

EARTH HOUR IN THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

Posted on 28/03/2020 by Naider



The WWF invites us today, as every last Saturday in March, to participate in Earth Hour, symbolically turning off the lights to reflect on our carbon footprint and what it means for the health of the Earth and those of us who inhabit it in her. The appointment comes this year, as is evident, in the midst of exceptional circumstances that have put the normality to which we were used to on hold. The current circumstances, however, do not stop the countdown to [contain the increase in temperatures below 1.5°C](#), and prevent the most devastating effects of climate change. The crisis we are experiencing in the face of the pandemic, in all its terrible magnitude, opens up important opportunities for learning and reflection to face the latent threat of global warming.

As we have been able to see these days in the news, the measures and the stoppage of many activities have been reflected, for the time being, in a notable reduction in air pollution. A [study carried out by the Center for Physical Technologies of the Polytechnic University of Valencia](#) shows that the concentration of nitrogen dioxide has decreased in Bilbao by 66%, in the days after the declaration of the state of alarm. This phenomenon derived from confinement measures will help reduce pathologies related to air pollution, and will even give the planet a break. Should we simply go back to business as usual as soon as the restrictions are lifted, however, the phenomenon will remain an anecdote.

The learning begins rather with the fact that we are putting collective health before macroeconomic indicators, and in a short time, we have put on hold, rethought or reconfigured entire economic activities to personal and family projects. This opens the hope that we will also be able to put the health of the planet and the well-being of its inhabitants first, and carry out resignations, in the face of another crisis as worrisome as the climate crisis. Especially when the transition process towards sustainability and decarbonization would also bring us benefits such as quality air to breathe, energy-efficient homes and facilities, or the development of new economic sectors.

In addition, the current health crisis is rearranging our priorities and revealing several very useful concepts for the path of decarbonization and compliance with the [Sustainable Development Goals](#). Among others:

- The indispensability of the care economy and [emotional work](#).
- The need to provide financial buffer tools so that no one is left behind in moments of crisis and transformation.
- The reorganization of working hours and the need to find a better balance for reconciliation.
- The popularization of the use of teleworking tools that avoid unnecessary journeys and trips.
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- In the face of stock outs, the convenience of local production and the reuse of resources in a circular economy.
- The revaluation of data with a solid and proven scientific basis for decision-making.

There are no comments yet.