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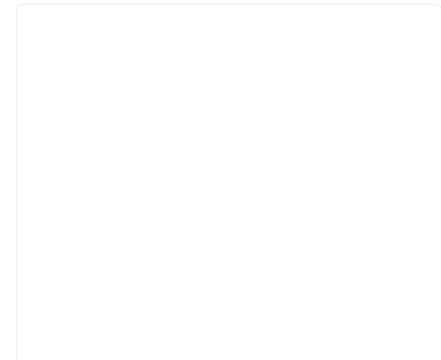
Earth Action: Support Global Climate Literacy



By [Gemma Alexander](#)

MAY 6, 2022

[climate literacy](#), [earth action](#)

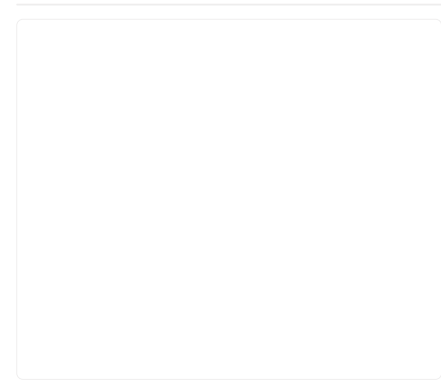


What Do You Think?

Would you give or accept a lab-grown diamond as an engagement ring?

- Yes
- Maybe
- No
- No opinion

NEXT



Taking action for the Earth shouldn't be limited to Earth Day. So Earth911 is honoring the 52 years that Earth Day has been inspiring action with **52 Actions for the Earth**. The Earth Day theme this year is **investing in the planet**. Each week from Earth Day 2022 to Earth Day 2023, we will share an action you can take to invest in the Earth and make your own life more sustainable.

This week, you can invest in the Earth by supporting global climate literacy.

Climate Literacy

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To halt climate change, we need a global shift to a green economy. That kind of change requires significant action from individuals, governments, and businesses. But people don't act for change when they don't understand the problem, and right now, scientists seem to be the only ones who really understand the essential principles of Earth's climate system. Too many of us don't even meet the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce) **standard for basic climate literacy**: understanding your influence on climate and climate's influence on you and your society.

Just as the industrial revolution prompted the establishment of a public education system and the space race spurred a focus on STEM, **climate literacy** is a prerequisite for a green economy. That's why EarthDay.org is campaigning for **universal climate education**. As part of their STEM education, every student in every school in the world should receive fully integrated, assessed climate and environmental education with a strong civic engagement component.

Climate Illiterate

This is far from the case right now. In the U.S., K-12 **curriculum standards** are determined at the state level. Twenty-nine states and Washington, D.C., have state science standards that include human-caused climate change. Fifteen states require climate change but don't specify its cause. Five states only require including climate change in elective high school science courses. Pennsylvania's standards do not address climate change at all. This lack of education means that only **60% of Americans** understand that climate change is a major threat.

Across 33 African countries, climate change literacy varies substantially, but the knowledge level appears to be slightly higher than in the U.S. Overall, **71% of Africans** say climate change needs to be stopped and 51% feel they can do something to help. **Across Europe**, 47% of people view climate change as the biggest challenge, but there's some indication that nearly that many believe it's too late to make a difference. Meanwhile, in China nearly three-quarters of Chinese people consider climate change a major threat. Even more – nearly 80% – confidently believe that climate change can be reversed.

Action: Tell Global Leaders to Commit to Climate and Environmental Education

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COP27

It seems like [COP26](#) in Glasgow just wrapped up, but it's not too early to prepare for COP27. Governments will meet at the Conference of the Parties (COP27) in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in November for further discussion of actions to meet the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

EarthDay.org will submit a letter to the executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Patricia Espinosa requesting the Paris Agreement signatory governments to give climate literacy the same importance as any other key subject. To that end, they request governments to make climate education:

- compulsory,
- assessed,
- linked to civic engagement,
- and integrated into the standard curriculum for all K-12 students.

Act now: [Sign the letter.](#)

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By [Gemma Alexander](#)

Gemma Alexander has an M.S. in urban horticulture and a backyard filled with native plants. After working in a genetics laboratory and at a landfill, she now writes about the environment, the arts and family. See more of her writing [here](#).

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