

## Conserve Challenge: Guide to campaigning

We've created this step-by-step guide to take you through the stages in planning and running an effective campaign. It's just one example of how to do this that you can adapt as required. Remember to stay safe while doing this activity and be careful when using the internet and social media.

Thank you for helping to fight the ocean emergency. If we act now we can make a real difference to the future health of the ocean.

### Step 1: Decide your campaign focus

**Research the four big issues** affecting ocean health:

- Pollution and litter
- Overfishing
- Endangered marine life
- Climate change and ocean warming.

There's lots of useful information on our website, including:

- Ocean emergency
- What we do
- Ocean pollution
- Climate change

**Choose the topic** you would like to be the focus of your campaign.

**Research solutions** to the issue you've chosen. Create a list of the actions that individuals, businesses or governments could take.

**Choose your target audience.** Who would you like to make aware of the issues and change their behaviour:

- family and friends?
- your school, college or workplace?
- people in your area and local businesses?
- people your age around the UK?
- business leaders and politicians?

**Set a target** for what you would like to achieve during your year of campaigning.

**Write down your reasons for campaigning.** You'll be working on this project for a while and you may find there are times when you're overwhelmed or downhearted. At those moments you can re-read your reasons for carrying out this work and boost your motivation.

## **Step 2: Plan your campaign**

You can't plan every moment of your campaign, but you should have an idea of the big things you'll do to build awareness and support.

**Write a plan** setting out the main activities you'll do each month. Try to make sure that something interesting is happening every day, week or month, depending on how long your campaign will run. Things to consider include:

- How will you launch your campaign?
- How will you keep people interested?
- How can you encourage people to share information?
- How can you motivate people to take action?
- How can you show the difference people will make?
- Do you want people to show you the action they will take e.g. with a pledge or by sharing an image?
- Are you going to create an attention-grabbing moment?
- How will you thank and celebrate your supporters?

Research relevant hashtags if you're using social media and remember to tag us @mcsuk.

If you're stuck for ideas, look at campaigns from charities or brands that you admire. What tactics do they use?

**Decide on your communication methods.** How will you reach your target audience with your messages? Make a list of ways you could communicate with your audience, for example:

- your own or your families' or friends' social media accounts
- presentations at your school, to local community groups, to your old primary school, to youth groups
- letters to local businesses
- posters in local shop windows and on noticeboards
- a local newspaper
- local WhatsApp or Facebook groups
- letters or petitions to councillors, politicians or business leaders.

Information for Action provide help with lobbying and contact details for politicians and business leaders around the world.

At [writetothem.com](http://writetothem.com) you can input your postcode to find out your elected representatives in local and national government.

**Create a list of facts and stats** that you can use in your campaign to help people understand why this issue is important.

We've created material that might be useful, including:

- Facts and stats
- Videos from our YouTube channel.

### **Create your publicity materials**

How you will grab the attention of your audience? Do you need images, videos, stories, facts and stats? You'll create materials as you go along but you can make your life easier by creating a set of materials to use throughout the campaign.

Websites like [Canva](https://www.canva.com/) provide free templates of posters, flyers and social media squares. [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com/) and [Creative Commons](https://creativecommons.org/) provide free-to-use images.

### **Step 3: Campaign for change**

This is it! Have fun running your campaign.

Remember that you don't have to follow your plan to the letter. If you find things work out differently from how you planned, or you get an unexpected opportunity, you can adapt your plans. Let us know what you're doing by tagging us [@mcsuk](https://twitter.com/mcsuk).

You may experience difficult moments where things don't go as planned or as you expected. Try to remember that everything you're doing will make a difference to the health of our ocean.

### **Step 4: Reflect on your achievements**

#### **Thank supporters**

In the final weeks of your campaign, it's important to celebrate success. Thank everyone who has supported you and changed their behaviour. You could create a thank you video, email, poster or social media post showing the difference their changes will make to our ocean.

## **Learn from your experience**

Reflect on what went well and what could be improved. You could create a list of dos and don'ts to be used by other John Muir award participants.

Take a moment to celebrate your achievement. Your work will help to create a cleaner, better-protected, healthier ocean.

We would love to see what you did. Please send your photos and a description to [education@mcsuk.org](mailto:education@mcsuk.org).

## **Campaign ideas**

To get you started, here are a few ideas of actions that can be taken to help the ocean.

### **Action area: microfibre pollution**

- Organise a clothes swap
- Run a learn to sew campaign
- Petition school uniform manufacturers or retailers to reduce polyester use
- Petition government and manufacturers to install filters in washing machines
- Run a campaign to change washing machine habits.

### **Action area: ocean litter**

- Run a refuse/reuse campaign
- Eliminate single-use plastic items from school
- Petition local takeaways to use sustainable packaging
- Run an Unflushables campaign
- Run a Bin the Butt campaign
- Write to water companies.

### **Action area: overfishing**

- Make a cookbook of sustainable fish recipes and sell it to parents and the wider community
- Persuade local restaurants to use sustainable fish
- Work with your school caterers to make lunch sustainable
- Create an ad campaign for 'unpopular' fish
- Petition the local council and hospital to introduce sustainability rules into catering contracts.

### **Action area: protecting endangered marine life**

- Join a Marine Protected Area campaign
- Run a No Plastic Bag campaign
- Reduce single-use plastic
- Run a Don't Let Go campaign.

### **Action area: fight ocean warming**

- Run an energy-saving campaign
- Encourage walking/cycling/use of public transport
- Run a refuse/reuse campaign
- Work with the school caterers to reduce the carbon footprint of lunch menus
- Petition the local council to reduce their carbon footprint.

### **Thank you!**

Thank you for helping us to fight the ocean emergency. Find out about more ways you can work with us to save our seas at [mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do](https://mcsuk.org/what-you-can-do)