



7. What can I do?



© Kevin_Hsieh | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

The question of what *each one* of us can do to make the world a more sustainable place is not easy to answer.

Maybe we individuals can make the greatest difference,

- if we take other people with us on the path to sustainable development,
- if we act together and network locally and globally,
- if we push for fundamental changes in politics, so that it listens again to the *voice of the people* and not only to the voice of the big companies and banks,
- if we reduce our collective consumption by just ten percent, because that would already have a major impact on many of the most polluting activities of our economy.

Translated from Graeme Maxton. 2018. Change! Warum wir eine radikale Wende brauchen.

It is important that now many people tackle *individual* behavioural changes. But these will only become effective together with *structural* changes in our society.

» We need both *systemic transformation* and *individual behavioural changes*. One without the other will not get us to the necessary scale of change at the necessary pace.

Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac. 2020. The Future We Choose - Surviving the Climate Crisis.

Take five actions

Each of us can *immediately* take 5 measures, making an *effective contribution* to the protection of the environment and climate.

1. Demand radical reforms from politics.

Vote for politicians who are committed to an effective, sustainable climate and environmental protection.



© Macrovector | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

2. Consume less.



© laymanzoom | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

3. Less time sitting in the car and on the plane.



© ra2studio | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

4. Eat less meat and dairy products.



© Estrada Anton | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

5. Plant a tree.

Or support one of the many projects that plant trees worldwide.



© G-Stock Studio | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2020

Realign my lifestyle



© BrainC | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2019

First

Question my consumption in everyday life, on vacation and in my free time.

In addition to my basic daily needs, only consume what gives me real added value.

Ask me the highly topical question: To Have or to Be?

In his book 'To Have or to Be' [1976], Erich Fromm describes the prerequisites for a fundamental change in the economy, politics and society in order to overcome the present crisis and to move from an orientation towards having to one towards being.

Second

Align my lifestyle with a good balance between quality and quantity.



© docstockmedia | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

The consumption-oriented lifestyle in the rich countries is pursued from many people worldwide, but it is probably not an attractive option for our children and grandchildren:

- first, because we are thereby causing large and sometimes irreversible damage to nature and it mostly affects many people in other regions of the world.
- second, because the price we pay in our lives is *disproportionately high* compared to the benefits gained, this being increasingly felt by the suffering of so many wealthy people in industrialised countries.

» The question arises: What philosophy of life is behind the *insatiability* of us who live so stubbornly and so dispassionately and morosely at the expense of others and the environment?

Translated from: Gabriela Simon: Mehr Genuss! Mehr Faulheit! Mehr Schlendrian! Die Zeit Nr. 42/1992

Third

Pay more attention to the environment.



© Depositphotos | lilmallugirl

For example with

- **Tips for climate and environmental protection**
[WWF World Wildlife Fund](#)
- **Tips for climate protection**
[MYBLUEPLANET](#)
- **Tips for climate and environmental protection**
[Global Stewards](#)

Fourth

Experience the richness of nature.



Melinda in Firiteaz, Romania 2018

All of us need *very personal experiences* outdoors in the «richness» of nature.

Because we humans only protect what we appreciate and we only appreciate what we really know.



© Sunny studio | Shutterstock, Inc. [US] 2018

Our children and grandchildren will be grateful if we leave them an intact world so that they, too, can live their lives independently and freely.

*And finally
[and intended tongue in cheek]*

**Presumably only when
the last tree has been cleared,
the last river poisoned,
the last fish trapped,
will we realise that we cannot eat money.**

Source: Unknown

First and last

**You must be the change
you want to see
in the world**

Mahatma Gandhi

The question is not *how*?

The question is, *when* do we start to live sustainably?

