



YOUTH AND CLIMATE GOVERNANCE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

A COMPENDIUM OF BEST PRACTICES



Regional Collaboration Centre - Bangkok
Promoting Climate Action in Asia and the Pacific



IN COLLABORATION WITH



FOREWORD

This foreword was initially published as the Youth Statement for ESCAP 79th session of the Commission.

Asia and the Pacific is home to almost two-thirds of humanity, with the highest number of children and youth in the world, constituting approximately 60% of the world's youth population.

The ESCAP theme study shows the need for greater ambition for climate action in Asia and the Pacific. Countries in the region are confronted by the worst consequences of climate change, with the region being declared as the most vulnerable to climate crisis. Of the ten countries most affected by climate-induced disasters, six are in the region. Together with other vulnerable groups, young people across the region are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts.

Rising sea levels threaten to submerge our land, changing weather patterns affect food sovereignty, and frequent floods and disasters affect the most vulnerable communities, undermining hard-won gains in sustainable development and our collective future. Meanwhile, the region produced over half of the global greenhouse gas emissions in 2020. This will continue unless urgent action is taken.

As young people, we have grown up with the climate crisis. This is the stark reality that we face at every turn. We no longer wish to hold onto feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. So, we stand before you, representing the young people of our region, whose survival and future are at stake - asking you to take urgent and decisive action.

We are dedicated and committed to climate action. We recognise the power and strength that young people have as a collective: the thought leadership we personify, our ingenuity, our drive, our courage and conviction, that can steer us towards a better future.

Similarly, we also recognise the capacity and strength that leaders and development partners bear. Together, we all share this responsibility to mitigate and adapt to the climate crisis to protect our beautiful planet.

FOREWORD

We represent the views of thousands of young people who engaged in consultations during the 10th Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and recommend in unity, the following:

1. **The scale of action needed requires greater cooperation beyond national borders, including - adherence to international commitments and to the Paris Agreement to keep global temperatures well within 1.5 C.** This means a rapid and just transition to phase-out fossil fuels, and to operationalize long-term plans for reaching net-zero by 2050.
2. **While recognising the urgency for decarbonisation of all sectors, the transition to a net zero emissions future should not leave anyone behind.** This includes centering the principles of equity, justice, and human rights, to ensure vulnerable communities, youth, women, indigenous peoples, and others benefit from a fair and just transition.
3. **Funding must be scaled and be prioritised for the most disadvantaged countries (LDCs and SIDS).** Funding must trickle down to civil society, to maximise impact, including to allow youth to implement climate change solutions and their visions of sustainable societies.
- 4 **Meaningful partnerships must be expanded with youth of all demographics.** This means creating avenues for policy coherence discussions on climate justice and peer learning at sub-regional and regional spaces that involve young people. It also means supporting the development of young people, their access to opportunities, involvement in the update of Nationally Determined Contributions and other political processes.

We refuse to sit idly while decisions about our present and futures are lost in the corporatocracy and politics of today. We must be included in the conversations for our present and our futures. We urge you to prioritize people and the planet over profits. We urge you to have the courage and strength needed to act now to ensure that we do not leave the generations of our future behind.

**The Drafting Committee of the Youth Statement
for ESCAP 79th session of the Commission
on behalf of youth from Asia-Pacific**



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1. AN OVERVIEW

1.1 Youth and climate in Asia and the Pacific

For the young people of Asia and the Pacific, the climate crisis is a rights crisis.[1] Across the region, record temperatures, wildfires, flooding and typhoons are impacting all aspects of young peoples' rights, including their right to education, clean water, and a safe environment, all of which are outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child[2][3]. This convention, in addition to the 2015 Paris Agreement, which aims to tackle the ongoing climate crisis, has been ratified by all countries across Asia and the Pacific[4][5].

Despite this, young people in the region often remain excluded from the climate policy and decision-making processes. This means that they have little or no say in the issues which affect their futures. Countries in Asia and the Pacific continue to rank poorly in the Youth Progress Index results, scoring the lowest in freedom of assembly and the freedom of expression, which remain some of the greatest barriers to youth mobilisation and advocacy for climate action in the region.[6]

Additionally, young Human Rights Defenders, many of whom fight to protect our forests, freshwater and oceans, are being targeted and harassed. This is particularly the case for indigenous youth, women and girls, and those from the LGBTQ+ communities - who also, simultaneously, bear the brunt of the climate crisis.[7]

The 2030 agenda, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement, all call for urgent action to address climate change. However, despite multiple collective action efforts in recent years, the rapid, transformative action required to avert the dangers of breaching the 1.5 °C increase threshold, have yet to take place at scale. The challenges brought upon by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic crisis, have further delayed action and exacerbated inequalities for young people across the region. This in turn has led to a reduction in the number of opportunities for their meaningful participation in political processes, education and employment.



Meaningful, diverse, and effective youth participation – inside the United Nations and far beyond – is essential to advancing human rights, addressing the climate crisis and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

António Guterres
UN Secretary General



Despite these challenges, millions of young people across the region remain passionate about protecting their natural environments. Climate change is not inevitable and the young people of Asia and the Pacific are an important part of the solution.

The following Compendium of Case Studies aims to showcase examples of government-led initiatives from across the Region which aim to enhance young people's participation in the climate governance process. These examples provide a mere snapshot of the many activities taking place.

It is hoped that the Compendium will inspire governments and development partners to scale-up efforts to ensure that young people can meaningfully engage in climate governance processes - and protect their futures.

1.2 The Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform

In recent years, there has been a growing movement of young people across the Asia-Pacific region calling for action on the climate agenda. Through climate strikes and effective utilisation of social media, young people have been calling for governments and other stakeholders to take urgent, collective action to tackle the climate crisis. However, young people still remain largely marginalised and excluded from climate governance.

In 2020, the Youth Empowerment in Climate Action Platform (YECAP) was established by UNDP and UNFCCC in collaboration with UNICEF, the British Council, YOUNGO, the Movers Programme and the 2030 Youth Force. The Platform was designed to provide a safe and inclusive space for youth across Asia and the Pacific to meaningfully engage in climate action.

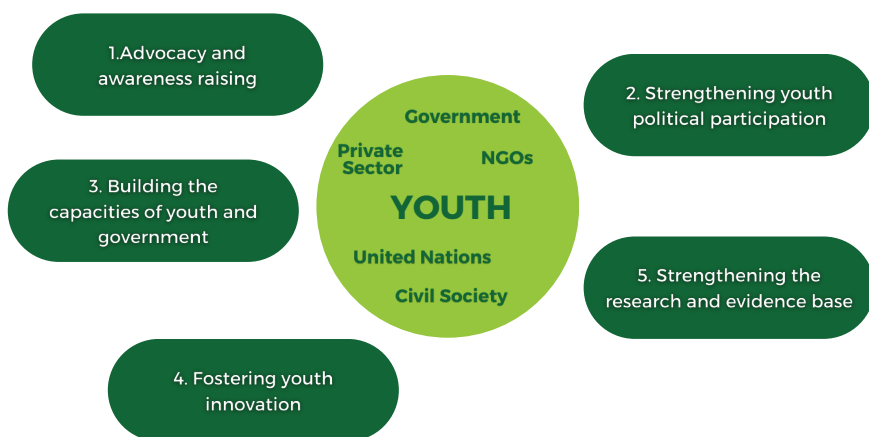


Fig.1 YECAP's approach to climate governance

By working with their co-conveners and government counterparts, YECAP aims to empower and provide the space for youth to influence climate governance at the sub-national, national and international levels. Moving forward, all youth activities will converge towards upstream work, to create long-lasting and transformational impact across the region, through 5 cross-cutting pillars (Fig.1). The following case studies have been collected by YECAP, to serve as best practice examples of activities taking place across the Asia-Pacific Region. They will serve to inspire the work of the Platform and its partners moving forward.

1.3 Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)

Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) is a concept introduced by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It originates from Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement and highlights six key areas: education, training, raising public awareness, encouraging public involvement, ensuring public access to information, and promoting global collaboration on these subjects. Addressing all these elements is essential for everyone to comprehend and engage in addressing the intricate issues of climate change.



ACE encourages nations to roll out educational initiatives, raise public consciousness, train experts in various fields, enhance access to climate data, and motivate the public to actively participate in climate change solutions. It also emphasizes the importance of countries working together, sharing best practices, and fortifying their domestic institutions. The collective aim of these efforts is to effectively undertake climate change adaptations and mitigations, aligning with the core goal of the UNFCCC.



We want you to trust us,
let us sit at the same table, and
discuss our future.
It's not just the future of youth,
it's the future of us all.

Prajesh Khanal
YECAP Fellow
Mover Ambassador, Nepal

References:

1. UNICEF (2021) <https://www.unicef.org/media/105376/file/UNICEF-climate-crisis-child-rights-crisis.pdf>
2. UNICEF (2022) <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version>
3. UNFCCC (2022) Ratification status of the Paris Agreement <https://unfccc.int/process/the-paris-agreement/status-of-ratification>
4. UNICEF (2022) <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/convention-text-childrens-version>
5. Deloitte (2022) Youth Progress Index <https://www2.deloitte.com/global/en/pages/about-deloitte/articles/youth-progress-index.html>
6. UN (2021) Global report on protecting young people in civic space <https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Global-Report-on-Protecting.-Young-People-in-Civic-Space.pdf>
7. UNFCCC (2022) Ratification status of the Paris Agreement <https://unfccc.int/process/the-paris-agreement/status-of-ratification>



2

**COUNTRY
BEST PRACTICES**

2.1 ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS RAISING

A. Raising Climate Ambition: Voices from Bhutan

Project Description

In 2021, Bhutan launched an advocacy campaign to collectively raise Bhutan's ambition and climate-related commitments. The campaign aimed to enhance public support and participation for climate action, strengthen institutional capacity, and help mainstream the country's climate concerns across sectors ahead of COP26.

As part of the initiative, UNDP, the National Environment Commission (NEC), along with other partners, launched an online climate learning series, titled "Raising Climate Ambitions: Voices from Bhutan." The five-part virtual series ran from May-October 2021, and targeted both local and international audiences.

The online events were organised around priority thematic areas and engaged all actors - from the government, to students and educators, climate advocates and practitioners, and private players. Events included panel discussions and talks, climate smart exhibitions, field trips and video competitions for students.

Series IV and V focused on youth engagement and were respectively titled "Youth Matters: Voices and Action in Climate Change" and "Climate Action Week: Call to Action". The objective of Series IV was to listen to the concerns of the youth around climate issues, their initiatives and actions against the crisis, and to ensure the assimilation of their world view into climate solutions.

Series V convened a mix of panel discussions, student engagements, expedition, and an exhibition. The fifth Climate Series engaged prominent



private players within the climate change arena to share knowledge and experiences, discuss the challenges and way forward to tackle the climate crisis and adopt ways and means for climate action. Winners of the “Youth for Climate” and “Dear World Leaders” video challenges were also declared during the closing event.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Climate education and awareness:** The series is aimed at enhancing awareness and understanding of climate change across government, public, academia, private, youth and civil society spaces. This increased understanding helped galvanise public support, strengthen institutional capacity, and further mainstream climate concerns across sectors.
- **Youth innovation and creativity:** the "Youth for Climate: Showcasing Youth in Action on Climate Change" challenge helped foster the development of youth-led ideas, and solutions to the climate crisis. It celebrated youth innovation - and empowered them to take the lead in the fight against the global climate crisis. Three winning teams received seed funding - and have gone to implement their projects at the community level.

More information

- Raising Climate Ambition - Voices from Bhutan: <https://www.undp.org/bhutan/stories/raising-climate-ambition-voices-bhutan>
- Youth Matters Voices and Action in Climate Change: <https://www.undp.org/bhutan/press-releases/youth-matters-voices-and-action-climate-change>
- Livestream of Series IV: https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?ref=watch_permalink&v=615656356087405
- Youth for Climate Challenge: https://undp-bhutan.exposure.co/6c10a5366db491c2146968a51cab8aa3?edit&fbclid=IwAR0F9A5eD-Zn5_pHSA6XxLBFcmWk_jXw2XUPxVe7J9sAN1FaDMPgPe5VJgg

Contact

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What is the future that we as the youth want? What can we ask our elders to do for us? What can we do as inheritors of this planet, are the concerns of youth over climate change?

Sangay Rabten
Youth Climate Advocate
Thimphu, Bhutan

B. Our Climate, Our Present, Our Future in the Maldives

Advocating for climate action for children

Project Description

In the run up to COP26, the Government of Maldives and UNICEF, in collaboration with UNDP, hosted the “Our Climate, Our Present, Our Future” event in Male, in an effort to spotlight the devastating impact of climate change on children and young people in Maldives and catalase action and partnerships to mitigate its effects.

The initiative involved a series of youth-focussed activities, including workshops, consultations, and campaigns, to mobilise stakeholders and promote greater action to address the climate crisis from a child and youth perspective.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Awareness and Advocacy:** The initiative helped to raise awareness about the severe impact of climate change on children and young people in the Maldives. It advocated for greater attention to be given to the specific vulnerabilities and rights of children and youth in the face of climate change, including their right to a safe and sustainable environment, education, and health.
- **Influence on policy and planning:** The Forum has since helped to influence policy and planning processes in the Maldives, calling for greater integration of child and youth perspectives in climate change policies and plans. It has emphasised the need for climate resilience and adaptation measures that take into account the unique needs and vulnerabilities of children and youth, including their participation in decision-making processes.



- **Youth Engagement:** The initiative has actively engaged children and youth in efforts to combat climate change in the Maldives. It has provided opportunities for children and youth to participate in workshops, consultations, and campaigns, enabling them to voice their concerns, share their ideas, and take action on climate change. This has empowered children and youth to become advocates for climate action and has promoted their leadership in addressing the climate crisis.
- **Partnerships and Collaboration:** The initiative has fostered partnerships and collaboration among different stakeholders, including government agencies, UNDP, civil society organisations, and young people. It has brought together diverse actors to work collectively in addressing the devastating impact of climate change on children and youth in the Maldives, promoting multi-sectoral cooperation and joint efforts towards climate resilience and sustainability.

More information

- Government of Maldives, United Nations urge greater action to address devastating impact of climate change on children and young people: <https://www.undp.org/maldives/press-releases/government-maldives-united-nations-urge-greater-action-address-devastating-impact-climate-change-children-and-young-people>
- “Our Climate, Our Present, Our Future” – A SIDS Perspective: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwtNu_qwWws

Contact

Ms. Fathimath Raia Musthafa, Programme Officer, UNDP Maldives, fathimath.raia@undp.org.



This situation is intolerable and demands urgent action from all of us to ensure that our children have a future on this planet that is safe and sustainable

Abdulla Shahid
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Maldives



C. Youth from the Archipelagic and Island States advocate to protect the oceans

Project Description

The Archipelagic and Island States (AIS) Forum, a platform for island states on key environmental and blue economy issues, hosted a series of events to raise awareness about the need to conserve the world's oceans.

Youth representatives and government counterparts from 12 Archipelagic and Island States, including Indonesia, the Philippines and Mauritius, joined together to deliver a call to action video message underlining the urgency of protecting and restoring the ocean. The event also showcased youth-led initiatives and ideas to improve marine conservation efforts in their respective states.

Youth from across the Region also took part in community activism events. For example, youth in the Solomon Islands organised a beach clean up in the coastal town of Honiara, including young people from Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change and the Correctional Service of the Solomon Islands. The team filled at least 30 bags with waste while sharing the importance of a clean beach with the community.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Innovative Solutions:** The Forum allowed young people to showcase their ideas and designs, used to improve marine conservation efforts, highlighting their passion, creativity, ingenuity and deep commitment. Examples include the use of artificial intelligence for tracking marine biodiversity, the development of sustainable aquaculture practices, and the use of social media campaigns to raise awareness about plastic pollution in the oceans.



Photo: AIS Forum

- **Advocacy and Awareness:** The Forum helped to amplify the urgency of marine conservation efforts, drawing attention to issues such as overfishing, habitat destruction, and marine pollution. The Forum, and its subsequent community-level activism have allowed young people to bring marine conservation issues to the forefront of public discourse and drive positive change across the Archipelagic and Island States.
- **Youth Empowerment:** The Forum provided young people with the skills, knowledge, and leadership opportunities to further contribute to their personal and professional development. The Forum also helped foster a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the marine environment among youth and other stakeholders, ensuring a more sustainable and inclusive approach to marine conservation for the future. The Forum also underscored the importance of empowering young people to be key actors in marine conservation and emphasised the need for their meaningful inclusion in decision-making processes related to marine policies and actions.

More Information

- Youth involvement from around the world in addressing marine woes: <https://www.undp.org/indonesia/blog/youth-involvement-around-world-addressing-marine-woes>.

Contact

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2.2 STRENGTHENING YOUTH POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

A. Pol.is surveys connect youth with legislators to promote climate action in Bhutan, Pakistan and Timor-Leste

Project description

Many young people in Bhutan, Pakistan and Timor Leste have reported a lack of trust in governance systems, institutions and political leaders at all levels. To help address this trust deficit, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub started focusing on innovative ways to strengthen engagement between parliaments and youth.

'Pol.is', an online survey that enables people to suggest, and vote on, proposed solutions to a single issue or question. The platform was designed as a tool to enable opinion-gathering from large groups of people, primarily to aid participatory democratic debate. Participants can express their opinions, and agree and disagree with the responses of others. The analysis and presentation of responses is assisted by pre-programmed advanced statistical methods.

During 2021 and 2022, a series of online youth conversations in Bhutan, Pakistan and Timor Leste used [pol.is](#) to advocate with parliaments to systematically reach out to and crowdsourcing ideas from young people to include in key legislation. The primary goal is to engage young people, get them involved in making vital decisions about their countries, and generate a powerful, valuable source of evidence on young peoples' views. The 2022 conversations focused on this question: "What should [country] do to tackle climate change?"

Advanced data science methods, coupled with collection of participants' demographic data, then allowed UNDP to analyse the data generated by the three conversations. Specifically, the exercise involved identifying opinion groups, points of contention among voters, ideas that generated consensus, and the ability to draw inferences from the thousands of votes cast.

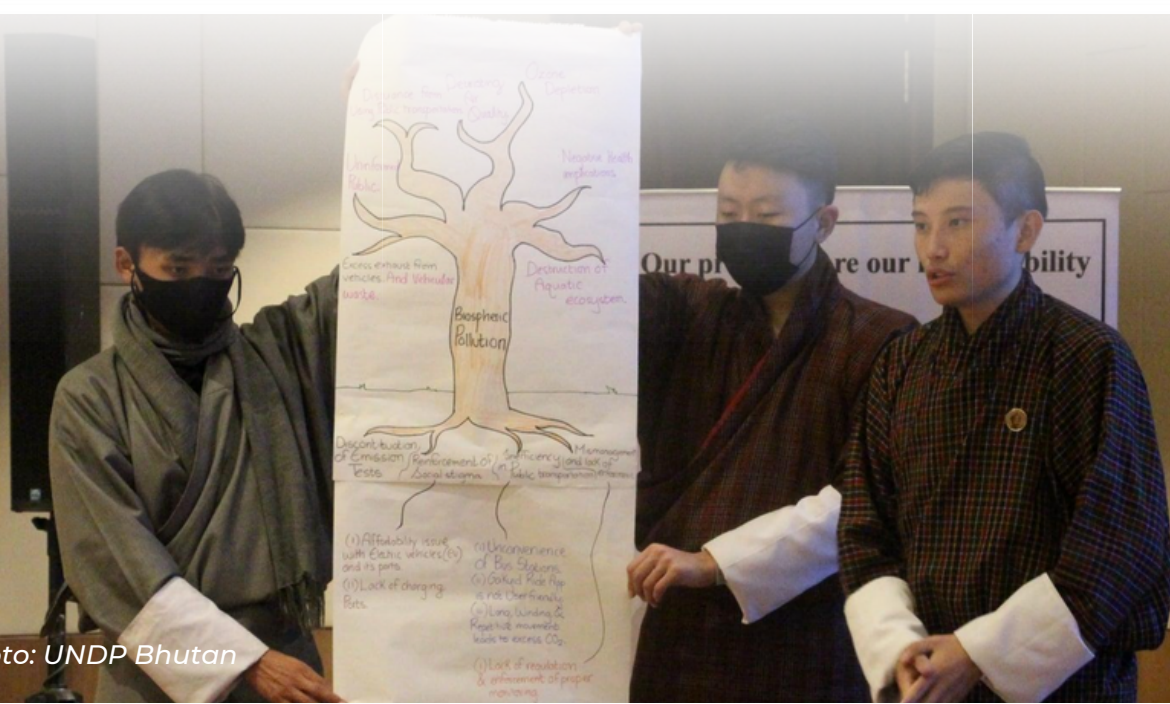


Photo: UNDP Bhutan

Key Results and Impacts

- **Bhutan:** Bhutan's polis conversation recorded 138,355 votes on a diverse set of user-generated ideas, ranging from the imposition of a carbon tax on neighbouring countries to the need to scale-up the use of rainwater harvesting. Following the success of the 2021-2022 consultations, Bhutan has now institutionalised the initiative - ensuring the voices of young people are streamlined throughout the legislative process.
- **Timor Leste:** Around 693 young people in Timor-Leste took part in the polis consultations, recruited through social media and outreach events. Each participant demonstrated a high level of engagement - with 28 votes on average. Recommendations included the replacement of conventional modes of transport with greener alternatives (such as electric vehicles and hydrogen), restoring tropical rainforests and investing more heavily in sustainable energy sources.
- **Pakistan:** Around 9,626 youth participants were recruited following a 'SMS blast' campaign. A total of 82,761 votes were cast, proposing solutions to the seed questions suggested by youth participants. These ranged from mandating companies to use greener energy sources, to the redesign of sewage management systems, to tackling corruption in environmental agencies.

The results of these polis surveys were presented to and discussed with members of parliament in each of the 3 countries, helping influence the parliamentary agenda and support the development of new policies.

More Information

- Digital Transformation, Youth and Parliaments: A New Journey in Asia: <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/blog/digital-transformation-youth-and-parliaments-new-journey-asia>

Contact

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Photo: Brunei Ministry of Development

B. Influencing policy through the ASEANyouCAN Youth Statement in Brunei Darussalam

Project Description

The Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on ASEAN Youth for Climate Action is a collaborative effort by youth representatives across Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Member States, aimed at encouraging leaders to take more rapid, meaningful climate action in the region. The Declaration was curated by 16 ASEAN youth at the ASEAN Youth on Climate Action (ASEANyouCAN) Dialogue, which was co-organised by the Brunei Climate Change Secretariat (BCCS), Prime Minister Office, Brunei Darussalam and the ASEAN Youth Advocates Network (AYAN) Brunei during Brunei Darussalam's Chairmanship of ASEAN in 2021.

The Declaration outlines key youth demands and recommendations for climate action, including the need for increased climate awareness, sustainable development, and climate resilience in ASEAN Member States. It also emphasizes the importance of youth participation and engagement in climate action and governance, recognizing their role as critical stakeholders in shaping the region's future.

It was subsequently presented at the 16th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment and UNFCCC COP 26 and was referred to in Brunei's 38th and 39th ASEAN Chairmanship Statement. The Declaration has been a significant milestone in the collective empowerment of ASEAN youth to address climate change across the ASEAN Region.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Collective advocacy and empowerment:** The Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on ASEAN Youth for Climate Action brought together young people from ASEAN to define a collective vision and commitment to tackling climate change. The Declaration also allowed ASEAN youth to collectively express central concerns on climate change. Since its formulation, the Declaration has served as a powerful advocacy tool for ASEAN youth to ensure their voices are included in all aspects of climate governance, including national climate strategies.

- **Regional Impact:** The Declaration has since informed regional policy dialogues, influenced the development of climate policies and plans across ASEAN Member States. For example, the youth Declaration called upon ASEAN Member States to set up a centralized climate fund for climate-related research and development to ensure accountability and create monitoring mechanisms in the region, which was agreed in principle during the Chairmanship's Statement in 2021.
- During the 19th Legislative Council Sessions, His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah announced that Brunei Darussalam will be the host for the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change (ACCC). The ACCC envisions facilitating regional cooperation and coordination on climate change initiatives among ASEAN Member States and providing policy recommendations for addressing climate change. As of October 2023, a Handover Ceremony of the Establishment Agreement of the ACCC was held at the 17th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Environment, signifying the successful conclusion of negotiations of the Establishment Agreement of the ACCC.
- **Supporting the empowerment and capacity development:** The Declaration has empowered ASEAN youth to play a more active role in climate action at both the country and regional levels. It clearly outlined the need to provide youth with access to information, education, and resources to effectively participate in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. The Declaration helps reinforce other empowerment and capacity-building efforts for young people, including YECAP, providing them with the necessary knowledge skills, and tools required to drive positive change.



HANDOVER CEREMONY

OF THE SIGNED ESTABLISHMENT AGREEMENT OF THE
 ASEAN COORDINATING CENTRE FOR TRANSBOUNDARY HAZE POLLUTION CONTROL (ACC-THPC)
 AND THE ESTABLISHMENT AGREEMENT OF THE ASEAN CENTRE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE (ACCC) TO
 SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ASEAN AS DEPOSITARY OF EA ACC-THPC AND EA ACCC

23 AUGUST 2023,
 VIENTIANE, LAO PDR



More Information

- Bandar Seri Begawan Declaration on ASEAN Youth for Climate Action: <http://climatechange.gov.bn/Press%20Release/Bandar%20Seri%20Begawan%20Declaration%20on%20ASEAN%20Youth%20for%20Climate%20Action.pdf>
- 16th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and the 16th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution: <https://aseanplusthree.asean.org/17th-amme3/>
- ASEAN Joint Statement on Climate Change to the 26th Session of the UNFCCC COP26: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/10.-ASEAN-Joint-Statement-to-COP26.pdf>
- Chairman's Statement of the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits: <https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FINAL-Chairmans-Statement-of-the-38th-and-39th-ASEAN-Summits-26-Oct....pdf>
- Media Release for the 17th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on the Environment and the 18th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution: https://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Media-Release-AMME17_COP1_Adopted_23Aug2023_final.pdf

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We acknowledged the importance of youth participation in ASEAN's efforts towards sustainable development and reaffirmed our commitment to ensuring that ASEAN youth have the necessary knowledge and skills to participate actively in the region's socio-economic development.

Chairmans' Statement at the 38th and 39th ASEAN Summits

His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal
Bolkihah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of
Brunei Darussalam

C. Improving youth parliamentary engagement in Nepal to promote accountability and climate action

Project Description

The "Enlightening Generation" project in Nepal is a UNDP-supported initiative that supports young people to take meaningful climate action. The project focuses on providing education, training, and leadership opportunities to young people, providing them with the tools they need to become effective agents of change. Activities so far have included a three-day 'Informed Youth: Increased Accountability' training seminar, policy dialogues with parliament, law and policy reviews and mock youth assemblies at the provincial level. Since its inception, the Project has also made a concerted effort to include a diverse range of young people, including those with disabilities, members of the LGBTQI community and youth from lower-income households.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Enhancing young peoples' knowledge and leadership skills:** The Project's various capacity-building programmes and seminars have equipped young people with the knowledge, skills, and tools required to take more meaningful climate action. Young people have gained a better understanding of parliamentary discourse and procedures, and how to better navigate them to create a lasting impact.
- **Strengthening public accountability:** The project has provided young people, particularly those from marginalised communities, with an opportunity to safely raise their concerns with leaders - and ask for immediate action. This in addition to other capacity building initiatives and public accountability activities has helped strengthen young peoples' capacities to hold their leaders accountable for meaningful climate action.

More Information

- Enlightening the generation: <https://www.undp.org/nepal/news/enlightening-generation>
- 'Informed Youth : Increased Accountability' – Janakpur Chapter: <https://ayon.org/2019/10/31/informed-youth-increased-accountability-karnali-chapter-2/>

Contact

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D. Samoan Government establishes a Parliamentary Youth Council for youth

Project Description

Over the past several years, the Government of Samoa has been ensuring that the islands' young people are actively engaged in the parliamentary process - particularly around issues of climate governance.

In 2021, the Office of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, in partnership with the United States of America Embassy Office in Apia, hosted the Parliamentary Youth Program in Mulinuu. The Program aimed to inform youth participants about the inherent functions of Parliament, the role of Members of Parliament and the functions of Parliamentary Committees. During the 2-day event, 150 young people were provided with an opportunity to observe parliamentary proceedings.

"The American Samoa Government wants to encourage our youth to have a voice in the future of our territory. Keeping young people involved in the affairs of our government and society will encourage them to learn here, to work here, and to live here."

Key Results and Impacts

- **Young people now have a better understanding of governance and parliamentary affairs:** The Parliamentary Youth Programme has provided young people with an opportunity to learn more about governance and parliamentary affairs - including action for climate change. This has allowed them to become more involved in parliamentary affairs and inspired them to further engage in political processes.
- **Establishment of the Governor's Youth Council:** Following the success of the Program, Gov. Lemanu P.S Mauga went on to establish the Governor's Youth Council, through an Executive Order in 2022. The Council now meets at least once per month, to share the concerns and ideas of children and youth with the Governor and parliamentarians.



Photo: Samoan Government

- **Policies and programmes are now more focussed on the needs of young people:** The voices of children and youth are now being included across all policies and public programs. This includes, but is not limited to, healthcare, education and climate action.
- **Improved accountability for climate action:** The Programme, including the subsequent establishment of the Governor’s Youth Council has provided young people with an opportunity to hold their leaders accountable for meaningful climate action.

More Information

- Samoa’s Parliamentary Youth Programme: <https://www.samoagovt.ws/2021/11/parliamentary-youth-program/>
- Gov establishes ‘youth council’ — comprising young delegates: <https://samoanews.com/local-news/gov-establishes-youth-council-comprising-young-delegates>

Contact

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The Government wants to encourage our youth to have a voice in the future of our territory. Keeping young people involved in the affairs of our government and society will encourage them to learn here, to work here, and to live here.

Lemanu P.S Mauga
Governor of America Samoa

E. Placing women and youth at the centre of climate policy consultations in Sri Lanka

Project Description

The "Making Civil Society Inclusion Count" project in Sri Lanka is Government and UNDP-led initiative that aims to promote gender-inclusive participation in Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+). The project focuses on empowering women and girls and promoting their active engagement in decision-making processes related to forest conservation, sustainable management, and climate change mitigation. A national CSO REDD+ Platform was established in December 2013, composed of NGOs working at the community, district and national level on forestry and climate change. One of its primary objectives has been to enable women to have a voice and representation at the policy level, ensuring women held co-leadership roles, ensuring women, girls and youth-focused organisations were included as members.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Women's Empowerment:** The project has actively promoted women and girls' active participation and leadership across all REDD+ initiatives. Through the Project's capacity-building programs, women have been provided with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to better understand the linkages between forests, climate change, and sustainable development and improve their participation in decision-making processes at the community, local and national levels. This has in turn allowed them to actively participate in climate and environment policy formulation, planning, and implementation of REDD+ activities.
- **Strengthening civil society activism and political accountability:** The Project has emphasised the role of civil society in environmental initiatives across Sri Lanka, including representation and participation among excluded youth and women. The Project has promoted CSOs as key actors in advocating for gender-inclusive and sustainable REDD+ policies and practices and building their capacity to better engage in REDD+ processes, advocate for women's rights and interests, and hold relevant stakeholders accountable for gender-responsive REDD+ outcomes. The project has also helped establish stronger partnerships and collaborations among CSOs, government agencies, and other stakeholders to promote gender-inclusive REDD+ in Sri Lanka.



More Information

- Making Civil Society Inclusion in REDD+ Count for Women: <https://www.undp.org/asia-pacific/stories/sri-lanka-making-civil-society-inclusion-redd-count-women>
- National REDD+ Investment Framework and Action Plan <https://unredd.net/documents/un-redd-partner-countries-181/national-redd-strategies-1025/16263-national-redd-investment-framework-and-action-plan-nrifap-12.html?path=un-redd-partner-countries-181/national-redd-strategies-1025>

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F. Ensuring the inclusion of youth in Thailand's Five-Year Plan for Social and Economic Development

Project Description

In 2021, the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) and UNICEF co-organized a youth consultation workshop to discuss directions and strategies for the draft 13th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2023-2027), which includes a focus on climate action.

Around 40 young people from diverse backgrounds attended the event, including young people with disabilities, young people from Juvenile Justice System, the Student Federation of Thailand, LGBTQ youth representatives, in addition to other marginalised youth groups. The interactive event used a World Café format to help create a safe space for young people to share their views, openly and freely. Discussions focussed on the development priorities that were the most important and relevant to their lives, as well as those that they would like to be addressed in the future. Young people also stressed the need for improved coordination, implementation and progress monitoring among government agencies.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Youth Empowerment:** The initiative has provided a platform to voice their opinions and ideas, encouraging young people to take an active role in shaping the future of their country, while gaining skills in advocacy, leadership, and public speaking.
- **Youth-inclusive policy development:** Engaging young people in the development of the National Plan, has helped ensure more youth-inclusive and responsive development policies and programmes.
- **Inclusion and Diversity:** The initiative specifically helped to ensure that the voices of typically marginalised young people were elevated and heard. As a result, the initiative helped promote social inclusion and diversity in decision-making processes, while addressing the needs and aspirations of the country's most marginalised youth.



More Information

- Youth Voices on Thailand's Draft Five-Year Plan for Social and Economic Development: <https://www.unicef.org/thailand/stories/youth-voices-thailands-draft-five-year-plan-social-and-economic-development>

Contact

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We hope to have more youth representation and participation in government decision-making in the future. Their input is very valuable for us to achieve the sustainable development goals

Dr. Kirati Khuvasanont

Deputy Secretary-General
Office of the National Economic and
Social Development Council, Thailand

2.3 BUILDING THE CAPACITY OF YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT

A. Climate Adaptation and Water Safety training for youth in the Republic of Marshall Islands

Project Description

The Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), like many other Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) is bearing some of the worst impacts of the climate crisis. Rising sea levels, combined with issues of water scarcity and flooding mean that many people living in RMI still do not have access to safe, reliable sources of water.

To help tackle the issue, in 2020, the Government and UNDP have launched the Climate Vulnerability in the Water Sector (ACWA) Project (2020-2027) to implement water security interventions that will help ensure climate-resilient water services for communities, including through rainwater harvesting and storage structures, protecting groundwater resources from contamination; and strengthening the technical capacities of national and sub-national actors. Since its inception, the ACWA project has committed to ensuring gender equality and social inclusion outcomes, including the active involvement of women and youth, providing them with training opportunities and actively encouraging their leadership and engagement. Other community members, including young people are also benefiting from training on inclusion and gender equality, allowing young people to improve advocacy efforts for women and girls.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Improved water access and climate resilience:** The project is working to improve access to safer, more resilient water supply and sanitation services for vulnerable communities across RMI. These interventions, supported by young people, have increased the availability of clean water, even during periods of drought and flooding - leading to improved health and dignity outcomes for entire communities.
- **Promoting gender equality and inclusion:** The project, through its strong emphasis on equity and inclusion, has increased the participation of women and girls water security projects, which in turn has led to more equitable and inclusive water security outcomes across RMI.



Photo: Roel Cabudsan

- **Promoting community ownership:** Interventions have been tailored to meet local needs, preferences, and priorities, and are owned by the young people and their communities. It has also fostered community ownership and stewardship of water resources, leading to more sustainable and locally relevant solutions.
- **Supporting RMI to meet their Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** The project contributes to the achievement of their SDGs, particularly SDG 6 on clean water and sanitation, and SDG 13 on climate action. By improving access to safe and sustainable water supply and sanitation services, enhancing climate resilience, promoting gender equality, and engaging local communities, the project aligns with all the principles of sustainable development and contributes to the overall well-being and resilience of the people across RMI.

More Information

- Water security interventions in RMI commences: <https://www.undp.org/pacific/press-releases/water-security-interventions-rmi-commences>
- Women and youth to strengthen capacities in climate resilience education and water safety: <https://www.undp.org/pacific/press-releases/women-and-youth-strengthen-capacities-climate-resilience-education-and-water-safety>

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2.4 FOSTERING YOUTH INNOVATION

A. The Youth Impact Challenge: Urban Mobility & Transport Solutions in Cambodia

Project Description

Rapid urbanisation in Cambodia has led to a growing demand for improved mobility and transport. This has meant that the transport sector is now among the leading sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the country.

The Sustainable Urban Mobility for All Initiative (SUMAI) project, implemented by UNDP and the Ministry of Public Works and Transport aims to tackle this issue by generating data on traffic and air quality, to inform policy and regulatory decisions. This in turn is helping the Government of Cambodia improve access to more sustainable, inclusive and smart urban transport solutions.

The SUMAI project has included a strong focus on youth and innovation from the state. So far, key activities have included:

- **The Youth Ideation Roadshow (2018-2019):** carried out in Phnom Penh, Siem Reap, and Battambang and attended by 200 students. The ideation sessions provided a platform for students to express ideas and solutions on traffic congestion and road safety issues.
- **The Youth Impact Challenge (2019-2020):** A challenge in which young people pitch their solutions to address the country's urban mobility and transport challenges. Teams were guided through weekly lectures, private coaching sessions, and a point-based competition designed to help them develop stakeholder relationships. Three teams were given \$5,000 each to help kick-start and implement their winning solutions.



Youth today have a lot of great ideas and solutions for Cambodia's development challenges. We want to encourage them and provide them with the tools and support they need to realize their vision.

Nick Beresford
Resident Representative
UNDP Cambodia

Key Results and Impacts

- **Improved youth knowledge and awareness on climate-related issues:** These engagements have raised awareness of the importance of urban mobility and air quality for youth.
- **Stakeholder dialogue:** The Urban Mobility Forum and Showcase Day, and Cities of the Future events have created the foundation for dialogue on urban mobility and transport in Cambodia amongst youth, entrepreneurs and different government ministries. The Urban Mobility Showcase Day engaged youth in classroom talks and as well as the booths that were presented on urban mobility and transport in the city.
- **Bolstered youth engagement and empowerment:** These engagements have built confidence for youth to participate in the Impact Challenge and contribute to the development of solutions in response to urban mobility challenges in the country.
- **Youth innovation and creativity:** The Youth Impact Challenge encouraged and showcased the skills, ability, and knowledge of Cambodia's youth. The programme allowed youth to compete with innovative ideas on their own take on how they would solve urban mobility issues.

More Information

- Youth Impact Challenge: <https://www.undp.org/cambodia/youth-impact-challenge>
- Youth Impact Challenge: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tqWnovsry7g>
- The Sustainable Urban Mobility for All Initiative (SUMAI): <https://www.undp.org/cambodia/projects/sustainable-urban-mobility-all-initiative>

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Photo: UNDP Cambodia

B. Youth Environment Living Labs in Malaysia: Empowering young people to learn, lead and advocate for climate action

Project Description

The 2020 National Youth Climate Change Survey found that 92% of young people surveyed recognised climate change as a crisis, and nine out of ten surveyed stated that they had personally experienced its impacts. Despite this, many have reported that they face barriers to taking meaningful action - including the costliness of a climate-friendly lifestyle and a lack of information and knowledge on how to tackle the climate crisis in their own communities. In addition, much of the information available online, focused on the impact in the Global North, with few local narratives and resources existing to help galvanise youth interest and support.

From these findings was launched the Youth Environment Living Labs (YELL) in 2021, a joint programme initiated by UNDP Malaysia, Singapore & Brunei Darussalam and UNICEF Malaysia. YELL will be supported by Amanah Lestari Alam (ALAM) until 2024. The initiative aims to support young people in their journey to becoming environmental leaders and help them better advocate for local and global environmental action. It also aims to fill some of the existing information and knowledge gaps faced by Malaysia's youth.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Improved youth knowledge and awareness on climate-related issues:** Since its inception, YELL has developed partnerships to promote tools and environmental action for and with young people. These have included:
 - Dialogue with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change (NRECC), for youth to learn about the Minister's aspirations for youth engagement in climate action.
 - The YELL Starter Kit: providing young people with all the ideas and inspiration they need to take action.
 - The #Bumbelia Stories Competition: stories crowdsourced from young people documenting and inspiring action as well as celebrating Malaysia's environmental heroes, such as the Life Lessons from Mother Earth: a story inspiring young people how to live, learn, and co-exist peacefully with Mother Earth, learning from the experience of elders.



- The YELL Network Resource Hub on Environmental Action: YELL's website that mapped a network of youth groups, individuals and environmental organisations, providing a collection of resources and innovative ideas that can be publicly accessed.
- **Youth innovation and creativity:** Through events such as the YELL Akademi Impact: A changemakers boot camp was held in partnership with Impact Malaysia (IM), an initiative by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, for 31 young participants. The Bootcamp led to 10 youth-led environmental projects seed-funded.

More Information

- About YELL: <https://yell.my/>

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C. The Green Building Design Challenge in Timor-Leste

Project Description

In 2020, UNDP Timor-Leste, in collaboration with the Department of Urbanization, Ministry of Public Works, launched the Green Building Design Challenge (GBDC), asking young people to showcase their creativity, knowledge, and skills in designing green buildings that integrate environmentally-friendly features such as energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, and use of renewable materials.

The project aimed to bolster youth-led initiatives and engage them in promoting sustainable practices in their built environment. This initiative also aimed to engage the Government, private sector and members of the public in the co-creation of sustainable building design. The objective is to create a uniform standard of practice covering all aspects of planning, design and construction of buildings.

Key Results and Impacts

- **Fostered greater innovation around green building design:** The competition was able to generate around 30 innovative and sustainable green building design ideas. The workshop, which included mentorship and support from the Government and private sector, inspired youth participants to build their own prototypes based on information collected during the consultation workshop. Several submissions have now been launched as pilot projects. The winning design has been collaborating with international NGOs to further develop hydroponics kits for the community to grow their own vegetables. They also provided to youth and children training about hydroponics, volunteering opportunities and learning activities around the concept of green building.
- **Youth empowerment:** The competition provided a platform for Timor-Leste's youth to actively engage in the sustainable design process, providing them with the knowledge, skills and mentorship required to help them take their ideas to scale. By participating in the competition, young people gained confidence and inspiration required to tackle the environmental issues being faced by their communities.



More Information

- Co-Create Standard Guidelines for Timor-Leste First Green Building Design Challenge: <https://www.undp.org/timor-leste/news/co-create-standard-guidelines-timor-leste-first-green-building-design-challenge>
- Youth-led green initiative in Timor-Leste <https://www.undp.org/timor-leste/blog/youth-led-green-initiative-timor-leste>

Contact

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The initiative is not only contributing to the protection of the environment but also providing a platform for young people to take the lead in promoting sustainable development in their community.

Jaime Dos Reis

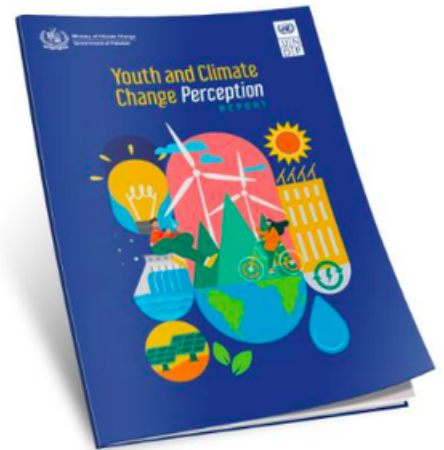
Director,
Department of Climate Change and
Disaster Risk Management, Timor-Leste

2.5 STRENGTHENING THE RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE BASE

A. The Youth and Climate Change Perception Report in Pakistan

Project Description

In 2021, the Ministry of Climate Change in Pakistan, in collaboration with UNDP launched the "Youth and Climate Change Perception Report," a report which documented the perceptions of Pakistani youth towards climate change and its impacts on their communities. Surveys targeted 13,000 youth across Pakistan to gather their views and opinions on climate change, its causes, consequences, and possible solutions, focusing on five central themes: climate change knowledge and vulnerability, adaptation strategies, regulatory knowledge, and climate advocacy. The report also highlighted the role of youth in climate action and their potential to contribute to addressing the challenges posed by climate change.



In line with the report's commitments, UNDP Pakistan, UNICEF Pakistan, UN Women Pakistan, and the Ministry of Climate Change launched the "COP In My City Initiative" in 2023. It seeks to amplify the voices of Pakistani youth in policy decisions, with a special focus on digitally empowering girls and women in remote regions. Central to this endeavor is establishing a seamless communication loop between the youth, government entities, and climate change experts, ensuring the youth's continuous involvement in climate dialogues.

Key Results and Impacts - Youth and Climate Change Perception Report

- **Increased awareness:** The project enhanced climate change awareness among Pakistani youth, utilizing surveys and interviews to gauge understanding levels. These insights are critical for informing nuanced, evidence-based policies and strategies.
- **Bolstered youth engagement:** Recognizing youth needs is vital for their meaningful inclusion in climate action. This project provides a platform for their voices, fostering their active participation in climate initiatives and policy discussions.
- **Influenced policy:** The report's findings have significantly influenced policy deliberation and strategy within Pakistan's climate change framework. Incorporated into the Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-2021, the survey data are being integrated by the Ministry of Climate Change for enhanced climate planning. Consequently, a refined climate advocacy strategy is underway, pinpointing actionable areas and green entrepreneurial prospects to stimulate job creation in the environmental sector.

Key Results and Impacts - COP In My City Initiative

- **Left no one behind:** Empowering almost 300 girls through the initiative by bringing them to the forefront within the climate action and policy sphere. · Involvement of around 30% of youth from underprivileged areas for the first time through focused outreach activities and covering their travel and accommodation expenses to remove any barriers to participation.
- **Improved youth knowledge:** Participants, especially girls, enhanced their digital literacy, awareness of online safety, and received training in climate journalism and policy document creation. The initiative bolstered knowledge on crucial climate change topics, from decarbonization to climate finance.
- **Enhanced intergenerational dialogue:** Continuous interaction channels were established between the youth, local governments, and climate experts, ensuring a youth and gender-sensitive perspective in climate policy dialogues.

More Information

- Youth and Climate Change Perception Report: <https://www.undp.org/pakistan/publications/youth-and-climate-change-perception-report>
- Pakistani young people have their say on climate: <https://www.undp.org/blog/pakistani-young-people-have-their-say-climate>

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Photo: UNDP Pakistan

B. The Special Reports on Youth for Climate Action in Viet Nam

Project Description

The Youth4Climate initiative is a collaboration between UNDP, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) and the Hồ Chí Minh Youth Union.

Youth4Climate aims to strengthen the knowledge, capacity and leadership skills of youth representatives and networks, to tackle climate change and advance Viet Nam's NDCs for climate action.

One key outcome of the project has been the development of two special reports, authored by young climate activists from across the country:

- The Special Report on Youth for Climate Action in Viet Nam (2021)
- The Second Special Report on Youth4Climate Action in Viet Nam (2022).

The Reports were co-written by twenty-four young authors, covering four key themes including youth in climate policy and decision-making processes, accelerating the transition towards a circular economy, climate mitigation towards net zero, and climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in 2021 and circular economy in 2022

The youth authors also documented and tracked more than 130 youth-led climate initiatives and projects that were outstanding good practices of meaningful climate action. They also identified several priority accelerators moving forward, including the establishment of a youth climate policy working group, education and capacity-building programmes on climate change, and financial and technical support for youth-led projects.

Finally, the young climate leaders have proposed a Roadmap for Climate Action covering the period 2021-2025, outlining key strategic areas, with priority accelerators:



Key Results and Impacts

- Influencing policy:
 - In 2021 the Special Report was handed over to Alok Sharma, the COP26 President Alok Sharma during his visit to Ha Noi and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources in May 2021.
 - In October 2022, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted a Youth Policy Dialogue, where the Viet Nam Youth Statement on Climate Change 2022 was presented to the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres.
 - A Youth Policy Working Group was also set-up to conduct research on Just Energy Transition, and Climate Change Education.
- Improved planning and coordination for youth climate advocacy: The National Roadmap on Youth4Climate was launched in 2022 following the recommendations of the Special Report, providing improved coordination and direction for youth climate advocacy efforts in the country.
- Strengthening youth knowledge and awareness: The bilingual Youth 4Climate Learning Hub entirely led and developed by youth was launched in 2022, providing a space for youth to learn about climate science and policy.
- Mobilising youth and driving collective action: An independent Youth for Climate Network (YNet) was also established with 11 initial members and has grown to more than 60 members.



More Information

- Download the 2022 Special Report on Youth4Climate Action 2021 [here](#) and 2022 [here](#).
- Follow the activities and updates of the [Youth4Climate Viet Nam](#) on Facebook
- Learn about climate change on the [Climate Learning Hub](#).

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3

RECOMMENDATIONS



The case studies presented in this report are just a small snapshot of the youth climate governance work taking place across the Region. Despite this progress however, much more needs to be done to help ensure that young people are actively involved in all aspects of the climate governance process - and their voices are heard.

Based on these experiences and research carried out by YECAP, the following recommendations for enhancing youth participation in climate governance have been developed.

1. Encourage and support the institutionalisation of mechanisms of youth participation.
2. Promote and support procedures that ensure equity and inclusion, including enabling intersectionality to tackle systemic discrimination.
3. Address the barriers relating to more systematic and structural inequalities.
4. Ensure availability of and access to networking opportunities, reliable information, knowledge and financial resources for youth participation.
5. Encourage an increased youth self-perception of empowerment.
6. Ensure culturally sensitive participation interventions.
7. Promote compatibility with the latest climate and earth science available with a strong climate justice lens.
8. Promote interconnectedness of climate with other development issues in youth initiatives.
9. Support youth participation that disrupts current socio-technical and socio-political structures underlying climate change.
10. Support and encourage youth initiatives that introduce alternatives for large-scale system transformations.
11. Explore binding youth participation including through quotas.
12. Promote transparency of outcomes of youth participation.
13. Assess positive impacts in youth empowerment and wellbeing / climate action.
14. Promote operationalization of intergenerational equity.



CONTACT

If you are a government or have been working with your government on meaningful youth engagement in climate governance, we would like to hear from you and learn from your initiative.

We also welcome any questions, feedback or suggestions on this publication.

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