

Youth Movement

The global community has long recognized youth as key players in the implementation of sustainable development. Agenda 21 affirmed that the participation of youth in the decision-making process is 'imperative' and noted that youth have 'unique perspectives' that need to be considered. It also urged governments to include youth representatives in their national delegations at international meetings. The 2002

Johannesburg Plan of Implementation reiterated the need for youth involvement in programmes and activities related to sustainable development.

The importance of engaging the next generation of decision makers (and those who will feel the brunt of the negative impacts of climate change) has been widely agreed upon, yet youth participation within the UNFCCC process has been sparse.

At COP6, in The Hague, youth organized a two-day conference in which 118 participants from 61 countries developed a declaration that was presented to the COP for consideration.

At COP8 in New Delhi, a number of school-aged children developed the Children's Charter on Climate Change.

At COP10 in Buenos Aires, youth organized a roundtable between youth and experts, wrote a newsletter for other youth about the conference and developed a declaration. As positive as these past actions have been, the engagement of youth in the international climate change process has always been left to the prerogative of the host country or civil society.

At COP11 in Montreal, more than 100 youth from 24 countries came together for the Beyond Kyoto – It's Us! International Youth Summit on Climate Change. Over the course of 4 days this group developed the Our Climate, Our Challenge, Our Future – International Youth Declaration ([insert link to doc](#)).

At COP12 in Nairobi, again 100 youth from 30 countries were brought together for a 3 day conference to share experiences and prepare for the conference. At COP, youth engaged in extensive media work, met with government delegations and continued work on developing a permanent global youth climate change network and gaining official youth recognition at the UNFCCC. Youth also composed an addendum to the COP11 declaration