Reflection task - Sustainable development

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The earth's temperature has been rising over the last century, and if this trend continues, it could have severe consequences over the next 100 years.

The first consequence that we discussed is the rising sea levels. As temperatures increase, ice sheets and glaciers are melting, which can cause the ocean levels to rise. One of us pointed out that this causes problems for polar bears as seen in the wwf commercials on tv. Since polar bears live on the ice and the volume of ice is decreasing.

Furthermore, we discussed the effect of rising temperatures for the agriculture sector. One of the interviewees had read about farmers in India, having seen a steady decrease in rice yields over the last decades as a result of hotter temperatures. Another one who is of east african descent spoke about his relatives in Somalia who are suffering from a long drought, which has caused a lot of poverty in the region in recent times.

Then we got into the topic of solutions and actions that are being taken by society. This was the absolute hardest for the interviewees to discuss. We spoke about specific memories of earth hour, the one day a year our teachers asked us to turn off all of our electronic devices for one hour. Then we got into the subject of the United nations sustainable development goals and among them they could name five of the goals. Immediately, the discussion turned into what each and one as individuals do to lower their carbon footprint. One of the interviewees thinks that taking the train as opposed to flying when traveling is one thing that they feel proudest of. Another interviewee points out that he does not take as much individual responsibility, but does not feel as it is his footprint that is to blame but rather industries and bigger institutions. He thinks the government should incentivize companies to more efficiently use energy. Furthermore, one of us

points out that we need more education in the subject to further increase awareness to make decisions that are more favorable for the environment.

Examine the concept of "Sustainable Development" in relation to oceans and coasts.

In our discussion we stated that the concept of sustainable development means developing the world without depleting the resources that we of our generation have so that future generations can make use of these as well. In relation to oceans and coasts, we figured it is important to regulate and preserve the oceans since it is a very meaningful source of food. This means for example implementing institutions to, for example, stop the fishing of endangered species, and banning bottom trawling - regulating the amount of fish that fishing agencies can catch.

One of the interviewees also said that he remembers the fact that the concept of sustainable development is to be seen from three aspects, which are ecological, economical and social. This is important for him, he says, because we still need development in our industries economically, whilst not damaging the environment ecologically. In relation to oceans and coasts however, we mainly discussed ecological sustainability.

We also discussed the pollution of the ocean and that it is a target of UN sustainable development goals to reduce pollution. One of us brought up that the Baltic sea, which was the nearest ocean when we grew up, is suffering from a long history of pollution, which has affected the seals very much, which in turn affects the whole ecosystem. Then we watched this infomercial from the 60s, describing the perspective we had of the ocean then.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t03saJVFkv4

To conclude, it is apparent that although the topic causes a lot of emotions among students and a sense of urgency in the matter, there are big holes in the knowledge regarding solutions for climate change, sustainable development targets and so on. The interviewees had a lot of specific, personal associations to either their home country, their local issues or things seen in

popular culture. Furthermore, we all agree that we need more education in the matter to increase awareness. This can cause ripple effects that can make our future business leaders and professionals make better decisions for the environment.