

Our World, Our Future

Children's Climate Forum Declaration 2009

Climate change threatens our lives, our families and our future. We, the youth delegates from 44 countries attending the Children's Climate Forum 2009, will not sit back and watch. We already face the effects of climate change. Our communities are deprived of clean drinking water, denied access to education and vulnerable to disease every time it floods. Our plates are empty due to drought. Our future is at risk, and we demand that something be done. The youth in the world are ready to take action, and we request the same of governments worldwide. The time for talk is over. Now, we hold you accountable for your commitments.

The challenges may appear insurmountable, yet as stakeholders, our generation is ready to collaborate in this cause.

We commit to personal lifestyle changes that place the common good above our individual desires and current way of life.

We commit to educate and empower ourselves and our communities to adapt to and mitigate the changing climate.

We commit to engage and actively cooperate with all generations and governments in combating climate change.

As our efforts alone will not be enough, we expect our leaders and fellow citizens to cooperate. The following actions need to be taken:

Recommendations for Adaptation

- Governments of industrialized countries should contribute more, through financial and technological support, to the adaptation of developing countries to climate change.
- We want cities to be well-planned and sustainable, with clean drinking water, many green spaces and efficient transport networks. Governments should take more proactive efforts to prevent uncontrolled urban growth and strengthen rural communities by creating sustainable employment, quality education and entertainment.
- Regulations, safety standards and standard emergency protocol, consistently centered on and informed by children, need to be established to prepare for climate induced disasters.
- As lack of water is already causing drought and desertification in many areas, governments must work towards water conservation and provide clean water sources for areas in need.
- Education on sea level rise and flooding, along with policies that allow communities to adjust to changes, must be implemented. When communities' water supplies are threatened by rising sea levels, alternative sources should be provided to aid their adaptation.

- Biodiversity-related projects that promote the conservation of threatened species must be widely implemented.

Recommendations for Mitigation

- Research, development and sharing of green and energy-efficient technologies, especially renewable energy production, must occur between industrialized and developing countries to ensure sustainable development globally.
- Investments should be made in sustainable transport infrastructure, such as train and bus networks, cycling lanes and environmentally friendly fuel.
- An international carbon trading system should be introduced. All transactions within the market should be taxed and the revenue generated should be used for an adaptation fund.
- We propose a new classification where countries are divided into three annexes—the industrialized countries, the developing countries which pollute heavily and the less polluting developing countries—to distribute responsibilities fairly among nations.
- Governments should establish and develop recycling systems on a national level. We demand that our authorities provide accessible recycling facilities in all communities.
- Climate change education should be a mandatory and substantial area of the school curriculum. Governments should also support organizations which already educate youth on climate issues.

The battle against climate change is upon all of us. We are ready to act and we invite you to join us. Climate change is affecting our lives, our families and our future. We must act immediately and we are ready to fulfill our commitments. We are prepared to give all we have as long as there is the possibility of saving our planet.

We expect the same courage from you.