



September 23, 2019
Global Youth Climate Action Declaration

Preamble

Today, we the Youth are united in our call for urgent action on the trans-national crisis of climate change. Together we represent the global constituency of young people, determined to preserve the integrity of our Earth for all lifeforms, for the generations to follow, and for the sake of our own survival. In order to protect our most fundamental right to an inhabitable, healthy environment, it is imperative that we have multi-dimensional cooperation. We must mobilise and transform our hope in order to transcend borders and immerse ourselves in action. This requires cooperation that may be the first of its kind -- harmony on a personal, local, national, and international level.

*Today, in response to the deadlock, ignorance, and inaction of past generations in addressing the climate change crisis created by our species, we, **the YOUTH** declare a global, social, and ecological state of emergency.*

*You - **member states** - have the power to enact the broad sweeping changes we so desperately need.*

*We - **the Youth** - are watching our Earth burn and witnessing the promise of a future diminish before our very own eyes. We have the time you failed to use. However, our time to act is limited.*

Together, we can change the course of history by using our power for good, by amplifying the voice of science, by abandoning “business-as-usual”, and by taking a stand for our planet.

Alongside biodiversity collapse, denial of human rights, dramatic levels of pollution, rising inequalities, and resource shortages, Climate Change will be a determining factor of planetary evolution for decades to come.

And in this crisis, with no exceptions, the least responsible will bear the heaviest burdens. We therefore urge you to address the rising complexities of the world you have built through adhering to the goals set forth by the Sustainable Development agenda and by governing with compassion for those of us who will soon inherit these grand challenges.

We call on Heads of States to acknowledge and act in accordance with the most accurate science, particularly the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, the recent IPCC Land Report, and the upcoming IPCC report on the oceans and cryosphere. We urge you to take immediate actions in line with the prevention of global temperature rise of 1.5°C and achievement of the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement.

We the global youth, call upon our member states to :

Economic, Political, and Social Drivers

- *Establish compulsory solution-oriented climate change curricula throughout educational institutions, equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to adequately tackle the climate crisis;*
- *Urge the international community to build a framework forbidding environmental legislation that defends human rights, maintains ecosystem integrity, holds corporations accountable and balances conflicts-of-interests;*
- *Secure the rights of young and future generations, by strengthening future-oriented and long term policies. Intergenerational equity must be infused throughout the entire democratic, policy and legislative process.*
- *Acknowledge that women are disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change and enact gender responsive, ambitious climate policies. We demand member states to ensure just transition policies and plans to protect workers of non-sustainable industries, by offering alternatives and defending their rights. We demand to follow an intersectional and inclusive approach to social justice, that simultaneously considers gender with other social factors, such as age, religion, class, caste, disability and ethnicity;*
- *Shift towards a circular economy to reduce the damage caused by our current unsustainable economic system. This will drive a reduction in CO₂ emissions caused by long distance transportation, overpackaging, growth of out-of-season food, and will broaden localized job opportunities;*
- *Adopt participatory, bottom-up and inclusive approaches to engage citizens and civil society organisations in policy-making and projects at all social and political levels, allowing them to take ownership as stakeholders. Frontline communities and grassroots groups should be especially included in this multi-actor social dialogue;*
- *Demand the establishment of robust and equitable governance of research and deployment of solar radiation management;*

Youth and Public Mobilisation

- *Create a sustained and transparent dialogue - at all levels - between youth and decision makers so that our ideas are both heard and implemented. Appoint youth chairs from a diverse array of backgrounds to deliver intergenerational input on policies;*
- *Ensure that people with all levels of education are able to participate in climate decision making by increasing public access to important key events, especially for historically underserved communities, vulnerable populations, and Indigenous peoples;*

- *Support initiatives to amplify the youth's voice in their respective communities, to cultivate leadership capacities, and enhance communication of youth across the globe in order to foster the form of collaboration that is imperative in addressing global crises;*
- *Strongly support and strengthen the existing institutions that support formal and institutional participation of young people in climate change processes, more specifically the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) within UNFCCC, while extending modalities such as the Action for Empowerment (ACE) dialogue to different structures of the society.*

Industry Transition & Accountability

- *Recognize that the technology industry contributes significantly to the production of Greenhouse Gases, and thus incentivise low-tech solutions and sustainable technology that can be repurposed and have a longer life span to reduce the need for annual developments;*
- *Increase commitments to combat the climate crisis by enhancing incentivization for eco-friendly industries, reducing taxes on foreign goods that are eco-friendly, prioritizing carbon positive programs, and ascribing scores and accreditation systems for industries acting in accordance with encouraging a societal shift as stipulated in the Development Pathway 4 outlined in the IPCC findings;*
- *Respond to the urgency which we must address the agricultural and fishing industries' detrimental impact on the environment by shifting towards sustainable, less intensive forms of agriculture such as agroecology, while as reducing quotas, fishing grounds, limiting the use of oversized fishing vessels and destructive trawling methods;*
- *Identify the need to engage in the principle of just transition especially in consideration of developing economies. We express particular concern over the importance of assisting developing economies both financially and by providing resources in the form of material and subject experts to assist developing economies in an industry shift;*

Infrastructures, Cities, and Local Action

- *Establish localized plans for future infrastructure, aligning with the SDGs and surpassing the Paris Agreement, passing necessary laws and regulations to ensure compliance;*
- *Affirm the principle that cities - both existing and future - should strive to be smart, self-sufficient and resilient in terms of energy, water, goods, and waste;*
- *Allocate 1/3 of the urban space in each city for green space through the planting of street trees, creation of parks, community gardens, green roofs, urban agriculture and other innovative solutions, while prioritizing indigenous species over imported plants, and edibles over ornamentals;*
- *Remedy the stark inequities in harmful environmental exposure on communities of low socioeconomic status through careful monitoring of noncommunicable disease indicators and ensure environmental health for all;*
- *Prohibit the destruction of existing agricultural and forested lands in order to reduce land use and land artificialisation;*

- *Transition public mobility systems to renewable energy-based vehicles while improving safety and access for cyclists and pedestrians;*

Resilience and Adaptation

- *Establish an international fund to tackle health risks and humanitarian crises resulting from climate change which directly and fully supports populations that are most at risk;*
- *Adopt a common and universal definition of climate security that will enable a coherent, effective and comprehensive response to the human and ecological security implications of climate change impacts;*
- *Build a resilient society, inspired by Nature’s adaptive skills and ecosystem services through honoring, celebrating, and recognizing the importance of traditional, local, and indigenous knowledge;*
- *Develop an amendment to the 1951 convention on the status of refugees to include climate refugees under the definition for the term “refugee” in order to protect those forced to flee their member states due to the climate crisis;*
- *Establish funding and reallocation programs to provide those who will lose their jobs as a result of the climate crisis with alternative employment;*
- *Developed revised concrete National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) that recognize young people as stakeholders and implementers (not just a vulnerable group) of adaptation action during 2020, with a focus on youth efforts while including capacity support for young people.*
- *Scale up their commitments to the Adaptation Fund.*

Climate Finance and Carbon Pricing

- *Acknowledge the historic responsibility that developed member states have had in contributing to climate change and under the Common But Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR) concept, issuing grant-based funding equivalent to the scale of the climate crisis “developed” member states must increase their commitments to the Green Climate Fund to meet the \$100 Billion goal while ensuring that these commitments are tracked to guarantee that nations are providing funds in a timely manner;*
- *Establish a mechanism where young people can easily access funding instruments for implementing grassroot level projects but also larger projects like COY or LCOYs;*
- *Ensure that climate finance is gender-inclusive, protects workers and communities impacted by climate change, puts in place urgent measures to address displacement and migration due to climate change, and builds resilience of the vulnerable through addressing issues of poverty, inequality and justice;*
- *Build a constructive dialogue on the blue economy and it’s interlinkage with loss and damage in order to find innovative financing mechanisms such as green bonds as a means to invest in rehabilitation projects within communities experiencing climate imposed disasters;*
- *Strengthen accountability and monitoring mechanisms on climate funding to ensure progress, as well as steering committees including local youth constituents;*

- *Strengthen carbon pricing to make it economically viable for local communities realizing that the current carbon prices are too low to provide incentives for local action against climate change;*

Mitigation

- *Develop effective and carbon neutral land, air and water transportation systems by setting stringent targets to be achieved by 2050;*
- *Hold maritime vessels accountable for damages done to oceans and seas;*
- *Intensify and promote research, innovation and utilization of methods involving mitigation strategies.*
- *Allocate specific funds to developing member states for their own research programs;*

Energy Transition

- *Promote and support technology transfer and development of environmentally sustainable technologies through adequate investment and tax subsidies for renewable energy;*
- *Aim to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2040 for developed member states and 2045 for other member states and channel investment towards cleaner energy;*
- *Facilitate the development of enterprises in all sectors related to the energy transition including training programs for professional growth in this sector;*
- *End subsidies for fossil fuels and industrial-scale bioenergy, and reject any unsustainable and extractive industries which put short-term gain over the wellbeing of people and nature;*

Nature-based solutions

- *Demand for Nature-based solutions to be efficiently implemented, the protection of our environment and the reversal of damage caused to it being a sine qua non condition;*
- *Understand that Nature-Based solutions are essential to create a sustainable long-term economic system which is beneficial to both human-kind and biodiversity and incentivize innovation in the field of sustainability and socially and ecologically just trade to create global communities*
- *Commit to biodiversity and ecosystem protection, valuation of ecosystem services, and the restoration and rewilding of biodiverse ecosystems;*
- *Appreciate the indispensable role of local and indigenous communities in the protection and proliferation of our biodiversity;*
- *Commit to a global transition to ensure sustainable and just agricultural systems based on principles of agroecology, good Agriculture Practice, Permaculture, Climate Smart Agriculture, Organic farming or any other practices that minimize the use of fossil fuel based machinery, hazardous chemicals, and which empower communities and improve resilience to climate impacts by breaking the barriers of Intellectual Property Rights and Corporate Hegemony over food and seed systems;*

We, the collective Youth Voice, speak as one for the wellbeing of all. We stand firm in our resolve towards addressing the Climate Change crisis through the imperative course of action as detailed above in the demands of the global youth constituency.

We are holding you accountable for your actions. We are watching. We will not relent until we catalyze and witness the necessary changes for sustaining life on this planet. We have no choice but to carry this torch onward and it is our sincere hope that you will join us as intergenerational partners in fighting for our future.

To those who have had the courage and bravery to join us in this endeavor -- thank you. To those who are waiting for the right moment to act -- that moment is now.