



A Voice For Youth & Ocean

Angelique Pouponnea, SYAH
Seychelles

☀ Call to Action

Learn more about best practices in the Blue Economy: seycat.org
Learn about Angelique's work with young people here: syah-seychelles.weebly.com

☀ Values

- Committed
- Dedicated
- Responsible
- Innovation
- Environmentalist
- Leader

☀ Lessons Learned

Many of the answers for living a sustainable life can be found in community involvement.

Economic growth should not come at the price of the destruction of the Earth. We need to work together to find ways to grow sustainably.

Change is best achieved when communities come together to fight for it.

When Angelique returned home to the Seychelles after studying abroad, she almost didn't recognize her beloved island home.

Where once there had been a footpath along a marsh, now there was a fancy new hotel—and mountains of plastic trash. Together with an organization she founded, Angelique managed to make plastic pollution a decisive political issue for an upcoming election—and the beginning of the end for single-use plastic bags in the Seychelles.

☀ Language Arts

Write a script for a telephone outreach campaign in which you invite people in your community to advocate for change. Which environmental issue would you choose to tackle, and why? How would you persuade people to join you? Focus on the arguments you would present, and the possible counterarguments that others might challenge you with.

Create a series of no less than six before-and-after posters that explain the damage that is being done to coastlines because of real estate development. Then, in a separate poster, offer three possible sustainable alternatives. Use both images and text. On a separate sheet of paper, explain your choices.

Using the example of the Seychelles, write an essay in which you explain the dangers of uncontrolled industrial or other growth in coastal areas. How does the growth affect the people living in these places? How does it affect the wildlife? What are the consequences of the destruction caused by indiscriminate growth along vulnerable coastlines?

Angelique's experiences when she returned to her home from London must have been incredibly upsetting. Draw-

ing on her story for inspiration, write a short children's story about a young person who has to deal with the destruction of his or her home, and who turns that heartbreak into inspiration to bring about positive change. (You may use pictures to complement your writing if you like.)

STEM Activities

Calculate the amount of waste, and the amount of recycling that has been collected in the Seychelles this year.

Compare these numbers to the volume of waste in the Seychelles over the past 20 years. Describe how you think assistance from individuals like Angelique could have impacted the Seychelles throughout its history.

The [Ocean Conservancy](#)¹ releases annual reports on trash collected from the oceans around the world. Have students review these reports and create a graph of one of the aspects of data presented over time - such as the number of volunteers per country, the amount of trash collected by weight or by location, or the top 10 items collected. Then use this graph to create an equation that models the average rate of growth or decline. Depending on the data selected, if the growth (or decline) continues at the same rate, predict what the Ocean Conservancy's 2050 report on that data will look like.

Assess the Small Island Developing States Youth Aims-Hub (SIYAH), and the projects they are working on. Identify 2-3 projects that you consider to be the most important for creating change and the momentum needed to reach their sustainability goals.

First research SIYAH and the Seychelles. Then imagine being in Angelique's shoes, as CEO of the Seychelles' Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust Fund. Create a list of 8-10 issues the Seychelles and other similar islands are facing, and create a proposed distribution of funds, indicating the percentage that you would allocate for each issue, and explaining why.

Angelique was devastated to see that the quiet, beautiful marsh she had known as a child, once filled with life, now littered with plastic waste. Plastics are made of polypropylene, which takes a very long time to break down. Scientists and engineers are looking for ways to develop biodegradable alternatives to these plastics. In this [experiment](#)², students will create polymer materials made from renewable, nontoxic components, and will evaluate their biodegradability, and compare them to PET or PLA plastics brought from home.

One of the ways we can reduce plastic pollution is by not using plastic in the first place! Challenge students to redesign a new type of packaging—for example, for candy, body wash/lotion, or take-out food—using sustainable and environmentally friendly materials. Students can create a 3d model, drawing, or package label to illustrate their improved packaging. Hold a design fair where students can share their ideas for better packaging with each other. For inspiration, have them read this article: [Genius Solid Shampoos Use No Plastic Packaging By Leaving Out Water](#)³.

Take students on a field trip to a local beach, waterway, or park to safely collect debris. Have them record their findings using a shared Google sheet; or have them contribute their data to a global database using apps like the [Marine Debris Tracker](#)⁴ or [Clean Swell](#)⁵. Then have them analyze and interpret their data, and use it to recommend strategies for reducing debris in their local community.

Sustainability Innovations

The [Seychelles Sustainable Tourism Foundation](#)⁶ is a leading foundation whose goal is to combine the work of the public and private sectors, along with NGOs, to build the Seychelles as a model for sustainable tourism. This is of vital importance to the Seychelles, since they have seen tourism double between 2009-2018--and along with this growth in tourism,

increased negative effects on the environment.

Many people view plastic straws and other traditional uses of plastic as the main threats to island communities.

However, as reported in this article in the [Christian Science Monitor](#)⁷ - Seychelles, the Aldabra Clean-up Project also collected 60,000 discarded flip flops and abandoned fishing gear.

When visiting island communities, it is important to follow their travel guidelines, and be respect their travel tips.

For example, the Seychelles has a list of [Sustainable Travel Tips](#)⁸ that can assist in the drastic reduction of carbon emissions, the maintenance of ecological stability, and the reduction of waste.

Sustainability Career Pathways

Blue Economy Business Incubator Manager. The blue economy is in its early development--with new technologies being rapidly developed. Many universities, port cities, and even island nations are encouraging investment in the blue economy. But even when the money is available, as Angelique notes, sometimes the projects and ideas needed to solve environmental problems may not be. Sustainable business incubators help by providing seed money and mentorship to entrepreneurs, including blue economy entrepreneurs. If you'd like to explore this area, check out [The Centre for Ocean Ventures & Entrepreneurship \(COVE\)](#)⁹, an incubator based in a former Coast Guard facility on Halifax harbor.

The World Bank, and Regional and Central Banks. The World Bank, regional banks (like the Asian Development Bank), and the central banks of many countries employ thousands of people in a variety of careers--as loan and grant officers, in project oversight, in human resources, in sustainability, and so on. Working at one of these pivotal institutions provides the opportunity to help shape (for good or for ill) the development path many countries are following in a variety of sectors--from energy and education, to agriculture, transportation, and climate change. If interested, a good place to start is the [World Bank's Young Professionals Program](#)¹⁰.

Resilience Officer. As climate change intensifies, more cities and regions have hired Chief Resilience Officers (CROs) to oversee adaptation to and mitigation of climate change effects, such as intensifying storms, coastal flooding, fires, and increased migration. Following an early effort by the Rockefeller Foundation, many cities are now hiring resilience officers. If this sounds interesting to you, read more about what CROs do [here](#)¹¹.

Green Chemical Engineer: Along with banning plastic, it will be essential to design alternative sustainable materials to replace plastics. This will require chemical engineers. [Explore this field](#)¹² and the ways you could [make a career](#)¹³ in chemistry to help build a greener economy.

1 <https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/annual-data-release/>

2 https://csp.umn.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/DyeingtoDegrade_HS.pdf

3 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/genius-solid-shampoos-use-less-plastic-packaging-by-leaving-out-water_us_57963f19e4b02d5d5ed24951

4 <http://www.marinedebris.engr.uga.edu/>

5 <https://oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/cleanswell/>

6 <http://seychellessustainable.org/>

7 <https://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2021/0107/How-60-000-discarded-flip-flops-ended-up-on-a-remote-island>

8 <http://seychellessustainable.org/sustainable-travel-tips/>

9 <https://coveocean.com/about>

10 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/about/careers/programs-and-internships/young-professionals-program>

11 <https://www.rockefellerfoundation.org/blog/what-a-chief-resilience-officer-does/>

12 <https://www.livescience.com/48134-what-is-chemical-engineering.html>

13 <https://destinationsscanner.com/is-chemical-engineering-a-good-career-in-year/>

