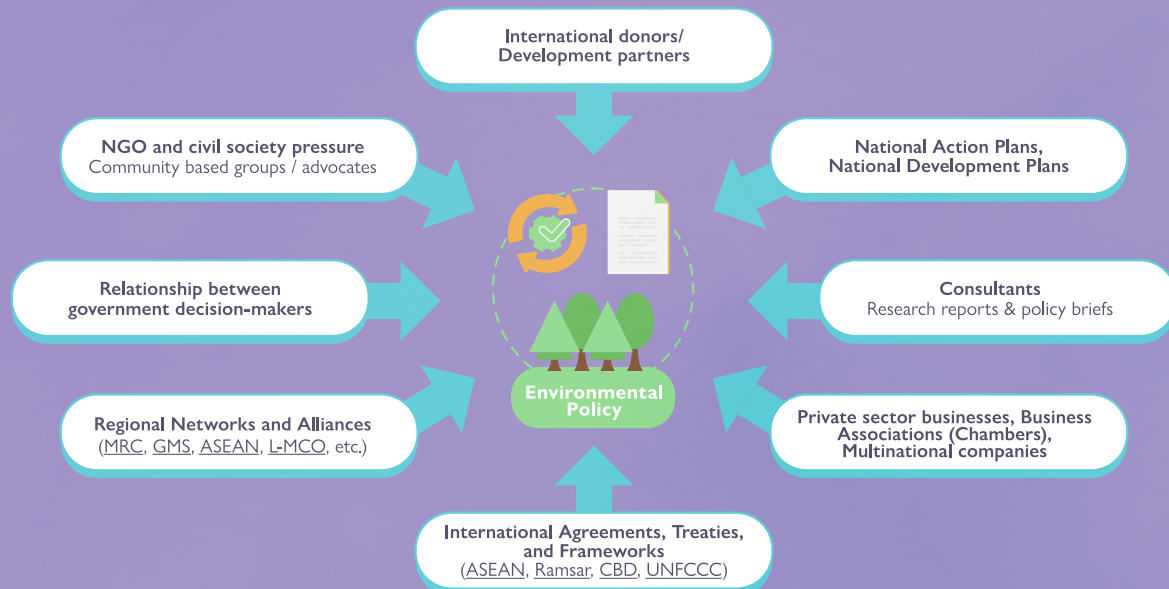
Note: Throughout all these stages, the process involves negotiation, compromise, and sometimes conflict among different interest groups, including government entities, private sector organizations, non-profits, and the public. The success of policy making and implementation depends a lot on the political, social, and economic context.

Although this step-by-step process looks quite simple, the way that policy is developed and influenced is actually often quite complicated and complex. This can make planning an advocacy strategy challenging. However, this can also be a good thing, as it means that there are potentially many different ways to influence policy.



Influencers of Policy

Environmental policy formulation and implementation are influenced by various factors, including government officials, experts, interest groups, and public opinion. Politicians and lawmakers create and enforce policies, while scientists and experts provide the necessary research and data. Interest groups, like environmental organizations, advocate for specific issues and push for change. Public opinion, shaped by media and social movements, also plays a crucial role by putting pressure on decision-makers to act. Together, these influencers help shape policies that aim to protect the environment and promote sustainability. The infographic image below illustrates the array of different stakeholders and factors that influence the formulation of environment policy.



The array of different stakeholders and factors influencing the formulation of environment policy.

Tool 6: Understanding & Engaging with Policy

Understanding the policies that affect your issue is fundamental to your education as an advocate. In fact, dreaming up new policies and replacing outdated ones could be one of your key aims as an advocate. Improve your understanding of the policies surrounding your issue and you will improve your advocacy efforts.

Go through the following questions which, step-by-step, will help you identify the policy/policies impacting the environmental issue that you care about. These questions will also guide you to analyze how your advocacy efforts can best be directed to improve existing policy, or to influence the creation of new policy that will support your cause.



Meeting with Decision-Makers

To succeed, you and your team will probably need to meet with someone in a position of authority. This could be the Minister or Vice-Minister of Natural Resources and Environment (MoNRE), a department head like the Director General or Deputy Director General, an advisor, a United Nations representative, or even the head of a nearby village or district. Whoever it is, there are a few things to keep in mind in order to connect with and persuade them.

Setting Up and Preparing for a Policy Advocacy Meeting

There are several key things you will need to do and/or keep in mind when setting up a meeting with someone from a policy-office of the government, or someone in a position that is part of the policy process in either government (local or national), or with a company or other entity.

- ✓ **Do Your Research:** Understand the person's role, responsibilities, and their stance on environmental issues. Know the current policies and any recent changes or proposals. Look at their LinkedIn profile, their Facebook posts, any opinion pieces or articles that they may have written, or any keynote speeches or presentations that they have given, etc. Think about whether they could support the type of change that you are looking to see.
- ✓ **Contact:** Find out the best way to reach the person that you are hoping to meet and talk to. Is there anyone who can help you set up a meeting?
- ✓ **Timing:** Is this a good time to approach this person or organization? Can what you are asking them to do be done now, or must it be delayed for a while?

- ✓ **Be Clear About Your Goals:** Define the purpose of your meeting and what you hope to achieve. Have a clear and concise message or request.
- ✓ **Identify Who in Your Team Should Go to this Meeting:** Think about who in your team is best placed to attend the meeting. Which person in your team has the presence, and the ability to speak with this official? Could you possibly involve any person directly affected by the issue to meet with this person?
- ✓ **Assign Tasks for the Meeting If You Are Going with a Group:**
Determine who is going to say or do what—and in what order. Tasks include:
 - Making introductions/thanking the person for meeting with you
 - Taking notes
 - Presenting the message: the problem and/or the facts
 - The personal example/story
 - Making the request
 - Responding to questions
 - Responding to counter arguments/resistance
 - Closing the meeting and thanking them for their time
- ✓ **Prepare Your Position Points:** Gather facts, data, and real-life examples to support your cause. Be ready to explain why your issue matters and how it affects the community or environment.
- ✓ **Be Respectful and Professional:** Show respect for their time and position. Dress appropriately, be punctual, and address them respectfully.
- ✓ **Be Clear About What You Expect from The Meeting:** Be clear about what you want from them (how much of their time and exactly what you want to speak about, including possibly sending them your questions ahead of time).
- ✓ **Practice Your Presentation:** Rehearse what you're going to say. Practice with your team to ensure everyone is confident and clear.
- ✓ **Develop Your "Pitch":** In advocacy we are constantly "case making" or making a pitch. We do this for our organizations, mission and mandates and shared causes. Knowing your audience is an absolute must, but ultimately it is about being crystal clear on what you hope to receive from them, inspire them to do and/or engage with. Know your audience, what matters to them, the tone and tenor of the message delivery and what you hope to achieve. Develop and practice your pitch with your team. Go through your key messages and what you are asking of them ("the ask"). List out the key talking points that you want to communicate.



Safeguard Colorado's water | Mackenzie Warden 2023

Watch YouTube video here: [Safeguard Colorado's water | Mackenzie Warden 2023](#)
Also refer to [Advocacy Pitch Competition — Defend Them All Foundation](#)

Tool 7: Developing Your Advocacy Pitch

An advocacy pitch is a concise and persuasive presentation designed to gain support, influence opinion, or prompt action on a specific issue or cause. It highlights the importance of the issue, the desired change, and how the audience can contribute to making that change happen.

The tool we provide here uses an easy 6-step approach to developing your environmental issue advocacy pitch, with an example to help you develop your own pitch.



Other Things to Consider for Your Meeting

- ✓ **Are you legitimate?**
Are you recognized as a representative of the people whose interests you are advocating for? Do you have evidence of your research available to show them (if needed)?
- ✓ **Are you convincing?**
Do you have evidence to support your position? Will what you are proposing really make much of a difference?
- ✓ **Have you got a Plan B?**
It is common to arrive at a meeting and find that the person you are meeting is not the person you planned or expected to meet. Or, you have much less time than you need... Or the person's agenda is different to what you had agreed beforehand. Be ready for all contingencies.

AT THE MEETING

1. Introduce yourself and the purpose of the meeting.

2. Listen carefully and recognize the positions, points and interests of others.

3. Ensure that you are able to communicate your key message and key points.

4. Don't get into an argument as it can create negative energy and waste time.

5. Focus on what you have in common.

6. At the end of the meeting, summarize what each side has agreed to do.

7. If the first meeting ends well, try to schedule a follow-up meeting.



Try to Create an Ongoing Dialogue

Meeting with decision-makers may give you an opportunity for “real dialogue.” Dialogue is a conversation where the main purpose is to share and learn from the other people participating in the discussion. A successful dialogue will build and strengthen trust, establish mutual respect among people with different perspectives and improve the understanding between you/your team and the decision-makers.

Note: For a dialogue to be considered successful, it is important to apply active listening and communication skills, and provide an opportunity for everyone to participate in the conversation.

Negotiations with Those Who Have Decision-Making Influence

Negotiation is when two or more parties with different needs and goals discuss an issue in order to find a solution that works for everyone. It involves talking and compromising, with the aim of reaching an agreement that benefits all involved.

We negotiate all the time—in conversations with our parents, friends, teachers, and work supervisors. Some advocacy meetings with decision-makers may also involve negotiation. For example, you might want a Minister to support your pilot project with local schools for nature-based environmental education. In return, you might be asked to help the Minister with something later on.

Before any meeting with powerful stakeholders (like decision-makers), it's important to consider what both you and the other party need and can offer in return. This is key to achieving a ‘win-win’ outcome. Here are some important questions to consider:

- ✓ What are your main goals and needs?
- ✓ What are the other party's main goals and needs?
- ✓ What can you offer that would benefit the other party?
- ✓ What can you reasonably expect to receive in return?
- ✓ What compromises are you willing to make to reach an agreement?

It is also very important that before going into any meeting with a stakeholder who has power (i.e. decision-makers), you seriously consider some key aspects of what both you and the other party need and can expect to receive from each other. This is the heart of negotiation, resulting in a ‘win-win’ outcome for both sides. Thus consider the following important questions:

- **Their Needs** — What do you think that the other party will want to gain from your meeting? Why do they accept the meeting?
- **Your Offer** — Can you provide something that the other group wants? What can we offer them for their support?
- **Your Needs** — What does your group need to get from this meeting? What is the minimum you will be happy with?
- **Your Concessions** — What are you willing to give up in order to get what you want?

In any negotiation, you must go into the meeting with two key mental strategies:

- **Aim high** — You can always negotiate down, but it is difficult to negotiate up.
- **Give concessions reluctantly** — drive a hard bargain as much as you can. Do not give up your leverage easily.

Possible Negotiation Outcomes

- ✓ **Win-Win** — This is when both parties feel that they have achieved something positive.
- ✓ **Win-Lose** — When one party comes out as a ‘winner’, and the other feels that they have lost.
- ✓ **Lose-Lose** — When both parties feel that they have lost out.



Some Negotiation Tactics to Consider as You Prepare for Your Meeting

Advocacy groups can employ a number of effective negotiation tactics when meeting with people in power and decision-makers, in order to influence outcomes in their favor. Some that we recommend include:

- ✓ **Preparation and Research:** Understand the issues very well, including the interests and constraints of the other party. This enables your advocacy group to present well-informed arguments and anticipate counterarguments.
- ✓ **Build a Strong Case:** Use credible evidence, data, and stories to support your position. A well-structured argument that highlights the benefits of your proposal can be very persuasive.
- ✓ **Establish Common Ground:** Identify areas of agreement at the beginning of the discussion to create a positive atmosphere. This can make it easier to navigate more contentious issues later on.
- ✓ **Active Listening:** Show genuine interest in the other party's views. Understanding their perspective can help you to refine your arguments and propose solutions that address their concerns.
- ✓ **Framing:** Present your arguments in a way that aligns with the interests and values of the decision-makers. For instance, if economic factors are a priority for them, highlight the economic benefits of your proposal.
- ✓ **Strategic Questioning:** Use questions to guide the conversation, reveal the other party's priorities, and challenge assumptions without being confrontational.
- ✓ **Negotiation Leverage:** Understand what leverage you have, such as public support, expertise, or the ability to mobilize voters, and use it wisely to strengthen your position.
- ✓ **Offer Solutions:** Instead of just presenting problems, offer practical and feasible solutions. This demonstrates a constructive approach and willingness to work towards a common goal.

USING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS FOR ADVOCACY LEVERAGE



Almost every country has ratified the leading international environment and climate change agreement and treaties. This means that if your team is knowledgeable about these agreements, treaties and frameworks, especially in terms of your country's position on them, you can use them as leverage for your negotiation with decision-makers.

Leveraging global/international agreements, treaties, and frameworks can significantly enhance your advocacy efforts, particularly when aiming to influence national policies or corporate practices. Here's how advocacy groups can effectively use these international instruments:

- **Build Your Case with International Standards:** Reference specific commitments and standards from international agreements to strengthen your advocacy position. This lends credibility to your arguments, showing that they align with global norms and values.
- **Highlight State Obligations:** Emphasize the legal and moral obligations that governments have under international treaties. This can pressure national governments to align domestic policies with their international commitments, such as those related to human rights, environmental protection, or health.
- **Use as a Benchmarking Tool:** Compare national policies and practices against the commitments and standards set by international agreements. Publicizing these comparisons can highlight gaps and areas for improvement, mobilizing public opinion and government action.

- **Engage in Shadow Reporting:** Participate in the reporting process of international treaties by submitting alternative or "shadow" reports that provide civil society's perspective on government compliance. This can influence the recommendations made by treaty bodies to states.
- **Advocate for Ratification:** If your country has not ratified a relevant treaty, campaign for its ratification. Ratification enhances the treaty's legitimacy and can compel the government to align domestic laws with international standards.
- **Utilize International Forums:** Engage with international forums and conferences as platforms to raise issues and network with stakeholders from other countries. This can facilitate knowledge exchange, coalition-building, and amplify your advocacy messages.
- **Collaborate with International NGOs and Networks:** Partner with international organizations and advocacy networks that can provide support, resources, and global visibility to your cause. This can also strengthen your credibility and influence at the national level.
- **Invoke Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Processes:** The UPR process reviews the human rights records of United Nations member states. Engage with this process to highlight your issues and recommend actions, leveraging the international community's scrutiny to advocate for change.
- **Lobby for Implementation:** Even after treaties are ratified, advocacy is crucial to ensure their effective implementation. Lobby for the adoption of national legislation, policies, and measures that fulfill international commitments.
- **Educate and Mobilize Public Support:** Use international agreements as educational tools to raise awareness among the public about global standards and the government's commitments. Mobilized public opinion can exert pressure on policy-makers.

By strategically using international agreements, treaties, and frameworks, you can anchor your demands in globally recognized standards, making it harder for national governments or corporations to dismiss your calls for change. This approach not only bolsters the legitimacy of advocacy efforts but also aligns them with a broader global movement towards sustainable development, human rights protection, and environmental conservation.



International Sustainability, Freshwater Ecosystem Management, and Climate Change Agreements

- **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC):** As the primary international treaty on climate change, the UNFCCC commits states to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Its associated agreements, like the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement, are critical for setting emission reduction targets and adaptation strategies.
- **Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD):** This treaty aims to conserve biological diversity, promote sustainable use of its components, and ensure fair sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources. It's vital for protecting the rich biodiversity of the Mekong Region.
- **Ramsar Convention on Wetlands:** This international treaty promotes the conservation and wise use of wetlands. It's particularly relevant for the management and protection of the Mekong Delta and other wetland ecosystems in the region, which are crucial for biodiversity, flood management, and livelihoods.
- **UNESCO World Heritage Convention:** This convention aims to protect natural and cultural heritage sites of global significance. Several sites in the Mekong Region are designated under this convention, emphasizing the importance of sustainable management practices to preserve these areas.
- **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES):** CITES regulates international trade in endangered species, including many found in the Mekong Region, to ensure that such trade does not threaten their survival.
- **Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs):** This treaty aims to eliminate or restrict the production and use of persistent organic pollutants, which can accumulate in ecosystems and pose a risk to human health and the environment.
- **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:** While not a treaty, this global agenda includes the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), providing a broad framework for addressing economic, social, and environmental sustainability. SDGs related to clean water and sanitation (Goal 6), climate action (Goal 13), life below water (Goal 14), and life on land (Goal 15) are particularly pertinent to the Mekong Region.
- **Mekong River Commission (MRC):** Though not a global agreement, the MRC is a vital regional organization that facilitates cooperation between the governments of Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, and Viet Nam on the sustainable management of the Mekong River and its resources. China and Myanmar are dialogue partners.
- **ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution:** This agreement among ASEAN countries aims to prevent and reduce haze pollution from land and forest fires. It's relevant for ensuring air quality and reducing the impacts of fires on ecosystems and human health in the region.

Library for additional resources

- [Using evidence to influence policy: Oxfam's experience](#), combines insights from policy studies with specific case studies of Oxfam campaigns. It describes different ways to promote the uptake of research evidence in policy.
- [Prepare to act. Practical tips for climate advocacy and action](#) is produced by UNICEF for adolescents and young people to assist them in preparing for climate advocacy and taking practical action to raise awareness and bring about change.
- [Youth participation in events by contextual safeguarding](#) highlights the things you should keep in mind when inviting other young people to a public event.
- [Planning guide on how to hold a youth summit](#) is a step-by-step outline for what to do when planning a public youth summit.
- UNICEF's [Prepare to Act booklet](#) has many useful tips on how to engage with influencing policies and tactics to use in advocacy.
- Youth Service Bureau's [Social Media Resource Guide: Tips and Tools for Talking to Your Kids About Social Media](#) (2016).
- [Green and Prosperous blog](#) is a digital marketer's guide that provides some tips for harnessing social media for environmental advocacy.
- UNICEF's [Putting Together Your Advocacy Team](#) is a website that describes the key roles that make up most youth advocacy volunteer teams.

BUILDING YOUR VOLUNTEER ADVOCACY TEAM

When building your volunteer advocacy team, there are several key factors to consider in order to ensure effectiveness and impact.

- Firstly, diversity in skills and expertise are crucial; team members should bring a range of talents including policy analysis, community organizing, media relations, and scientific knowledge, allowing for a comprehensive approach to advocacy.
- Secondly, passion and commitment to environmental issues are essential for sustained motivation and resilience in the face of challenges.
- Thirdly, the ability to work collaboratively within a team and with external stakeholders, including communities, policymakers, and partners. This is vital for leveraging collective strengths and achieving common goals.
- Additionally, consider the importance of leadership qualities among team members to inspire and guide the team towards achieving its objectives.
- Finally, understanding the social, economic, and political context surrounding the environmental issue is necessary for crafting effective advocacy strategies and messages. A well-rounded team with a shared vision and diverse capabilities can significantly enhance the impact of environmental advocacy efforts.

Where to Start?

When building a volunteer youth advocacy team, start by identifying passionate and motivated young individuals with a shared interest in your issue. Places to look for recruiting your advocacy team may include the following:

- Start with your own circle of friends and your networks, including:
 - Your close friends and their friends
 - Students currently studying in your faculty
 - Other faculties of your university
 - Students from other universities
 - Youth associations and groups interested in issues similar to yours

Brainstorm who to invite to join your team.

Use the space below to do a quick brainstorm of who you can reach out to when recruiting your advocacy team members.

Write your answers here

How to Best Announce Your Recruitment Efforts

Youth groups trying to build their volunteer advocacy team should announce their recruitment efforts through a strategic mix of channels in order to maximize outreach and engagement. It is very important that you develop clear and compelling messages that highlight the purpose of the advocacy, the roles available, and the impact potential recruits can make.

Utilizing social media platforms, school and community bulletin boards, and local youth organizations or clubs can help reach a wide audience.

Additionally, partnering with educational institutions and leveraging word-of-mouth through existing network members can attract passionate individuals. The announcement should emphasize the benefits of joining the team, such as skill development, networking opportunities, and the chance to make a meaningful difference on issues important to the youth community.

In the context of your own country and local situation, brainstorm ways in which you can reach out to other youth, as well as adult and professional advisors who could join your team.

Write your answers here

Recruiting Advisors and Mentors to Your Youth Advocacy Team

Any youth advocacy group or campaign should aim to recruit adult advisors and mentors who can bring a mix of expertise, experience, and passion for environmental advocacy to the team. This includes professionals with backgrounds in environmental science, policy, law, and education, who can provide knowledge-based guidance and strategic advice.

Additionally, experienced activists or community organizers can offer insights into effective advocacy techniques and campaign strategies. It's also beneficial to include mentors skilled in media relations and digital communication to help amplify the group's message.

The ideal advisors and mentors should share a commitment to environmental causes and possess the ability to inspire and empower young advocates, providing both practical skills training and moral support to navigate the challenges of advocacy work. Their diverse expertise and experiences can significantly enhance the group's capacity for making impactful changes.

Think about the kind of advisors, coaches and mentors that you feel would give your youth advocacy team the right kind of professional advice to increase the effectiveness of your team's knowledge, skills and overall capacity, and ability to develop a successful advocacy campaign.

Brainstorm the kinds of outside advisors, experts and mentors that you think would strengthen your team and its ability to influence policy, public awareness and behavior.

If you have specific people in mind, list them down as well.

Write your answers here

Qualifications of Youth Members in Your Advocacy Team

For a strong environmental youth advocacy campaign team, new youth volunteers should possess a genuine passion for environmental issues and a willingness to learn and engage in advocacy work. Specific qualifications may vary depending on the campaign's goals. Desirable characteristics include strong communication skills, the ability to work collaboratively in a team, and the ability to initiate—as well as participate—in campaign activities. Some background knowledge of environmental science, policy, or related fields can be beneficial but not mandatory, as diverse perspectives and skills can enrich the campaign. Additionally, commitment to the campaign's mission and values, alongside the readiness to dedicate time and effort to its activities, is crucial for effective participation and contribution to the team's success.

Brainstorm the qualifications that you expect youth applicants to have when applying to your advocacy campaign team.

These qualifications should be included in both your recruitment announcement and your selection process.

Write your answers here

PLANNING YOUR ADVOCACY EVENT

Events and activities aimed at advocacy efforts can take many forms. Be sure to use your creativity and have fun when planning and carrying out an event or an activity. Make sure it is designed to achieve your aims and not stray too far from your main purpose.

Use the following questions to help you think through what you want to achieve with the event or activity, in the context of your overall environmental issue advocacy campaign.

1. What is the topic and/or theme that we want to organize the event or activity around?

Describe the topic/issue in some detail.

Write here

2. Who is the audience that we would be targeting with the event or activity?

Describe the target audience in terms of who they are (e.g. students, youth, teachers, working adults, business people, civil society organizations, general public, etc.), their interests and general relationship to the issues you want to address.

Write here

3. What is the purpose of the event or activity that we are organizing ? What do we hope to achieve? For example:

- Raising awareness or educating people more deeply about the issue(s)
- Taking visible action addressing the issue
- Sharing and exchanging ideas, perspectives, experiences, tools, etc.
- Gathering support from identified target group(s)
- Raising funds

4. Clearly list the objectives and outcomes you would like to see. What would we like participants / attendees to do during the event?

Objectives (What do you want the attendees to do during the event?)	Outcomes (What do you want to have as a result of this event?)

5. Brainstorm some event or activity ideas and rate their capacity to help achieve our stated purpose, objectives, outcomes and outputs.

(Examples: Exhibition or booth, public meeting, petition signing, march or rally, art/music, theater or other performance, conference, symposium, workshop, field trip, etc.)

[illegible]

6. Final event or activity decision

Write here

7. What type of venue or location is needed to organize this event or activity?

Describe the type of venue and/or location that you believe is appropriate to successfully carry out this event or activity.

Write here

8. What type of support do we need to successfully organize and conduct this event or activity?

Identify and describe the type of support you think you will need to carry out this event or activity, as well as ideas about where to find it / who to ask. (Examples: knowledge or expertise, equipment, decorations, volunteers, first aid, funding, food & drink, giveaways, etc.

Type of support we need	Where to find it / Who to ask

9. Who might we partner with in organizing and conducting this event or activity?

Brainstorm some potential partners to cooperate and/or collaborate with who can bring value to your event / activity, and identify what value they could contribute (e.g. expertise in something, more participants from their network, high media and/or public visibility to your event, in-kind equipment or other support, etc.)

[illegible]

10. Optimal Scheduling: What is the best date / time for our event or activity?

Discuss and identify the time of year, day of the week, and time of day for holding your event or activity so that you will get maximum participation and exposure. Briefly explain your rationale or reason.

Write here

11. What are our next steps?

Brainstorm what you think your next steps should be to push your event or activity forward to the end.

Write here

LEARNING WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING THROUGH ONLINE ADVOCACY

For a new youth environmental advocacy group, learning about the activities of other similar groups, particularly their online advocacy campaigns, is important for several reasons:

- Firstly, it offers valuable insights into effective strategies and tactics that resonate with audiences and can be adapted and applied to its own efforts.
- Secondly, understanding the successes and challenges faced by other groups helps in avoiding common problems. It can also enable the use of best practices to your advantage, thereby increasing the chances of making a meaningful impact.
- Thirdly, it provides opportunities for collaboration and networking, as groups with similar goals can join forces to amplify their message and reach a wider audience.
- Finally, studying the past and present activity of established campaigns can inspire innovation and creativity. It can help new groups to explore new ways of carrying out advocacy in a way that engages and mobilizes supporters effectively.

Overall, learning from the experiences of others enriches a group's campaign strategy, builds a sense of community among environmental advocates, and enhances the overall effectiveness of their advocacy efforts.

Below are a series of questions to help guide you and your advocacy team in exploring the Internet. These questions will help you identify what others—in other countries as well as your own—are doing, and determine what works or doesn't work in relation to environmental issue advocacy.

1. What are some online platforms/spaces that are doing environmental advocacy and running campaigns, particularly targeting youth? And what can we learn about our issues from them?

Spend about 30-45 minutes searching online about what others are doing in terms of raising awareness and engaging youth and young adults on environmental issues. Your search can be about issues that your group is focused on, as well as other environmental issues.

Use the space below to document the hashtags (#) you found that are most helpful, as well as any other relevant information you discovered regarding your issue, planned activities, and anything else.

Write here

2. From your online research of interesting youth advocacy groups and platforms, copy and paste some digital campaigns that you admire:

Insert links in the spaces below for reference.

3. Use the questions below to reflect on the online campaigns that you found:

What key features do we like in the online campaigns we found?

--

What do we feel are the benefits or advantages of the formats, styles and structures used in these online advocacy platforms, in relation to their intended audience?

--

What do we not like so much about the way the sites communicate their messages and try to engage the audience? What wouldn't work for us? (Explain why).

--

Are there any lessons learned that we can apply to our issue and campaign?

What changes would we need to make for something similar to work for our effort?

What are some actions that our team could adopt into our overall social media strategy to make our advocacy campaign posts more effective in engaging and impacting our target audience?

PLANNING FOR YOUR OWN DIGITAL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN

Part 1: Pre-Planning: Digital Advocacy Campaign Exercise

Instructions: With your advocacy team, conduct the following exercise to get your team ready to develop your own advocacy campaign.

- Review the list of questions below with your core advocacy team.
- Collaboratively discuss and answer each question to the best of your ability.
- Use this brainstorming session to generate initial ideas for taking your campaign online.
- These ideas will be invaluable for developing your Advocacy Event Activity Plan later.



1. What are some initial ideas that we have for engaging our target audience on social media?

Write your answers here

2. Some digital campaigns we admire are:

Insert links in the spaces below for reference.

3. Use the questions below to reflect on the online campaigns that you like:

What are the key features of the campaigns that you like?

What do you feel are the benefits or advantages of this structure for the viewer, as well as their approach in regards to advocating for their issue message?

What do you not necessarily like about the site and how they are communicating their message and engaging the viewer?

Are there any lessons learned for my/our issue or campaign?

Are there any lessons learned for my/our issue or campaign?

4. Based on the answers that you provided in the previous questions, develop some ideas regarding creating your own digital advocacy campaign:

Write your answers here

Part 2: Planning - Digital Advocacy Campaign Planning Template

Use the steps outlined below to help you and your team develop your digital advocacy campaign.

Step 1: Defining the Campaign

What is the primary goal of the campaign?

Who is the target audience?

What specific environmental issue are we addressing?

What message do we want to convey?

Step 2: Knowing Your Audience

What are the key demographics and interests of our target audience?

Which social media platforms and digital channels does our audience use most?

How can we make our message relatable and engaging for our audience?

Step 3: Developing Content Strategy

What type of content will we create (e.g., articles, videos, infographics)?

How often will we post content, what is the best time for posting, and on which platforms?

Who will create and manage the content?

Step 4: Utilizing the Online Social Media Tools

Which digital tools and technologies will we use to execute the campaign (e.g. Hootsuite, Buffer, Mailchimp) ?

Will we use any hashtags, keywords, or slogans to unify the campaign?

Step 5: Looking for Partnerships and Collaborations

Are there any influencers, organizations, or stakeholders we can partner with?

How can we leverage these partnerships to amplify our reach?

Step 6: Managing Risk

What potential challenges or risks might we face during the campaign?

How will we address negative feedback or misinformation?

Step 7: Monitoring and Evaluation

How will we measure the success of the campaign? What are the metrics that you will use to measure your campaign performance (e.g. engagement metrics, website traffic, viewing clicks, petition signatures)?

What tools will we use to track and analyze the campaign's performance?

How often will we review and adjust our strategy based on the data?

Step 8: Sustaining and moving forward with your social media campaign

How will we sustain engagement and momentum after the initial campaign?

Based on the analytics, what things from your current media strategy and approach would you consider revising and/or changing / adding?

What are our plans for follow-up actions or future campaigns?

TOOL: PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Press Release

Your name or the name of the campaign

Date: *Date of the event or activity*

Embargo: *The time and date that the information can be made public*

Headline: *Keep it short and sweet*

Paragraphs: *The first paragraph is crucial as it is the “hook” for the reader (especially a journalist) to want to write about this event or activity. Paragraphs 2 and 3 are used in order to expand on any newsworthy points. The fourth paragraph should then summarize the Who, What, Where, When, Why and How. Use quotes from respected people at the end, in order to communicate key points of the event or activity’s purpose to the reader.*

Add any additional info about your organization or group and links that are important

Contact Information: *Your contact information goes here—provide details of who to contact for more information*

UNDERSTANDING & ENGAGING WITH POLICY

Understanding the policies that affect your issue is fundamental to your education as an advocate. In fact, dreaming up new policies and replacing outdated ones could be one of your key aims. By improving your understanding of the policies that impact your issue, you will improve your advocacy efforts. Remember, a policy is a set of plans or methods that guide decisions for achieving a course of action.

Instructions:

Go through the following steps to identify the policy / policies impacting the issue that you care about. These instructions will also help you analyze and understand the best ways your advocacy efforts can be applied, in order to amend existing policies—or to influence new ones—that will support your cause.

Which policy / policies have obvious (direct) and not so obvious (indirect) implications and impacts on the issues and problems that you are working to address?

Step 1: Identify the policy or policies that directly impact the issue or problem you are addressing.

Use the table below to list the policy document name, and the relevant section and article that relate to your issue. Policies can be found through online research, your university handbook, or legislative documents. Utilize the document search function to find keywords that help identify the key sections and articles related to your issue.

Policy Document Name	Policy Section / Article & Page # (copy the section text as necessary)	Online / offline location (where to find the document)

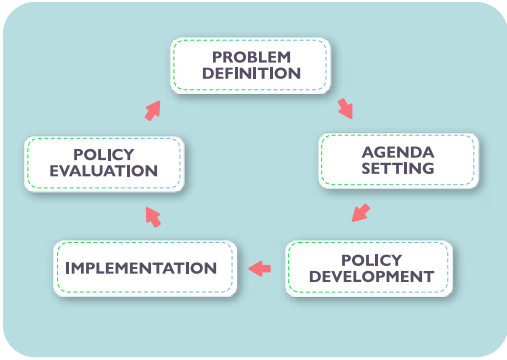
What new policy content and language would we like to change?

Step 2: Identify how you would change the existing policy to better support the goals and outcomes you are seeking for your issue. Start by considering a specific policy shift or change you would like to see. Based on the policy documents and the sections or articles identified in Step 1, draft new language for the sections you'd like to change to address your issue. Use the table below to organize your thoughts.

Ask yourself these questions to help you draft the new policy language:

- How effective is the existing policy?
- What is missing from your policy research? What do you need to research and find out?
- Is there any similar policy somewhere else i.e. from another country or another organization that we can compare to and learn from.

[illegible]



What do you need to do to influence the policy development or policy revision process?

As a youth advocacy team, the most effective place to intervene and make changes in a policy is during the policy evaluation and problem definition stages. To influence the policy, ask yourself the following questions:

- Who is in charge of the policy development process and who influences the policy makers?
- What is motivating policy development at the level you are targeting (national, provincial, district, community, organization, etc.)?
- Where in the policy development process can you have the most impact and what do you need to do to influence the process?

Step 3: Map out the policy development process you want to influence. Brainstorm with your team to identify actions you and your group can take now or in the near future that would have a chance to influence these policies directly related to the issue and problem you want to address.

Policy Document Name	Policy cycle stage to intervene in (i.e. policy evaluation stage, problem definition stage, etc.)	What do you need to do to influence the policy development or policy revision process?

DEVELOPING YOUR ADVOCACY PITCH

An advocacy pitch is a concise and persuasive presentation designed to gain support, influence opinion, or prompt action on a specific issue or cause. It highlights the importance of the issue, the desired change, and how the audience can contribute to making that change happen.

How do you write an advocacy pitch?

Follow these 6 steps to create a concise, strong advocacy message for any audience.

1. Open with a statement that engages your audience.
2. Present the problem.
3. Provide facts and data about the problem.
4. Share a story or give an example of the problem.
5. Connect the issue to the audience's values, concerns, or self-interest.
6. Make your request (the "ask").

1. Develop your opening statement that engages your audience.

Make a statement that gets your audience's attention right away, perhaps by using a dramatic fact. This is your lead-in and should be only a sentence or two.

Example: "Did you know that every minute, the amount of sunlight that strikes the Earth could meet the world's energy needs for an entire year? This fact underscores the untapped potential of renewable energy, which we feel is crucial for the sustainable future of our own country."

Write here

2. Present the problem.

Describe the problem, who it affects, and its impact.

Example: “Climate change is starting to hit the poor and marginalized rural communities in our country the hardest, wrecking their crops, homes, and lives with extreme weather. And yet, they still do not have electricity in their villages, and certainly are not contributing to climate change themselves.”

Write here

3. Provide facts and data about the problem.

Data is important to demonstrate that a problem exists and to support your position. Look for facts that are relevant to your audience.

Example: “According to a recent UNDP climate-related disaster report, Southeast Asia has experienced a significant rise in extreme weather events like typhoons and floods. These destroy homes and farmland with increasing frequency and severity, in particular affecting rural areas where people depend on agriculture for their livelihoods.”

Write here

4. Share a story or give an example of the problem.

An example or story puts a human face on the issue and makes it real and more compelling. Again, make sure the example is relevant to your audience—for instance, it could be the experience of a family losing their home to a landslide caused by extreme rains in the same district as your audience.

Example: “In our own district, the Sok family lost their home to a devastating landslide caused by extreme rains last year. They have since struggled to find stable shelter and rebuild their lives, facing uncertainty and hardship every day.”

Write here

5. Connect the issue to the audience’s values, concerns, or self-interest.

Show your audience how this issue fits with what they care about, want or need. Learn what you can about the person. For example, is the person you are meeting an opponent of dam building, or a champion of social issues?

Example: “We understand your commitment to safeguarding our community and promoting sustainable development. Our focus on renewable energy directly aligns with your goals of reducing environmental risks and fostering resilience in vulnerable areas.”

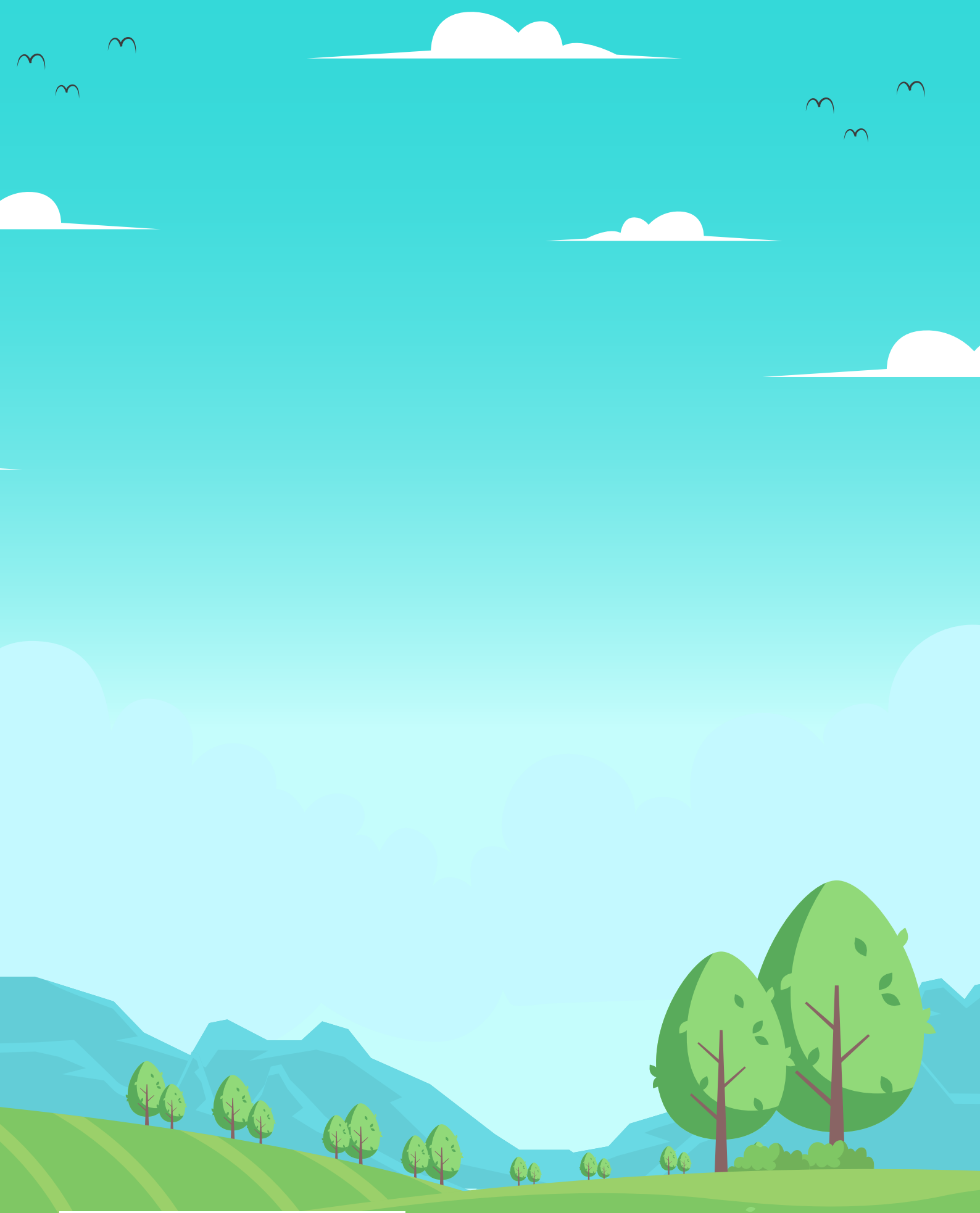
Write here

6. Make your request (the “ask”).

Clearly state what you want the person to do.

Example: “We urge you to support and implement policies that prioritize the transition to renewable energy sources, ensuring funding and resources are directed towards sustainable projects that benefit both the environment and marginalized communities.”

Write here



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world for the benefit of people
and wildlife.

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