Seedlings for Cameroon

Change begins with Knowledge

The word "broadcast" means "to scatter seeds." With these programs, you can plant seedlings throughout your daily broadcast to become a Green Station. Seedlings are short pieces about climate change that can include facts, simple solutions, nature poems, songs, and listener ideas.

1. **This is Seedlings,**
   a new, compact version of Seed to Grow, where we take a minute to think about our environment and what climate change means in our everyday lives. So what is climate change? Humans introduce large amounts of carbon dioxide gas into the atmosphere when we burn fuel for cars, factories, and even cooking stoves. This extra carbon dioxide has produced a "greenhouse effect," where the gas traps heat from the sun, causing the average global temperature to rise. In the past 100 years, the Earth has warmed by 0.74 degrees Celsius, and it is still warming. This may not sound like a big change in temperature, but we are already able to feel the effects: drought, flooding, melting glaciers which cause the seas to rise, and extreme weather events. Listen for the next Seedlings segments, when we will hear more about the effects of global warming.

2. **This is Seedlings.**
   A new study from Drexel University in the US has found that the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee, already the world's most endangered subspecies of chimp, faces a severe threat from climate change. Found in the Gulf of Guinea, the chimpanzees' habitat is threatened by logging and the expansion of farms, and rising temperatures in central Cameroon's savannah-woodland could mean extinction by 2080. The research team mapped the chimpanzees' habitat, then put the UN's predictions of how the environment would change over time into a computer model. They ran scenarios based on different amounts of fossil fuel use, human population growth, and conservation efforts. The study's chief researcher, Paul Sesink Clee, said, "We were surprised to see that the Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzees […] are under the most immediate threat of climate change, and my completely lose their habitat within our lifetime."

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3. This is Seedlings.

The hardy cash crop cotton could be a strategic investment for Cameroonian farmers facing the threat of climate change. Carbon dioxide, a byproduct of burning fossil fuels, acts as a fertilizer for cotton. Though many crops are sensitive to changes in average temperature, cotton yield is expected to marginally improve by 2050 according to climate prediction models run by the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement. This advice does not come without caveats, however. Cotton needs reliable rain, and climate change may make it harder to predict when the wet season will begin and end. Soil impoverishment is another problem, but there are farming practices that keep soil rich, such as mulching and growing crops under the cover of other plants. The IRD recommends farmers purchase insurance against low rainfall and changes in the global cotton market to minimize risk.

4. This is Seedlings.

Though Cameroon is not yet a major contributor to global climate change, it is one of the first countries to suffer from the effects. Because the temperature does not fluctuate much throughout the year, it is difficult for ecosystems to adapt to even a small increase in average temperature. Farming makes up 30% of our GDP, and employs 80% of our poor, meaning that a bad harvest will affect the nation's most vulnerable as well as the entire economy. Over the next few decades, population growth and increased energy demands mean that Cameroon may begin polluting at an unsustainable rate. At the Catholic University Institute of Buea, students are hard at work preparing for that future by finding ways for Cameroon to adapt to climate change. Here, students in the School of Engineering are required to complete projects on green technology such as plans for sustainable housing, waste treatment, and wind and solar energy. It is crucial for Cameroon to assess its readiness to adapt to climate change and make use of this window of time before the effects worsen.

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