

USING WATER RESPONSIBLY - SUPPORT PACKAGE

International Day to Combat Drought & Desertification



June 17 is an annual day to raise awareness and promote advocacy for land and water stewardship. This special day, declared by the United Nations, is an opportunity to connect with the global community on a common issue. The causes of drought and desertification are attributed, firstly, to human activities (such as agriculture and deforestation) and secondly, to climate variations. A significant focus of this day is on actions we can take in order to reduce our water consumption.

Educators can bring a local perspective to global issues such as water shortage and soil loss. Take students on a journey to experience these realities (for example via video, stories or a field trip) to demonstrate the effects of drought and desertification. These changing landscapes are changing lives. A student may start to ask questions such as, "What can we do about global issues like these?" An important activity is an investigation into water and food systems, as well as personal water use. When discussing human impacts on the environment, there is an opportunity to introduce the water footprint concept. What are the best choices and practices for efficient water systems? Action-oriented lessons and resources are great approaches to this complex issue.

Action Plan

Step 1 - Slide shows are available on the Green Schools NS website and could be used to begin a lesson on water use: [Using Water Responsibly Grades P-2](#) or [Using Water Responsibly Grades 6-8](#).

Step 2 - Ask your Engagement Officer for the Green Schools NS Support Package for the Water Footprint. This resource puts human consumption in perspective and reflects on the environmental impact of our choices. Try the extended personal [Water Footprint Calculator](#) or other [Interactive Tools](#) from Water Footprint Network.

Step 3 - Try the Green Schools activity [Where Does Our Food Come From?](#) to discover how our food choices and climate are interrelated. Take this activity further by mapping food source locations and investigating various farming techniques, and climate requirements for food production.

Step 4 - Choose from the many water related lesson plans at [Resources for Rethinking](#), such as [Why Care About Water](#) for Grades 5-8. You could take a field trip to your local water treatment facility, or if that isn't possible, an interview that can lead to learning more about this facility.

Step 5 - To build on this momentum, the students may be interested in using the [Action Plan for Using Water Responsibly](#) to generate an idea for an initiative. These youth leaders may find inspiration for many action projects to create positive change!





Many Green Schools are using water responsibly by fundraising to install water bottle refill stations like this one. Ask your Engagement Officer for the Water Bottle Refill Station Support Package.

Other Resources

[Green Schools NS Pinterest board Using Water Responsibly](#)

[Green Schools NS Octopus Rain Barrel Activity](#)

[Green Schools NS Building a Model Watershed](#)

[Green Schools NS Water Footprint Support Package](#)

[Evergreen - Go With the Flow: Storm Water Guide](#)

[The Water Project - Teaching Tools & Resources](#) - [Lesson Plans](#) - [Sand Dams](#)

[The Water Footprint Calculator](#)

[Conserve Water for Kids](#)

[Protecting Our Sacred Water](#)

[Desertification Fact Sheet](#)

[Drylands Map](#)

[United Nations - World Day to Combat Desertification & Drought](#)

[United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification \(UNCCD\)](#)

[WWF - Reducing Water Footprint](#)

[WWF - Planet Water](#)

Videos

[Good Planet Foundation - Desertification](#)

[WWF Canada - What's Your Water Footprint?](#)

[TED Talk - How to Green the Desert with Alan Savory](#)