

Europe's environment 2025 | Guide for using citizen stories in your communication activities

Thank you for your support in promoting our *Europe's environment 2025 report*. This how-to guide is part of our online toolkit providing practical tips for combining our efforts to build more environmental awareness. It provides guidance on how to use the environmental citizen stories in the toolkit to illustrate or complement your own communication materials.

1 The Power of Storytelling

Using personal stories in environmental communication helps to:

- Make messages more engaging and emotionally impactful.
- Bridge the gap between scientific facts and real-life experiences.
- Build trust and connection with audiences by showing the human side of environmental issues.
- Elevate a post, article, or news by giving it a personal, compelling narrative.

By integrating these stories thoughtfully and responsibly into our communication, we can amplify voices from across Europe and deepen engagement with our work.

2 EEA citizen campaign: Our Environment: Our Future

On 4th of March, the EEA launched a citizen stories campaign to gather personal experiences from individuals across Europe on how they relate to the environment and climate change. These short stories describe how citizens chose to address environmental issues and make a positive difference in their community. You can find more information on

this campaign at this link: [👉 Our Environment: Our Future](#).

3 Access the stories

All collected stories can be accessed at this link: [👉 Catalogue of stories](#). (This catalogue is password protected: OEOF2025). These stories are shared by individuals as part of the EEA's citizen stories campaign. The views expressed are their own and have not been independently validated by the EEA. Stories are shared as received, without prior selection or editorial intervention.

4 Select the right story

We recommend that you familiarize yourself with the content and context of the stories and assess whether it is suitable for your communication activity.

Consider these elements:

- **Relevance:** Does the story align with the topic or message you're communicating?
- **Audience fit:** Is the tone appropriate for your audience?
- **Format Suitability:** Would full stories or quotes be more adequate?
- **Message support:** Choose stories that reinforce your communication goals (i.e. inspire, inform, or connect emotionally).

5 Respect the usage rules

Use Proper Credits

Every story must include the following copyright line: "Story by (First name) from (Country, City), Our Environment – Our Future/EEA".

If the contributor has approved full name attribution, you may include their full name.

Never alter or fictionalize the content to fit a narrative

Stories must not be altered, but they may be shortened or quoted as long as the original meaning and tone are preserved.

Minor editing is allowed

If you need to make slight edits (e.g., for grammar or clarity), ensure the meaning remains unchanged.

Be respectful

Some stories may include personal or emotional content. Be respectful and avoid sensationalizing or trivializing such content. If in doubt, consult the communication team before using the story. 📩
events@europa.eea.eu.

6 Keep track of usage

If you use a story in your communication materials, please consider noting this internally for tracking purposes. We would also be interested in hearing about the popularity of these posts.

7 Partner support: Reaching more voices

We would be grateful for your support in promoting our campaign and encourage more people to share their personal experiences with the environment until **30 September**.

LINKS AND RESOURCES

Campaign - Our Environment: Our Future

<https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/newsroom/citizen-stories>

Catalogue of stories

<https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/publication/OurEnvironmentOurFutureEU>

- Limited disclosure until September
- Password protected: OEOF2025

For any enquiries, please reach out to us at events@eea.europa.eu.



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