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Young environmental advocates showcase green projects at UN workshop



Youth Vision for Green Economy highlighted at UNEP-Bayer Young Envoy Programme

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Young environmental leaders from 18 developing countries are meeting at a United Nations backed workshop in Germany this week to showcase their own, innovative solutions for sustainable development, ranging from eco-tourism to eco-friendly cooking fuel.

The 47 young people were selected from over 800 applicants to represent their countries at week-long meeting of the Young Environmental Envoy Programme, jointly sponsored by the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)) and the chemical and pharmaceutical giant Bayer at the company's headquarters in Leverkusen.

“The participants in the UNEP-Bayer Young Environmental Envoy Programme are trailblazers in that they demonstrate the kinds of low-carbon, resource-efficient ‘green economy’ solutions

needed for a fairer, more sustainable and prosperous planet,” UNEP Acting Director for Communications and Public Information Nick Nuttall [said](#).

“The energy and creativity embodied by the young envoys and their projects – such as solar powered phone chargers in Venezuela, or compiling indigenous environmental knowledge and bringing it to young people in Ecuador – should serve as inspiration to their home governments, and others, to take concrete action on sustainable development next year at Rio+20,” he added, referring to the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development.

Other projects include creating an online map of recycling centres in Argentina, an eco-tourism initiative for cyclists in Chile, and replacing charcoal with eco-friendly briquettes in cooking stoves in Kenya.

Through interactive workshops and field trips, the programme aims to provide the young green innovators with expertise, support and new ideas to encourage them to implement or expand their projects upon their return home.

Originally introduced in Thailand, the programme was subsequently extended to Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, Colombia, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Peru, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Singapore, South Africa, Venezuela and Vietnam.

The Leverkusen meeting comes two weeks after 1,400 young people issued the Bandung Declaration at the UNEP-organized Tunza International Children and Youth Conference on the Environment in Indonesia, calling on young people to lobby their governments to make Rio+20 a top priority, adopt more sustainable lifestyles and reduce their ecological footprints, and educate their communities and raise awareness about sustainable production and consumption.

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