**TOPIC 8**

**Sustainable Development**

# Learning Outcomes

* 1. Act­ions that address sustainable development
	2. arguments concerning sustainable development
	3. participants in these debates

**See specification for full elaboration of the learning outcomes**

Some big questions addressed in this topic are:

* What are the causes of underdevelopment and poverty?
* Is sustainable development possible?
* How can we address the problem of climate change?
* Can technology help solve our environmental problems?
* Who is paying the price for climate change?
* What kind of action is needed, both individual and political?

**Possible Learning Activities**

##

## *Getting started:*

Organise students to research voluntary groups in their local community which aim to address environmental justice, global poverty or underdevelopment using questions such as:

What is their vision/aim?

What specific issues are they working on?

How do they work to achieve their aim?

Do you think this is an effective response?

Before examining the topic of ***sustainable development*** it will be necessary to explore the concept of ***development****;* what is means and how it is measured?

Provide students with different definitions or statements about development and ask them to rank the statements, with the one they agree with at the top and the one they disagree with at the bottom.

Organise paired reading activities using some of the links opposite and then ask students t­o debate the argument: *Sustainable development will not be achieved without massive life-style changes*.

## 8.1 actions that address sustainable development

* Provide students with key terms (or ask them to research them as homework) , such as ‘Fair Trade’, ‘Ethical Trade’,’ Free trade’, ‘Sustainable Development’.
* Debate the view that ‘*Our national actions contribute more to climate change than our individual actions*’.

Useful resources

The local library and parish/community centre will have information on local community groups. Students can also access information via the websites of groups such as St Vincent De Paul, Barnardos, An Taisce, The Irish Environmental Network, Friends of the Earth, Changing Ireland, ChangeX, etc.

[For a summary of different ways of measuring ‘development’ see ***80-20 Development in an Unequal World***, 7th Edition, Chapter 1, *Wealth, poverty and human development*](http://developmenteducation.ie/app/uploads/2017/05/80-20chapteronesample.pdf)

[See ***OECD 2017 report on global progress towards achieving sustainable development***, (tables are particularly useful](http://sdgindex.org/assets/files/2017/2017-SDG-Index-and-Dashboards-Report--full.pdf))

[For good introductory classroom activities on the topic of ‘Development’ see Global Action Plan’s *Action on Global Citizenship Teacher Toolkit*](http://globalactionplan.ie/education/resources/)

Specific resources to support teachers in teaching this topic can be found at <https://www.financialjustice.ie/education/lc-polsoc.html>

For [an explanation of the difference between fair trade and ethical trade visit](http://www.ethicaltrade.org/issues/ethical-trade-and-fairtrade) [this link](http://www.ethicaltrade.org/issues/ethical-trade-and-fairtrade)

[The debate for and against Fair Trade is set out by Colm Regan](http://developmenteducation.ie/feature/fairtrade-debated/) [here](http://developmenteducation.ie/feature/fairtrade-debated/)

Martin Lukas’ article ‘*[Neoliberalism has conned us into fighting climate change as individuals](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/true-north/2017/jul/17/neoliberalism-has-conned-us-into-fighting-climate-change-as-individuals)*.’ Guardian newpaper, July 17th 2017

Watch this [Ted Talk to hear Lauren Singer explain *Why I live a zero waste life?*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pF72px2R3Hg) Also see her website [www.trashisfortossers.com](http://www.trashisfortossers.com)

[The story of a T shirt](http://apps.npr.org/tshirt/?t=1531736897178#/title)

Storyofstuff.org: [Excellent short videos](http://storyofstuff.org/movies/)

* Ask students to pick an everyday product (phone, cotton T shirt, jeans, trainers, bar of chocolate, cooking oil) and trace its production trail, focusing on any points along the chain which might have an impact on the environment or on human rights.
* Ask students to research consumption patterns in different parts of the world and discuss how this reconciles with the UN definition of sustainable development and with targets for attaining the sustainable development goals (SDGs).
* Students can measure their carbon footprint and discuss ways of reducing it.
* Examine Ireland greenhouse gas emissions and compare national emissions with those of African countries (e.g. Burundi)
* Organise a paired reading activity using Chapter 3 of the book ***80-20 Development in an Unequal World***
* Discuss how students’ own energy use contributes to climate change. Follow up this discussion by examining the role of different groups/institutions in this issue and actions needed at an international level, national level, community level and personal level. (See Cliodhna Denny’s article opposite)
* Ask students to use NGO websites to research the impact of climate change on people in a number of specific countries/communities and then present evidence to support or refute the view that ‘*those people who are least responsible for creating climate change are paying the biggest price’*. Vandana Shiva
* Arrange for the class to interview somebody working with an environmental or development campaign, in person or via Skype (e.g. Trocaire, Friends of the Earth)
* Ask students to listen to some of the speakers at [Trocaire’s Climate Justice conference, 2015](https://www.trocaire.org/getinvolved/climate-justice/climate-justice-2015) and note the key ideas.

Useful trade related sites:

* [Ethical Trade](http://www.ethicaltrade.org/)
* [Clean Clothes Campaign](https://cleanclothes.org/)
* [Trade Justice Movement](http://www.tjm.org.uk/)
* [World Fair Trade Organisation](http://www.wfto.com/)
* [International Labour Organisation (ILO)](http://www.ilo.org/)
* [Fairtrade Foundation](http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/)
* [Labour Behind the Label](http://labourbehindthelabel.org/campaigns/shoes/)
* [Fairphone](https://www.fairphone.com/en/)
* [Palm oil: ravaging the planets lungs and tearing communities apart](http://www.stand.ie/palm-oil-ravaging-the-planets-lungs-and-tearing-communities-apart/)

Students can measure their footprint by completing a short survey at <http://footprint.wwf.org.uk> or at [www.myfootprintnetwork.org](http://www.myfootprintnetwork.org)

[Watch this short video](http://developmenteducation.ie/feature/consumption/) about consumption

See the [World Bank’s global consumption data base](http://datatopics.worldbank.org/consumption/)

Every other year, the CSO produces Environmental Indicators. [This page on the CSO website has easy links to sets of indicators going back over the years](https://www.cso.ie/en/statistics/environmentindicators/).

More data on Ireland's climate pollution can be accessed from [this EPA webpage](http://bit.ly/EPA_inventories). The latest one [is here](http://bit.ly/EPA_GHG15).

See ***80-20 Development in an Unequal World*,** (7th Edition) Chapter 3, *Sustainable Development – ‘enough for all, forever’* *by Roland Tormey*

[*Article on Sustainable Development* by CliodhnaDenny](http://developmenteducation.ie/feature/sustainable-development/5/)

See Bernie Sanders [interview with former US Vice President Al Gore (July 2017) in which we suggests ways of solving the climate crisis](https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jul/24/bernie-sanders-and-al-gore-on-solving-the-climate-crisis)

New York magazine, July 10, 2017 article [‘*The Uninhabitable Earth*’](http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html) ;

Watch ['*The Burning Question*'](https://vimeo.com/172758338)(30 min video) by Trocaire which explores the links between hunger and drought in African countries like Malawi and developed countries continued reliance on the fossil fuels that drive climate change.

[Also watch ‘*Drop in the ocean*- *Ireland and climate change*’](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xTz8xjL6g3E) (27 min video)

Further useful resources can be found at:

[World’s largest lesson: Lesson plans related to the sustainable development goals](http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/all-lesson-plans/)

* Ask students to create a mind-map showing how the issue of climate change/climate justice links to other topics they have examined in Politics and Society, such as human rights, power and decision making, social class and gender, patriarchy, the role of the media, the role of international and supranational bodies, migration/displacement of peoples, etc.

## 8.2 arguments concerning sustainable development

* Examine each of the following arguments and link them to some of the thinkers participating in these debates:
* Underdevelopment is caused by people in less developed countries not having the knowledge, technology and industry of people in developed countries
* Underdevelopment is caused by unfair terms of trade imposed by the west in collaboration with local leaders in less developed countries
* Underdevelopment is caused by corrupt local elites in less developed countries
* Industrialisation in less developed countries has driven women, who were the traditional environmental stewards in societies, to a position of powerlessness and poverty and has damaged the environment
* Technology and the laws of the free market will solve our environmental problems
* Development in harmony with nature requires a move away from big industries and urbanization, and towards small-scale, self-reliant communities using renewable resources
* Discuss the viewpoints above and ask students to find evidence and to come to a conclusion as to which of these arguments are most supportable (with reference to some of the key theorists).
* Ask students to find a range of newspaper opinion pieces which deal with issues related to development and environmental problems. Which of the above arguments are evident in these?
* Identify which arguments would be associated with a ‘left-wing’ position, which would be associated with a ‘right-wing’ position, and which could be associated with either.
* Research initiatives aimed at creating a more sustainable future such as the eco-village in Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary or other local initiatives

[Mary Robinson TED talk on ***Why climate change* *is a threat to human rights***](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JVTirBEfho)

[Ernesto Sirolli: *Want to help someone? Shut up and listen!* A provocative introduction to a discussion on development aid, and why some aid efforts don’t work. (Listen to the first 7 minutes)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chXsLtHqfdM&feature=youtu.be)

Thinking about Thinkers

Rostow’s modernisation theory of development

Gunder Frank’s dependency theory of development

 Thomas Hylland Eriksen’s idea of ‘overheating’

Martha Nussbaum’s human capabilities

 approach to human development.

Vandana Shiva

 [Students can follow Vandana Shiva on Twitter](https://twitter.com/drvandanashiva)

 and watch Vandana Shiva short videos, such as:

* [TedX Talk: Solutions to the food and ecological crisis facing us today.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER5ZZk5atlE)
* [Sydney Peace Prize Talk](https://vimeo.com/17376439)
* [Not Globalization, Localization](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUEQD7hmdUQ)

Seán McDonagh

* [10 minute video of Seán Mc Donagh speaking at Climate Change conference, May 2015](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xqkziwgLmU&list=PLcu5nblZPjWspFZdh-tYeIKvxbIWncqhW&index=15)
* [Irish Times article reviewing McDonagh’s book *The death of life: The horror of extinction,* 2005](https://www.irishtimes.com/news/columban-father-finds-the-devil-in-the-detail-1.406654)
* [Interview in which he critiques the role of Genetically Modified (GM) food](https://www.organicconsumers.org/news/catholic-priest-says-gmos-are-going-create-famine-and-hunger)
* [Podcast interview](https://www.trocaire.org/getinvolved/education/resources/global-voices) with Seán Mc Donagh

**Some links related to corruption** -

[Oxfam Briefing Paper, March 2017 ‘An economy that works for women.’ (See Exec Summary p. 2-5 and the case studies)](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5Cuser%5CDownloads%5Cbp-an-economy-that-works-for-women-020317-en.pdf)

[Case-study – Oxfam paper on the link between corruption and poverty/inequality in Malawi, 2015](http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/a-dangerous-divide-the-state-of-inequality-in-malawi-582678)

[*Myths and facts about corruption*](http://www.dochas.ie/sites/default/files/Corruption%20Myths%20and%20Facts.pdf) (Dochas)

 [Article '*Corruption a threat to development?*'](http://www.dochas.ie/publications/corruption-threat-development)

[For examples of corruption around the world and how it impacts on development go to *Transparency International* website](https://www.transparency.org/)

# How will students show evidence of their learning?

What am I looking for? Sample criteria for success

**Examples of ongoing assessment related to topic 8**

Present the case for and against technological solutions to climate change. Investigate both the benefits and cost. Where do the materials come from, how are the materials to make batteries for electric cars manufactured, for instance? What about the impact on workers in the fossil fuel industry if we transition to greener energy?

Imagine you have read an article in a journal which had the following headline:

‘*Genetically modified organisms represent a triumph of western technology which can only benefit the developing world*.’

Write a letter to the journal responding to this statement that is co-signed by Gunder Frank, Seán McDonagh and Vandana Shiva challenging this viewpoint

**or**

Prepare a two-minute presentation in the character for one of the above people, challenging the article’s claims.

Critically evaluate a piece of qualitative or quantitative research (not previously seen), on climate change noting:

* The key facts that can be gleaned from the data
* The quality and reliability of the evidence
* Conclusions and/or implications that could be drawn from the study
* How the data links to your wider learning in this topic

Data can be selected from websites such as:

* [The World Resources Institute website](http://cait.wri.org/)
* [Climate Change Performance Index](https://germanwatch.org/en/ccpi)
* [NASA](https://climate.nasa.gov/)
* [The World Bank](http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/climatechange)
* [The Environmental Protection Agency](http://www.epa.ie/researchandeducation/education)
* Capacity to critically interrogate an argument or viewpoint and consider opposing viewpoints
* Ability to provide reasons and evidence to back up their personal view.
* Use relevant research data, case-studies or examples to support the argument
* Ability to connect with broader concepts such as globalisation, sustainable development, human rights.