



12 steps to a green 2012

By: [Linda B. Bolido](#)
[Philippine Daily Inquirer](#)

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The Worldwatch Institute, one of the institutions I truly admire, has come up with a list of 12 steps for the developing world to go green. Some, if not all, of these steps you have already heard before. But we can always use a reminder every now and then.

Sue Edwards, director of the Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD), said the developing world needed to embark on a more vigorous “going green” program. Danielle Nierenberg, director of the Worldwatch Institute’s Nourishing the Planet project, said the solutions to problems like food security, energy supply, and poverty could come from simple innovations and practices.

For lack of space, I will only mention the steps, with brief comments on some. They are elaborated on in the institute’s flagship annual report, “State of the World 2011: Innovations that Nourish the Planet.” Here are the 12 steps for a greener 2012 and beyond:

1. **Recycle.** Segregate trash and compost the organic waste.
2. **Reduce fossil fuel consumption.** Instead of coal or wood, use biogas from methane produced by either livestock manure or weeds like water hyacinth (or water lily, as we call it here). Use an environmentally friendly solar cooker and use the sun’s energy instead of the non-renewable fossil fuels.
3. **Make the switch.** Use [compact](#) fluorescent lamps (CFL) that use 75-percent less energy and last 10 times as long. Australia estimates that switching to CFLs will save an average household 66 percent on electricity bill. Local and national governments can give free CFLs in exchange for old incandescent bulbs.
4. **Reuse water bottles.** Instead of buying bottled water, use stainless-steel or even plastic reusable containers for carrying tap water. In Metro Manila, both Maynilad and Manila water companies are doing a good job of keeping the water supply clean and safe.
5. **Conserve water.** It may seem like we do not have to worry about water shortages with all the floods that occur every year. But supply of potable water is limited. Save water from dishwashing and laundry to water plants or flush the toilet. Some people I know even stand in large basins when they shower and use the collected water to flush the toilet.)

6. **Turn down the air-conditioner.** Use fans to reduce the amount of harmful chemicals released into the air. If you want to install an AC, use ozone-friendly units that do not emit hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs).

7. **Support food recovery.**

8. **Buy local, indigenous crops.** Buy directly from farmers or ask your local market to carry their products. Grow such crops yourself if you have the space.

9. **Plant a tree.** It will provide shade and help control erosion, among others.

10. **Plant a garden.** Create a “vertical garden” if space is limited. Reuse old tires or buckets as portable planters.

11. **Compost organic waste.**

12. **Eat meat that is raised right... and eat less of it.**

(Visit www.worldwatch.org.)