# Video games drive global shift to greener behaviours, study finds



Video games have long been celebrated for their entertainment value, but a recent study suggests they could also play a crucial role in addressing some of the world's pressing environmental challenges. The research, known as Play2Act, highlights how games have the potential to influence player behaviour positively, encouraging sustainable actions through engaging gameplay.

Conducted by PlanetPlay, a not-for-profit organisation, the study gathered insights from over 181,000 players spanning 189 countries. These participants interacted with popular titles, including mobile sensations like *Subway Surfers* and *Pokémon Go*. According to the findings, a remarkable 79 per cent of players who engaged with games featuring environmental themes reported adopting at least one positive behavioural change as a result.

Breaking down these changes reveals significant progress: 47 per cent of respondents indicated they reduced their environmental impact, specifically by altering their energy consumption or switching to public transport. Meanwhile, 34 per cent admitted to making greener consumption choices. Given the extensive reach of these games, such shifts represent a substantial impact on global sustainability efforts.

Rhea Loucas, CEO of PlanetPlay, underscored the transformative potential of gaming, stating, "Games are uniquely positioned to engage a vast and diverse audience on environmental issues. Seeing so many players adopt greener habits after engaging with green content is a powerful testament to the impact games can have in shaping a more sustainable future." Loucas’s remarks speak to a growing recognition that video games can educate and inspire players to embrace environmentally friendly behaviours.

This trend aligns with broader movements across the gaming industry, where initiatives aimed at promoting social good continue to gain momentum. Notably, the 20th anniversary of Games for Change, held recently in New York City, showcased various projects focused on harnessing gaming to further the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals. Such festivals highlight the industry’s commitment to using its platform for positive impact, drawing attention to the potential of games as tools for advocacy.

Moreover, the gaming industry itself is beginning to grapple with its environmental footprint. As highlighted in recent reports, major companies like Microsoft and Epic Games are actively working to reduce their carbon emissions and electricity consumption. These industry giants recognise the significant power they wield—not just in entertainment, but also in shaping environmental consciousness among their user base.

The impact of video games doesn't stop at influencing player behaviour; they are also becoming avenues for financial support for environmental initiatives. PlanetPlay runs a digital storefront where all proceeds are directed towards certified green projects, allowing players to contribute directly to sustainability without compromising their gaming experiences.

New releases in the gaming landscape continue to embody these ideals. Games like *Terra Nil* and *Beecarbonize* blend entertainment with essential messages about ecological restoration and carbon footprint management. These titles focus on empowering players to engage in ecosystem reconstruction and strategic simulations that mirror real-world environmental challenges, further demonstrating the medium's capacity as an educational platform.

Indeed, as evidenced by the Play2Act study and various initiatives across the industry, video games are evolving beyond mere escapism into instruments of societal change. As gamers become more aware of their environmental impact, the future of gaming may very well hinge on its ability to foster a culture of sustainability and responsible behaviour.

In this new era, the question remains: can gaming be a key player in the pursuit of a more sustainable future? The evidence suggests a resounding yes, as both developers and players are rallying together to harness the industry’s influence for good.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Paragraph 5
3. Paragraphs 6, 7
4. Paragraph 7
5. Paragraphs 5, 8
6. Paragraph 8
7. Paragraph 8

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.radiotimes.com/technology/gaming/games-with-green-messages-play2act-newsupdate/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.radiotimes.com/technology/gaming/games-with-green-messages-play2act-newsupdate/> - An article discussing the Play2Act study, which surveyed over 181,000 players from 189 countries to explore the role of games in addressing climate and nature crises. The study found that 79% of players who engaged with games featuring environmental content reported making positive behavioral changes, such as reducing energy use or opting for public transport, and making greener consumption choices.
3. <https://www.axios.com/2023/07/20/games-for-change-20th-festival> - An article celebrating the 20th anniversary of Games for Change, a nonprofit organization advocating for the positive impact of video games. The festival in New York City highlighted how games can promote social good, including raising awareness about the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.
4. <https://www.apnews.com/article/85a237ea50cc2f1e5c60b907e06b7299> - An article detailing Paris's efforts to host the most sustainable Olympics in 2024, aiming to halve the carbon footprint compared to previous games. The plan includes minimizing construction, promoting low-carbon transport, and using renewable energy sources, while acknowledging challenges in balancing emission reduction goals with environmental preservation.
5. <https://time.com/6696736/sustainable-video-game-companies/> - An article examining how video game companies are addressing environmental concerns. It discusses the significant carbon emissions from the gaming industry and highlights steps taken by companies like Microsoft and Epic Games to reduce electricity consumption and carbon footprints, as well as initiatives to engage players in environmental awareness.
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terra_Nil> - A Wikipedia page about 'Terra Nil,' a strategy video game developed by Free Lives and published by Devolver Digital. Released in 2023, the game focuses on ecosystem reconstruction, allowing players to transform barren landscapes into thriving ecosystems, emphasizing environmental restoration over exploitation.
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beecarbonize> - A Wikipedia page about 'Beecarbonize,' a free-to-play real-time card-based simulation video game developed by Charles Games in association with People In Need. Released in 2023, the game challenges players to manage sectors like industry, ecosystems, people, and science to reduce carbon emissions and achieve a sustainable future.