

# **50 Actions for the Planet**

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**2025 is a significant year for the planet.** For one, it marks the 55th anniversary of Earth Day. Meaning, for 55 years, individuals from around the globe have come together to celebrate, to appreciate, and to advocate for the natural world around us.

2025 is also significant as we are only five years away from 2030, and those next five years will be crucial for the future of our planet. According to <u>WWF's Living Planet Report</u>, we are at a tipping point for nature, putting at risk the fate of our one home and all our futures. We have the global agreements and solutions to set nature on the path to recovery by 2030, but the action taken falls far short of what's required. We need to work together to restore nature in a fair and inclusive way.

Though these challenges seem intimidating from an individual's perspective, everyone has a role to play, and everyone has the power to create meaningful change for our planet. In our 60 Actions for the Planet guide, WWF experts across key areas have collaborated to help individuals learn how they can reduce their environmental footprint and embrace more Earth-friendly lifestyle choices. Small actions can lead to lasting habits. From the food that you eat, the water you drink, the waste you create, and even the purchases you make, each daily choice made can leave an impact on the planet—**let's make it a positive one**.

#### action #1: reconnect with nature

Nature has a restorative power. Tap into the world around you by rediscovering nature in your own backyard. Taking time to appreciate what our environment provides can remind us that we are all connected—many communities, cultures, and languages, but only one planet. Let's celebrate it!

## action #2: <u>donate</u> to WWF to support our work globally

You can have an extraordinary, positive impact on our natural world. When you help WWF protect species, you contribute to a thriving, healthy planet. Donating through your employer's dedicated giving platform may unlock a corporate matching gift, doubling your impact. However you choose to support WWF, we are deeply grateful.

## biodiversity

**3. Diversify your plate with a sustainably sourced diet.** Our food systems have contributed to 70% of biodiversity loss on land and 50% in water. Shifting our eating patterns can help us restore nature and improve our health. Choose more sustainable ingredients, diversify your diet, up your veggies and balance your meat intake, eat minimally processed and nutritious foods, and reduce food waste. Use the <u>Planet-Based</u> <u>Diets Impact & Action Calculator</u> to see how changes to your diet can help reduce your food footprint relative to your country's environment, then take a look at what's in your weekly shopping basket, based on the diet you've picked.

**4.** Add native plants, fruits, and vegetables to your garden. Research the flora, fruits, and vegetables that are native to your region and plant a variety of them in your garden or backyard. This will help preserve and enhance the biodiversity in your area, while supporting the local ecosystem.

**5. Conserve water when you can.** Like us, biodiversity depends on access to freshwater resources. By shortening your showers or turning off the tap while washing your hands and doing the dishes, you can help to conserve water.

**6. Halt the spread of invasive species.** Non-native species can cause a lot of economic and environmental harm to a given area. You can help stop the introduction and spread of invasive species by making conscious decisions, like ensuring that your boat is cleaned thoroughly before entering it into a new body of water, cleaning your hiking boots before exploring a new area, planting and cultivating native species, not buying illegal wildlife products, and only buying firewood sourced from where you plan to burn it.

**7. Protect biodiversity strongholds** like the Amazon and the Great Plains. Deforestation and grasslands plow-up are leading causes of wildlife population decline and a major contributor to climate change. <u>Pledge to be a more conscious consumer</u> and choose to purchase products that are sustainably sourced.

**8. Respect local habitats.** While visiting your local parks, nature reserves, or hiking areas, make sure to stick to the walking path or hiking trail and throw trash away responsibly. This helps to protect plant and animal life, preserves the local ecosystem, and can help keep plastics out of nature, including streams and rivers. Teach children to do the same and be sure to pick up after your pet!

treshwater

**9. Transform your green spaces.** Even if you only have access to a small piece of outside space, remove any lawn grass (heavy water user!) and instead choose to plant native species, landscape with water-efficient plants, and use eco-friendly fertilizers. Adding a rain garden can also lessen the speed and quantity of storm-water runoff, which negatively impacts the health of local watersheds.

**10. Reduce your water use**. Many cities or states provide free, rebate, or pay-back programs to install low-flush toilets or to convert yards to drought tolerant landscape. Using your dishwasher without heavy rinsing can also significantly reduce your household water use.

**11. Buy water-friendly food.** Choose products from farmers who use smart and water-saving methods to grow food. This includes ways like collecting rainwater, drip irrigation, low-water crop rotations, and organic farming. It helps in reducing the overall water used to produce the food we eat.

**12. Protect riparian areas, the areas near rivers and lakes**. Stand up for and join efforts that keep areas near rivers and lakes safe. These zones are super important for keeping water clean, stopping erosion, and providing homes for different animals. Support rules that prevent too much building close to water.

**13. Join citizen science projects.** Get involved in projects that study how clean our local water is. By taking part and contributing data, you help scientists and groups working to understand pollution and find ways to protect our freshwater. You don't need to be an expert – just share what you observe!

**14. Join a river clean up. H**elp to clean up debris from your local water ways before it breaks down into microplastics, gets consumed by native species, or flows into the ocean. It is a great way to volunteer, get to know your community, and enjoy some fresh air.

**15. Fill your washing machine and run it on cold.** Run the washing machine when it is full and use cold water helps save the energy used for multiple loads and for heating water on the hot/warm settings. Additionally, air dry clothes whenever possible as dryers consume a lot of energy.

forests

**16. Look for the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) logo.** <u>Pledge</u> to look for the FSC logo to know that your wood and paper products, including paper towels, tissues, and toilet paper—or even the packaging they're wrapped in—come from a responsibly managed forest. Switching to forest-friendly products will help protect wildlife too!

**17. Choose secondhand furniture.** An alternative to buying new wood furniture bearing the FSC logo is purchasing furniture from thrift shops and antique stores. There are also online sources for resale or free furniture, such as The Freecycle Network<sup>™</sup>. Reusing furniture can be cost-effective, and it's good for our forests!

**18. Learn why forests are important.** Nearly three-quarters of the world's population uses nontimber forest products, such as for food, fuel, and medicine. Forests are also <u>vital for human health</u>—including by filtering our air and water. Additionally, forests help mitigate the hazardous effects of climate change through carbon sequestration. You can learn more on our website and share this knowledge with friends and family.

**19. Get out into nature.** Whether exploring the trees growing on a city street or visiting a local forest or park, connecting with the nature around you will help you understand and share why protecting, conserving, and restoring forests and other vital ecosystems is so important.

**20. Keep forests pristine.** You can help forests thrive by picking up trash, especially single-use plastics like water bottles and bags, while enjoying a hike through the trees. And don't forget to clean up after yourselves! Pack it in, pack it out.

**21. Reduce your food footprint.** Agriculture is a leading driver of deforestation. Check out the tips in the Food section to minimize food waste, which helps keep forests standing.

**22. Plant a native tree.** Trees absorb CO<sub>2</sub> as they grow, and native trees are important parts of the ecosystems we rely on for clean air, fresh water, and even food.

**23. Embrace imperfections in food.** About <u>16% of food loss</u> occurs on the farm due to cosmetic reasons. However, <u>nutritious food comes in all shapes, sizes, and colors</u>. Wilting produce? You can reinvigorate some veggies, like lettuce, with a quick ice water bath. Browning bananas? Peel and freeze them for baking or smoothies. Extra leftovers or soft produce? Add spare items into soups, sauces, or stews, which don't require crisp texture but will benefit from the added flavor.

**24. Reinvent your leftovers.** Whether it's leftover chicken, veggies, or pasta, get creative in the kitchen. Turn that extra protein into a flavorful soup or stew, use vegetable scraps to whip up a homemade broth, and explore online for a variety of leftover recipes. From sandwiches to casseroles, the possibilities are endless. Not only does this approach help minimize food waste—<u>in the U.S., 40% of all food goes unsold</u> <u>or uneaten</u> but it also adds a touch of excitement to your everyday meals.

**25. Be wary of date labels on food.** Most food is safe to eat longer than we think, especially fresh and canned goods. Most expiration dates have nothing to do with safety and many foods are still safe to eat days, weeks, or months after the "best by", "sell by", and "best before" labels. Trust your senses to know when food has gone bad, or you can search the <u>FoodKeeper App</u> to learn more about food freshness and storage options.

**26.** Just freeze it. You can freeze almost anything—eggs, meats, produce, sauces—whether you just bought it or already cooked it, to extend the shelf life of food. Keep containers tight with a little room for liquids. Freeze in portions for easy access, and date and label so it's easier to manage. A little extra work up front will save you cooking, prep, and shopping time later. And you'll save money if you use everything you buy.

**27. Get to know your local farmers.** Farmers are facing a difficult time as prices fluctuate and concerns over shortages rise. Farming is vital for our economy and food system. By supporting nearby farmers or your local farmers' market, people can begin to understand how agriculture can serve as a tool for conservation and food security. And with greater understanding, we can begin to share in the challenge of producing enough food for everyone without impacting our planet.

**28. Start home composting.** Initiate a home composting system to recycle kitchen scraps and organic waste but check before adding non-food materials to your home compost, not all certified compostable materials are suitable for home composting. Composting not only reduces the amount of food waste sent to landfills, and plastic bags used for trash, but also produces nutrient-rich compost that can be used to enhance soil health in your garden or for potted plants. It's a simple and effective way to contribute to a circular and sustainable food system.

**29. Speak up against food waste.** Ask your representative to address food waste through the 2025 Farm Bill. Today, food is the number one item (by weight) we throw into landfills, which are the third largest source of methane emissions as a result. Learn more at the <u>ZeroFoodWasteCoalition.org's</u> page on the <u>Farm Bill</u>.



### plastics

**30. Support public policies that will unlock circular solutions** needed to keep plastic out of nature. Tell your lawmakers that you support the <u>UN Global Treaty on Plastic</u> as well as <u>Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)</u> in the United States. You can also petition your local government to enable better recycling capabilities and initiatives to cut plastic waste in your community.

**31. Learn about local recycling systems and responsible plastics disposal.** Learn the difference between biobased, biodegradable, recyclable, and compostable plastic so you know the proper methods of disposal for each material. Find out which plastics your town's recycling system accepts, and just as importantly, which they do not accept so you can be sure to avoid contamination.

**32. Choose reusable products.** Paper to-go cups can take up to 30 years to decompose and many aren't recyclable due to plastic linings. Styrofoam takes even longer to decompose. To minimize waste, invest in high-quality reusable items to replace common single-use plastics like cups, bags, water bottles, straws, and utensils – and remember to bring them along whenever you leave the house. Choose reusable business models to decrease the demand for single-use everyday items like soda and bulk grocery items.

**33. Always recycle glass.** It's essential to keep glass out of landfills as it's highly recoverable and non-biodegradable. Unlike plastic, glass is 100% recyclable and does not degrade in quality when recycled. Always recycle glass when possible – or better yet, challenge yourself to reuse glass containers for new purposes, like food storage or an art project.

**34. Shop sustainably for new items.** Look for items that are not only recyclable, but also manufactured from recycled content. When available, opt for package-free products like shampoo bars or bulk refills and shop for second-hand clothes.

**35. When you see litter, pick it up!** Every piece of plastic you dispose of responsibly is one less piece in nature. Join a local cleanup event when possible, or even organize your own.

**36. Be mindful of microplastics.** Plastic may break down, but it never goes away. Mismanaged plastic waste leads to microplastics, which are tiny particles of plastic that break off and do not decompose. They are now in our air, soil, and water, with scientists estimating we ingest up to 5 grams of these particles weekly. By reducing the plastic waste that ends up in landfills, we can help limit the spread of microplastics.



**37. Look for responsibly caught seafood.** Help keep our fisheries and fish stocks healthy by looking for the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) and Aquaculture Stewardship Council (ASC) labels on product packaging or restaurant menus. Their blue and green fish logos help ensure your fish can be traced back to responsibly managed fisheries and farms.

**38. Respect boundaries when interacting with marine life.** Seeing whales, sea turtles, or coral reef fish in the wild can become an exciting and treasured memory. To ensure that ocean wildlife continue to thrive, take only photos and videos of your experiences and stay respectful of wild animals.

**39. Opt for reusable products when possible.** While some single-use plastics can support safety and health, many plastics—such as non-reusable water bottles, plastic bags, and straws—pollute our ocean and can destroy ecosystems and endanger marine life. No plastic belongs in nature, even if it claims to be biobased, biodegradable, or ocean-safe. Consider what items are truly necessary and which can be skipped. Less materials consumed means less opportunity for materials to pollute our oceans.

**40. Help prevent ghost gear.** Abandoned, lost, or discarded fishing gear, commonly referred to as ghost gear, contribute significantly to the problem of plastic pollution in our ocean. Abandoned fishing lines and nets can also trap marine species like sea turtles, manatees and dolphins, so if you go fishing be sure to take your gear home with you.

**41.** <u>Pledge</u> to work together to solve the world's greatest environmental problems and protect our oceans.

**42. Skip the motor.** Choose wind-powered sailboats or self-powered kayaks, stand up paddle boards, or canoes rather than motorboats when enjoying time on the water.

**43.** <u>Increase your ocean IQ</u>. The more you learn about the ocean and its amazingly varied ecosystems, the better prepared you'll be to inspire change— and help others do the same.

#### oceans

#### climate

**44. Learn more about your personal carbon footprint and household emissions.** By now, most of us have heard about the many advantages of heat pumps and smart thermostats—and these are great tools! But there is so much more you can do. Calculate your emissions and find out how you can reduce them by using an online carbon calculator, like this one from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

**45. Commute by walking, biking, carpooling or using mass transit.** More than a quarter of the vehicle-miles travelled by households are for commuting to and from work—and usually with only one person in the vehicle. Consider some of these alternative ways of getting around that can offer big reductions in carbon emissions.

**46. Plan and combine trips.** A lot of driving involves frequent trips nearby, to go shopping or run errands, for example. Another great way to reduce carbon emissions is able and able and and combine trips to reduce the miles you need to travel. Going with a friend? Carpool together instead of driving separately.

**47. Change Your Fashion Habits.** The UN estimates that the fashion industry—particularly "fast fashion"—accounts for up to ten percent of global greenhouse gas emissions. That's even more than aviation and shipping combined! Consider revamping your style to focus on fewer, staple pieces and buy from consignment, resale, and thrift shops. And instead of throwing away your old garments, repair, re-tailor, resell or donate them!

**48. Switch to LEDs.** The light-emitting diode (LED) lightbulb is significantly more efficient, longer lasting and more durable than traditional incandescent or compact fluorescent lightbulbs. In fact, LEDs use at least 75% less energy, and last up to 25 times longer than incandescent lighting.

**49. Protect yourself and your community from extreme weather impacts.** Work with community planners and local representatives to promote the use of green infrastructure and resilience measures. This can include promoting the use of permeable pavements and native plants to improve drainage and act as buffers to extreme weather.

**50. Reduce your trash volume.** Trash ends up in landfills, and according to the USEPA, landfills are responsible for about 16.9% of all human-caused methane emissions in the U.S. Compost your food waste when able and avoid single use products—especially plastics! You can also shop at stores—both online and in-person—that make it a point to minimize their use of packing materials.

wildlife

**51.** <u>Report</u> any suspected illegal wildlife product to the <u>Coalition to End</u> <u>Wildlife Trafficking Online</u> and don't buy illegal wildlife products. Become a <u>Cyber Spotter</u> to help keep endangered wildlife products offline.

**52. Respect wildlife boundaries.** When outside, help limit casualties caused by human\_wildlife conflict by observing wildlife from a distance. This could include observing wildlife from a car or at least staying 100 yards back. Be sure to stay on marked trails, keep pets leashed and controlled, and educate children on the importance of admiring wildlife from a safe distance – for your safety and theirs.

**53. Sign on to <u>Stop Wildlife Crime</u>** and commit to preserving nature's beauty for future generations.

**54. Skip the plastic bag and dispose of trash responsibly.** Litter can harm wildlife and pollute landscapes. Plastic bags can cause entanglement for wildlife and negatively impact their habitats and can also be mistaken for food. A floating plastic bag in the ocean may look like a jellyfish or squid, common prey species for <u>sea turtles</u> and <u>whales</u>, respectively. When possible, opt for a reusable bag instead.

**55. Minimize your light pollution.** Wildlife need the dark! When considering outdoor lighting, try to only light areas you need. Warm LED lights or motion sensor lights can go a long way. In addition to saving energy, by using motion sensor lighting and warmer bulbs, you'll help migrating birds, bats, and insects like fireflies. Leaving lights on can disturb the natural behavior of nearby nocturnal animals, from migrating birds to hunting bats to scintillating fireflies. You can make a positive impact by adjusting your lighting and leaving areas dark for wildlife.

**56. Plant a wildlife-friendly garden.** At least 30% of crops and 90% of flowering plants rely on pollinators, including bumble bees, to produce fruit. Plant regionally native species that attract pollinators, reduce pesticides, landscape with water-efficient plants, and use eco-friendly fertilizers. Discover native plants in your area with this <u>Native Plant Finder</u>.

**57**. <u>Symbolically adopt a species</u> and your contribution will support WWF's global conservation work.

**58. Be an ambassador in you community**. Champion our planet and speak out about the importance of sustainability in your own community. Consider becoming a <u>Panda Ambassador</u>, the ultimate next level of engagement for those committed to saving wildlife and the environment while supporting WWF.

**59. Inspire and educate our future conservation leaders.** Inspiring our next generation to care for the Earth will secure a better future for both people and wildlife. Check out our <u>Wild Classroom</u> for family fun and learning opportunities; <u>Find Your Inner Animal</u> and expand your wildlife knowledge with <u>Animal Trivia Games</u>; download the <u>WWF Together</u> app for interactive experiences with endangered species and natural habitats.

**60.** Share this guide and <u>our additional resources</u> with families, friends and colleagues. Together, we can find solutions for a better future where people and nature can thrive. **Together**, **it's possible**.

Thank you for supporting WWF in any way you are able — whether through financial support or taking action to reduce your footprint — together we can protect the future of nature.



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