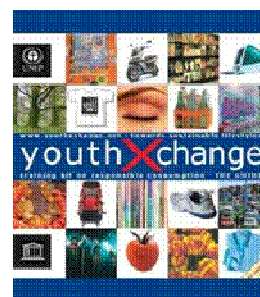


Young Consumers' Guide to Eco-Friendly Living

UNEP and UNESCO Announce a New and Updated Edition of the Popular YouthXchange Training Kit

Paris/Nairobi – October 1st, 2008. How to balance looking cool and feeling cool with the need to combat climate are among the key tips in the new United Nations YouthXchange Training kit. This updated version of the guide also gets to grips with the mountains of waste emerging across the globe as a result of today's fast throw-away society from mobile phones to fashion.

The 2008 Training Kit on Sustainable Consumption, produced by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is now in its second edition. YouthXchange is a train the trainer tool that aims to promote sustainable consumption patterns among young consumers worldwide. Among other novelties, this updated guide includes a chapter on how to find a balance between youths' consumer aspirations of dressing cool and fashionable while at the same time being aware of the impact of their consumption on, for example, climate change.



“YouthXchange is one of the most important youth activities connected to UNEP’s sustainable consumption and production work - it provides us with content that we are able to convey to other young people, empowering them to make different choices in their daily lives and be actors of change,” says Gabriela Monteiro, a UNEP Tunza Youth Advisor.

Young people today establish their identities through what they buy and seek social inclusion by purchasing the newest and “coolest” products on the market. Yet, when unguided, this consumption contributes to problems such as ozone depletion, climate change and hazardous wastes that not only affect our daily lives but impact the entire globe.

Through their daily actions, people can increasingly reduce their environmental impact. Well aware of this, UNEP’s Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE) and UNESCO decided to update the 2002 guide to include today’s trends. It provides statistics, case studies, games, examples of companies going greener, and alternatives for more sustainable lifestyles. New to the guide are the following features: a clear link between our consumption patterns and climate change, a more substantial e-waste section, updated data and scientific information and two new chapters: one on the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development and one on fashion. Fashion feeds a growing industry and ranks textiles and clothing as the world’s second-biggest economic activity for intensity of trade¹. However, human rights and the environment pay a heavy price – a price that people can increasingly choose to lessen with the rise of ethical fashion.

Achim Steiner, UN Under-Secretary General and UNEP Executive Director, said: “Young people in developed and rapidly developing economies can play a massive part in fighting climate change while being cool and keeping the planet cool too”.

“Through their purchasing patterns, life-style choices and networks with schools and universities to clubs, the music scene and sports they can also influence the wider world—influence that will be vital for moving

¹ UNEP *Resource Kit on Sustainable Consumption & Production* - www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/WEBx0008xPA-ResourceKitEN.pdf

communities, companies and countries to back a new UN climate change deal in Copenhagen's UN Climate Change Conference in 2009" he added.

"This initiative, which fits within the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD, 2005-2014), seeks to raise the awareness of young people and make responsible consumers of them," said Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO "Buying a product, what ever it is, is never a neutral act for the environment; its production, its use and the management of the waste it generates, all impact – to a greater or lesser degree – on our planet."

Through YouthXchange, UNEP and UNESCO work together to show young people that it is possible to translate our aspirations for a better world into everyday actions.

YouthXchange has been translated and adapted in 19 languages and is available in a bilingual (French and English) website – www.youthxchange.net.



Notes to editors:

For the 2008 YouthXchange version, please visit:

<http://www.youthxchange.net/main/english-guide.asp>

The UNEP Tunza Programme seeks to engage and involve young people through awareness creation, information exchange and capacity-building and through involving them in environmental decision-making processes globally and in the regions. For more information on UNEP's youth and children program, please visit: <http://www.unep.org/Tunza/>

About the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Created in 1972, UNEP represents the United Nations' environmental conscience. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, its mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations. www.unep.org

About the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO was founded on 16 November 1945. Based in Paris, this United Nations agency focuses its activities in the fields of education, social and natural sciences, culture, communication and information. www.unesco.org.

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