
By Students From The Overseas School of Colombo

Global Climate Strike 2019

Changing Together

27th September, 2019

September 20th - 27th 2019 are the official dates Greta Thunberg announced as the global dates for the youth to protest against climate change, strategically timed around the UN climate action summit. The message we are trying to voice is the fact that this is our future and world leaders willingly choose to ignore the long term consequences of their economic choices. Now is the time to take matters into our own hands and take action! We demand more action from our government, thus we must practice what we preach and start by making better choices in our daily lives.

The Overseas School of Colombo Must Become More Sustainable!

The following pledge acts as a **moral contract** for those who wish to take action and raise awareness about climate change. By signing this pledge, you are agreeing to follow its terms to help improve the current global situation by changing your actions. If we all come together and make a change, we can improve our future, so let's be sincere about what you're agreeing to.

This pledge has no legal significance, **but we expect you to do what you can to reduce your contribution towards climate change if you sign it. THIS IS OUR FUTURE, THE FUTURE OF UPCOMING GENERATIONS, AND THE FUTURE OF ENTIRE ECOSYSTEMS.** We've wasted enough time merely talking about the problem, now is the time to act!

As Greta Thunberg said "*For way too long, the politicians and the people in power have gotten away with not doing anything at all to fight the climate crisis and the ecological crisis. We need to get angry and understand what is at stake. And then we need to transform that anger into action and to stand together united and just never give up.*"

PLEDGE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. Regulate Air Conditioner Temperatures In Every Classroom.

Air conditioners consume **huge** amounts of energy. Never have A/C temperatures **lower** than 20°C. If you notice an AC is lower than 20°C, tell the teacher to turn it up! Don't rely on the teachers to do this, it's your responsibility as well. Additionally, only start using it **after break** - it's cool enough in the morning to work without A/Cs.

2. Reduce Your Consumption Of Products Containing Palm Oil

Palm oil is used in nearly all processed food and hygiene items, from shampoo and toothpaste to Nutella, chips and bread! Rainforests are being burnt and cut down for oil palm plantations, **driving animals like orangutans to extinction** and **releasing huge amounts of carbon dioxide** into the atmosphere. Organisations such as **Nestlé, Unilever and Ferrero** are responsible for much of the deforestation. By buying products containing palm oil, you contribute to deforestation!

3. Switch Off ACs, Lights and Fans When You Leave the Room!

Be **responsible!** If you see a room that is currently not in use, switch off any fans, A/Cs or lights. Do not be afraid, but be proud, to stand up for what you know is right. Be proactive and be a leader for tomorrow!

4. Switch to Electronic Documents

When it's not necessary to print documents, **demand** that teachers give you **electronic copies** in order to save paper. Forests are among the world's most important carbon sinks, and deforestation results in huge amounts of carbon being released into the atmosphere. The usage of paper is contributing to this. **Stop using paper to reduce deforestation!** This will ensure that carbon can continue to be absorbed by the world's forests.

5. Reconsider Before Using Plastics That You Will Not Reuse

Even though you throw away your plastic it is not actually gone. **Sri Lanka** is one of the ten countries worldwide that contribute to **2/3 of plastic disposed into the ocean**. Be sure

to bring and use **reusable water bottles**. **Say NO to plastic utensils**. Plastic is made from petroleum products making it deadly to our planet. It is silly to use plastic when there are equally convenient and sustainable alternatives!

6. Carpool, Use the School Bus, or Walk/ Cycle to School

Private transport is detrimental to climate change, as huge amounts of greenhouse gases are emitted that warm our atmosphere. **Transportation contributes to nearly a third of greenhouse gas emissions** in the US. It may seem inconvenient to meet at a certain point to drive to school with another family, but it produces only half of the emissions! **Using the bus** is another great way to reduce emissions, but **cycling or walking are the best options**. If you want to **significantly reduce your emissions, this point should have high priority!**

7. Advocate for Climate Change on Social Media

The best thing we can do to have a big impact is to **share the message**. Share this pledge, your thoughts about the issue, and ways others can have an impact, **with as many people as you can!** The more people know about this, the more likely it is that we will improve our future.

ADMINISTRATION SPECIFIC

Let's encourage our school administration to do their part.

1. Advocate for the Environment during Advisory and at Other Times

Most adult world leaders **do not put enough effort into tackling climate change**, but hopefully we can trust you to make this topic a priority of your actions and conversations. Ensure the **youth** is not only educated about the problem, but also about what they can do, and tell them why this is a **crucial topic** for everyone.

2. Meat-free Thursday in the Canteen

Meat production is a **huge contributor to both deforestation and climate change**. Vegetarian food provides all the nutrients necessary for a healthy life. Do not be selfish and **eat responsibly**. A meat-free Thursday must be implemented in order to reduce the school's contribution toward climate change. **The school should not promote meat items when there are suitable alternatives.**

3. Introduce Compulsory Carbon Tax for SAISA Flights

Considering OSC is trying to be a sustainable school, it is ironic that several times a year, many of us fly great distances for just three days of sport or music. These **flights emit huge amounts of carbon dioxide**, exponentially higher than any other mode of transport. It is **ludicrous** that we are doing this without applying an affordable and very simple way to compensate for these emissions - the **carbon tax**. For example, a flight to Muscat and back costs on average **€400 for 12 people** (two coaches and a 10-person team) via the carbon tax organisation [atmosfair](#). This is an **insignificant cost for each participant**. Please **enforce a carbon tax for every SAISA flight**.

4. Reduce the Production of Unnecessary Athletic SAISA Kits

Instead of buying and producing a new SAISA kit every year which is made out of polyester, the sports department should have kits for each sport that are **borrowed by the students for each tournament**. The production of polyester uses **harmful chemicals** that if untreated when disposed, can cause **significant environmental damage**. Please realize that we must **stop acting irresponsibly** when **logical sustainable alternatives are available**.

I, agree to the terms and conditions stated above, will abide to them to the best of my abilities and do my best to reduce my personal contribution to the current climate crisis as a member of the Overseas School community.

DATE:

SIGNATURE:
