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WELCOME TO THE ECO LEADERS GUIDE!

Over the next few pages, you'll find all the activity guides, aids, tests/quizzes, worksheets, and templates for **'Chapter 5: Implementing Your Advocacy Campaign and Influencing People'** from the Eco Leaders Guide. Use the hyperlinks below to quickly access the specific resource you need.

CHAPTER 5: Implementing Your Advocacy Campaign and Influencing People

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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:

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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)

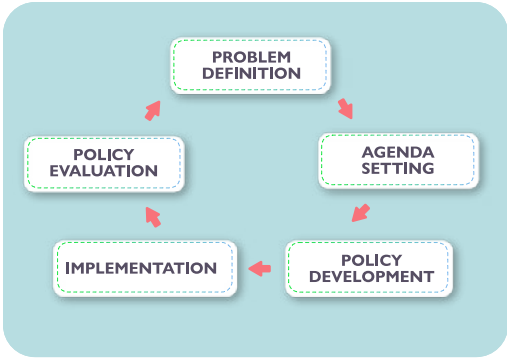
What new policy content and language would we like to change?

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.”

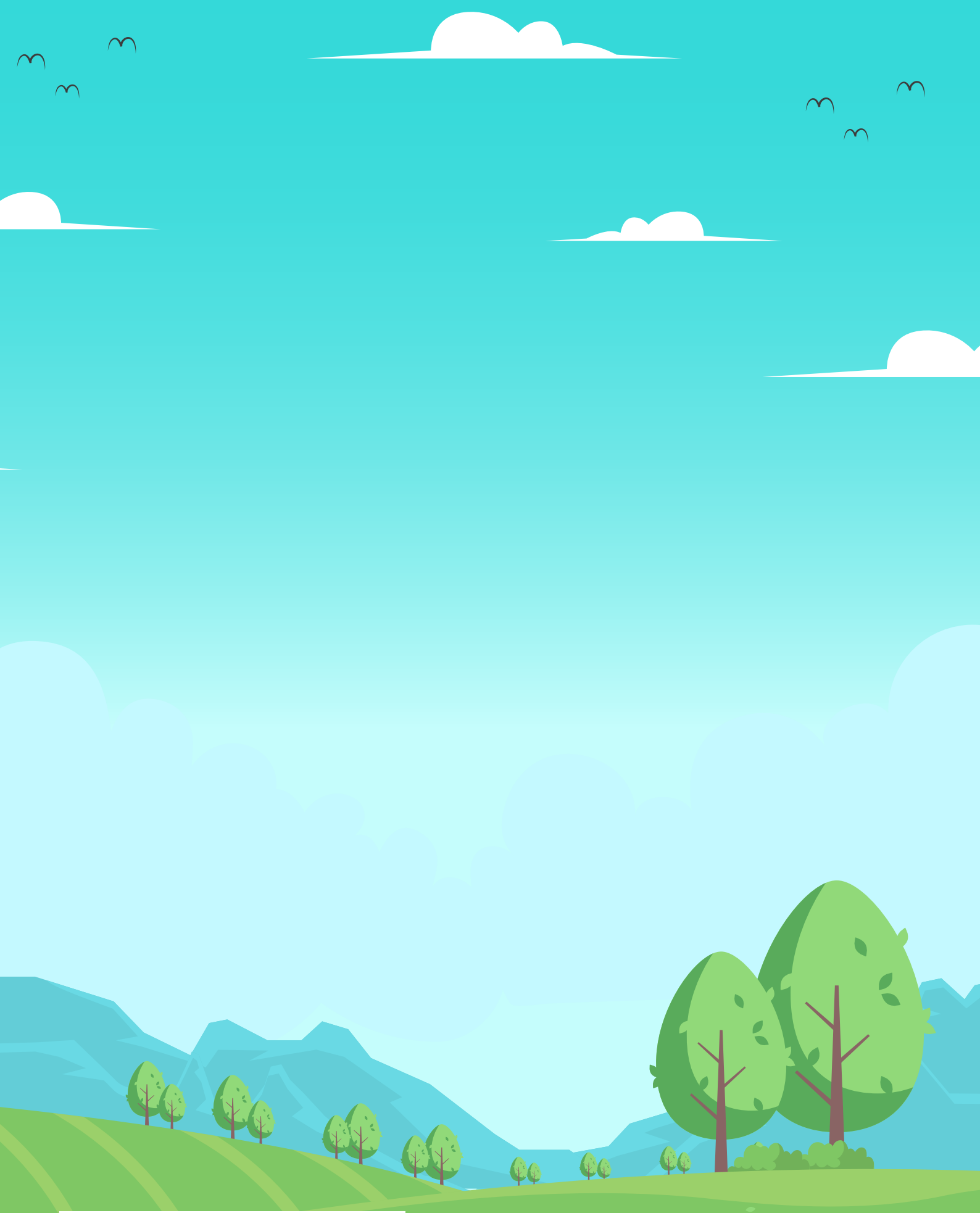
Write here

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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