



AOTEAROA YOUTH STATEMENT OF CLIMATE ASKS

This Statement is the result of the discussions and insights collated from the COP Simulation event held on Saturday 28 September 2024, designed and delivered by Save the Children New Zealand and Save the Children International across the areas of WASH, Loss and Damage and Sustainable Food Systems.

Twenty-eight young people aged 12 – 18 years worked together to discuss key climate issues and develop a collective statement of asks. The young people were predominantly based in Auckland (Tāmaki Makaurau) however youth from Wellington (Te Whanganui-a-Tara), New Plymouth (Ngāmotu) and Christchurch (Ōtautahi) also participated in the simulation and development of the Statement of Climate Asks.

The purpose of the Statement is to share with political leaders, country representatives, policy makers and advocates, the views of children and youth committed to fighting for a healthier and more protected planet in the lead up to COP29. The decisions made at COP29 have a direct impact on our planet but also the lives of children now and long into the future. Children and youth have the right to share their voices on the issues that are important to them, and adults in positions of power are obligated to listen to those voices and take them into the account in the decisions they make.

Children and young people in Aotearoa and all over the world are demanding a safer, healthier, more sustainable world, and the opportunity to be included in climate protection and decision making. Children and youth bring personal experiences, new ideas and deep commitment to improve our world. It is well past time they were accorded the opportunity to do so.

WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene)

Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) are critical elements in ensuring public health, mitigating climate change effects, and improving global equity. During the Aotearoa COP simulation, youth representatives from diverse sectors generated key outcomes aimed at addressing global WASH challenges. These outcomes stress the need for global cooperation, sustainable infrastructure, and educational opportunities, with a particular focus on Indigenous knowledge, equity, and disaster response.

Key Outcomes:

1. Global North Assistance for Disease Prevention:

- **Recommendation:** Urges Global North countries to provide financial and technological assistance to regions heavily affected by water-borne diseases. This includes implementing groundwater pumps and creating wells to provide clean, safe drinking water.
- **Analysis:** Climate change exacerbates the risk of disease-related epidemics, especially in regions with unclean drinking water or stagnant water. Support from developed nations can mitigate the effects of climate-related disasters and improve WASH infrastructure in vulnerable communities.

2. Wealth Tax for Sustainable WASH Infrastructure:

- **Recommendation:** Establish a global wealth tax to support impoverished communities, fund sustainable WASH infrastructure, and ensure that Indigenous populations benefit from this redistribution.
- **Analysis:** A wealth tax can generate funds to address inequities in access to clean water and sanitation services, supporting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on water and sanitation.

3. Education on Water Sustainability and Indigenous Practices:

- **Recommendation:** Provide educational opportunities around water sustainability, incorporating Indigenous practices. This aims to broaden career paths and increase awareness of sustainable WASH practices.
- **Analysis:** Education empowers communities to adopt sustainable water management strategies, promoting long-term resilience. Including Indigenous knowledge ensures that traditional water preservation techniques are respected and applied.

4. Redistribution of Global Funds Based on SDG Priorities:

- **Recommendation:** Redistribute global WASH-related funds based on how each country prioritises clean water and sanitation in their SDG goals.

- **Analysis:** This system incentivises nations to prioritise WASH infrastructure improvements, particularly in communities where access to clean water and sanitation is limited.

5. Global Disaster Response Unit for WASH:

- **Recommendation:** Establish a global disaster response unit within the World Health Organization (WHO) dedicated to providing medical aid to communities affected by WASH-related crises and alleviating the global shortage of IV fluids during disasters.
- **Analysis:** As climate change intensifies, disaster preparedness and response become more critical. A dedicated global WASH unit would ensure that resources and medical supplies reach affected communities efficiently.

Stakeholder Insights:

NGO Representatives:

- Urged for the reduction in the cost of hygiene products, particularly to combat period poverty.
- Advocated for investments in water infrastructure and funding mental health support in disaster-prone areas.

Climate Policy Advocates:

- Highlighted the need for global support in assisting countries affected by water contamination and called for a coordinated global response unit for disaster management.

Health Advocates:

- Stressed the importance of resources to support vulnerable communities after climate-related disasters, particularly in the Pacific, and advocated for regenerative practices to aid in environmental recovery.

Education Advocates:

- Recommended integrating water sustainability education into school curricula, providing free sanitary products in schools, and encouraging students to pursue careers in WASH sectors.

Economic Advocates:

- Supported eco-friendly infrastructure and emphasised the importance of working with communities to solve local water issues. Advocated for reinvesting the proceeds of Pacific Island exports into improving local WASH infrastructure.

Indigenous Representatives:

- Called for an end to industrial pollution of water systems and emphasised the need to include Indigenous perspectives in managing and maintaining WASH infrastructure.

Social Justice Advocates:

- Proposed a wealth tax focused on equity, implementing a global treaty on WASH, and identified the need for countries to prioritise support for regions that lack access to clean water. Advocated for rainwater collection systems on all housing to increase resilience to water shortages.

Conclusion:

The WASH outcomes generated by youth representatives emphasise the need for a holistic approach that integrates global cooperation, sustainable funding mechanisms, Indigenous knowledge, and local capacity building. By addressing the challenges in water, sanitation, and hygiene through equitable solutions and focusing on resilience, these recommendations contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and fostering healthier, more sustainable communities worldwide.

Loss & Damage

Loss and Damage refers to the unavoidable impacts of climate change that countries, particularly in the Global South including the Pacific, are already experiencing. These impacts range from extreme weather events to biodiversity loss, displacing communities and severely affecting lives. During the COP simulation, youth representatives from various sectors shared key outcomes aimed at addressing these urgent challenges. The focus is on building resilience, establishing equitable recovery frameworks, and ensuring that Global North countries contribute their fair share to recovery and adaptation efforts.

Key Outcomes:

1. Establishment of a Global Climate Resilience Fund:

- **Recommendation:** Create a globally funded Climate Resilience Fund to support infrastructure rebuilding in vulnerable countries, with contributions from Global North nations and international organisations. A global Climate Resilience fund that can be accessed by children and youth. And that a percentage of the fund must be spent on programmes that directly include and or support children and youth.
- **Analysis:** Climate disasters are already displacing communities and destroying infrastructure. A resilience fund ensures that communities in the Global South receive the resources needed for long-term recovery and rebuilding.

2. Investment in Renewable Energy Infrastructure:

- **Recommendation:** Significantly increase funding for renewable energy projects in climate-affected countries, focusing on developing sustainable and eco-friendly energy systems to reduce dependency on fossil fuels.
- **Analysis:** Renewable energy infrastructure is crucial to mitigate climate damage and build resilience against future impacts. It empowers vulnerable nations to transition to clean energy while adapting to climate-related challenges.

3. Global Insurance Framework for Climate Disasters:

- **Recommendation:** Implement a global insurance system to support communities affected by climate disasters, covering both infrastructure and livelihoods. This system would provide compensation and aid recovery efforts.
- **Analysis:** Many developing nations lack the financial means to recover from climate disasters. A global insurance framework would ensure swift recovery support, reducing the long-term damage to lives and economies.

4. Prioritisation of Indigenous Knowledge and Resource Protection:

- **Recommendation:** Ensure the inclusion of Indigenous knowledge in climate resilience strategies, especially in protecting natural resources and biodiversity. Indigenous voices must be represented at every level of decision making.
- **Analysis:** Indigenous communities possess valuable traditional knowledge about sustainable land and resource management. Incorporating this knowledge will help tailor resilience efforts to local contexts, enhancing overall impact.

5. Global Collaboration for Education and Community Outreach:

- **Recommendation:** Foster global partnerships to create educational programmes about climate adaptation, with a special focus on displaced children and affected communities. These programmes should emphasise climate resilience and the opportunities for careers in this area.
- **Analysis:** Education is vital to prepare communities for future climate risks. Strengthening educational infrastructure and outreach initiatives will equip vulnerable populations with the tools to adapt and thrive in a changing climate.

Stakeholder Insights:

Health Advocates:

- Highlighted the need for clean and healthy water in the Pacific.
- Called for increased financial support to develop water infrastructure.
- Supported the creation of more marine reserves to protect biodiversity.

NGO Representatives:

- Advocated for preventing logging to halt deforestation, which contributes to climate damage.
- Emphasised the importance of collaboration to manage climate impacts and support displaced communities.

Education Advocates:

- Called for the creation of educational programmes focused on climate resilience and adaptation.
- Recommended increasing financial support for educational infrastructure, especially for displaced children.

Environmental & Economic Advocates:

- Urged for more stringent regulation of fossil fuel companies and penalties for polluters.

- Advocated for increased investment in renewable energy to expedite the transition to sustainable energy systems.

Climate Policy Advocates:

- Proposed the creation of a Climate Resilience Fund to build resilient infrastructure.
- Emphasised the need for global collaboration and consequences for countries that fail to contribute to climate adaptation efforts.

Indigenous Representatives:

- Stressed the importance of protecting Indigenous land and resources and integrating Indigenous knowledge into resilience strategies.
- Called for traditional Indigenous methods to be taught in schools as part of climate education.

Social Justice Advocates:

- Proposed a wealth tax to promote equity and redistribute resources to vulnerable communities.
- Emphasised the need for increased contributions from Global North countries to support climate adaptation in the Global South.

Conclusion:

The outcomes from the youth representatives focus on building resilience and addressing Loss and Damage, particularly for Global South nations. By establishing financial mechanisms, integrating Indigenous knowledge, and investing in renewable energy, these recommendations provide a pathway towards equitable recovery. Global cooperation, education, and support will ensure that communities can adapt to the ongoing and future impacts of climate change, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Sustainable Food Systems

Sustainable Food Systems are crucial and directly link to both climate mitigation and adaptation. Sustainable Food Systems are essential to combating food insecurity, mitigating the environmental impact of agriculture, and promoting equitable access to nutrition. During the COP simulation, youth representatives shared key outcomes focused on building resilient, sustainable food systems that address global inequities and incorporate Indigenous knowledge. The emphasis was on ensuring food security, equitable distribution, and sustainable agricultural practices, particularly in regions most affected by climate change.

Key Outcomes:

1. Equitable Distribution of Food and Resources:

- **Recommendation:** Identify areas with the most need and redistribute food resources and agricultural imports to ensure these regions receive adequate support. This includes equitable access to nutrition, particularly for disadvantaged areas.
- **Analysis:** Climate change exacerbates food insecurity, particularly in vulnerable regions. Equitable distribution ensures that those most affected by food scarcity receive the necessary resources to survive and thrive.

2. Incorporating Indigenous Practices in Agricultural Education:

- **Recommendation:** Integrate Indigenous sustainable agricultural practices into school curriculums, ensuring that traditional farming methods are taught to future generations.
- **Analysis:** Indigenous farming techniques have proven to be sustainable and environmentally friendly. Educating young people on these practices will contribute to a more sustainable food system and respect Indigenous knowledge.

3. Restoration and Protection of Indigenous Lands:

- **Recommendation:** Establish policies that prioritise the restoration and protection of Indigenous lands, promoting a reciprocal relationship between people and the environment.
- **Analysis:** Indigenous communities have long cultivated a sustainable relationship with the land. Protecting their whenua (land) and prioritising restoration will safeguard biodiversity and support sustainable agricultural practices.

4. Financial Incentives to Reduce Monocultural Farming:

- **Recommendation:** Introduce financial incentives that discourage

monocultural farming practices and promote crop rotation to prevent soil degradation and promote sustainable land use.

- **Analysis:** Monocultural farming depletes the soil of nutrients, leading to long term environmental damage. Crop rotation and diverse farming practices are essential for maintaining soil health and sustainable agriculture.

5. Tax Reform to Promote Healthy Eating:

- **Recommendation:** Provide tax breaks for healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables and increase taxes on processed foods to incentivise healthier diets.
- **Analysis:** Tax incentives can encourage healthier eating habits, reduce the consumption of processed foods, and promote sustainable agricultural practices. This also makes nutritious food more accessible to low-income communities.

Stakeholder Insights:

Social Justice Advocates:

- Advocated for free water access for communities and government funding to support employment in agriculture.
- Called for reduced industrial agriculture and pollution, as well as discounted food for low-income individuals and communities.

Education Advocates:

- Proposed introducing sustainability and nutrition classes in schools, alongside practical gardening and sustainable farming education.
- Recommended providing food waste bins and composting facilities to schools to promote sustainable food systems.

Health Advocates:

- Highlighted the urgent need for emergency food aid for Pacific communities, which are at greater risk of food insecurity due to climate change.
- Emphasised the importance of learning from Indigenous elders about sustainable practices and ensuring food accessibility for all.

NGO Representatives:

- Urged for increased investment in sustainable agricultural practices and community-based food programmes to enhance food security.

Indigenous Representatives:

- Called for Indigenous farming methods to be taught to farmers and incorporated into mainstream agricultural practices.
- Emphasised the need to protect Indigenous land and ensure that their traditional knowledge is respected and utilised in agricultural systems.

Climate Policy Advocates:

- Encouraged incentivising the cultivation of native plants and ensuring a more equitable global distribution of food.
- Suggested diverting food waste globally to areas in need and called on Global North countries to fund sustainable food system initiatives.

Economic & Environmental Advocates:

- Advocated for increased funding towards GMO projects to combat malnutrition and investment in soil conservation and restoration efforts.
- Emphasised the importance of mitigating food waste through fairer global distribution and supporting sustainable agricultural practices.

Conclusion:

The outcomes from the youth representatives underscore the importance of building a sustainable, equitable food system that integrates Indigenous knowledge, promotes food security, and reduces environmental impact. By focusing on restoring land, incentivising sustainable agriculture, and ensuring access to nutritious food, these recommendations aim to create resilient communities that can adapt to the ongoing challenges posed by climate change.