

## **Screening Guidelines for *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour***

We have a choice: will this century be one of human activities that increase the likelihood of local and global social disruption and collapse, or will this time become the century of environmental recovery? *The 11th Hour* promotes the idea that people can "vote" every day by making small changes—from buying compact fluorescent light bulbs to recycling—in order to reduce our individual "carbon footprints."

Environmental education often begins close to home, encouraging learners to forge connections with and understand their immediate surroundings. The awareness, knowledge, and skills needed for these local connections and understandings provide a base for a more sophisticated comprehension of causes, connections, and consequences. For each environmental issue there is not just one right answer or solution. Environmental education cultivates the ability to recognize uncertainty, envision alternative scenarios, and adapt to changing conditions and information.

To this end, the following guidelines can be used by classroom and community educators in a variety of contexts—from a formal classroom setting to an evening program or workshop—to foster crucial dialogue about the critical status of our environment, and how individuals—through education, awareness, and simple actions—can make a positive difference.

### **Recommended Audiences**

*The 11th Hour* is appropriate for any young adult or adult audience interested in exploring environmental issues and solutions. In particular, this film provides an opportunity for institutions of higher learning to lead the way towards environmental recovery, as tomorrow's leaders are on college campuses today. The film provides viewers with opportunities to construct their own understanding of a variety of complex issues relating to the environmental crisis. Post-viewing discussions can help transition viewers from absorbing information, to taking action.

### **Note to Facilitators**

Before screening *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour*, watch the video, creating a list of the film's main points for post-screening discussion. These points might include, among others:

- climate change/global warming
- overpopulation
- excessive consumption
- biodiversity loss
- speed of devastation
- air and water pollution
- social justice
- "green" decision making and "redesigning design"
- "biomimicry" – looking to nature's operating system for sustainable solutions
- renewable energy
- local community action

In addition, as you preview the film, consider and take note of places that would be good to stop the film for interim discussions.

### **Pre Viewing Guidelines for *The 11th Hour***

1. Give a brief introduction to the film, outlining the four primary focus areas of the film:
  - testimony from experts regarding current environmental crises
  - the history of attitudes and actions that have led to the current situation
  - a showcase of some innovations in technology

- actions people can take individually and collectively to stop the current trend towards global devastation
2. Write some or all of the following ISSUES on chart paper for use during a post-screening discussion:
    - climate change/global warming
    - overpopulation
    - excessive consumption
    - biodiversity loss
    - pollution
    - social justice
    - sustainable “green” building
  3. Prepare another piece of chart paper for listing ACTIONS individuals and groups can take.

**Note to facilitators:** This list will be elicited from the audience as part of the post-viewing activity.

4. Distribute index cards to the audience and ask viewers to write thoughts, feelings, and questions that come to mind during the screening. Let them know that you will not be collecting the cards, but that the cards are for their own use to help them remember what they were thinking during the viewing of the film.

**Note to facilitators:** Keep in mind that each viewing group will be different. Be sensitive to the level of maturity and experience of each audience and structure activities to reflect each group’s abilities and interests.

5. Before screening the film, use some or all of the following questions as a way of encouraging the viewers to use their knowledge, personal skills, and assessments of environmental issues as a basis for environmental problem solving and taking action.
  - What do you see as today’s most urgent environmental crisis?
  - Where have you gotten information about environmental issues?
  - Do you think the mainstream media present environmental issues clearly and accurately?
  - What actions have you taken to conserve and preserve the earth’s resources?
  - In assessing your skills as an advocate for something you care about, what do you see as your strengths?

### **Post Viewing Guidelines for *The 11th Hour***

Post-viewing extensions can support the development of an active learning community where people share ideas, expertise, and prompt ongoing inquiry. Ultimately, the goal of environmental education is to develop an environmentally literate population capable of exercising their rights and responsibilities as global citizens.

Use some of the following ideas to extend the learning of *The 11th Hour*:

1. Lead a post-viewing discussion using some or all of the following questions:
  - Describe some of the emotions you felt during the film. Which aspects of the video had the greatest impact on you and why?
  - What information contained in the video was new to you?

- What topics presented in the film would you like to explore further? Do you know what you need to know in order to continue learning about environmental issues? If the answer to that question is no, how can you find out what you need to know?
  - Discuss the ways that eating locally produced food is an environmental issue. What can individuals do to support the local production and consumption of foods?
  - Who should see this film and for what purposes? Who might be unreceptive to the ideas in the film and why?
  - Share one issue or item that you wrote on your index card while you were watching *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour*.
  - As a result of your having seen this film, what, if any, specific actions do you think you will take?
2. To ensure understanding of some of the basic concepts, conduct a Glossary Activity by dividing the viewing audience into five groups and assigning each small group one of the words from the *Handout: Selected Glossary* to discuss and present to the whole group. Allow about 15–20 minutes for small group discussion and 5 minutes for each group’s presentation. Allow time for questions at the end of the activity.
  3. Have members of the audience create personal action plans that include ten things they could start doing immediately. [See *Handout: Taking Action*.] Suggest that they monitor progress and add to their lists regularly. An alternative to this could be to post three pieces of chart paper in the room labeled START DOING, STOP DOING, and DO DIFFERENTLY. Have members of the audience write their ideas on each of the three charts. When everyone has had a chance to write, read the list aloud to the group and allow for questions and comments.
  4. Create an Action Plan Activity by dividing the audience into groups using the following categories: AT HOME, AT SCHOOL, AT WORK, IN THE COMMUNITY, TRANSPORTATION, GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY, and EDUCATING OTHERS. Give each small group chart paper and markers and have the groups brainstorm and chart ideas to share with the whole group. Allow 15–20 minutes for small group discussion and 5–10 minutes for each small group to present its ideas. Allow time for questions and comments.
  5. Alternately, elicit a list of Action Ideas from the whole group and list them on the prepared chart paper. Divide the audience into five groups and assign each group one or more of the Action Ideas listed. Give the groups 10–15 minutes to brainstorm ways that their Action Ideas could be implemented locally. Reconvene as a large group and allow 5–10 minute for each small group to present its ideas, and field questions and comments.
  6. Research some of the organizations mentioned in the film and listed in the attached *Handout: Resources* to find out what you can do to assist these organizations in achieving their goals.
  7. Take a trip to a transfer station in your community and find out how the various kinds of waste are disposed of. Research how decisions are made about where such transfer stations are located in your community.
  8. Take part in existing environmental service projects in your community. If such opportunities do not currently exist, consider organizing projects in some of the following areas: trash clean-up, soil testing, composting, planning, planting, and maintaining a rainwater garden or other native habitat area, monitoring water quality, and educating others about the environment.

9. Find the source of your food and water. Where does your water come from? What is the water cycle in your local area? Where does the food you eat come from? How is it transported and processed? How much of what you eat comes from local areas? What can you find out about what is in your food, water, and air?
  
10. Contact people in your community with expertise in related environmental issues to present their perspectives; people to consider include park rangers, natural history museum staff, members of local Green Decade Coalitions, science teachers, government agents with oversight of waste disposal, to name a few.

### **Handout: *The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour*: A Synopsis of Film**

The expression “the eleventh hour” means the last moment when change can happen to avert possible disaster. In the film *The 11th Hour* a variety of world experts explore how humanity has arrived at the current convergence of environmental crises while exploring steps that people can take to avert global disaster. In summary, the earth is nearing meltdown, beyond climate change. The process began with the Industrial Revolution, when people started mistakenly looking on nature as external to themselves and exploitable without limits. Forests have undergone major destruction. The ocean is becoming stagnant. Almost everywhere, the soil itself is largely damaged. In addition, 50,000 species a year are becoming extinct; no ecosystem can be identified as improving.

Humans suffer from increasing numbers of diseases caused by pollution. At fault is the overproduction of non-sustainable manufactures, immense waste and destruction, and an unupportable population. The primary cause for much of the crisis is the fuels we use, petroleum being the primary one.

Through nature itself, the technology exists to solve some of these crises, and part of the solution is for people to live more consciously in harmony with nature as opposed to dominating it. According to the film, in a few years we will have reached the point of no return. We are not only at the eleventh hour, but at the last few seconds of that hour. Within this century, if nothing effective is achieved, planetary damage will be dramatic and total in every area. Although impossible to predict, extreme disaster could be quick once the balance is decisively tipped in the wrong direction, and it will happen everywhere.

*The 11th Hour* features leading experts from around the world, including former Soviet Prime Minister Mikhail Gorbachev, scientist Stephen Hawking, former head of the CIA James Woolsey, and sustainable design experts William McDonough and Bruce Mau, along with over 50 other scientists and world leaders who discuss the most important environmental issues facing the earth while presenting strategies to avert the crisis.

*Handout: Taking Action: Minimizing Your Impact on the Planet*

- The most important thing individuals can do is to become educated about the global crisis and act in accordance with newly acquired information. Follow local and federal legislation and contact your elected officials regularly to let them know how you want them to vote on issues affecting the environment. Write letters to the newspaper so that your commitment becomes public and energizes others.
- Shape policy by voting with your dollar. Support corporations that have good business practices and respect the environment by buying their products
- Form community groups around the topics that are important to you by visiting [www.11thhouraction.com](http://www.11thhouraction.com). There, you can provide and find support, share ideas and solutions, and learn how to make a difference in your communities policies and programs.
- Recognize that small steps can be important. Turn off heat and air conditioning when you leave a room. Buy low wattage light bulbs. Use compact fluorescent bulbs. Recycle everything that can be recycled. Turn off and unplug appliances that drain energy when not in use. Buy local and organic food. Eliminate chemicals from your life as much as possible. Be vigilant but not sanctimonious so that others are inspired, but not turned off, by your commitment.
- Avoid paper and plastic plates and cups whenever possible. If you have regular committee meetings have committee members bring their own coffee mugs to the meetings and serve snacks that do not require plates.
- Whenever possible, carpool with others to avoid using a car, walk, or ride a bike, or use public transportation. If you do drive, keep car tires inflated appropriately; under-inflation uses excess fuel. Be conscious about all decisions regarding transportation.
- Use Energy Star appliances and wash clothes in cold water.

## Handout: Selected Glossary

### Global Warming

Climate change is the long-term fluctuations in temperature, precipitation, wind, and all other aspects of the earth's climate. Global warming is defined by the United Nations Convention on Climate Change as “change of climate which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods.”

### Greenhouse Gases

Greenhouse gases are chemical compounds in the atmosphere that trap heat there. They retain a proportion of the sun's heat through a mechanism known as the greenhouse effect. Greenhouse gases, mainly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), are naturally present in the atmosphere in small quantities (less than 1%). Greenhouse gases are those gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of infrared radiation emitted by the earth's surface, the atmosphere and clouds. It is very likely that greenhouse gases released by human activities are responsible for most of the global warming observed in the past 50 years. The warming is projected to continue and to increase over the course of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and beyond.

### Biodiversity

The variety of life on earth—or its biological diversity—is commonly referred to as biodiversity. The number of species of plants, animals, and microorganisms, the enormous diversity of genes in these species, and the different ecosystems on the planet, such as deserts, rain forests, and coral reefs are all part of a biologically diverse earth. Biodiversity boosts ecosystem productivity where each species, no matter how small, has an important role to play, and it is this combination that enables the ecosystem to possess the ability to prevent and recover from a variety of natural disasters. This is useful for humanity as a larger number of species of plants means more variety of crops and a larger number of species of animals ensures that the ecosystem is naturally sustained.

### Carbon Footprint

A carbon footprint is made up of the sum of two parts: the direct, primary footprint and the indirect, secondary footprint. The primary footprint is a measure of the direct emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> from the burning of fossil fuels. This includes domestic energy consumption and transportation from, for example, cars and planes. The secondary footprint is a measure of the indirect CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the whole life cycle of products we use, those associated with their manufacture and eventual breakdown.

### “Green” Building

“Green” building is the practice of increasing the efficiency with which buildings use resources—energy, water, and materials—while reducing building impacts on human health and the environment, through better site planning, design, construction, operation, maintenance, and removal—the complete building life cycle. Other similarly used terms include sustainable design and green architecture.

## *Handout: Selected Resources*

### Organizations and Websites

Global Green USA  
[www.globalgreen.org](http://www.globalgreen.org)

New American Dream  
[www.newdream.org](http://www.newdream.org)

Green Seal  
<http://www.greenseal.org>

The Higher Education Associations Sustainability Consortium (HEASC)  
<http://aashe.org/heasc>

Rocky Mountain Institute  
<http://www.rmi.org>

Second Nature  
<http://www.secondnature.org>

Clean Air - Cool Planet  
<http://www.cleanair-coolplanet.org/>

David Suzuki Foundation  
[http://www.davidsuzuki.org/climate\\_change/](http://www.davidsuzuki.org/climate_change/)

Green Facts  
<http://www.greenfacts.org>

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)  
<http://www.ipcc.ch/>

Natural Resources Defense Council  
<http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming>

Sierra Club  
<http://www.sierraclub.org/globalwarming/>

Union of Concerned Scientists  
[http://www.ucsusa.org/global\\_environment/global\\_warming](http://www.ucsusa.org/global_environment/global_warming)

World Wildlife Foundation  
<http://www.worldwildlife.org/climate/>

Bioneers  
<http://www.bioneers.org>

The Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF)  
<http://www.ulsf.org/resources.html>

## Books

*Fight Global Warming Now: the Handbook for Taking Action in Your Community* by Bill McKibben (2007)

*The Weather Makers: How Man Is Changing the Climate and What It Means for Life on Earth* by Tim Flannery (2006)

*How to Save the World in Your Spare Time* by Elizabeth May (2006)

*The Quest for Environmental Justice: Human Rights and The Politics of Pollution* by Maxine Waters and Robert D. Bullard (2005)

*Nature's Operating Instructions* Edited by Kenny Ausubel and J.P. Harpignies (2004)