

Four Millennials who are Leading the Charge for a Greener Earth



Image Source: [Unsplash](#)

For the last few decades, scientists have been warning with rising urgency about the state of the Earth's climate and ecology and the damage being done to it by the human species. As environmental conditions gradually worsen, more and more people are waking up to the reality that humanity's biggest challenge is the need to save our planet. Faced with apathy from older generations and uncertain futures for themselves and for generations to come, younger adults are often painfully aware of this environmental emergency. With their fresh perspectives and fierce passion, these young people are inspiring change worldwide.

4 Inspiring Millennials Who Are Fighting for a Better World

The four young people profiled here all share common attributes. They all believe in speaking truth to power, finding workable solutions and taking bold action. And most of all, they all believe that ours is a world worth saving. Whether through dedicated research, incisive discourse or inspiring creative arts, these young adults are committed to doing all they can to preserve the Earth for future generations to enjoy.

Leading and Inspiring Through Poetry

Hailing from the [Marshall Islands](#) in the Pacific Ocean, poet and activist Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner is all too aware of the looming threat of climate change. Like many other low-lying areas, the islands are under existential threat from rising sea levels due to global warming melting the polar ice caps. In 2014 she addressed the United Nations Climate Summit with her poignant poem “Dear Matafele Peinem”, written to her infant daughter. Fierce yet full of love, the poem is Jetnil-Kijiner’s vow to protect her child from the impending danger of climate change.

Leading Through Speaking the Truth

Sarah Myhre is an academic researcher and science communicator who studies palaeoclimatology and uses the framework of human rights to talk about climate action. She presents a feminist perspective on environmental concerns such as the gendered and intersectional impact of climate change, drawing the ire of climate deniers and misogynists alike. Myhre also calls attention to sexism and harassment in STEM fields and is a tireless champion of women and people of colour in science.

Leading Through Research

Kate Marvel is a research scientist currently working at Nasa, as well as a science writer and communicator. Her research centres around climate modelling and the multitude of effects that clouds can have upon the Earth’s atmosphere. Marvel writes a column, “Hot Planet” in Scientific American which covers the scientific basis of global warming, climate politics and human advocacy efforts. She is relentlessly passionate about educating people of all ages and walks of life about the complex interactions and implications of global warming.

Leading Through Inspiration and Action

Xiuhtecatl Martinez is a musician, indigenous environmental activist and director of the grassroots conservation organisation [Earth Guardians](#). Hailing from an indigenous Mexican Aztec background, he grew up acutely aware of the threat to our planet and has been making waves as an activist since childhood. In 2015 at the age of just 15, he spoke at the UN, and in the same year, he launched a landmark legal case with 20 other child plaintiffs to sue the US Government for failing to take action on climate change. Their case argues that the government has violated their constitutional rights to clean air and a healthy environment. When he is not fighting the system, Martinez is a hip-hop artist who uses his music to share stories and spark inspiration.

Though they are often stereotyped as entitled and self-absorbed, young people are deeply concerned about sustainability and how our everyday choices are affecting the environment. Millennials want their work to be taken seriously, and they are working on their own ways to take action now, asking: if not us, then who? While their paramount concern is for the Earth’s changing climate and the impending threat that it poses to humankind and other species, young people are also deeply troubled by the myriad of other challenges facing our world. According to a 2017 [World Economic Forum survey](#), Millennials cite war, poverty, inequality, government

corruption, education and religious conflicts among the most pressing challenges the world faces today. For a famously ‘selfish’, disengaged generation, they seem to be distinctly altruistic and conscientious.

Younger generations have a vision of a cleaner, fairer world, and increasingly, they are not waiting for permission to take action. While Baby Boomers still hold much of the institutional power in leadership roles and often seem happy to uphold the status quo, as they age into retirement the new guard is arriving with an urgent mission to fix the mess made by previous generations. Instead of deriding them for their youth and idealism, people of all generations would be well advised to listen to them, support and elect them and signal boost their voices. Millennials want to save the world: the least we can do is let them try. Our future survival as a species may depend upon it.

You can find more information on these activists' work below.

Video) Poem Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner

Dear Matafele Peinem

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJuRjy9k7GA&feature=youtu.be>

Sarah Myhre

Published Articles:

The Culture of Harassing and Demeaning Women Scientists

<https://www.thestranger.com/slog/2017/11/17/25572044/the-culture-of-harassing-and-demeaning-women-scientists>

Yes, Climate Action Is a Moral Issue

<https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/observations/yes-climate-action-is-a-moral-issue/>

Xiuhtezcatl Martinez

Projects:

<https://www.earthguardians.org/story>

Kate Marvel

Talks:

https://www.ted.com/talks/kate_marvel_can_clouds_buy_us_more_time_to_solve_climate_change

Collaborations/Contributions:

What's Really Warming the World?

<https://www.bloomberg.com/graphics/2015-whats-warming-the-world/>

Harper is an advocate for sustainable living and a supporter of environmentally-friendly products and businesses. When she isn't busy freelance writing for blogs or business sites such as [Harrows](#), you can find her working on a variety of amazing DIY projects! Follow her on [Tumblr](#).

The [MAHB Blog](#) is a venture of the Millennium Alliance for Humanity and the Biosphere.

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