

Press release, Thursday, March 14th, 2019

Pupils realize the need for urgent political action

Student sustainability networks from 6 countries solidarize with the initiative "Fridays for Future" and call for participation at the Global Climate Strike for Future on Friday, March 15th 2019

One who does not think about the future, will soon have great worries. - Konfuzius

All around the world pupils and students are organizing demonstrations instead of attending classes. **"Fridays for Future"**¹ is a rapidly growing global movement led by young people who demand **climate justice** in the face of inadequate climate policy. These young students are taking to the street during school hours to demand **climate protection** and a rapid **fossil fuel fade-out**.

On March 15th, 2019, pupils from all over the world will participate in the first globally coordinated climate strike. They will stand up for their fundamental rights that are put at risk through the climate crisis.

In particular, we call up on students to support the Global Climate Strike for Future with an active and visible participation and to follow the example of already committed students like Luisa Neubauer.²

As nation-wide university student networks for sustainability from Germany (*netzwerk ne.V.*)³, Austria (*forum n*)⁴, Switzerland (VSN)⁵, France (REFEDD)⁶, the Netherlands (rootAbility)⁷ and Great Britain (NUS)⁸, as well as two global networks oikos international⁹ and GRLI¹⁰, we are enthusiastically following this movement and declare our unwavering solidarity with all the young people politically positioning themselves in the public sphere. We pay respect to the courageous and responsible engagement of these pupils!

"Fridays for future" uses a black-or-white approach to bring attention to the insufficiency of policy makers' current efforts to seriously tackle climate change and its devastating consequences.

They bring attention to the missing framework conditions necessary to transition towards a sustainable society.

They bring attention to our decision makers' careless handling of the natural ecosystems that all humans fundamentally depend on.

¹ <https://fridaysforfuture.de/>

² <https://www.zeit.de/campus/2019-02/fridays-for-future-luisa-neubauer-organisatorin-demonstration-schueler-klimaschutz>

³ <https://netzwerk-n.org/>

⁴ <https://www.uninetz.at/forum-n/>

⁵ VSN: Schweizer Verband studentischer Organisationen für Nachhaltigkeit <http://vsn-fdd-fss.ch/>

⁶ REFEDD: Réseau français des Etudiants pour le Développement Durable: <https://refedd.org/>

⁷ <http://rootability.com/>

⁸ NUS: National Union of Students, <https://www.nus.org.uk/>

⁹ oikos International: students for sustainable economics and management, <https://oikos-international.org/>

¹⁰ GRLI: Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative, <https://grii.org/about/our-network/>

The pupils' concerns and demands are highly legitimate. This is, amongst others, underlined by the joint statement of more than 12.000 scientists from Germany, Austria and Switzerland (#Sciencetists4Future). The scientists highlight the scientific findings that call for immediate and consistent action and thereby forcibly support the "Fridays for Future" movement.

As student networks for sustainability, we stress the importance for schools and universities to responsibly educate children, youth and young adults. **The transition towards a sustainable society will only be possible if teaching and learning at schools and universities accordingly undergoes a transformation.** Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and transformative education are vital for contemporary schooling. It also demands open and experimental spaces that allow learners and teachers to interact in an environment of critical discussion, visionary creativity and independent experimentation.

We consequently declare the following **demands**, addressing all political decision makers as well as teachers and staff from educational institutions:

- Do not penalize pupils and teachers for attending Fridays for Future demonstrations!
- Take the demands of the pupils seriously! A dialogue at eye-level is insufficient, as we need to build structures that steer towards fulfilling the Paris Agreement.
- Integrate Education for Sustainable Development and transformative education as central parts in the curricula of all schools and universities! This is an educational practice that is currently being demonstrated by the pupils themselves.

Transitioning towards a sustainable society and tackling climate change demands decisive action. To comply with their social responsibility, political decision makers must start creating the necessary framework conditions now. **Politicians who still refuse to act despite the wake-up calls of pupils and scientists gamble with the living conditions of current and future generations.**

