



Poster of the BeGreen Film Festival

Environmental Communication through Audiovisual Media

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Audiovisual tools provide a unique way to communicate a powerful message in a short space of time, to recapture public interest by presenting an issue in a new light, and to motivate action by taking an issue off of the page and into a real-life context. Audiovisual presentations, by nature, include both a sound and a visual component. In this newsflash, we focus on short films and animations that present an environmental message. Firstly, we present the European Commission's series of mixed-media video clips to inspire environmental action among teenagers, then we discuss two dynamic short films by European Environment Agency about climate change adaptation in arctic communities and sustainable consumption initiatives in Copenhagen, and finally we highlight the BeGreen Film Festival in France, a short film competition with a sustainability theme.

Green Tips by Teenagers

'You Control Climate Change!', the European Commission's climate change awareness campaign, won the Slovak Environmental Agency prize at ENVIROFILM 2009, the 15th International Environmental Film Festival, on May 15th for its new series of video clips encouraging young people to take up climate-friendly habits and practices. ENVIROFILM takes place in Slovakia annually. Teenagers from twenty-one different EU Member States share tips in their native language, ranging from unplugging appliances to train travel and green building.

The series shows real teenagers taking a leading role, countering climate change through simple everyday actions and motivating their parents to do the same. The increasing popularity of visual learning among young people makes audiovisual communication particularly suitable for reaching and affecting this target audience. The clips will soon be available on EU Tube and You Tube and will be screened at public events across Europe. Access them directly at: www.climatechange.eu.com.

« In summer, the best thing is an open window with a white curtain. What about you, do you prefer natural air conditioning? »
- Maria Ines, 17, 'You Control Climate Change!' video clip in Portuguese



Picture from the 'You Control Climate Change!' video clips



Global Warming Adaptation in Action

The European Environment Agency (EEA) uses short video and animated films to present environmental issues, from biodiversity protection to eco-design, using the medium to inspire, affect or educate viewers. The short film 'Global Warning: Early Warnings on Adaptation', for example, looks at how life is already changing as a result of rising temperatures in arctic communities. Using firsthand accounts by local people, 'Global Warning' shows how traditional practices and livelihoods are having to adapt to migrating animal populations and decreasing fish stocks. Audiovisual media is a versatile tool, in this case facilitating expression of abstract scientific ideas at a human level.



Creative Consumption features at Culture Night

The EEA also used audiovisual media to record its sustainable consumption initiatives at Copenhagen Culture Night last year. Addressing the issue inventively, through street theatre, a 'CO₂ friendly meal' and a panel discussion, participants at the event concluded that consumers have a responsibility to buy environmentally friendly products as much as businesses have a responsibility to produce them. The video highlights simple, sustainable practices consumers can undertake to make the step 'from knowing to doing', while demonstrating the creativity of local people in an appealing, colourful way on film. These films and many others are available through the EEA Multimedia Centre at: www.eea.europa.eu/multimedia.



Environmental Ideas Filmed On-the-Go

The 'Be Green Film Festival' was launched in France on April 20th, with a competition challenging young people to capture environmental issues in short films using their everyday tools for communication and entertainment: mobile phones, cameras and computers. The 'pocket film' challenge calls for films on the subjects of biodiversity, water, waste, energy, transport and climate change, which can be uploaded directly onto the competition website at: www.begreenfilms.com. A variety of styles are accepted and encouraged, whether comic, documentary-style or experimental in nature. Submissions will be judged on their originality and engagement with the topic by a group of scientific, political and media personalities and will be broadcast on France's TF1 and Ushaïa TV in the autumn.

Pictures from EEA films 'Global Warning: Early Warnings on Adaptation' and 'Spreading Green Consumption Tips in Copenhagen'

This newsflash is issued by the EECN which is DG Environment's support structure for European Environmental Communication Networks.

Visit the website of the EECN on:

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/networks/index_en.htm to learn more about the activities of the networks and read newsflashes previously released.

Don't forget World Environment Day on June 5th!

The theme of this year's event, coordinated by the UN Environment Programme, is 'Your Planet Needs You – UNite to Combat Climate Change', focusing on the need for consensus building before the Copenhagen climate convention in December. You can watch a video presentation of the event by host country

Mexico at: www.unep.org/NewsCentre/videos/player.asp?w=640&h=480&f=shortfilms/2008-09-22_WEDMexico



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