



School of Sustainability

Friends of the Earth Europe has been awarded a major 3-year grant by the European Commission for its project “School of Sustainability in European Year of Development 2015 and beyond”.

The project is funded as part of the EU's programme on Development Education and Awareness Raising. It will allow us to implement informal education activities in 20 EU member states, to develop critical understanding and promote action amongst EU citizens on some of the most important development, environmental and social justice issues facing people and the planet today. 2015 has been named the “European Year of Development”, as the deadline for meeting the Millennium Development Goals, and the year in which the international community will agree on the future global framework for poverty eradication and sustainable development.

We are drawing on the experience in other regions of the Friends of the Earth International federation (most notably in Latin America and in Africa), where “sustainability schools” have been set up using techniques from popular education, environmental education and political ecology. These schools, which take place for a few weeks each year, support the creation of common political analysis, the sharing of skills and development of leadership, within and between Friends of the Earth groups.

The European “School of Sustainability” project begins in April 2015, and runs for a period of 3 years. It will bring together 23 partners from the Friends of the Earth European network of national Friends of the Earth groups and Young Friends of the Earth groups. Europe-wide events will take place on themes including climate justice, food sovereignty and extractive industries. There will be opportunities to share skills on mobilisation, communication, and organisational development, both online and at these events. The insights gained, and the skills learnt, will be put into practice by project partners through a wide variety of local and national events including seminars, practical workshops, and residential events like summer camps. These events will help our network to reach out to new people, including communities directly affected by social, economic and environmental crises.

The project also includes broad outreach activities, including actions in Paris and across Europe around the United Nations “COP21” climate summit at the end of 2015, and solidarity activities to defend the rights of environmental activists around the world.

The “School of Sustainability” will enable Friends of the Earth Europe to become a stronger, more engaged and more politically coherent network. We will be able to reach more people and achieve the transformational change that we need, for people, for the planet, for the future.