

## Words for Your World

### **Year 13 Winner: Simran Randhawa, Colton Hills Community School**

To the members of the UN,

Climate change is an expression the majority of us have come across. We are aware it is the change in the Earth's temperature and weather patterns – in recent years, we have seen its devastating consequences. Forest fires, immense flooding and dire droughts have impeded our lives.

In 2021, no matter where you went, you would hear of forest fires. The European Space2 Agency stated, "fire affects an estimated four million square kilometres... of Earth's land each year"; this size is larger than India (which is roughly 3.28 million square kilometres). Wildfires destroy the habitats in which many species reside; plants, trees, insects and animals all suffer. They exude vast quantities of gases that add to global warming, such as carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide. Increasing air pollution results in respiratory and cardiovascular issues that can cause chronic illnesses. The higher the planet's temperature gets, the more fires we can expect. The destruction of forests is cataclysmic for a multitude of reasons and we need to combat this. By planting more trees and decreasing forestation, we can improve our situation.

It's estimated that an average tree absorbs around 10 kilograms of carbon dioxide per year for the first 20 years. This is a large sum. But, looking at the amount of pollution that companies release is much bigger. A company that almost the whole world knows of is Amazon. In 2019, their total carbon footprint was 51.17 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMT CO2E) – 15% more than what it was in 2018. Amazon has pledged to decrease this enormous amount – but how successful will they be?

We drive average citizens to recycle, reuse and reduce waste. These are all helpful. But, to create a shocking impact – an impact that has a majorly positive effect – we need to look to major companies like Amazon. Companies, which produce millions of greenhouse gases, need to be targeted. We need to set international quotas on how much greenhouses can be produced by these companies; we need to establish rules and regulations to ensure they create the minimum amount of damage to the environment. As usual, we should continue to encourage citizens to participate in protecting our world but with the addition of more encouragement to large-scaled corporations too.

On behalf of the youth in this world, I can confidently say we want to live on a planet where the world's environment is safe from human greed. Our avaricious wants have led to increased levels of pollution and our need to monetize every opportunity has become a dangerous slope where we've begun to neglect our planet. We want to live in a world where the air is safe to breathe; there's no litter on the beaches or streets; the sea animals don't suffocate because of man-made plastic. We have heard this before: there is no planet B. There's nowhere else for us to go. So, we need to save our home.

Thank you.