Youth4Pacific Declaration on Climate Change

The Youth4Pacific: Pre-COP Gathering was the biggest Pacific Youth mobilization in the lead-up to COP26 bringing together over 600 young Pacific people from around the world. This Gathering provided opportunities for Pacific Youth to contribute to regional priorities meaningfully and maximize the impact of their unique moral authority on climate change ahead of COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland. From November 1 to 12, commitment towards implementing the Paris Agreement goals of member states will be reviewed.

Throughout the Gathering, Pacific youth engaged in constructive and outcome-oriented discussions on issues that need urgent action. In this regard, the Gathering provided young people with capacity building and practical engagement experience on COP26 Agenda Items, further enabling their understanding of the UNFCCC negotiation processes.

Supported by the UK Government, the Gathering built the momentum of Youth efforts towards accelerating climate action in the region. The Youth4Pacific: Pre-COP Gathering was organized with Active Citizens Pacific, Alliance for Future Generations [Fiji], Sustainable Ocean Alliance (SOA), and 350.org Pacific.

DECLARATION

We, the Youth from the Pacific and Pacific Youth in the diaspora, representing frontline communities, grassroots organizations, youth networks, and Indigenous peoples, with unified support from around the world, call on our global leaders to respond to the challenge of this time with an intersectional lens prioritizing justice that promotes an inclusive and just world for ourselves, and the future generations to come.

We reiterate that climate-forced displacement is not an adaptation measure, and urge that gender justice, and human rights be integrated with all-climate responses and that putting the Pacific before profit is of paramount importance.

We, the Pacific Youth, demand world leaders, and the COP26 Presidency to:

1. Localise and contextualise their commitment to clean energy by investing in young green entrepreneurs and creating an enabling policy environment to facilitate Youth demands.

2. Ensure Youth are at every national and international decision-making space, particularly ensuring that nature-based solutions and traditional practices are preserved, documented, and shared through storytelling.

3. Recognise young leaders as experts in climate adaptation and make available finance to support their actions.
4 Curb carbon emissions by at least 50% by 2030 through the just and urgent transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy.

5 Weave science and traditional environmental knowledge towards designing ocean policies and initiatives across all levels. Recognize that traditional environmental knowledge is important and needs to be woven into designing ocean policies, and ocean management initiatives across all levels.

6 Operationalize and finance the Santiago Network on Loss & Damage, identify new loss and damage finance sources, and ensure these are distributed as grants, not loans.

7 Transform the public and private financial system at the domestic level and globally by 2030 and ensure that financial flows are compatible and in line with a 1.5-degree pathway, climate-resilient development, and just recovery efforts, which require ceasing existing and future financing of fossil fuel projects and shifting away from extractive economies to regenerative economies that are recognized by Pacific cultures.

Climate Change continues to be a lived reality many Pacific people. We urgently demand that leaders recognise that real progress on climate action requires transitioning from global extractive economies to local, living economies rooted in shared values of reciprocity, care, dignity, mutuality, solidarity, and the respect for the territorial integrity, sacred creative principles, and natural laws akin to that of our Pacific ancestors.

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The ‘Youth4Pacific: Pre-COP Gathering’ was held from the 23rd - 24th September 2021 in a hybrid format bringing together over 600 young Pacific people from around the world engaging over 2 days, 6 Talanoa’s and 12 Movement Workshops.

For more information, please email team@youth4pacific.org