Meet the CHILDREN'S CLIMATE PRIZE WINNERS

Two inspirational teens from India talk us through their award-winning projects!

CHILDREN'S CLIMATE FOUNDATION

WHAT *IS* THE CLIMATE PRIZE?

These **international awards** celebrate **young innovators** who have made **extraordinary efforts** for the **climate** and **environment**! Launched in **2016** by a **Swedish renewable energy company**, a panel of seven judges award winners with a **diploma**, **medal** and SEK 100,000 (**$16,000**) to continue developing their projects.

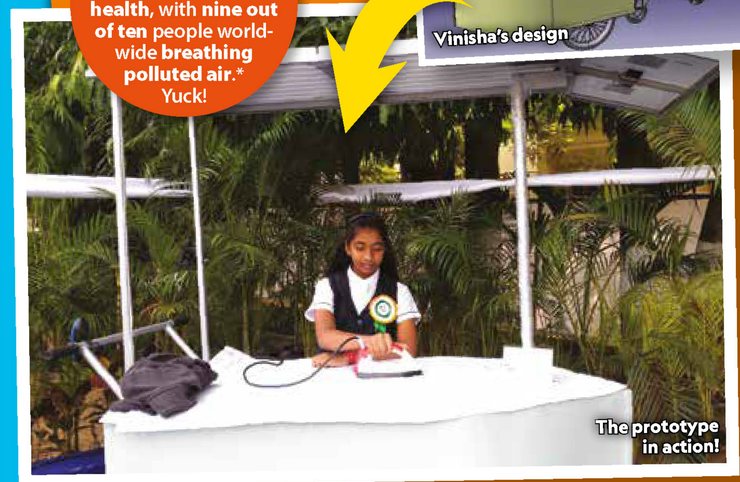
CLEAN AIR PRIZE

Awarded to **Vinisha Umashankar** for her **SOLAR IRONING CART**!

We should face problems head on and solve them.

Name: *Vinisha Umashankar*
Age: *14*
From: *Tiruvannamalai, India.*
Hobbies: *Singing, painting, keyboard, gymnastics. Also loves making pancakes.*

Air pollution is the **biggest environmental threat to human health**, with **nine out of ten** people worldwide **breathing polluted air**.* Yuck!



The prototype in action!

In **India**, it's common for people to get their **clothes ironed** by workers known as '**ironing wallahs**'. But one day, **Vinisha** became aware of the **clouds of smoke** produced by her local ironing man. And she noticed he had a **cough**, too.

That's because the **irons** are heated with **burning charcoal** (made from **wood**) which is highly **polluting**. And with **10 million ironing carts** on the streets of India, each using **5kg of charcoal per day**, that adds up to a huge number of trees being **destroyed** which, when burned, **pollute the air** *and* contribute to **climate change**.

One of India's many 'ironing wallahs'

Charcoal-heated irons like this one are bad for the environment!

THE SOLUTION

Vinisha designed a **solar-powered ironing cart**, which would be **safer**, **healthier** and **better for the planet**!

"When I first saw the **protoype** I was so excited," she recalls. "I realised this system could **change the system of ironing clothes** in this country." The judges agreed!

Vinisha's design

THE FUTURE

With her **prize money**, a thrilled Vinisha plans to make her design more **efficient**. "I want it to work even during **cloudy days**," she says.

And if **YOU** are thinking of entering the award next year, Vinisha has a message. "**Believe in yourself**," she says. "What others think is irrelevant. No one is in charge of your future but **you**." Right on!

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

*"Vinisha has managed to combine **science, innovation** and **technology**! If implemented on a **large scale**, her invention could have a **significant positive impact** on **India's air quality** and **people's health**, while reducing the **unsustainable** use of wood."*

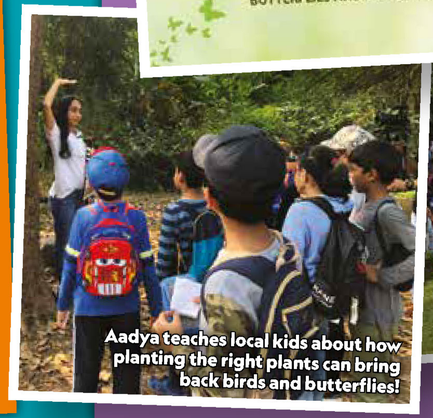
CHANGE-MAKER PRIZE

Awarded to **Aadya Joshi** for her project, **THE RIGHT GREEN**!

*I want everyone to understand the **importance of planting native plants**. And then actually do that!*

Name: *Aadya Joshi*
Age: *17*
From: *Mumbai, India.*
How would you describe yourself? *Environmentalist and educator with a love for science. Oh, and a musician!*

The Right Green website is a great source of information!



Aadya teaches local kids about how planting the right plants can bring back birds and butterflies!

She also runs workshops showing communities how to restore healthy ecosystems

Check out the **theright green.org/**

Deforestation is the **second-leading cause of climate change**. But just **randomly planting new trees** can sometimes do more **harm** than **good**. That's because when **non-local trees** are planted, the **local insects and birds can't feed on them**. And, when **too many of the *same* trees** are planted (often in large-scale planting drives), this **stops native plants flourishing and growing**. This '**monoculture**' is devastating to **biodiversity**.

THE SOLUTION

Aadya wanted to **spread awareness** of the **importance of native plants**. So, she set up ***The Right Green*** **project** to encourage people to '**plant native**'. She developed a **database** which lists over **15,000 plants** from **different regions** together with the **insects that feed on them**! **Gardeners** and **local governments** can refer to this '**BioPower Index**' so they can be sure to **plant the best biodiversity-supporting plants** for their area.

THE FUTURE

Aadya is excited about **winning the prize**, and has **big plans** for the next steps. "We're working on **scaling up**!" she says. "Right now we're doing everything **manually**, so we want to **automate** the process." She also intends to crowd-source **information** on plants from around the world. "It would make me really **proud** to see the project go **global**," she says. "I think it's necessary – not a lot of people know what's native and non-native to their area." So get **informed** and **plant native**!

WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

*"**Aadya** has a great understanding of the **dangers of biodiversity loss**. Through her initiative 'The Right Green', Aadya has combined **modern** database technology with the **traditional** knowledge of native plants to **empower local communities** to take action."*

All images supplied by Children's Climate Prize.

* World Health Organization.