

Preamble

Between the 10th and the 14th of October, elected student leaders from all across the world convened in Accra, Ghana for the Global Student COP27 Pre-Summit hosted by the Global Student Forum in cooperation with the All-Africa Student Union under the auspices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration of the Republic of Ghana. The conference represented a unique opportunity for the organised student movement to come together and develop a collective understanding, shared aspirations and joint ambition for a bold COP27 policy vision. The outcome document of the summit underwent further written consultations with national unions of students from 122 countries and serves as a reference point for the student movement's collective advocacy efforts.

This Global Student Declaration calls for urgent action on climate justice. It seeks the eyes and ears of world leaders, decision makers and those in power to recognise the injustice of the climate crisis and take action, to deliver on climate justice. It seeks solutions to the climate crisis which acknowledge that those who are least responsible, are facing the impacts of anthropogenic climate change faster and to a far greater extent than those who have financially and politically benefited.

Our Vision for Climate Justice

Climate justice is about learning from past and current injustices, and recognising the implications of these locally and globally, to inform and shape a future that delivers on climate justice for all. The climate crisis is the biggest predicament of the 21st century and must be addressed as imperative for the survival of humankind and the Earth as we know it.

Climate justice education must, like climate policy, be based on science and acknowledge the anthropogenic causes and inequitable impacts. It must be co-created, inclusive, and democratic. Education for climate justice must recognise the harmful practices that have led us here, and exploration of sustainable alternatives must be part of every curricula, from early years through to higher education and professional training. This seeks to empower people internationally and intergenerationally to act and build a cohesive sustainable future.

The climate crisis is intersectional; it intersects race, gender, class and caste, sexuality, disabilities and age. Climate justice cannot stand alone but must be implemented with intersectionality ensuring it to be inclusive for the benefit of people and planet. The future of climate justice education must correspond to the needs of the world and empower students to be agents of change. Equally, education institutions must not only educate on climate, but practice what they preach.

We must seek to put the planet before profit and ensure those who have polluted the most take responsibility for this through climate change adaptation financing and financing of loss and damages. The world's most disadvantaged should not pay for the crisis they did not create.

Climate justice is about compensating those suffering from the crisis and ensuring that commitment to change and funding of green initiatives is not just morally binding, but legally.



Student and Youth Priorities for COP27

1. Education and Training

As organisations and unions representing youth and students, our priorities for COP27 have great focus on education and training for climate justice. As stated in the UN Sustainable Development goals, education is a key enabler for change, we are therefore advocating for a stronger focus on climate justice in education to ensure we bring the whole of global society with us in transitioning to a climate just and fair future for all.

- 1.1. Sustainability and climate change need to be taught across curricula, from early years through to higher education and adult learning, so all learners are prepared for green jobs and can implement climate actions in their own schools and communities
- 1.2. Curriculums should be influenced and co-created by students and student unions. This should create education spaces that are vibrant democracies where all stakeholders are represented and students participate in shaping learning
- 1.3. Education institutions should provide lifelong learning opportunities, inclusive of upskilling opportunities for those who need to transition to green jobs
- 1.4. Each country shall ensure that all school pupils are given the opportunity to develop a connection with nature including, but not limited to learning about indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices
- 1.5. Educators and trainers shall be provided with adequate training, resources and capacity to integrate climate and sustainability into their teaching and training
- 1.6. Education institutions shall integrate sustainable environmental practices in their extra-curricular activities beyond the formal curriculum to ensure the whole institution is adopting sustainable practices
- 1.7. Education and training to go beyond formal education settings
 - 1.7.1. E.g. Sustainable food systems and food security: Working with and supporting farmers through education and training to build climate resilient food systems
 - 1.7.2. E.g. Bridge the information gap by training media and journalists as gatekeepers and communicators of climate action (lifelong learning)
- 1.8. Leaders of developed nations ensure more resources are committed to all education systems so they can put into practice climate science
- 1.9. Education institutions must be sustainable spaces in their operations to enable students and learners and learn about and physically experience climate action and sustainability. For example, provision of green energy and plant based food options in education institutions
- 1.10. Poverty and food poverty are key barriers to learning, in our education institutions, no student should go hungry
- 1.11. Education is a key enabler for a transition to a more sustainable future, therefore education must be accessible for all through free and publicly funded quality education systems
- 1.12. To achieve holistic delivery on climate justice across all aspects of education (formal, informal and subliminal curricula), a workforce transition will be necessary, this must be done by way of a Just transition

2. Practising Democratic Decision Making for Climate Solutions

- 2.1. Representation of local and indigenous groups and communities in local, national and international policy making spaces
- 2.2. Student and/or youth representation in all state owned environmental-based organisations and ministries
- 2.3. All national delegations to UN climate conferences to have democratically elected youth and student leaders
- 2.4. Young people shall be protected and positively engaged with when they speak up on climate issues

3. Climate Finance, including Loss and Damages

- 3.1. Better financing for youth action, as young people are going to bear the brunt of the climate crisis. We call for financing mechanism for youth and student-led climate action, ring fenced funding for youth/student organisations and marginalised communities
- 3.2. Countries shall ensure that loss and damage finance is part of the new collective global agreement on climate action. This shall be distributed equitably with those most implicated by the climate crisis and least responsible, being compensated by those most responsible and financially most able to adapt
- 3.3. Climate finance shall be a separate component of funding, allocated to adaptation and mitigation
- 3.4. Climate financing shall recognise that those who have economically benefited from the climate crisis shall now share that wealth with those most impacted and least able to adapt and mitigate

4. Accountability

- 4.1. A Climate Education Bill shall be passed in every country to ensure accountability through policy for delivering on climate education
- 4.2. Effective monitoring and evaluation system or framework for every nation, or tracking system for all pledges as well as action points made towards climate justice
- 4.3. All nations (and HEIs) should deliver on their commitments to the Paris Agreement and take equity into account while doing so
- 4.4. Enforce cleaner production to reduce emissions, e.g. university buildings are carbon neutral and greening the operations of educational estates. Institutions, businesses and local authorities should be held accountable to delivering on net zero carbon targets.

Why the Student Movement is a key Enabler for delivering Climate Justice

The international, organised student movement is the largest global structure for the democratic representation of predominantly young people's interest towards decision-makers on all levels. . Young people will be impacted the most by the effects of climate change and should be recognised as custodians of the planet, therefore young people deserve a right to be heard in shaping our collective future. The student movement is also an intergenerational collective, together we must take responsible action for climate justice, to protect the planet now and in the future.

Coordinated advocacy from the student movement across the globe is fundamental to achieving a climate inclusive framework. Students are most often the voices of grassroots communities - schools from different localities, regions and nations coming together as a collective, hence students have the power to echo and amplify the voices of the communities of those impacted and those who can be part of the solution.

Students represent the largest stakeholder group within the education community. Schools and higher education institutions are change incubators and we believe that climate justice can only be fought for when all members of this community, including students are meaningfully involved.

Students have the potential and are already enacting their capabilities to be liaisons between the institutions producing knowledge on just transition and the communities they go back home to, this holds powerful potential for delivering climate justice. Through these liaison roles embodied by students, they can be advocates, trainers, facilitators, global citizens and future leaders (socially, politically and economically).

“ **6% of people attend university but they take up 80% of the leadership positions” (Charles Hopkins, UNESCO Chair)** ”

This statement of youth and students was co-written by student representatives from the following organisations at a pre-COP27 student summit on climate justice convened by Global Student Forum and the All-Africa Students Union in Accra, Ghana, October 2022.



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