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## Take Action on Climate Change Now

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Montecito mudslides. Maryland flooding. Hurricane Florence. Hurricane Michael. Camp Fire.

These natural disasters, some of the deadliest ever seen before, happened during the span of 12 months. And these five were some of the worst, but not all that happened. These natural disasters are an effect of climate change, and we must take action to address climate change. One might ask, why do we have to deal with climate change? Why can't we just let others deal with it? The correct response can be taken from President Barack Obama's statement: "We are the first generation to feel the effect of climate change and the last generation who can do something about it."

Global Climate Change data from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) states that "since the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the acidity of surface ocean waters has increased by about 30 percent." 2016 was the warmest year on record in Earth's history, and the "planet's average surface temperature has risen about 1.62 degrees Fahrenheit since the late 19th century."

It might not be possible to stop climate change right now because humans have already been producing harmful emissions like carbon dioxide for many years, but we can take action to stop some of climate change's worst effects. And we must take action because it is affecting us, our loved ones, and our communities already.

As climate change contributes to warmer climates and increased temperatures, heat-related illnesses, including cardiovascular and respiratory problems, and vector-borne illnesses can spread more easily around the world. Rising sea levels can threaten water supply and take away habitats for many organisms in polar regions. Our lifesustaining freshwater makes up one percent of the Earth, and it is increasingly being depleted. Increased carbon dioxide levels and unpredictable weather patterns can disturb agricultural productivity and affect food availability. Increased risk of flooding and

natural disaster means that more precautions must be taken for protection; moreover, there will be higher costs to rebuild communities, such as Paradise, after a natural disaster.

Our generation is the one who must step up to fight the effects of climate change. We are the ones who will register to vote and elect officials who will represent our views on climate change and propose legislation such as the Green New Deal that will address environmental issues. We are the ones who will bring awareness to the "hidden" issues of climate change by becoming activists in-person and on social media to spread awareness. We can promote using clean and efficient energy sources in our community in order to decrease the use of pollutant fossil fuels.

On local, national, and global scales, we must take a stand and speak out for taking action on climate change. Earth is the only home we have, and we must do all that we can to try and reverse the effects of the damage we have caused to our home.

#### Footnotes

"Climate Change Evidence: How Do We Know?" NASA, NASA, 18 Mar. 2019, [climate.nasa.gov/evidence/](https://climate.nasa.gov/evidence/).

Shapiro, Emily. "5 Natural Disasters That Devastated the US in 2018." ABC News, ABC News Network, 8 Dec. 2018, [abcnews.go.com/US/natural-disasters-devastated-us-2018/story?id=59367683](https://abcnews.go.com/US/natural-disasters-devastated-us-2018/story?id=59367683).