

Arab Youth Toolkits: Action Steps for a Sustainable Lifestyle

- Conscious Consumerism



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INTRODUCTION

We are at a historic tipping point in our history in regards to consumerism and climate change. For the last two centuries, we have sought convenience and speed over all else, often leaving incalculable damage to our homes and communities that future generations will be forced to rectify. We consume water faster than can be replenished from underground aquifers; we burn hydrocarbons as global supplies dwindle and global temperatures rise; we raise animals in factories and pump them full of drugs to optimize price over flavor or customs; and we eat antiquated diets that inefficiently use the plants and animals we cultivate. Then when we have finished consuming something, we permanently dispose of it rather than try and reuse its components.

But no longer. The youth of today are leading a global transformation to make our economies more sustainable and our consumption more conscientious. This is broadly captured by the environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) movement, which seeks to pair responsibility with corporate and government investing.

Of these three key pillars, the one which individual consumers can influence the most is the first: environmental. There are dozens of lifestyle choices, cultural routines, and other habits that must be altered if we are to protect our planet's future. In addition, there are key social changes we can assist with that will symbiotically make the environment stronger. Ironically, many viable solutions are deeply rooted in the lifestyles of our elders and ancestors.

The Industrial Revolution has made us arrogant in our recent dominion over nature. However, we should not think that we are entirely regressing either: greater global connectivity has made us far more compassionate and empathetic than our forebears, especially in regards to inclusivity and work-life balance.

In this toolkit, we seek to offer the youth practical ways to become more sustainable consumers as well as inspire others to follow suit. We attempt to provide both relevant content for individuals as well as suggestions for local leaders or activists to implement small scale projects, with particular relevance to the Middle East and North Africa.

We zoom in on six particular areas where consumers can improve their consumption patterns: water usage, food intake, shopping, housing, travel, and waste management. We provide checklists with explanations for why new habits should be considered, as well as pilot programs that see these habit changes in action. We then shift the content to help community organizers, first by understanding and empathizing with different perspectives. Then we suggest how to encourage local population behavior changes, such as through public relations campaigns.

We are confident that the youth of today, who have proven themselves to be the most capable generation yet, will rise to the challenges that climate change is bringing to our daily lives. Conscious consumerism is a key step on our path to a sustainable future.

THE YOUTH OF TODAY ARE LEADING A GLOBAL TRANSFORMATION TO MAKE OUR ECONOMIES MORE SUSTAINABLE AND OUR CONSUMPTION MORE CONSCIENTIOUS



UNDERSTANDING "CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM"

Before we can dive into the nuances of sustainable living, we need to agree on some basic definitions. If some of these concepts don't feel directly related, hang tight: we'll connect all the dots.

■ **Consumerism:**

A preoccupation of society towards the acquisition of consumer goods.¹

Example: buying the latest iPhone model every year.

■ **Conscious Consumerism**, also known as ethical consumerism or green consumerism: consumers deliberately make purchasing decisions they believe have a positive social, economic, and environmental impact. In short, it means living and shopping with sustainability in mind.²

Example: buying earth-friendly products or eliminating single use plastics



■ **Environmental, Social, and Governance criteria** also known as sustainable investing, responsible investing, impact investing, or socially responsible investing: a set of standards for a company's behavior used by socially conscious investors to screen potential investments. Environmental criteria consider how a company safeguards the environment, including corporate policies addressing climate change, for example. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers, and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls, and shareholder rights.³



■ **Fast fashion:** inexpensive clothing produced rapidly by mass-market retailers in response to the latest trends. Allows mainstream consumers to purchase the latest trends or the next big thing at an affordable price.⁴

Example: H&M or Zara

■ **Recycling:** the process of collecting and processing materials that would otherwise be thrown away as trash and turning them into new products.⁵

Example:⁶ breaking down paper to be converted into new products, including (Figure).

■ **Upcycling:** The act of taking something no longer in use and giving it a second life and new function. In doing so, the finished product often becomes more practical, valuable and beautiful than what it previously was.⁷

Example: turning old chairs into a new park bench⁸



■ **Circular economy:** markets that give incentives to reusing products, rather than scrapping them and then extracting new resources. In such an economy, all forms of waste, such as clothes, scrap metal and obsolete electronics, are returned to the economy or used more efficiently. This can provide a way to not only protect the environment, but use natural resources more wisely, develop new sectors, create jobs and develop new capabilities.⁹

Example: repairing worn out smartphone components instead of purchasing a new phone

■ **Consumer debt:** personal financial obligations owed as a result of purchasing goods that are used for individual or household consumption.¹⁰

Example: Credit card debt, student loans, auto loans, mortgages, and payday loans

■ **Targeted advertising:** a form of online advertising that focuses on the specific traits, interests, and preferences of a consumer. Advertisers discover this information by tracking their activity on the internet.¹¹

Example: social media or YouTube ads

■ **Planned obsolescence:** a strategy of deliberately ensuring that the current version of a given product will become out of date or useless within a known time period. This proactive move guarantees that consumers will seek replacements in the future, thus bolstering demand.¹²

Example: Annual new iPhone models with limited updates

1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consumerism>

2. <https://agood.com/blogs/stories/conscious-consumerism---text-Conscious%20consumerism%20C%20sometimes%20called%20ethical%20shopping%20with%20sustainability%20in%20mind>

3. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/e/environmental-social-and-governance-esg-criteria.asp>

4. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/f/fast-fashion.asp>

5. <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/recycling-basics>

6. <https://www.maine.gov/dep/waste/recycle/whatrecyclablesbecome.html>

7. <https://www.habitat.org/stories/what-is-upcycling>

8. <https://resources.peppicorecycling.com/resources/lesson-plan-upcycling-competition/>

9. <https://unctad.org/topic/trade-and-environment/circular-economy>

10. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/consumer-debt.asp>

11. <https://edu.gcglobal.org/en/thenow/what-is-targeted-advertising/>

12. https://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/planned_obsolescence.asp

WHAT IS CONSUMERISM AND WHY IS IT NOT SOCIALLY OR ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE?

We are constantly bombarded with advertisements trying to entice us to buy the latest gadget or clothing trend. Brands spend billions trying to subtly (or overtly) influence our purchasing behavior in their favor. Stores are literally designed to maximize unplanned additional purchases.

We live in an age of peak consumerism. We see new brands of food at the grocery store every single week. We replace five-year-old furniture with brand new sets we see at a shopping mall. We get too busy to make dinner and have a meal quickly delivered encased in multiple layers of disposable plastic. We make sure we wear the same clothing brands as our favorite celebrities or wealthier friends we admire. We fill an entire wall of our home with a giant TV, when our grandparents lived in the same room decades ago with a screen smaller than the average laptop today. Nothing we own feels permanent; we continually upgrade and dispose.

But, "what's the big deal?" you ask. You likely work hard every day to earn money for this exact purpose: you can afford to buy a new phone each year, or go on shopping sprees every few months, or drive yourself to work in a new car and pay for parking each day.

IT'S A LOSE-LOSE SCENARIO FOR BOTH OURSELVES AND THE PLANET.

Such spending perks are pervasive across middle and upper class consumers regardless of nationality. Modern consumer products make your life more comfortable and convenient, right? It's your money, your decision, right?

The problem is, these hyper-consumer-centric behaviors - however culturally acceptable and even admired - are terrible for the environment and for society. And ultimately, consumerism actually wastes your money while causing you long-term mental health problems. It's seemingly short term gains, but at a huge long-term loss. It's a lose-lose scenario for both ourselves and the planet.

So, the question we need to ask ourselves more often is: do we really need all these things? Why do we base our happiness on the amount of stuff we possess, or how our stuff compares to someone else's stuff?

A study published in the Journal of Industrial Ecology demonstrates how the products we consume are responsible for up to 60% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions and between 50 and 80% of material, land, and water usage.³

In other words, the stuff we buy—alone—is responsible for most of the climate change we can see happening today. On top of this, many factories and farms churning out these emissions are abandoning social responsibility in the process, complicating our transition to sustainable solutions.

THE STUFF WE BUY—ALONE— IS RESPONSIBLE FOR MOST OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE WE CAN SEE HAPPENING TODAY.

The same study also found that around 80% of the environmental impact of consumerism isn't a result of direct behaviors, such as taking long showers or driving carbon fueled cars.

Instead, it's the result of the entire manufacturing process that brings you your favorite steak, the newest smartphone, or the latest trend.

That means a majority of our carbon footprint can be attributed to our consumption habits. Globally, the average carbon footprint is closer to 4 tons per person, per year, according to the Nature Conservancy. To have the best chance of avoiding a 2°C rise in global temperatures, the average global carbon footprint per person per year needs to drop to under 2 tons by 2050.¹⁴

³ <https://simplish.co/blog/what-is-conscious-consumerism>

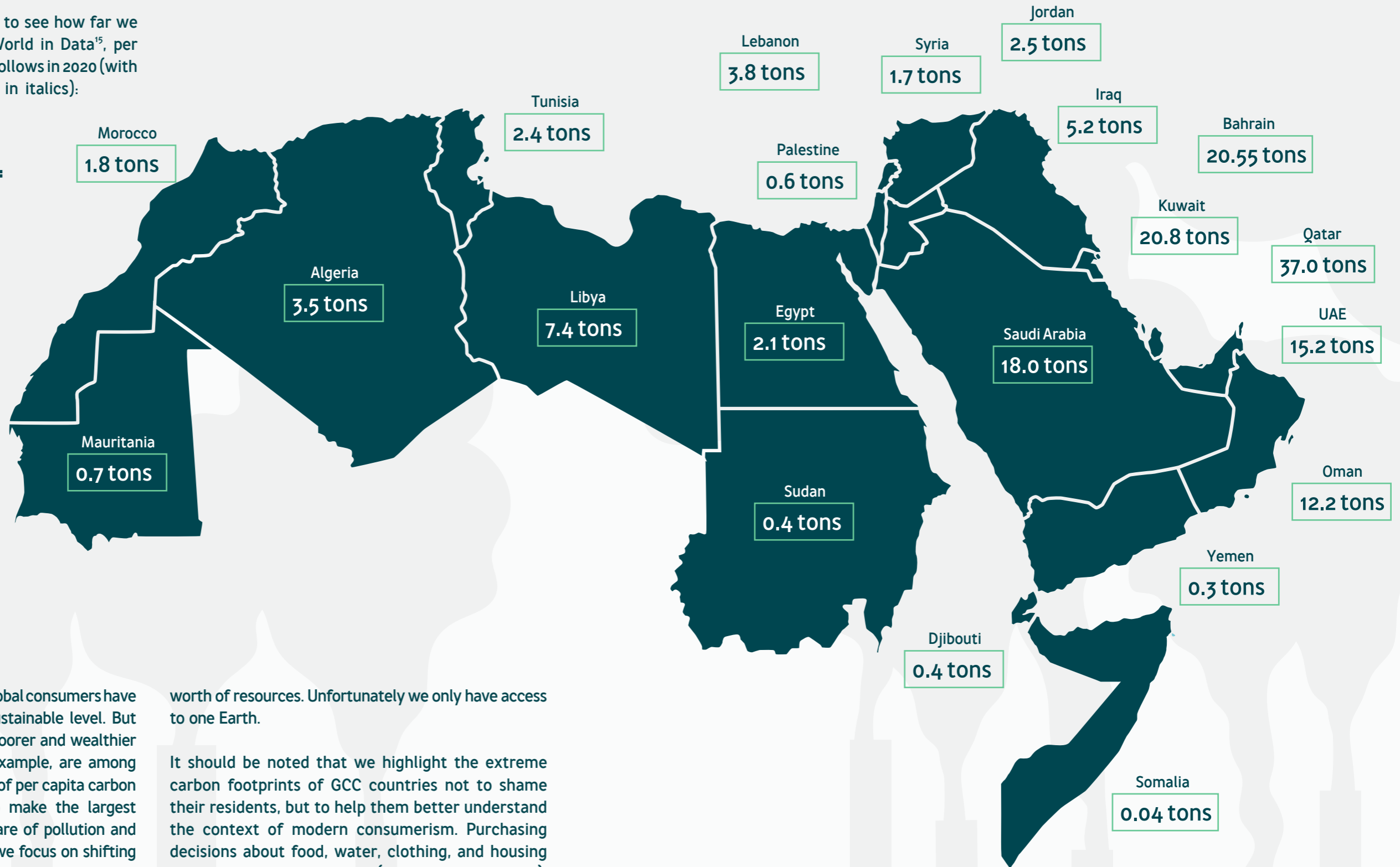
¹⁴ <https://www.nature.org/en-us/get-involved/how-to-help/carbon-footprint-calculator/#--text=Globally%2C%20the%20average%20carbon%20footprint%20does%20happen%20overnight>



Let's zoom in on the Arab World to see how far we need to go. According to Our World in Data¹⁵, per capita carbon emissions were as follows in 2020 (with some international benchmarks in italics):

International benchmarks:

- Nigeria: 0.6 tons
- North Korea: 1.1 tons
- Brazil: 2.2 tons
- France: 4.2 tons
- China: 7.4 tons
- Singapore: 7.8 tons
- USA: 14.0.2 tons



As we can see, a rising majority of global consumers have carbon footprints far beyond a sustainable level. But there is much disparity between poorer and wealthier nations. The Gulf countries, for example, are among the highest on the planet in terms of per capita carbon footprint, meaning they need to make the largest adjustments. In fact, the lion's share of pollution and social concerns can be averted if we focus on shifting habits in middle and upper class communities. Billions of consumers in more humble circumstances also have a role to play, and absolutely are capable of implementing many of the ideas and policies outlined in this toolkit, but they usually have less flexibility in terms of basic needs. Meanwhile, if everyone consumed like the average resident of the GCC, we would need over five Earth's

worth of resources. Unfortunately we only have access to one Earth.

It should be noted that we highlight the extreme carbon footprints of GCC countries not to shame their residents, but to help them better understand the context of modern consumerism. Purchasing decisions about food, water, clothing, and housing are often taken for granted (beyond price at least), and people might not realize the problematic consequences of their choices. The GCC is also full of government and corporate leaders, youth activists, and entrepreneurs who are finding innovative solutions to implement ESG investment criteria - we just need to help them spread the word!

¹⁵<https://ourworldindata.org/co2/country/egypt><https://ourworldindata.org/co2/country/egypt>

WHAT IS CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM?

IN A NUTSHELL, CONSCIOUS CONSUMERISM IS INTENTIONAL AND SUSTAINABLE

In a nutshell, conscious consumerism is intentional and sustainable. It means shifting our purchasing habits from immediate convenience and price to durability, responsibility, and resource usage. A socially or environmentally conscious consumer will think whether consumption is necessary, then once they decide to buy, they look at who is providing the product and how the product impacts each environment touched in its creation and delivery.

This is not a niche belief system: Nielsen estimates that **73%** of global consumers would "definitely or probably" change their consumption behavior to reduce their impact on the environment - and that number is only growing.¹⁶

Consuming the world in this way has numerous benefits, including:

- Reducing our individual and collective consumption habits
- Accelerating important environmental practices like recycling
- Possessing higher quality products
- Preventing exploitation of underage labor in less developed markets
- Improved health and mental wellbeing
- Humane treatment of animals
- Less deaths from preventable causes like air pollution
- More beautiful cities and communities

Perhaps you think this is a passing fad, with no chance for consumer habits to change nationally or globally. But we see time and time again that consumers willingly change when opportunities arise. For example, the majority of vehicles sold in Norway today are electric, a feat that was unheard of even 10 years ago. Before 2013, only 20% of S&P 500 companies (an index of the largest publicly-traded companies in the US) chose to disclose their ESG information; however, in 2019, that number was up to 90%.¹⁷ Twenty years ago, organic farming was a niche industry with \$3.6 billion in sales; by 2019, organic food and livestock sales had surpassed \$50 billion.

There are some issues with conscious consumerism as well, including:

- Sustainable products are often more expensive than their regular counterparts, making the transition more difficult (or even impossible) for poorer consumers
- Many communities do not have access to more sustainable products, making rollout and distribution uneven
- Changing spending patterns will disrupt large portions of the economy, which will cause unemployment friction while businesses adjust

Each of these issues is solvable, with the right vision and investments. Conscious consumerism is here to stay, and it is up to each of us to contribute to a carbon neutral future.



¹⁶ <https://nielseniq.com/global/en/insights/analysis/2019/a-natural-rise-in-sustainability-around-the-world/>

¹⁷ <https://growensemble.com/conscious-consumerism/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Does conscious consumerism mean lowering your standards or living or quality of life?

No. On one extreme, conscious consumerism can actually help lift people out of poverty by providing better quality products as well as more resilient and diverse local economies. On the other extreme, excessive luxuries such as gas-guzzling cars and boats or sprawling mansions that require constant maintenance will need to be replaced with socially and environmentally responsible alternatives. These items can be kept, but must not damage the planet anymore in doing so.

Obviously, most of humanity is not part of an economic extreme, and exists somewhere in the middle. In these cases, conscious consumerism will absolutely raise the quality of life, from the food we eat to our homes to our commutes to our mental and physical health. But certain habit changes will be necessary in the short term.

Does conscious consumerism simply mean buying products that are "greener"?

Unfortunately, no. Many companies untruthfully slap a label on their products claiming they are environmentally or socially friendly, when their supply chains are anything but. Additional research in the short term is essential, at least until these companies are forced to genuinely transition to sustainable alternatives – or are forced into bankruptcy and leave the market.

Does conscious consumerism mean ignoring or rejecting new technologies?

No. In fact, the global economic transition to carbon neutrality will require us to be more innovative and technologically efficient than ever before.

Does conscious consumerism mean less jobs for people who are in need?

Like most new technologies, conscious consumerism will shift the job market, rather than eliminate a percentage of jobs. Yes, fast fashion companies like H&M will likely hire less workers in their factories in developing countries like Ethiopia and Bangladesh. They will likely hire less retail workers in developed markets once people stop buying new clothes as frequently.

However, those antiquated positions will be replaced by new ones, such as in reuse and remanufacturing sectors or in the production of high-quality tailored goods. As a recent World Business Council on Sustainable Development report outlines, there are great payoffs and job creation potential in advancing sustainable consumption habits, especially in redesigning our economy to be less wasteful and more circular including in green buildings, food, transportation and education.



HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

A balance needs to be struck that allows both a high quality of life while not permanently damaging the environment or societal fabric. For much of the Arab World, this transition will happen in step with economic development.

However, it should be noted from the outset that all Arab countries can still maintain most of their primary value propositions – trade, aviation, finance, hospitality, tourism, fledgling technology sectors – while still promoting conscious consumerism. There are many low hanging fruits such as the nonexistent recycling sector, which has ample room for innovation and job creation. Restaurants and hotels and offices can follow the example of other countries in remaining profitable while eliminating single-use plastics. Food will taste more delicious as we demand a wider variety of ethical ingredients. Aviation and banking and tourism will continue to thrive even as jets change to sustainable fuels. Countries will continue to need convenient maritime ports to restock and re-export. Retail fashion will

become more dynamic than ever before as products are finished locally instead of imported from a questionable foreign factory.

In fact, shifting to conscious consumption is a wonderful opportunity to showcase the best the Arab World has to offer. Arab architecture is naturally more energy efficient than generic globalized architecture, and will be vital to prepare the region for a warmer future. Arab fashions are more timeless and do not need to be replaced as often as other clothing trends. How Arab countries overcome the challenges of their extreme environments will make them lodestars for other nations beginning to face aridification. Arab leaders' forward thinking with work life balance will naturally help residents switch to more sustainable habits as they become less hurried. Above all, the Arab World is home to some of the globe's most legendary melting pots – Beirut, Dubai, Cairo, and Casablanca to name a few – which will continue to bring together a variety of cuisines, religions, ideas and the like.



HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

FOOD CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR FOOD CONSUMPTION:

PRACTICE

1 Buy fruits and vegetables (and other foods) produced locally where possible, and purchase from regional destinations over faraway global ones as the next best alternative – even if the price is higher or the quality appears lower. **For example:**

- Buying tomatoes and spinach grown in the UAE instead of Australia
- Buying strawberries from Egypt instead of the US
- Only buy fruits and vegetables that are in season, which makes it easier to focus on what local farmers have available.

EXPLANATION

Every imported food item requires tons of pollution in the forms of truck exhaust, container ship fuel, additional pesticide coatings, and more. Cutting down these emissions is essential to fight climate change.

Plus, it bolsters the local economy which keeps money circulating within the region instead of adding to a multinational corporation's quarterly profits.

This visual calendar helps you know what produce is in season.¹⁸



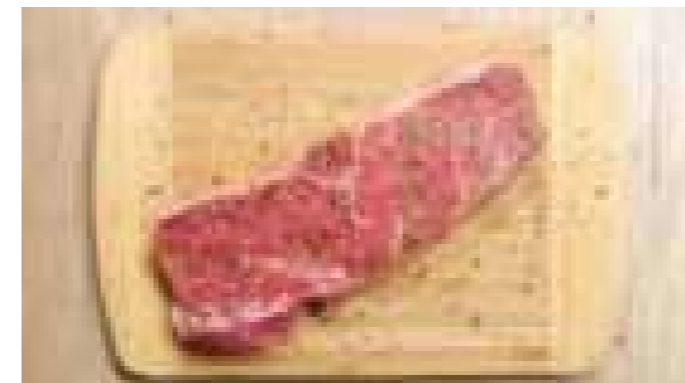
2 Talk to your kids about which products you choose and why (as well as the products you don't buy!). This will help them understand how we can consciously reduce our impact by carefully choosing what we buy

EXPLANATION

Teaching the next generation is key to making these new habits stick!

3 Eat less meat, especially "red meat" (beef and lamb). **Consider as alternatives:**

- Eating more "white meats" such as fish and chicken
- Eating vegetarian-only meals at least 1 or 2 days a week (or more!)
- Purchase sustainable meat alternatives such as falafel, Impossible Burger, or Beyond Meat.
- Eat more fruits and vegetables in general as part of your diet.



EXPLANATION

Meat production is a substantial contributor to greenhouse gas emissions – beef production especially – and the environmental burden deepens, as raising and transporting livestock also requires more food, water, land, and energy than plants. To eat for our own health as well as that of the planet, we should consider picking non-meat proteins such as nuts and legumes.

Fish can be a healthy choice if part of an overall healthy dietary style, but some species are at risk of being overfished, or produced in ways that harm the marine environment, so be careful with the species you eat.

4 Reduce household food waste. **For example:**

- Freeze food you don't eat before it goes bad
- Buy fresh produce instead of frozen, canned, or boxed, which encourages more conscientious portion buying.
- Keep track of how much food your family wastes each week, then adjust grocery lists accordingly to eliminate waste
- Donate leftover food to needy people (where able to do so)

EXPLANATION

Food waste is a big problem. 30% of the food produced is wasted, with serious repercussions for the environment. In fact, if food waste was a country it would be the 3rd largest emitter of greenhouse gasses after China and the US.

Fish can be a healthy choice if part of an overall healthy dietary style, but some species are at risk of being overfished, or produced in ways that harm the marine environment, so be careful with the species you eat.



HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

FOOD CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR FOOD CONSUMPTION:

PRACTICE

5 Eat a wider variety of food in your diet. Some suggestions might include (depending on the region):

- Algae
- Beans and pulses
- Cacti
- Alternative grains
- Alternative leafy greens
- Mushrooms
- Nuts and seeds
- Sprouts and tubers

EXPLANATION

75% of the world's food supply comes from just 12 plants and five animal species. Greater diversity in our diets is essential as the lack of variety in agriculture is both bad for nature and a threat to food security.

A report detailing important food ingredients for next 50 years can be found here:

6 Grow your own food in an urban garden



EXPLANATION

As well as being healthy and delicious, it is free from the carbon footprint of shop-bought food.

7 Eliminate single use plastics where possible.

For example:

- Do not place produce into plastic bags when you purchase (stick the price stickers directly onto the food or bring reusable bags from home)
- Do not put groceries in plastic bags (use reusable ones)
- Do not drink water from disposable plastic bottles, but use your own reusable one
- Do not order food delivery from restaurants that use gratuitous amounts of plastic packaging (and tell them on social media they must change policies if they want your future business)

EXPLANATION

Plastic pollution harms our health, wildlife and the environment, and attracts significant clean-up costs. Many single-use plastic items are difficult and economically non-viable to recycle. Often, they end up contaminating our recycling. They can often be easily avoided or replaced with reusable products.

If you cannot avoid or use reusable items, then try to choose single-use items made from alternative materials such as paper, wood, or bamboo.

8 Compost leftover food waste instead of throwing it into the trash. Purchase a small, odor-blocking composting bucket for an easy way to keep your kitchen scraps contained (where available - and advocate to local politicians to allow composting where collection does not exist yet)



EXPLANATION

It's not always possible to eat every last bit of food, such as the shell of a spaghetti squash or the peel of an orange. Plus, no one is perfect all the time. Leftovers get forgotten, neglected to produce shrivels and wilts, or you eat out more than planned that week, leaving the food in your fridge to lose quality and appeal.

Composting is an easy solution to this problem, keeping food out of landfills and undesirable foods out of your kitchen. Composting turns organic waste into nutrient-rich fertilizer which can be used to help grow more nutritious foods - what a wonderful life cycle!

SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY (CHECK THE REFERENCES FOR MORE DETAILS)

Healthy Corner Store Alternatives²¹

- Corner stores are defined as small stores offering limited selections of food and other products. They are ubiquitous throughout urban, suburban and rural communities and might also be called convenience stores, neighborhood stores, bodegas or mom-and-pop stores. Corner stores can be the main food supplier in communities that lack supermarkets, which can negatively impact community health since most of these stores sell highly processed foods, offering few options for fresh produce and other healthy food options. Additionally, corner stores are frequent destinations for children, many of whom stop at corner stores on the way to and from school for snacks, making the need for healthier food choices even more critical.

- "Healthy corner store" definitions vary, but the standards typically include requirements to stock certain types of items (such as whole grain bread, low-fat milk, or fresh produce) and/or a minimum number of healthy items (such as six types of fresh produce). In some cases, standards may also include requirements for store design and requirements to limit or eliminate marketing of tobacco products. Improving corner and convenience stores is less complex and costly than constructing a new store, and builds on existing community resources.

- An evaluation study conducted in Philadelphia showed that introducing healthier foods into corner stores yielded an increase in profits of \$100 per week for one store owner, including an increase in profits from customers in Pennsylvania's nutrition assistance program.

Produce sales also increased by **60%** in stores studied and the study found that **35%** of overall sales went to "healthy" items.

Preventing Wasted Food²²

- Food consumption is a very personal and intimate activity making it a high-leverage opportunity to promote changes in consumption behavior. The popularity of farmers' markets, farm-to-table dining and urban agriculture suggests that the public is rediscovering the value of food and efforts to prevent wasted food can have a high resonance. Local governments can harness this interest to deliver programs aimed at food businesses and consumers that highlight the life-cycle environmental impacts of food and the value in reducing and preventing wasted food.

- Enormous quantities of food are wasted throughout the food provision system, from producer to seller to consumer. This comes at great expense: one study revealed that \$165 billion of food is wasted annually by Americans, or about 20 lbs. per person per month. Plus, 1.3% of US GDP is spent growing, processing and disposing of food that is never eaten. Next door in Canada, about 3% of greenhouse gas emissions come from wasted food.

This segment of Last Week Tonight with John Oliver highlights the shocking amount of food we don't eat²³

Sustainable Food Purchasing²⁴

Communities across the globe are building momentum in the movement for fresh, healthy food, which makes food policies—especially sustainable food procurement policies—a sensible entry point for a city's sustainable consumption activities. Sustainable food procurement policies must be specific to a community's values, stakeholders and opportunities. With food as one of the most impactful products we purchase, it is one of the high-powered levers we have for reducing negative environmental and social impacts of consumption.

²¹ <https://sustainableconsumption.usdn.org/initiatives-list/healthy-corner-store-alternatives>

²² <https://sustainableconsumption.usdn.org/initiatives-list/preventing-wasted-food>

²³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8xwLWboLY>

²⁴ <https://sustainableconsumption.usdn.org/initiatives-list/sustainable-food-purchasing>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

While the largest gains in global water consumption are to be found in agriculture and other commercial activities, we can each do our part to responsibly use water in our personal lives. Every bath or shower, every sink, and every outdoor hose requires enormous resources to get clean water coming out of it.

WATER CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR WATER CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

- 1 Install water efficient appliances at home (and only run them when full, where applicable), **including:**
 - Washing machines
 - Toilets (ultra-low flush)
 - Showers
 - dishwashers
 - Bidets

EXPLANATION

In the US, indoor water use at home from the tap, toilet, and other appliances adds up to about 60 gallons per person per day. That is an unallowable level of waste, especially as global temperatures rise and access to water becomes more expensive.

- 2 Conserve additional water in the bath/shower, through methods such as:
 - Using a low-flow shower head
 - Taking shorter showers
 - Showering less often



EXPLANATION

Showering daily is not actually necessary or beneficial for our health; it's often just a habit. Cosmetic products are expensive, showering uses a lot of water, and the whole process takes up valuable time. Most importantly, bathing disrupts our skin's microbiome: the delicate ecosystem of bacteria, fungi, mites and viruses that live on (and in) our skin.²⁵

- 3 Recapture greywater (used water from your bathroom sinks, showers, tubs, and washing machines) and use to water household or yard plants



EXPLANATION

Greywater may contain traces of dirt, food, grease, hair, and certain household cleaning products. While greywater may look "dirty," it is a safe and even beneficial source of irrigation water in a yard. Reusing greywater for irrigation reconnects urban residents and our backyard gardens to the natural water cycle.²⁶

- 4 Replace your home's lawn for xeric plants or a waterless alternative like rock gardens (and advocate with local city leaders to limit wasteful subsidies for golf courses and other atypical lawns)

EXPLANATION

Each square foot of grass removed can save about 208 liters of water per year, according to the Southern Nevada Water Authority, home to the Las Vegas desert.²⁷



²⁵ <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/10/19/12126/09/in-the-era-of-hygiene-clean-author-makes-the-case-for-showering-less>

²⁶ <https://greywateraction.org/greywater-reuse/>

²⁷ <https://elementalreports.com/water/2019/07/lawn-be-gone-major-western-cities-pay-residents-to-ditch-grass-to-save-water/>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

WATER CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR WATER CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

- 5** Do not wash your clothes after each individual use. Home appliance company Whirlpool recommends some of the following guidelines (unless visibly dirty or you've been sweating):²⁸
- Shirts and blouses: 2-3 wearings
 - Dress pants or slacks: 2-3 wearings
 - Jeans: 4-5 wearings
 - Sweaters: up to 6 wearings, if worn with an undershirt; 1-2 wearings if worn without an undershirt
 - Workout clothes: after 1 wearing
 - Sleepwear: after 2-3 wearings



EXPLANATION

Cutting down on washing can help to further reduce the carbon footprint of your wardrobe, while also helping to lower water use and the number of microfibers shed in the washing machine

- 6** Change your diet to focus on foods that require less water during production; that means less of **these foods:**

- Red meat (beef and lamb)
- Chocolate
- Butter
- Cheese

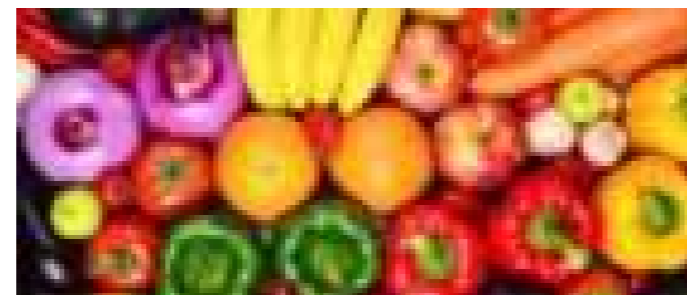
...and more of these foods:

- Eggs
- Tomatoes
- Veggie patties

EXPLANATION

Did you know, it takes over 15,400 liters of water to produce only one kilo of beef?²⁹

Studies show that eating fewer animal-based products reduces water use since animal production uses more water than crops do. In addition, reducing the amount of food that's lost or wasted at various points in the food supply chain could feed about 1 billion extra people while simultaneously reducing water use.³⁰



²⁸ <https://www.whirlpool.com/blog/washers-and-dryers/how-often-should-you-wash-your-clothes.html#text=Here%20are%20some%20basic%20guidelines%20for%20jeans%20after%204%20to%205%20wearings>

²⁹ https://www.nature.com/citable/blog/eyes-on-environment/water_world/

³⁰ <https://eos.org/research-spotlights/eating-less-meat-wasting-less-food-could-save-water-worldwide>

SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY

Cities Pay Residents to Ditch Grass to Save Water³¹

• It is a lot of work to transform home landscaping, with hired contractors and lawn removal and changes to irrigation systems. But some cities offer support for this decision through lawn removal rebate programs that pay (for example) \$1-2 for every square foot of lawn removed.

• Water conservation and efficiency are important to every utility, and especially in areas where "aridification" is occurring. That's the term to describe a region's transition to a water scarce environment due to climate change—a condition that will result in a shrinking water supply.

• Water utilities have various strategies to get customers to lower usage. Many offer rebates for installing low-flow toilets and efficient showerheads in older homes to reduce indoor use. With outdoor use, water providers can use "cash-for-grass" incentives. They can also offer free mulch, rebates for efficient irrigation systems, and audits of outside water use.



³¹<https://elementalreports.com/water/2019/07/lawn-be-gone-major-western-cities-pay-residents-to-ditch-grass-to-save-water/>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

Fashion accounts for around 10% of greenhouse gas emissions from human activity, and nearly 20% of wastewater, but there are ways to reduce the impact your wardrobe has on the climate.³²

SHOPPING CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR SHOPPING CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

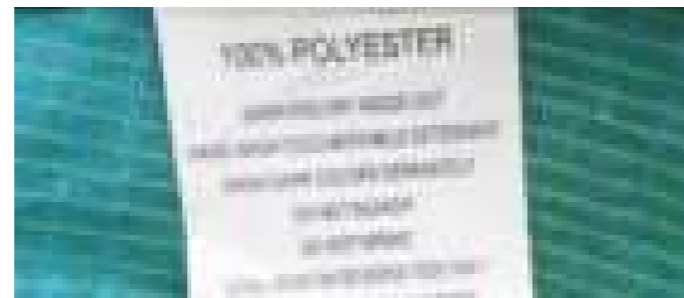
- 1** Online shopping can be greener than traditional retail (unless you're able to walk everywhere), but only if we take into account the following restrictions:
- Make purchases in bulk as much as possible
 - Choose slower delivery options
 - Use online shopping to replace—not supplement—in-store buying
 - Have purchases dropped off at a nearby locker instead of your doorstep (where available)



EXPLANATION

A full 22% of a garment's climate impact comes from the process of a consumer driving to the store to try something on, driving to another store to try that thing on, then bringing their final selection home in their car.

- 2** Be a conscientious consumer and avoid certain materials that are more environmentally damaging, such as:
- Polyester, nylon, spandex, rayon, acrylic, and animal leathers
- ...And buy more materials from less damaging sources, such as:
- Wool, cotton (preferably organic), linen, silk, hemp, lyocell (tencel)
 - Polyester that's made of recycled water bottles, fishing nets, carpet, and other post-consumer products
 - Leather alternatives like Piñatex, which is made from pineapple leaf waste (but is not biodegradable).



EXPLANATION

Polyester fibers are made from oil (it's basically a plastic thread) and most synthetic fibers shed microfibers into our waterways (which you later ingest).

Conventional cotton production also relies on pesticides and herbicides which are improperly, excessively, and dangerously applied in underdeveloped countries, and is contributing to the worldwide decline of insect populations.³³

- 3** When you need new clothing, buy from vintage and secondhand shops to avoid the environmental impact of new materials.



EXPLANATION

There is a glut of secondhand fashion (in the West, at least). Secondhand shops can only resell about 20-45% (75% on a really good day) of unwanted threads – the rest is downcycled into insulation, carpeting, or rags, or (if it's still wearable) shipped to developing countries to be resold for a few dollars.

But keep in mind: you may think that donating your old clothing is mitigating the effects and saving the planet – but clothing donation involves a tremendous amount of additional resources, including industrial chemical-based cleaning and a whole new series of global shipping. And in the end, a large percentage of donated clothing goes unwanted and still eventually ends up in landfills.³⁴

- 4** Avoid "fast fashion" products which are cheaper in quality and change in style rapidly. Instead, buy the best quality items you can afford which are more durable. And then, when those clothes wear out, have them repaired and patched instead of throwing them out or donating.



EXPLANATION

The longer you use a garment, and the more times you wear it, the lower the impact. This doesn't necessarily mean you have to go out and buy exclusively locally-made, organic fashion that costs well in the hundreds of dollars. Whatever it is, if you think you will wear it 30 times or more, that's definitely a sustainable choice.

³² <https://www.bbc.com/future/article/202009-sustainable-fashion-how-to-buy-clothes-good-for-the-climate>

³³ <https://www.racked.com/2017/09/14/22/8/sustainable-shopping-how-to>

³⁴ <https://articlesofstyle.com/blog/news/how-to-shop-more-sustainably>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

SHOPPING CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR SHOPPING CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

5 One popular notion in the conscious fashion world is the idea of a capsule wardrobe: an extremely edited collection of versatile pieces that can be endlessly mixed and matched, so that you get maximum use out of minimal possessions.



EXPLANATION

If you want some guidance in this area, try the app Cladwell, which helps you discern your style, whittle down your wardrobe, donate or sell what you don't love anymore, and come up with interesting new combinations.³⁵



6 Consider renting instead of buying for goods and services you do not use regularly. **This can include:**

- Niche clothing outfits – formal suits and dresses, religious attire, funerals and weddings, and so forth
- Materials for an event or party – catering and cutlery, linens, chairs, tents, chocolate fountains, etc.
- Seldom-used items around the house – tools for fixing or installing household appliances,
- Parking spaces – rent them for a fee when you do not use them, or pay a fee yourself if you only need parking for a brief window
- Recreation equipment (for vacation or a weekend getaway) – camping supplies, skiing gear, beach toys, photography equipment, etc.

EXPLANATION

In theory, renting is more sustainable than purchasing because the same products can be used again and again instead of more being purchased and disposed of. There are also psychological benefits of tying a community together through sharing. However, renting requires additional transportation emissions and washing processes, which can offset and even outweigh the gains from renting. Thus, it is up to consumers to carefully select which rental services to order from, and which products to outright purchase, and which products to forego altogether.

7 Buy reusable products instead of disposable ones, including:

- Plates and cups
- Silverware
- Napkins
- Drinking straws
- Makeup wipes
- Diapers
- Grocery bags
- Coffee filters and pods
- Soap dispensers
- Water bottles



EXPLANATION

If a shopping spree for cloth baby wipes and shampoo bars is too ambitious, start small – and local. Nearly every grocery store sells inexpensive, reusable shopping bags; walk out with one of these on your next provisions run

8 Research both new and favorite brands in between shopping trips, to understand how environmentally and socially responsible the company's supply chain is. **This includes finding evidence of:**

- Decent working conditions for all employees regardless of country
- The company hires a diverse array of employees and is not discriminatory in promotion and leadership roles
- Raw resources sourced responsibly from conflict-free regions
- Animals are humanely raised and butchered
- Percentage of resources in the supply chain that are reused or recycled
- How many tons of waste ends up in landfills

EXPLANATION

Governments and companies are aware that consumers are becoming more conscious about sustainability and ethics. But rather than fully change their practices to meet consumer expectations, many organizations cut corners and mislead. "Greenwashing" is when an entity exaggerates how sustainable their goods or services are, and "social washing" is when an entity exaggerates their efforts to improve labor rights or diversity.

The solution to verify how sustainable a brand really is due diligence and research. Skilled use of online search engines or customer service outlets can help consumers piece together where resources are sourced from, where factories are located, what the conditions at the factory are like, what companies are used for logistics and distribution, and so forth.

³⁵<https://www.racked.com/2017/03/22/8/sustainable-shopping-how-to>

SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY

Community Repair Events

• Community repair events are a social and enjoyable way to shift mindsets toward repair and extend the useful life of products. "Repair Cafés" and "Fixit Clinics" are free events where people get together to fix their broken possessions. Visitors bring things they want fixed and work collaboratively with volunteers to repair them.

• The types of items that might be fixed at repair cafés include computers, clothing, furniture, appliances, bicycles, toys, and more. When the volunteer repair work is coupled with teaching, visitors can become more self-reliant and re-learn an oft-forgotten ethic of fixing instead of throwing things away and buying new. Volunteers who provide repair skills and services range from professionals with repair businesses to tinkerers who love the challenge of getting an item up and running again.

• Repair events offer a means of extending the useful life of consumer goods and slowing the purchase of new goods. They also help to shift mindsets to consider repairing items before buying something new and empower residents to learn to perform their own repairs. They help to rebuild a repair ethic which could lead people to consider repairability in purchasing in future purchasing decisions. Similarly, by exposing participants to local repair services they may not otherwise know of, these events may also serve to shore up the repair industry, driving customers to repair businesses instead of defaulting to purchasing new items.

Tool Lending Libraries

• Tool libraries offer no- or low-cost access to home and garden tools and more, reducing cost-related barriers to home improvements and encouraging community sharing. Lending libraries can additionally offer kitchen tools, books, toys and games, sewing equipment, and other material goods that, for a variety of reasons, may not be practical for a household to buy and maintain.

• Tool libraries can also offer classes and workshops and are coupled with communal workshop spaces or makerspaces. Some traditional book libraries are now carrying other items like toys, kitchen gadgets and home and garden tools that the public can check out. Likewise, other shared spaces like sewing stations, shared kitchens, hackerspaces, and technology labs offer tools and places to complete do-it-yourself projects of all types.

• Shared ownership of tools may lead to an absolute reduction in the amount of tools purchased and eventually entering the waste stream. Tool libraries providing garden tools may also help to reduce some of the consumption problems related to food systems, as they allow urban gardeners to grow food locally thereby reducing food packaging production and potentially replacing empty calories with nutrient-rich foods. Similarly, tool libraries make it easier for homeowners with limited resources to maintain their homes, which helps to provide for housing security. Additionally, tool libraries may serve as a gateway to other types of borrowing and sharing opportunities and initiatives such as kitchen tool shares, skill shares, and toy shares among other sharing activities.



HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

According to the UN Environment Program, cities today are responsible for some **75%** of global energy and resource use, and some **70%** of greenhouse gas emissions.³⁶

Rapid urbanization and unsustainable practices in all sectors from transport to buildings and construction to waste management to energy will amplify the environmental impacts of cities. Most of urban growth today is unplanned, fragmented and incoherent, and those cities that will see the biggest increase in urban population, lack urban and spatial planning capacity. This leaves gaps in environmental protection and in access to important services for many citizens.

Luckily, urban communities are ready for a new style of living that is kinder to residents and the planet alike and are exploring ways to do so.

Cities can achieve an estimated **30-55%** reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and resource use by using better spatial planning and urban design, higher sector and cross-sector efficiency and circularity, and more sustainable lifestyles and consumption patterns

In fact, the neighborhood level is the right scale for achieving a coherent and sustainable urban piece in a reasonable time



³⁶ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/new-neighborhood-creating-new-community-around-sustainability-and-social>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

HOUSING / NEIGHBORHOOD CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

1 Be more conscientious about the environmental impact of household chores; consider adopting the following adjustments:

- Wash clothes in cold water instead of hot; this conserves energy used to heat the water
- Hang clothes to dry instead of using a dryer; did you know a dryer uses more energy than a fridge, dishwasher, and washing machine combined?
- Switch to nontoxic household cleaners and paints; many conventional liquids use chemicals that are harsh on the environment
- Recycle and compost where permitted (and advocate to city leaders to expand access where it is not)



EXPLANATION

Every bit of energy saved counts, and often the daily mundane rituals we do for chores do not make our homes cleaner anyways.

2 If you have errands to run near your home, walk, bike, or take transit instead of driving, even it will be a little slower



EXPLANATION

Car-free transportation reduces transportation emissions and encourages a healthier and more social lifestyle!

3 Unplug (or turn off outlets) appliances or other electronics when not in use



EXPLANATION

Passive electricity consumption like this can exceed 10% of your electricity bill.

4 Consider living in more environmentally efficient neighborhoods, that focus on dense walkable housing (multi-family like apartments or single family attached like townhomes)



EXPLANATION

Housing that is located in walkable neighborhoods near public transit, employment centers, schools, and other amenities, allows residents to drive less and reduce transportation emissions.

Household costs likewise drop, as multi-family buildings use electricity better and are more efficient for heating/cooling.³⁷

³⁷ https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014/05/documents/location_efficiency_btu.pdf

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

HOUSING / NEIGHBORHOOD CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

5 When constructing or remodeling your home, be considerate of every detail to make them more energy efficient (which translates to less ongoing fuel costs and fewer resources to maintain); **this includes:**

- Insulation
- Lighting
- Plumbing
- HVAC
- Windows (thinner ones do not regulate temperature well; keep large ones facing away from the sun)
- Decorations
- Building materials
- Appliances
- Yard irrigation

EXPLANATION

Home sustainability can lower the cost of running your home, saving energy, water and maintenance on systems and appliances. Even more than that, you create a healthier environment for yourself, your family and pets.

A sustainable home is an efficient home that's built or retrofitted in a way that respects resources, optimizes energy and water use, and will last longer with quality systems.³⁸

Smart home automation systems can help optimize your home's efficiency without much effort from the consumer.

6 Take advantage of any open space your community has, whether it be unused plots or road medians or empty alleys, and take the opportunity to approach government figures about utilizing it more sustainably:

- Plant a community garden for neighbors to grow and harvest local foods together.
- Construct a community chicken coop to raise animals and collect eggs.
- Build mini "parklets" to encourage healthier lifestyles



EXPLANATION

Officials are often willing to get involved and may provide valuable grant money towards the cultivation of a community garden space. If there are local schools, approach administrators about learning and extracurricular opportunities for students in regards to garden care and upkeep.



³⁸https://blog.constellation.com/2020/01/ways-to-make-your-house-more-sustainable/files/2014/09/documents/location_efficiency_btu.pdf

SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY

Creating Walkable Mixed-Use Neighborhoods³⁹

- Comfortable pedestrian access to stores, restaurants and other businesses, co-mingled with neighborhoods, reduces the need to own cars and encourages social connections.
- "Walkable" does not mean cars are eliminated from a district; rather, these areas seek to find a balance between pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and other motorized vehicles used for business or pleasure. For residents, benefits range from strong neighborhood identity and greater access to services to health improvements and greater social capital and connectedness.

Encouraging Development of Smaller Homes⁴⁰

- Small and micro homes help keep housing prices affordable, require fewer materials to build and lower utilities to live comfortably, and encourage living with less "stuff."
- Smaller homes are enhanced when clustered to enable shared space and amenities, and also when they offer connection to the outdoors, such as shared gardens, patios, courtyards and parks. Further, micro-housing works best in areas where transit service is robust enough that residents don't need cars, since parking is a major concern in areas with significant density increases.
- Like other small housing options, micro-housing and smaller homes specifically promote sustainable consumption in several ways:
 - Smaller-sized units require fewer materials to build and lower consumption of public utilities like water, gas, and electricity than traditional single-family homes or condominiums;
 - "Very small homes" (<1,150 sq.ft.) produce 36% less lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions than "standard homes" (2,262 sq. ft.);
 - Smaller-sized units create a cap on the amount of material goods that residents can fit into their homes, encouraging them to acquire fewer possessions and share tools, equipment and other material goods.
 - Small homes and micro-housing can help cities meet the growing demand for affordable housing while also keeping housing prices low.

Supporting Development of Accessory Dwelling Units

- Carriage houses, in-law suites, granny flats, backyard cottages, sidekicks and laneway houses are among the dozens of names for Accessory Dwelling Units, or ADUs. ADUs are a simple, time-tested housing option that allows secondary housing units on the same property as a single-family home.
- Homeowners may have a variety of reasons for building ADUs, including housing a family member or creating an income stream from ADU rentals. ADUs also allow homeowners to age in place as their needs change over a lifetime. With more people choosing to live alone or not have children, ADUs offer the option of smaller homes for single people or smaller families, responding to changing household demographics in North America. And for cities looking to increase density and property values without sacrificing neighborhood character, ADUs offer a solution that accommodates more residents while views from the street remain largely unchanged.



³⁹ <https://sustainableconsumption.usdn.org/initiatives-list/creating-walkable-mixed-use-neighborhoods>

⁴⁰ <https://sustainableconsumption.usdn.org/initiatives-list/encouraging-development-of-smaller-homes>

⁴¹ <https://sustainableconsumption.usdn.org/initiatives-list/mcmansion-ordinances-overlay-zones-limiting-square-footage>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

We all travel at various points throughout the year. Each day we take trips around our local city, either to commute to work, or run errands, get food, drop kids off at school, or any other daily need. On evenings or weekends we might visit friends or family outside our home city. Other times we find ourselves on a vacation or business trip that takes us farther away.

As travel recovers from pandemic lows, we have a prime opportunity to change our travel habits to be more sustainable – both in our daily routines as well as occasional vacations. A 2019 survey noted that 42% of US travelers would be willing to prioritize sustainable travel in the future, but only 15% of these travelers were sufficiently familiar with what sustainable travel actually means.⁴² We are confident that these numbers can substantially increase with additional education and opportunities.



⁴² <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/what-sustainable-tourism-means?loggedin=true>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

TRAVEL CONSUMPTION

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR TRAVEL CONSUMPTION

PRACTICE

1 Ditch the car and use alternatives for local errands (within a 5km radius), including grocery shopping, dropping kids off at school, visiting friends, exercise, and more. Biking in particular is regaining traction in the developed world, as the negative externalities of cars are better understood; an expanding ecosystem of products with cargo space, child seating, electric motors, and more are creating transportation options that cost significantly less than cars to own and maintain – or rent through a shared mobility app – but are equally as convenient (gallery of some options is shown below).

For those occasional trips across the city where a car is necessary – just get a taxi (a few taxi rides per month is still much cheaper than a car payment and insurance, and it's still better for the environment).

EXPLANATION

Cycling is the most sustainable means of urban travel, practical for most short- and medium-distance trips—commuting to and from work and school, shopping, visiting friends—as well as for recreation and exercise. Cycling promotes physical, social, and mental health, helps reduce car use, enhances mobility and independence, and is economical for both public and personal budgets. Cycling should be made feasible for everyone and not limited to especially fit, daring, well-trained cyclists riding expensive bicycles.⁴³

2 When you travel or go on vacation, consider the following tips to consume more sustainably:

- Visit places closer to home
- Travel outside the peak summer months
- Avoid tourist hotspots that are becoming permanently damaged due to overuse (especially fragile islands like Santorini in Greece or Maya Bay in Thailand)
- Stay longer in fewer locations instead of 1-2 nights in many locations
- Avoid countries with poor records in child worker exploitation
- Visit parks or other protected areas that spend money on conservation efforts
- Book accommodations and activities near town centers so you can get around using bikes or transit, instead of needing to rent a car
- Take trains or buses between destinations instead of flying
- Don't go on cruises, which are very polluting
- Try activities that combine experience with environmental benefits, such as beach clean-ups.
- Pack fewer clothes
- Avoid purchasing single-use plastics, such as disposable water bottles, and hygiene products; bring reusable bottles and tote bags instead
- Avoid buffets for meals
- Consider skipping meat for 1 meal per day
- Unplug electronics and turn off the AC when you leave your hotel room (even if it doesn't cost you extra to leave them on)
- Pay for carbon offsets to mitigate the pollution caused by your trip
- Above all: leave no trace of your trip when you leave for those who come after

EXPLANATION

Sustainable tourism (sometimes called eco-tourism) is all about achieving a balance between economic growth, human well-being, and environmental health. It focuses on reducing tourism's negative impacts and on maximizing its positive benefits for communities, cultures, ecosystems, and the planet. Sustainable tourism accounts for both the immediate impacts felt today as well as those longer-term impacts that will be experienced by future generations.⁴⁴

Slowing things down is not just better for the environment, but will allow you to really experience the place you are visiting. When you aren't rushed, you can take time to immerse yourself in the culture, build deeper connections with local people, and get to know the destination's unique charms.

National parks, marine sanctuaries, and other protected areas play an important role in protecting our planet's natural resources and biodiversity. Many countries rely on tourism fees such as entrance fees, operator permits, or bed levies to preserve these special places and animals. Every year, more than 8 billion people visit the world's protected areas, generating about \$850 billion in spending. These dollars help fund the conservation activities necessary to protect these areas while also providing income to local communities.

3 Choose vacation destinations that have track records in sustainability and "ecotourism", such as:

- Slovenia
- Palau
- Costa Rica
- Norway
- Latvia
- Jordan

EXPLANATION

In 2016 the capital of Slovenia, Ljubljana, was voted Europe's greenest city by the European Union, thanks to its public transport, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, and commitment to protecting green areas and saving waste water.⁴⁵



⁴³ <https://mitpress.mit.edu/books/cycling-sustainable-cities/>

⁴⁴ <https://sustainabletravel.org/top-10-tips-for-sustainable-travel/>

⁴⁵ <https://www.nytimes.com/guides/travel/how-to-travel-sustainably>

EXAMPLES OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF BIKES

CARGO BIKES



ELECTRIC BIKE SHARE (WITH BASKETS FOR GROCERIES)



BIKE CARGO TRAILERS



DUTCH ROAD BIKE (OMAFIETS)

SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY

Starting and growing a bike-share program: Case Study from Lyon France⁴⁶

• Velo'V is a bike sharing network based mainly in Lyon and Villeurbanne in France. This service was set up in 2005. It now has over 4,000 bicycles divided across 348+ stations. These bicycles are only available for short-term rental. Using a credit card, each user can:

- Rent one of the bicycles at any one of the 348 stations;
- Use this bicycle for a period not exceeding 24 hours (but rental prices are designed to be unattractive above one hour);
- Return the bicycle at any one of the 348 stations.

• Fees for short-term rentals are limited, as this service is primarily financed by advertising revenues earned by the service provider from simultaneously operating street furniture (passenger shelters and advertising hoardings).

• Although developed within towns that are already well served by public transport, the aim of the Velo'V service is to complement other modes of transport rather than replace them. Vélo'V and the Lyon public transport service are two services managed by separate authorities.

• The fee structure for this service offers a long-term subscription (for a year) and two short-term subscriptions (for a week or for a day). The system captures both occasional users such as tourists and more regular users such as residents and employees in Lyon and Villeurbanne.

• Within 10 years, the Velo'V service counted between 20,000 and 25,000 users per day, or about 6 trips per day per bicycle.



⁴⁶ https://www.benefits.transport.eu/wiki/index.php?title=Case_Studies_V%C3%A9lo%E2%99%80%80%2F%2F_France

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

The amount of waste each of produce has grown exponentially over the last generation. Often we do not realize how much trash we are personally responsible for. However, it is crucial that each of us takes decisive action to reduce our trash footprint and recycle as much as possible, to help mitigate the environmental damage already occurring.

Some cities or countries do not have adequate disposal services for common recycled goods or toxic materials, and will tell you to just throw it in the garbage anyways. In these cases, contact your local government leaders to alert them to the serious environmental damage this can cause and work with them to introduce alternative destinations for toxic and recycled goods.

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING HABITS

PRACTICE

1 Eliminate single use plastics where possible.

For example:

- Do not place produce into plastic bags when you purchase (stick the price stickers directly onto the food or bring reusable bags from home)
- Do not put groceries in plastic bags (use reusable ones)
- Do not drink water from disposable plastic bottles, but use your own reusable one
- Do not order food delivery from restaurants that use gratuitous amounts of plastic packaging (and tell them on social media they must change policies if they want your future business)

EXPLANATION

Plastic pollution harms our health, wildlife and the environment, and attracts significant clean-up costs. Many single-use plastic items are difficult and economically non-viable to recycle. Often, they end up contaminating our recycling. They can often be easily avoided or replaced with reusable products.

If you cannot avoid or use reusable items, then try to choose single-use items made from alternative materials such as paper, wood, or bamboo.

2 Collect compost. Your fruit and vegetable scraps, egg shells, coffee grounds, grass clippings, and leaves can all be composted, which reduces the amount of trash that ends up in landfills.



EXPLANATION

Composting at home will provide you with a beneficial return on your investment of time and effort. Depending on the conditions, you may have compost in 3 to 12 months to use in your garden. You'll save on fertilizers and if you grow your own vegetables, you'll likely see improved yields. The organic matter will also act as a sponge to absorb more water, meaning you might not need to water your plants as much, saving you money and time.⁴⁷ A growing number of cities collect composting so it can be aggregated and used more efficiently than used individually.

3 Buy second hand items and donate used goods



EXPLANATION

Before you go buy something new, consider buying it used which can also save you lots of money. That can mean buying secondhand clothes, used furniture and repurposed construction materials, or searching peer-to-peer online platforms for a deal on a bicycle. By purchasing secondhand items you'll be supporting local charities in addition to saving items from ending up in the dump.

4 Dispose of toxic waste properly, and do not put it in your regular garbage; this includes (not including items that can be recycled):

- Medications
- Batteries
- Paint
- Computer and TV screens
- Certain light bulbs and thermostats
- Pesticides and herbicides
- Asbestos
- Motor oil and antifreeze
- Fire and carbon monoxide detectors

EXPLANATION

Toxins at landfills lead to serious soil contamination and water pollution. Contact your local waste disposal service provider to learn where to properly dispose of toxic household waste.

47: <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/delaware/stories-in-delaware/delaware-eight-ways-to-reduce-waste/>

HOW TO BECOME MORE CONSCIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERS

WASTE MANAGEMENT AND RECYCLING

TIPS FOR YOUTH TO IMPROVE SUSTAINABILITY OF THEIR WASTE DISPOSAL AND RECYCLING HABITS

PRACTICE

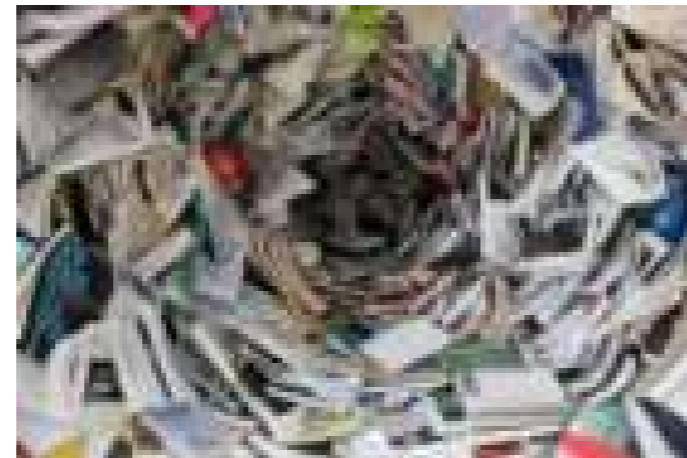
5 Many bathroom items should not be thrown into the toilet because they will clog up pipes or slow down water treatment plants; **these include** (but are not limited to):

- Baby wipes (even "flushable wipes" - these are not actually pipe friendly and are a huge cause of pipe clogs in citties)
- Q-tips and cotton balls
- Menstrual products
- Condoms
- Dental floss
- Paper towels and tissues
- Medication (unless a bottle is explicitly labeled safe to do so)
- Cat litter
- Cigarette butts
- Hair
- Gum
- Cooking grease
- Bleach

EXPLANATION

Items that should not be disposed of through the toilet should instead be thrown out with the trash, disposed of safely, or recycled if applicable.

6 Curb your use of paper: mail, receipts, magazines; in today's digital world, most companies offer bills by email, and some even offer incentives to do so.



EXPLANATION

This saves more resources from being turned into paper that is immediately thrown out. More stores are also offering e-receipts which are great because they're harder to lose if you need to make a return. Consider digital subscriptions instead of printed for your favorite magazines that you can read on your tablet or computer. Digital subscriptions are often a little cheaper than the hard-copy version, as well.

7 Purchase rechargeable batteries instead of single-use ones

EXPLANATION

Batteries contain elements that can be quite toxic to our environmental system, so we need to limit the number of new ones produced.

8 Learn to repair instead of discarding things!

EXPLANATION

As a society, we often tend to dispose of our used items pretty soon, even if they only have minor issues. Repairing things has never been easier, since we have numerous free videos online on how to fix thousands of common (and uncommon) products.

9 Use a meal plan to coordinate your food purchases throughout the week, this saves you time on food prep, money on wasted ingredients, and can be a great opportunity to try new recipes

EXPLANATION

With meal plans, you know exactly what food ingredients you need to buy every week. You also save money from not buying extra food which just ends up in the garbage.

Using a meal plan on your smartphone instead of paper further improves your eco-footprint since you also save paper.



SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY

Encouraging and Mandating Building Deconstruction⁴⁹

Deconstructing buildings—the selective dismantling or removal of materials from buildings prior to or instead of conventional demolition—amplifies the marketplace for used goods, helps create new jobs, and limits new materials production.

Many components from old buildings are still usable and valuable, and are sometimes more valuable than at the time of original construction. Materials may be salvaged or reused in their original form or recycled into new building materials. Local ordinances create incentives and penalties to encourage the demolition of buildings. Most construction and demolition reuse and recycling policies include the following:

- Recycling of debris
 - Reusing building materials on the project site
 - Deconstruction to maximize reuse
 - Specifying types and quantities of materials recovered for reuse and recycling
 - Reporting requirements
 - Compliance tools, including fees and penalties for non-compliance
- Increased deconstruction will:
- Divert million of pounds of materials for reuse annually
 - Create job opportunities that act as a pathway for construction careers.
 - Increase the likelihood of discovering materials containing lead and asbestos for safe removal and disposal.
- Deconstruction yields a larger supply of salvageable and reusable building materials than conventional demolition. By incentivizing or regulating building deconstruction salvaged, reused and recycled building materials become more viable and more normalized in the commercial marketplace.



⁴⁹ https://www.benefitsandtransport.eu/wiki/index.php?title=Case_Studies_V%C3%A9lo%E2%99%80%84%20France

SAMPLE PROGRAMS TO IMPLEMENT LOCALLY

How cities can boost recycling rates⁵⁰

High recycling rates are essential for cities to minimize waste disposal costs, environmental and climate impacts, and to work towards zero waste. Cities like Seoul and San Francisco already achieve diversion rates above 65% and offer clues for other cities to follow.

STEP 1

Collect and analyze waste data to set recycling priorities

As a starting point, use the Waste Data Explorer to find out how much solid waste is generated in your city, its composition, the disposal and treatment approaches used, and the diversion rate from landfill and incineration. This explorer uses a mix of World Bank and CDP data; if your city is not included, look for data from a similar-sized city in your region for indicative results. Then you can watch this webinar for additional information⁵¹:

STEP 2

Make recycling services accessible and easy to use for residential, commercial and industrial waste generators

Determine the collection approach best suited to local conditions. Door-to-door collection schemes typically have higher recovery rates and reduce contamination. However, they are more costly to operate. Drop-off or 'bring' schemes rely on waste generators to deposit waste at centralized locations, and recovery rates can be low. However, they are cheaper and easier to operate.

STEP 3

Incentivize participation with pay-as-you-throw policies, bans of non-recyclable items and more

One of the most impactful supportive policies cities can introduce is volume-based fees or 'pay-as-you-throw' schemes. This is an effective financial incentive that immediately encourages waste segregation and reduction at source by waste generators. These cost structure systems are more impactful than schemes that focus only on increasing recycling rates, as they also incentivize composting, source reduction and reuse.

STEP 4

Develop clear, positive and targeted communications campaigns

There are two audiences for communications campaigns: those who are already recycling, and non-recyclers. For both groups, a lack of information about what can and cannot be recycled is the most commonly cited reason for low participation rates. To address this, city leaders and activists should:

- Make sure that drop-off centers and bins are clearly marked, and that instructions are clear and visual (using photographs or drawings).
- Ensure information is easy to find on the city's website. Highlight answers to basic questions, particularly: What can I recycle? When is my collection day? How can I recycle special wastes?
- Use the advertising space on the side of collection trucks, direct outreach via collection staff, and flyers attached to bins, for awareness campaigns.
- Ensure messaging is coordinated and consistent, especially if there are multiple actors involved. Municipal governments should meet regularly with waste authorities, haulers, and processors to identify common communication messaging.

STEP 5

Secure the buy-in of collection workers and waste management operators

The effective participation of collection workers and waste management operators is vital for successful recycling schemes. To secure their motivation and buy-in, cities need to ensure that separate collection of recyclables is convenient for the collectors as well as the waste generators. Cities can also build incentives into contracts with hauling companies to drive action to boost recovery - revenue-sharing mechanisms that kick-in beyond a certain threshold of recyclable waste collected are commonly-used incentives.

STEP 6

Maximize revenues from recyclables by establishing appropriate pricing and incentivizing a local market for reuse of materials

Municipal recycling is unlikely to make the city money, but revenues should still be maximized. To understand how much revenue can be earned from your city's recyclables, speak to secondary raw material processors about their pricing. To develop the local market for reuse of materials, identify options to create material 'loops' that funnel recovered materials back into local enterprise - helping to create a local 'circular economy'



⁵⁰ https://www.c4oknowledgehub.org/s/article/How-cities-can-boost-recycling-rates?language=en_US

⁵¹ <https://www.c4oknowledgehub.org/s/article/Best-practices-for-waste-characterisation>

HOW TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS AND CONSUME MORE SUSTAINABLY

STEP 1

Understanding why people are not conscious consumers already

At the end of the day, this toolkit is about changing behaviors. People who already identify as conscious and sustainable consumers are a dedicated minority group, who now need to help build momentum and convert others to join their efforts. Reasons for not practicing conscious consumption vary, but understanding each perspective is crucial to extending empathy and compassion, which are the first steps to positive change. Some common reasons for not consuming sustainably include:

REASONS PEOPLE ARE NOT CONSCIOUS CONSUMERS	EXPLANATION
Convenience	our linear economy is convenient and change is hard. It's inexpensive to buy fast food each day and throw away the plastic wrappings. It's cheaper to buy lower quality food that harms animals or the environment instead of more expensive healthier alternatives, and that takes additional research so why bother? These daily consumption habits are baked into our routines, culture, and personal emotions, and they can be difficult to overcome.
Apathy	Many people are too overburdened by their modern lifestyles to care about anything other than their everyday wants and needs. Between working long hours, the high costs of housing, and spiraling levels of debt to maintain modern lifestyles, over-consumption and leisure take precedence.
Frugality	being sustainable costs more money than taking the path of least resistance. It doesn't have to be prohibitively more expensive, but when so many people live paycheck to paycheck, every dirham count, and if people are forced between altruistically saving the planet or filling their stomachs, they will usually pick the latter.
Interests	some people simply are not interested in social justice or the environment. Not everyone wants to be an activist, and not everyone wants to voice their opinion on particular issues.
Ignorance	some people might not fully understand the damage their consumer habits cause to other humans or the environment. They might not know how widespread child labor is or how cruelly livestock are treated. They might not realize (or believe) that the environment is in peril and that we need to quickly change behaviors on a mass scale. In any case, we must gently and compassionately help educate them.
Greed	the desire to own more and more things is a common preoccupation of our culture today. We must own the latest trends and products to impress our friends or family, satisfy our own egos, and advertisements promise we can fulfill inner psychological needs by purchasing external material objects, and that is the path towards true happiness.
Hope in undiscovered technologies	according to the Young Arab Survey, many young people, especially in the Gulf region, believe that undiscovered technologies will solve climate change in the vague future, and radical consumption habit changes will not be needed in the meantime. The problem with this viewpoint is that it removes our responsibility to fix what is possible today, and replaces it with an irrational hope in a deus ex machina.
Cynicism	some people might not think that one person can make a difference, or that companies are inherently corrupt, or that our situation is hopeless already, so it is not worth trying to change behaviors anyways.

HOW TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS AND CONSUME MORE SUSTAINABLY

STEP 2

Increase awareness and introduce positive peer pressure

Governments and activist organizations must be able to explain conscious consumption in such a way that it becomes a “no brainer” to switch habits. But even the best intentioned people will have difficulty changing decades-long routines, so consistent pressure in appropriate public avenues will be crucial.

Mistakes will happen, people will relapse on bad consumption habits, and that’s ok. Just keep the positive messages flowing and keep encouraging them to try again. Do not underestimate the impact of positive peer pressure.

Consistent reminders are an important tool to both remember behavior goals as well as provide some accountability for individuals and organizations. In our digital age, one of the most convenient mechanisms today is a social media campaign. For reaching larger audiences, a more traditional public awareness campaign that combines many media outlets – press releases, radio/podcasts, blogs, flyers, and so forth – might be preferred.

Below are simple outlines for both styles of building awareness, provided by Adobe and Gartner, respectively.

1- Social media campaigns⁵²

One common tool for marketing a new idea or practice to many people rapidly is a social media campaign, likely on Twitter or Facebook or Instagram. Computer software giant Adobe offers an easy template to put together a campaign on one of these platforms:

STEPS	EXPLANATION
Define Your Social Media Campaign Goals	What are your goals beyond promoting a specific product or initiative? Define your goals in writing so you can refer to them as you formulate the rest of your social media marketing strategy.
Identify the Social Media Channels You’ll Use	You probably already have a good sense of where to reach your target audience, and which social media channels will help you reach your goals. If you do, turn to those channels. Also consider branching out, especially since it doesn’t cost anything to post on multiple platforms.
Plan Your Social Media Campaign Strategies	Outline the types of campaign content you plan to create for each social media channel. A few examples of goals and content tactics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building your newsletter audience by hosting a giveaway on a digital platform that collects the email addresses of entrants. - Building the number of social media users who are following you by hosting an Instagram giveaway where entrants need to follow your brand and tag a friend. - Getting feedback from loyal users by crafting an Instagram Stories poll. - Generating revenue by promoting a sale, discount, or special offer. - Remember to always tie your concepts and messaging back to your goals
Choose the Metrics You Want To Monitor	One of the coolest things about social media marketing programs is that pretty much everything is measurable. For example, if your social media campaign strategy includes Facebook with a goal to inspire consumer engagement, make one of your measurable success metrics revolve around getting likes, comments, or shares.
Create a Social Media Content Calendar	Successful social media campaigns have a start and end date, and a detailed calendar of what happens in between. This is your content calendar. It’s also your roadmap, so make one, and make it detailed! Your content calendar should outline deadlines for creating the content you plan to feature on your social networks during your campaign, as well as when and where all of your content will appear. If you’re supporting your initiatives with a social media advertising campaign or scheduled posts by social media influencers, you can include those coordinated marketing initiatives in your content calendar too.
Design Your Marketing Assets	Once your plans are in place, it’s time to design compelling marketing assets and content that will win eyeballs and hearts. Text-centric Twitter aside, the only way to do that in the social media world is through spectacular visuals. Today’s online tools make crafting every type of digital post so easy, you don’t need a design background to create pro-level campaign banners, logos, posts, videos, and more.
Schedule Your Content Using Social Media Management Tools	These smart tools practically manage your campaign for you, starting with scheduling your posts to publish at specific dates and times—upload your content, schedule the publishing dates, and you can practically kick back, eat bonbons, and watch your campaign flourish. Be sure to schedule your posts for when your community is more active on your social media accounts. If you’re not sure when that is, check out some industry standards.
Manage Your Campaign	If your plan is working as you hoped, your efforts may focus on engaging with users and customers. Answer questions and “like,” comment on their comments, and so on. But this is also the time where you should monitor engagement in real time and adjust your strategies if necessary. If you’re not getting the response you hoped for or are seeing more success on one channel or campaign initiative than on another, you can pivot your social media strategy for better results.
Analyze the Results	Half the value of a social media campaign is in the ROI associated with your goals. The other half is the insight you’ll glean from the experience. Once your campaign is over, evaluate what worked, what didn’t, what you learned from your customers, and what you would do differently next time. This insight will help you with your next social media campaign and all of those that follow!

⁵² <https://www.adobe.com/express/learn/blog/social-media-campaign>

HOW TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS AND CONSUME MORE SUSTAINABLY

STEP 2

Public relations campaign: op-eds, podcasts, and other positive media outlets⁵³

Sometimes, social media channels are not holistic enough to drive the results you need; in these cases, other media and entertainment avenues should be pursued. Technological research and consulting firm Gartner developed the chart below that provides breakdowns on the pros and cons of various methods:

CHANNEL TYPE	EXAMPLE	GOOD WAY TO	PROS	CONS
Central Communications (one to many)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Press release - E-mail - Memo - Intranet Post 	Update/inform a large group about a issues of 'big' concern/initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scalable - Reaches multiple stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to gauge impact - Limited opportunity to clarify
Leader Presentation (one to many)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Media interview - Press Conference - Town Halls - CEO video/blogs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Motivate and energize audience - Make important announcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good way to address issues - Highly credible source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One-way communication - Audience often intimidated to ask questions
Manager Cascade (one to few)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication in teams meetings - Emails 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform/updated on team specific and/or sensitive matters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trusted source - Personal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Messages often fail to get through - Manager not familiar/ bought-in
Manager Dialogue (interactive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Group discussion - Manger one-on-one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Problem solve/gain feedback - Translate strategy into action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Helps resolve issues - Drives behavioral change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time intensive - High variability in manager communication skill
Mobile and social media updated (one to many)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Company blogs - Intranet - Twitter account - SMS mobile - Company Facebook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Time-sensitive information updated/alerts - Humanizing the company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ease of access to information - Tracking sentiment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If not done properly, company can be seen as 'phony'
Social Media Participation (interactive)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion Forums - Blogs - Twitter - Youtube 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing viewpoints - Engaging in debates - Creating a dialog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Builds engagement - Gives a human face to the company 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Little control over the communication - Possible rejection of corporate agenda
Enabling Advocated (many to many)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Employees - Suppliers - Customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reputation management - Reaching out to skeptical audiences - Spread viral message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trusted sources - High resonance - High "stickiness" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to find suitable advocates - Time-sensitive

⁵³ <https://www.gartner.com/en/marketing/insights/articles/how-to-choose-the-right-communications-channel>

HOW TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS AND CONSUME MORE SUSTAINABLY

STEP 3

Change policies to incentivize good consumption and penalize bad consumption

When increased awareness and activism fall short of the necessary level of change, then the government should get involved (or be persuaded to do so by grassroots organizations).

The most effective policy adjustments will be different in each city of each country, but promising examples include:

SUGGESTED POLICIES	EXPLANATION
Updating school curriculums	If we can help children change habits before they are adults, the next generation will be better equipped to sustainably consume. All the tips and information included in this toolkit can be applied to the average schoolkid, or can be adapted for school buildings and operations themselves. Mandatory field trips that help students understand their personal impact on the social issues and environment – landfills, recycling centers, water treatment plants, local fragile ecosystems, consumer product factories and so forth – can be a powerful visual aid to spur change. Plus, children can likely help their parents adjust their own behaviors (for example, Swedish activist Greta Thunberg convinced her parents to switch to vegan diets before she ever started leading protests).
Add carbon footprint or ethical labels to foods and other consumer staples	We are used to seeing lists of ingredients, vitamin quantities, toxicity warnings, and other essential information on our products – why should social or environmental impact be any different? "Eco-labeling" is a growing trend to provide users with honest information about different brands so that consumers are persuaded to choose more sustainable alternatives. There are hundreds of different existing label programs focused on different qualities (or are holistic for both social and environmental performance), so you can find the ones best suited for your local community. These include: fair trade certifications, cruelty-free animal treatments, free of specific harmful chemicals, sustainably sourced from fragile ecosystems, and many more.
Change taxation for sustainable alternatives	Ideas include lower VAT fees for goods that are deemed more durable or less likely to be replaced in a certain time period (as well as higher VAT fees for the opposite), or for secondhand goods that are finding new homes (in official business-to-consumer stores; peer-to-peer platforms like dubizzle and Facebook Marketplace will continue to thrive as long as they remain the most cost effective and efficient way to barter)
Carbon Taxes	Under a carbon tax, the government sets a price that emitters must pay for each ton of greenhouse gas emissions they emit. Businesses and consumers will take steps, such as switching fuels or adopting new technologies, to reduce their emissions to avoid paying the tax.
Harsher legal punishments for companies that misrepresent or use more than their allowed environmental impact.	Perhaps we are too cynical for assuming that large businesses can pollute with impunity, but governments have an essential role to curtail and make an example of firms that refuse to reduce emissions as well as make conscious consumption a realistic goal for residents.

HOW TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO CHANGE BEHAVIORS AND CONSUME MORE SUSTAINABLY

STEP 4

Program Evaluation

The final step after completing any conscious consumption program is to assess its effectiveness through evaluation. The US Environmental Protection Agency provides a framework we can build from.⁵⁴

Evaluating a program involves monitoring the baseline, the implementation processes, and the overall results. Monitoring helps quantify what has been done, when it has been done, how it has been done, and who has been reached. It can also help identify any problems so that adjustments can be made. Monitoring tries to answer the question "How much of what we planned to do did we do as planned?"

Evaluation is important for assessing message effectiveness, identifying program strengths and weaknesses, and determining if different communications are needed to make a program more effective and better achieve its goals. If communication is successful in these ways, it becomes the basis for effective decision making. Evaluation data can provide program staff with valuable insight to help understand the impact of the program, effectiveness of the program, the target audience, and the role the staff can play to contribute to its success.

Evaluation should be built in from the start. Integrating evaluation throughout planning and implementation ensures that program managers: Understand what is and is not working, and why

- Tailor messages, materials, and activities to the

target audience

- Help program staff see how its work affects the target audiences
- Define appropriate, meaningful, achievable, and time-specific program objectives
- Monitor the program and ensure accountability
- Expend resources as efficiently and effectively as possible

There are three types of evaluation which are implemented at different times.

Formative evaluation is evaluative research conducted during program development. It may include state-of-the art reviews, pretesting messages and materials, and pilot testing a program on a small scale before full implementation

Process evaluation is research conducted to document and study the functioning of different components of program implementation; includes assessments of whether materials are being distributed to the right people and in what quantities, whether and to what extent program activities are occurring, and other measures of how and how well the program is working.

Outcome evaluation is research designed to assess the extent to which a program achieved its objectives.

Agencies and their partners can evaluate short-term, intermediate-term and long-term outcomes and impacts. Program managers may want to identify an outcome for the short term, medium term, and long term. When determining outcome objectives make sure they are 'SMART':

- Specific - identify exactly what it is hoped the

outcome to be and include the five W's: who, what, where, when, and why

- Measurable - quantify the outcome and the amount of change the program aims to produce
- Achievable - be realistic in projections and take into account assets, resources, and limitations
- Relevant - make sure the objectives address the needs of the target audience and support the overarching mission of the program or organization
- Time-bound - provide a specific date by which the desired outcome or change will take place

Remember that many standard evaluation approaches assume a direct cause-and-effect relationship between the stimulus (the program's communication and the target audience's response to it). However, it can be impossible to isolate the effects of a particular communication activity, or even the effect of a communication program on a specific target audience, because change does not often occur as a result of just one specific activity.



⁵⁴ <https://www.epa.gov/fish-tech/8-assess-program-effectiveness-through-evaluation>

CONCLUSION

Some people reading this are looking at the future with apprehension. They like their beef, they like their cheap fast food meals, they like changing their wardrobe every six months – why can't we just leave them alone?

To these skeptics we say: conscious consumerism still has much to offer. So much in fact, that the benefits far outweigh the short term friction from changing habits.

Imagine a future with no garbage dumps, no trash-covered beaches, no smog, and no cheap electronics that die every few months. Imagine being able to replace a broken part of a product instead of being forced to buy a new one entirely. Imagine all the available food tastes better than ever and is resistant to sudden shortages or price spikes. Imagine the money savings from not needing to pay for gasoline for your car or natural gas for heating your home. Imagine the peace of mind in knowing that no

children or animals were abused in the process of making a product. The end result is nearly as convenient, likely just as cheap, and your mental, physical, and emotional health will see significant improvement.

These aren't hippie fever dreams: this is the world we can fashion for our grandkids to inherit, if we work hard over the next few decades

The 20th century has made us lazy consumers, and hopefully we are past the nadir of our wrong choices. We are fully capable of changing our consumption routines, without ruining our economies or modern lifestyles.

Conscious consumerism will make our lives more enriching and more satisfying as well as help our global transition to a carbon neutral future. There are many steps that each of us must individually take, especially in regards to our water, food, shopping, and travel consumption, as well as improving our recycling and waste management routines





HSBC in the MENAT region

HSBC is the largest and most widely represented international banking organisation in the Middle East, North Africa and Turkey (MENAT), with a presence in nine countries across the region: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. In Saudi Arabia, HSBC is a 31% shareholder of Saudi British Bank (SABB), and a 51% shareholder of HSBC Saudi Arabia for investment banking in the Kingdom. Across MENAT, HSBC had assets of US\$71bn as at 31 December 2021.



The Arab Youth Center (AYC)

The Arab Youth Center (AYC), led by HH Sheikh Theyab Bin Mohammed Bin Zayed, Chairman of the Crown Prince's Court and AYC, aims to empower young Arabs and address their needs.

The Center offers a unique platform to develop youth capabilities and support innovation and creativity among youth. AYC implements purposeful initiatives across diverse sectors, in addition, it conducts research on young Arabs to help decision-makers shape policies that enable their progress.

The Arab Youth Council for Climate Change (AYCCC)

The Arab Youth Council for Climate Change (AYCCC) is an initiative by the Arab Youth Center in cooperation with the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MOCCA), the Office of the UAE's Special Envoy for Climate Change, and private sector partners under the umbrella of the Arab League. The Council aims to achieve a qualitative leap in the interaction of Arab youth with environmental issues, support youth climate action, and engage young Arabs in developing innovative and sustainable solutions to the climate change challenge.



Posterity Institute

The Posterity Institute is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan think tank that strives to create a better tomorrow, and a more sustainable shared future for the coming generations. The Institute aims to develop a deeper understanding and awareness of sustainable development challenges in emerging economies through conducting research, leading programs and initiatives, and fostering strategic partnerships with the public and private sectors. The Institute has two focus areas: Climate Change and Inclusive Economic Growth. It also centralises the role of Technology for Good, leveraging and promoting the use of the latest technologies to overcome obstacles and catalyse sustainable living.

The Institute's team of experts leads research studies particularly on public policy, curates and designs specialty courses relevant to its focus areas, enables leaders and pioneers, supports and facilitates regional and international initiatives that accelerate sustainable development, and nurtures meaningful partnerships and collaborations between the public and private sectors.

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