



INCORPORATING

CHILD RIGHTS

INTO CLIMATE ACTION

Summary of key asks for COP 27
compiled by the members of the
Children's Environmental Rights Initiative.





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Incorporating Child Rights at COP 27 **Action for Climate Empowerment**

Asks for Champion Parties at COP 27

- Defend the three existing provisions of relevance to children's rights contained within the draft text.
- Under Policy Coherence, insert a provision under Development of technical guidelines to support the implementation of General Comment 26. The UNFCCC, in cooperation with other relevant expert bodies, including the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, should produce technical guidelines to help Parties incorporate the substance of the General Comment into their ACE activities, and through broader incorporation of ACE into NDCs and domestic climate strategies.
- Under Policy Coherence, insert a provision to organise an in-session workshop on intergenerational equity to align with the ongoing work under the UN General Assembly to create a Special Envoy for Future Generations and to link in with national offices created to support intergenerational equity.

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What is happening?

State of Play: ACE



At COP26 in November 2021, Parties advanced efforts to implement the provisions of ACE through the adoption of the Glasgow Work Programme on Action for Climate Empowerment.

This is a 10-year flexible framework for country-driven action.

The Work Programme offers four priority areas to guide actions:

- Policy coherence to strengthen coordination at the international and national levels.
- Coordinated action to build partnerships that bring together diverse expertise, resources, and knowledge
- Tools and support to enhance the dissemination of effective means of building capacity and raising awareness on ACE among relevant stakeholders.
- Monitoring, evaluating and reporting

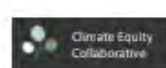
During informal consultations under ACE, Parties considered how to identify immediate actions through short-term, clear and time-bound activities that would substantiate the Glasgow work programme. Their work resulted in an informal note that sought to capture the ideas and suggestions brought forward by the Parties and contains the draft text for adoption at COP 27.

The draft text and annex contained in the informal note provide a solid basis to advance key considerations on children's rights. The proposals contained in the annex include three specific recommendations of value:

- Map and collate existing guidelines and good practices concerning child education and empowerment in climate action with particular attention to gender equality and inclusion of persons with disabilities to produce a compilation report on child education and empowerment; and
- Include the promotion of local networks and platforms that would support ACE activities at the national and subnational level and encourage the involvement of children among other stakeholders.
- The informal note also includes references to creating a national youth role to enhance the promotion of ACE at the local level, which would include children's participation.

While these proposals would all represent progress towards a more significant consideration of children's needs and priorities under the ACE agenda, they will need to be protected and built upon in negotiations at COP 27.

These asks have been endorsed by:





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Incorporating Child Rights at COP 27 **Climate Finance & Loss and Damage**

Asks for Champion Parties at COP 27

1. Request the Standing Committee on Finance to consider a definition for child-responsive climate finance as part of its work on definitions of climate finance.
2. Request the Standing Committee on Finance to prepare a report on an overview of climate finance flows that respond to the needs and priorities of children and a review of how the policies and guidelines of the GCF, GEF and AF could better support the protection and promotion of child rights.
3. Include provision for children's rights, needs and priorities in the new collective quantified goal on climate finance, including incorporating guidance from the forthcoming General Comment on child rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change, being prepared by the UNCRC.
4. Ensure any decisions on developing a financing mechanism for loss and damage include provision for policies and guidance on protecting and promoting child rights.

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What is happening?

State of Play: Climate Finance



Negotiations on climate finance are extensive and it is beyond the scope of this document to address all facets. However, consideration should be given to opportunities to quantify the financial needs and measure existing financial flows going to the protection and promotion of children's rights in climate action. In addition, steps should be taken to incorporate the consideration of children's needs and priorities in the policies of existing funds. Currently:

Green Climate Fund

- The GCF has no specific policy or strategy with a focus on children's needs and priorities and its gender policy makes no reference to girls.
- The GCF does not currently track financial resources flowing towards the protection and empowerment of children

Global Environment Facility

- The GEF (Policies govern the SCCF and the LDCF) includes consideration of the needs and priorities of children in policies related to Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender Equality and Indigenous Peoples.
- The GEF does not currently track financial resources flowing towards the protection and empowerment of children.

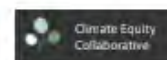
The Adaptation Fund

- The AF includes consideration of the needs and priorities of children in policies related to Environmental and Social Safeguards, Gender Equality and Indigenous Peoples.
- The AF does not currently track financial resources flowing towards the protection and empowerment of children.

A key accompanying decision to the 2015 Paris Agreement stipulates setting a new collective quantified goal for climate finance prior to 2025. This new goal is to be built on the foundation of the US\$100 billion per year by 2020 commitment and must consider the needs and priorities of developing countries. Consideration should be given to children's needs in the design and distribution of the collective quantified goal on climate finance.

In addition, provisions on ensuring the needs and priorities of children should be captured in work on loss and damage once the Santiago Network for Averting, Minimizing, and Addressing Loss and Damage and the Glasgow Dialogue on loss and damage advance sufficiently for such considerations.

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Incorporating Child Rights at COP 27

Adaptation and children's rights

Asks for Champion Parties at COP 27

1. Ensure that the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation:
 - a. Prioritizes a focus on social services that reach children and communities most at risk, including climate-resilient water and sanitation, health systems, education, nutrition, social and protection services.
 - b. Is informed by age- and gender-disaggregated data on climate impacts and adaptation benefits.
 - c. Strengthens data and monitoring mechanisms to track/measure the resilience of basic services.
 - d. Is coherent with relevant SDG and Sendai Framework targets, indicators, and monitoring mechanisms.
2. Request the NWP to consider, as part of their work to address adaptation knowledge gaps, work on children's needs and priorities in the context of climate adaptation.

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What is happening?

State of Play: Adaptation



Recognizing that adaptation is a globally relevant issue, the Paris Agreement aims to strengthen the global climate change response by increasing the ability of all to adapt to adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience. It defines a Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), which aims to:

- enhance adaptive capacity and resilience;
- reduce vulnerability, with a view to contributing to sustainable development.

The Adaptation Committee, established COP 16 (2010) to promote the implementation of enhanced action on adaptation in a coherent manner under the Convention, is tasked with understanding how the review of the GGA can take place.

In addition, the long-running Nairobi work programme (NWP) strives to assist all Parties, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing states, to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions.

To date, adaptation in the negotiations has been essentially silent on the needs and priorities of children or child rights.

COP 26 established a comprehensive two-year Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation (2022–2023). This is a series of events, workshops, reports, and submission opportunities designed to enable Parties to come to a collective agreement on what the GGA should comprise, and how it will be measured and reported on. The GGA is intended to enhance national planning and implementation of adaptation actions, particularly in developing countries, and to identify possible indicators, data and metrics, needs and support needed to assess progress towards it.

In addition, the efforts to strengthen the role of the NWP includes calls to scale up the Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative – an initiative to close adaptation knowledge gaps – and strengthen ties among communities of practice, presenting opportunities for the incorporation of a new focus on children's adaptation needs and developing guidance for child-centred adaptation.

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Incorporating Child Rights at COP 27 **The Global Stocktake**

Asks for Champion Parties at COP 27

- Child rights and intergenerational equity as cross-cutting priorities, particularly guidance to states emerging from the UNCRC's General Comment 26.
- The responsibility of states to ensure that climate action addresses gender equality, with particular attention to the protection and promotion of girls' rights.
- The right of children to participate in decision-making processes related to local and national climate action, and noting the relevance of provisions contained in the Aarhus Convention and the Escazu Agreement in this regard.

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What is happening?

State of Play: Global Stocktake



The Global Stocktake (GST) is a process that takes place every five years measuring the progress of the Paris Agreement's long-term goals. The first GST is in progress and will run from 2021 to 2023. The technical assessment component of the GST is built upon Technical Dialogues (TD) – a series of conversations among Parties, experts and Non-Party Stakeholders.

The GST is intended to increase the ambition of actions and support for collectively addressing climate change without focusing on individual countries or groups of countries. It will inform the next round of submissions by Parties of their NDCs in 2024-25.

At SB56 in June 2022 the first meeting of the TD under the GST took place. Prior to the TD, the SB Chairs circulated guiding questions in an informal note. These included a question on how climate action can respect human rights, including children's rights. The guiding questions also asked about integrated and holistic approaches to climate action.

The first TD was held in multiple formats, including plenary sessions, roundtables and world café events. The three roundtables were themed, broadly speaking, on issues of mitigation, adaptation and finance. The second technical dialogue of the first global stocktake will take place at COP 27.

Children's rights are currently significantly under-represented in existing NDCs, and are rarely consulted in the development of NDCs, and omitted from consideration in terms of global climate finance, so utilising the global stocktake process to emphasise the importance of considering the needs of children, along with other social considerations, is essential.

In its submission to the Global Stocktake, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights highlighted the importance of a human rights-based approach and included reference to the analytical study on the relationship between climate change and the full and effective enjoyment of the rights of the child.

It references the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment 15 on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, and the new General Comment 26 on child rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change. Similarly, a CIEL briefing paper on the stocktake published in February included a focus on intergenerational equity.

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Incorporating Child Rights at COP 27 **Gender and Climate Change**

Asks for Champion Parties at COP 27

Insert provisions on girls into updates to activities under the priority areas of the gender action plan:

- **Gender balance, participation and women's leadership:** Include specific reference to girls, in addition to youth, as groups that need to be included in decision making processes.
- **Gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation:** Request the Green Climate Fund to update its gender policy to include a reference to girls in order to recognise their unique challenges in the face of climate change.
- **Monitoring and reporting:** Agree on a new output under priority area E to request submissions from Parties and other relevant stakeholders on effective local and national measures to mitigate against the risks to girls education arising from climate change and develop a synthesis report.

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What is happening?

State of Play: Gender



At COP 25 in 2019, Parties agreed on a 5-year enhanced Lima work programme on gender and its gender action plan (Decision 3/CP.25). This succeeded the prior Lima work programme agreed at COP 20.

The enhanced gender action plan sets out objectives and activities under five priority areas:

- Capacity Building, knowledge management and communication
- Gender balance, participation and women's leadership
- Coherence,
- Gender-responsive implementation and means of implementation
- Monitoring and reporting.

The Gender Action Plan only contains one reference to girls, namely in relation to their "full participation and leadership in science, technology, research and development" (Activity D.3). Any review of the Gender Action Plan should seek to centre more consideration of the unique needs of girls.

The negotiations on Gender and Climate Change at SB56 in June 2022 primarily focused on initiating the intermediate review of the gender action plan (GAP), a framework supporting gender-based climate action as part of the enhanced Lima work program on gender, mandated to commence at the Bonn session.

With respect to children's rights, there was a welcome push for a provision calling on Parties to engage girls, youth, and Indigenous Peoples in climate action. Concerningly, this provision did not make it into the final informal note by the co-facilitators. The only operative reference to girls in the informal note is in reference to engaging boys and men as strategic partners and allies in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change.

Supporting champion countries in increasing the focus on girls under the gender action plan should be a priority in the months before COP 27.

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Incorporating Child Rights at COP 27 **Ocean-Based Action under the UNFCCC**

Asks for Champion Parties at COP 27

- a. Request States to prioritise ocean-based climate action that supports the protection of children's rights, significantly curbing CO2 emissions to combat ocean acidification as a mitigation co-benefit and in the context of loss and damage.
- b. Require the explicit consideration of children's rights in relation to the scoping, assessment, selection, implementation, and monitoring of ocean-based actions (including an assessment of blue carbon initiatives, adaptation and loss and damage), including incorporating guidance from the forthcoming General Comment on child rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change, being prepared by the UNCRC.
- c. Develop guidelines on ocean-based adaptation approaches through the Glasgow-Sharm El-Sheikh Work Programme for the Global Goal on Adaptation, notably on fisheries and climate change, in partnership with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and relevant stakeholders, including regional fisheries bodies to strengthen resilience, limit losses and protect and uphold children's rights.
- d. Explore how action and support with respect to adaptation and loss and damage can be operationalised to limit the ecological and human rights impacts of ocean acidification on children's rights.

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What is happening?

State of Play: Oceans



Climate change is causing vast and rapid changes to the ocean, undermining the ocean's capacity to produce essential benefits to children. In turn, the ocean plays an important role in regulating our global climate, as it absorbs over a quarter of global carbon dioxide (known as the ocean-climate nexus). The ocean should therefore be recognised as an essential element at the intersection of climate change and human rights, especially for children.

After over a decade of international efforts to include the ocean under the international climate change regime, at COP26, the 2021 Glasgow Climate Pact:

- Referred to ensuring the integrity of marine ecosystems, their protection and restoration (1/CP.26 para. 21); Mandated relevant work programmes and constituted bodies under the UNFCCC to consider how to strengthen and integrate ocean-based action in their existing mandates and work plans and report these activities (1/CP.26, para. 60);
- Mandated the chair of the SBSTA to hold an annual dialogue starting at the 56th session, to strengthen ocean-based action and prepare an informal summary report for the Parties for COP27 (1/CP.26, para. 61).

While the Glasgow Climate Pact officially integrates the ocean for the first time across all areas of work under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, much remains to be clarified about what "ocean-based action" means and how it can be supported with a view to also contributing to other relevant international objectives, including State's obligations to ensure, maintain and protect children's rights.

The Ocean-Climate Dialogue at SB56 did include the participation of youth organisations. Still, more work is needed to amplify children's voices in the context of climate change at the ocean-climate nexus. Moreover, during much of the discussion on ocean-based action in the context of mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage and finance, human rights did not feature particularly prominently in this context despite them being discussed in other meetings at SB56.

There are key opportunities for Parties to advance children's rights in their contribution to implementing the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement through ocean-based climate action that are built upon a mutually supportive interpretation of international biodiversity law, the law of the sea, and international human rights law with a view to achieving co-benefits across different Sustainable Development Goals and reduce vulnerabilities.

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