

## CHILDREN FOR NATURE FELLOWS JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN

We are children from the Global South participating in the Children for Nature Fellowship, and we are deeply concerned that future generations are and will continue to be the most affected by climate change. Our primary concern regarding the climate crisis isn't just the crisis itself, but how we, as humanity, choose to respond to it. We face the emergence of new diseases, impacts on human health, air pollution, extreme weather events, food insecurity, rising sea levels, biodiversity loss, a lack of transparency in decision-making, and an absence of effective responses to the root causes of the climate crisis.

We know what needs to be done; science has made it clear—it's simply a matter of taking action. To achieve our goals, we need three key elements: will, cooperation, and funding. Moreover, we must include the most vulnerable, particularly children, and adopt a human rights-based approach, recognizing a clean, sustainable, and dignified environment as a fundamental human right.

To secure a safe place for future generations, we must take action to protect our world now—this is the only planet we have, and it's where we will continue to live. We believe the solutions lie in several actions that COP29 negotiators should focus on and commit to:

1. **Rapid Emissions Reduction:** Commitments to significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, with ambitious, fair and science-based targets to reach net-zero emissions, already considering the scenario where we exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius of global warming and must ensure we don't exceed 2 degrees Celsius. It is imperative that, for this to happen, NDC's - countries emission reduction targets - reflect this scenario with the significant inclusion of children, both in participation and in the projects and actions foreseen in the targets.
2. **Increased Climate Funding from the North to the Global South:** We want to see promised climate funding actually reach us, in ways that work for us. This funding should go directly to locally led projects addressing children's specific challenges, such as flood mitigation, reforestation, and energy infrastructure improvements. Let's turn words into action and ensure that, particularly in Africa, climate funding is accessible without bureaucratic barriers.
3. **Ending Fossil Fuel Extraction and Consumption:** Stop subsidies for fossil fuels and end new fossil fuel projects, ensuring a just energy transition. Increase ambition in terms of emissions reduction goals by phasing out fossil fuels.
4. **Greater Participation in Discussion and Decision-Making Processes:** Ensure meaningful and active participation of children at local, national, and international levels, incorporating their ideas into the creation of rapid, intergenerational solutions. COP processes must guarantee a more inclusive and accessible language for children, which will also benefit adults and the entire population. Countries should join forces to strengthen the children's movement, such as in a Global Coalition for Children and Climate.

5. **Just and Inclusive Energy Transition:** Eliminate fossil fuel subsidies and activities that promote deforestation. Halt new fossil fuel projects and promote incentives for a just energy transition across sectors. Ensure that workers in affected sectors are supported to build a resilient and sustainable economy.
6. **Investment in Clean Technologies:** Invest in clean technologies and government policies to support fair and sustainable climate mitigation and adaptation solutions.
7. **End Deforestation:** Promote ecosystem restoration and sustainable agriculture to protect ecosystems and mitigate climate impacts on biodiversity. We need to reforest the planet and the minds of people to generate a bond and care for nature.
8. **Oceans:** Prevent the destruction of oceans, such as the loss of marine biodiversity, acidification, and coral bleaching, caused by the climate crisis, since the oceans play a fundamental role in regulating the global climate.
9. **Climate Justice:** Climate justice and social equity must be central to discussions, recognizing that vulnerable communities and children are often the most affected by climate change. Support policies that foster equity and social justice. Ensure that communities most impacted by climate change have access to resources and support for adaptation and resilience, including adequate infrastructure and essential services.
10. **Nature based Education:** Climate education should be integral to school curricula and should be part of countries' NDCs, with an emphasis on practices that aim to connect children with nature, sustainable practices, nature-based solutions to adapt and mitigate schools to the climate, promote renewable energy, and protect biodiversity. Empower youth to take climate action and implement practical, sustainable solutions within their communities. It's essential that the current generation is equipped with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively combat climate change.
11. **Protection for Environmental Defenders:** Safeguard children, adolescents, young people, and environmental activists, ensuring the human rights of the most vulnerable and of those fighting to protect our environment.

The commitments negotiators make to address the climate crisis have the potential to shape a more sustainable and just future for all. We cannot discuss the future without including the future—children must have a seat at the table. This is not optional; it is a human right.

#### **CHILDREN FOR NATURE FELLOWS:**

1. Amarachi C. (age 16 - Nigeria)
2. Catarina L. (age 17 - Brazil)
3. David A. (age 14 - Mexico)
4. Francisco V. (age 15 - Colombia)
5. Lova R. (age 14 - Madagascar)
6. Taissa K. (age 14 - Brazil)