



Aktion Klima!

Organisation of climate action campaigns at schools, educational institutions and German schools abroad

 Education | [Information](#) [Consulting](#) [Participation](#)



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Project information

[Support programme](#)

Innovative climate action projects

[Project duration](#)

1 November 2008 to 29 February 2012

[Project leader](#)

BildungsCent e.V.

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www.bildungscen.de/aktionklima/

For a good climate in schools

Children and young people spend a lot of their time in school, and the experiences they have there shape their values, attitudes and behaviours. For this reason, it makes sense to give climate action a prominent place in all aspects of school life.

At a glance

In practice, most schools are under enormous pressure to comply with strict curricula, implement reforms or respond to demanding parents. Free time is a luxury. In such an environment, on-the-ground support and mindful dialogue is needed to get children and teenagers involved in climate action. 'Aktion Klima!' of the non-profit association BildungsCent e.V. delivered both. Over 2,200 schools with motivated faculty and student bodies got involved in climate action campaigns and achieved a lot with many smaller actions. The basis for the project's success were carefully thought-out, targeted information materials and toolkits as well as a lively exchange with and among the participating schools.



Students committed to Aktion Klima!



71 percent stated having achieved their project goals to a large extent or completely. Many of the projects were found to have an influence on school life as a whole. Some 67 percent of the projects took place outside of the basic curriculum, and 33 percent during class time. A total of 25 percent of the schools presented their results to the school authorities or the community. Many of the initiated activities also gave rise to further actions. Indeed, 96 percent of the schools stated wanting to remain involved beyond the project.

What happened next?

- The project Aktion Klima! is no longer being continued, but there are follow-up projects with modified climate boxes and targets, for example, 'Aktion Klima! Mobil' and 'Aktion Klima engagiert';
- Materials developed during the project are still available on the website but are no longer being updated:
www.bildungscnt.de/programme/programme/aktionklima/downloads/.

Into the second round with prominent advocates

In February 2010, the project team announced the second round of Aktion Klima! for all participating schools. A highlight of this round was that members of the Bundestag were asked, via a letter from the German Federal Environment Minister, to personally hand over a climate box to a participating school in their electoral district. The request was taken up by 170 members of the Bundestag, which of course drew ample media coverage for the action. Member of the Bundestag Burkhard Lischka, for example, handed over the climate box to students from Calbe, who used the tools for doing experiments in selected classes, in particular their physics class, as well as in an extracurricular environmental group.

Networking and knowledge exchange using the internet

Knowledge exchange between the schools was an important project goal: By May 2012, some 960 schools had posted their projects on the online documentation centre, which was also accessible to the schools that had not managed to apply for and join Aktion Klima! on time. Through this route, everyone was able to be inspired by and learn from the climate box and exchange with one another.

Motivated participants

A total of 4,012 primary and secondary schools applied for participation, of which 2,285 ended up participating. Each of the participating schools received their own climate box, and 1,300 of them received grants. The schools were spread evenly across Germany's federal states. Many of them have continued to plan climate action measures on their own since Aktion Klima! ended.

Contribution to climate action

Through knowledge and action, Aktion Klima! showed students as well as teachers that they can make a difference and that there are things they can do to protect the climate. Although these results are less quantifiable, we can assume that the overall effect is positive. In addition, the grants were used to implement concrete carbon reduction measures that effectively avoided CO₂ emissions, even if these were not measured or captured as part of the project.

Lessons learned

The experience of the project is valuable for all institutions that want to engage young people or schools. Given the great diversity of institutions out there, actions of this type must be able to provide a differentiated range of offers from which the interested parties can choose from.



Direct and regular exchange

Through surveys and the sending of motivational materials, the project team remained in regular contact with the schools as well as with the pupils. This helped to maintain and promote the enthusiasm of all parties involved.

Checklist for success

- direct and regular contact with participants;
- recognition of commitment through certificates or presentations in project publications;
- flexibility with regard to both content and the budget in order to respond to specific needs;
- involvement of prominent multipliers and provision of communication guidelines to ensure public visibility.

Recognition through certificates and presentations

Recognition for commitment is crucial for the motivation of young people. Aktion Klima! gave participants this recognition by, among other things, allowing them to present their activities in the climate book. All pupils also received a personalised participation certificate.

Flexibility in terms of content and use of funds

During the course of the project it became clear that some of the activities could not be implemented as planned. In one case, for example, a tree planting action had to be called off. Or, the primary school variant of the climate box turned out to be too technical for children of that age and had to be transformed into the school garden box. In both cases, the project adapted and let go of its initial plans – early on. Flexibility thus calls for two things: the capacity to change gears when needed regarding the content, and the associated rebudgeting of funds.

Visibility thanks to prominent multipliers

The involvement of members of the Bundestag for the handing over of the climate boxes gave the project a considerable boost in terms of media coverage, which in turn motivated the pupils even more.

Suggestions for the spread of results beyond schools

To consolidate the learnings and to promote public awareness, suggestions for presenting the project results in the public realm are helpful. To this end, the project team developed guidelines for communicating and dealing with the media. These guidelines were designed to be of use in the immediate term for this project as well as for similar projects to come.

Climate action needs your initiative

Since its launch in 2008, the National Climate Initiative (NCI) of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB) has been supporting numerous projects that contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. Funding has been given to a broad range of activities, from developing long-term strategies to providing practical assistance and investment aid. With a focus on advancing climate action on the ground, the Initiative benefits consumers, municipalities, businesses and educational institutions.

Legal information

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Sources: This project summary is based on the final project report and publications in professional journals.