

# UN Recognizes Canadian Climate Project with Sustainable Development Goals Action Award



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Toronto – A Canadian climate action initiative known as **The Youth Climate Report** (YCR) has won one of only 13 [Sustainable Development Goals Action Awards](#) this year, the United Nations announced recently.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Action Awards are presented each year by the United Nations to acknowledge initiatives demonstrating significant impact, creativity, innovation, and replicability. The **Youth Climate Report** won an Honourable Mention making it the ONLY Canadian program to be recognized this year out of a field of more than 1,000 nominated projects. The UN will host a virtual awards ceremony for all winners **March 25 and 26, 2021**.

Mark Terry, PhD, a Canadian filmmaker and instructor at Toronto's York University and Wilfrid Laurier University in Waterloo, ON, is the Executive Director of the **Youth Climate Report**, a non-profit organization that produces a new form of database documentary film project known as a "Geo-Doc", showcasing more than 525 films made on climate research, impacts, and solution from all seven continents. The project was nominated by the [UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability](#).

The **Youth Climate Report** uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology as an exhibition platform, pinning hundreds of three-minute videos, along with photos, links to scientific reports, and other metadata such as the longitude and latitude coordinates of profiled research, the film's year of production, the names of filmmakers, and the country of origin. It has been presented by the [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) in this format since premiering at the Paris climate summit in 2015. In 2016, it was officially adopted by UN policymakers as a data delivery system under its Article 6 mandate for education and outreach.

The SDG Action Awards praised the Canadian project for bridging a gap between science and policy. In its January 22, 2021 announcement, the UN said: "This initiative (YCR) is important to give voice to under-represented communities at UN policymaking conferences" adding that the project mobilizes "young people across the world to report on climate research, impact, and solutions within their communities through the power of film". The full UN announcement can be found [here](#).

"I am thrilled to have this project be recognized for an SDG Action Award," said Dr. Terry. "It not only heralds the work of more than 525 young documentarians from around the world, but also shines a light on Canada and its leadership role in climate communications."

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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## BACKGROUNDER:

### The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Action Awards:

The UN SDG Action Awards are organized by the UN SDG Action Campaign, a special inter-agency initiative of the UN Secretary General mandated to scale up, broaden and sustain the global movement of action for the SDGs. Since 2018, the UN SDG Action Awards have attracted more than 4,000 applications. Initiatives, from transmedia series illustrating the impact of climate change, to youth theatre and poetry programmes addressing taboos on sexual and reproductive health or blockchain platforms connecting entrepreneurs from among the world's poorest to clean up ocean plastic, have been honored for their contribution to accelerating action towards the Goals.

### The Youth Climate Report:

In answering the call for a youth-oriented film project for the UN climate summits known as the COP conferences, filmmaker Mark Terry and entertainment lawyer John Kelly conceived a crowd-sourced documentary feature film of climate research and impacts showcasing five short films made by students around the world. The YCR program continued in this format until 2015 when the demand from conference delegates for more films resulted in the Geo-Doc format it now takes. Each year the GIS map grows by approximately 100 new films and is expected to top 500 films in total by the end of 2021.

### Mark Terry

The Canadian documentary filmmaker earned his PhD at York University in 2019 after an award-winning career in film spanning 30 years. Awarded the Humanitarian Award by the Academy of Canadian Cinema and Television for his work in providing visible evidence of climate change to delegates and world leaders at the United Nations since 2009, Dr. Terry has continually experimented with new methods and approaches to strengthening the documentary film's ability to inform and influence those in power. His Geo-Doc format was developed in collaboration with UN policymakers resulting in a proven format that accelerates the path to progressive policy change. Dr. Terry documents this development and explains his innovative film theories in the book [The Geo-Doc: Geomedia, Documentary Film, and Social Change](#), published in 2020 by Palgrave Macmillan. Dr. Terry has been decorated by Queen Elizabeth II with her Diamond Jubilee Medal and the Explorers Club with its Stefansson Medal for his humanitarian work in documentary film. Last year, he was elected to the Royal Society of Canada, our nation's highest academy. Today, he teaches at [York University](#) and [Wilfrid Laurier University](#) and continues his research at the [Dahdeleh Institute for Global Health Research](#) in Toronto.

## PHOTOS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

### USEFUL LINKS:

**Youth Climate Report Website:**

<http://youthclimatereport.org>

**Mark Terry (Wikipedia):**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark\\_Terry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_Terry)

**SDG Action Awards:**

<https://sdgactionawards.org>

**UNFCCC:**

<https://tinyurl.com/UNFCCC-YCR>

**UNESCO:**

<https://tinyurl.com/UNESCO-Chair-YCR>