

## REFLECTION PAPER

This reflection paper was done with the intention of reflecting about what students know or do not know about climate change as a global issue. Three students studying different programs at different institutions were asked about the topic of climate change. For simplicity purposes, this reflection is focused on what student thinks are the causes of climate change, its general and future impact, and how it could be mitigated.

According to the United Nations (2023), climate change is one of the biggest global issues with greater impacts socially, environmentally, and economically. Despite this, knowledge about this issue is rather minimal and varying between generations. According to Luís et al. (2018), lack of information about the causes of global warming and climate change, and therefore people cannot take informed decisions or adequate change. All three students interviewed were not aware of the specific reasons for climate change, as they explained that climate change was the result of “human behaviour”. Moreover, one of the students mentioned “ignorance” as a cause, they explained that people has decided to take a comfortable living standard disregarding how or to which extent they obtained it.

### 1. The Impacts

All students claimed that we are already experiencing the effects of climate change. They provided the example of Southern Sweden, where they have experienced snow around April or May – when snow usually falls on winter -. One of them also mentioned California and claimed that being one of the warmest places has experienced snowfall. The students mentioned what they think would be the future impacts of climate change, such as the disappearance of regions. They argued that due to the high temperatures, the ice on the pole’s melts, rising tides – further supported by Mokhov (2022). In the long run, the water level will increase to a point where low altitude regions will be covered by water. Overall, they showed a clear understanding of how climate change affects us right now, and how it will affect us in the future.

### 2. The Solutions

In general, the students agreed that “not enough” has been done when it comes to easing and mitigating climate change. They mentioned how there has been government intervention, especially in the European Union such as emission quotas. However, they pointed out that most

countries do not seem to take this seriously and would ignore the quotas set. They also talked about how “green energy” (energy obtained from renewable resources) has been on many government agendas with the subsidization of power plants, wind turbines, solar panels, etc. However, they brought up how this alone would not be enough to aid on the battle against climate change. Moreover, the students raised digitalization and how it had helped easing the human impact on the environment. For instance, being able to have meetings digitally on a global scale instead of having someone flying to different countries on an ongoing basis, which would reduce travelling, and therefore, emissions. Despite this, they still argued that the measurements put to combat climate change were not enough.

A statement that I found very interesting was that they mentioned how they would value information stating to which extent are personal actions changing the course of climate change. They pin-pointed how they are being more cautious when it comes with consumption, transportation, etc., but it would not make a positive impact if bigger contributors were not changing. For instance, they brought up how firms and corporations (especially big multinationals) are one of the biggest contributors to all kinds of pollution, but there was little to no regulation on that matter.

### **3. Final Thoughts**

After having talked with the students, they all said that they were impressed with how little they knew about climate change. They raised their awareness of the problem, and wanted to make a positive impact on it, however, they realized that they must be more informed about the issue to understand the measures needed.

In a personal level, this assignment was very interesting to realize how information about climate change flows around with young students. It is rather alarming that young people are misinformed about a global issue that requires immediate action. On the other hand, I agree with some of the students when raising how big corporations impact the environment with no limitations, and how more intervention is needed. Finally, despite not knowing to which level my personal decisions impact, I will keep going with responsible consumption for goods and services, water, electricity, etc.

## References

Malmö University student A. (Interview, 24 April 2023) had general questions about climate change.

Malmö University student B. (Interview, 24 April 2023) had general questions about climate change.

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