

Latin American and Caribbean Youth Declaration on the Environment

Youth Declaration on the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean Latin America and the Caribbean – 2025

We, the young people of Latin America and the Caribbean, have come together through an extensive consultation process and an in-person meeting of LACYEF (Latin America & Caribbean Youth Environment Forum) to share our concerns, experiences, and proposals in response to the environmental and climate crisis affecting our region.

We come from diverse contexts: rural and urban youth, Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, migrants, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ communities, and adolescents. This plurality enriches us and reflects the reality of a continent that, despite its natural and cultural wealth, is among the most affected by environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and the impacts of climate change.

This process was convened by the Children and Youth Major Group to UNEP (CYMG), the formal youth engagement mechanism to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), which represents more than 1800 organizations and 12,000 individual members from over 120 countries.

This Declaration compiles and systematizes 362 contributions from 18 countries across Latin America and the Caribbean, gathered through regional consultations, dialogue spaces, and collective reflections.

Fully aware of the urgency, we raise our collective voice to demand immediate action and firm commitments from States, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society. This Declaration is the result of a collective effort that seeks to contribute to the construction of a just, sustainable, and inclusive future.

Considering

- That the environmental and climate crisis disproportionately affects our communities, threatening the human right to a healthy environment, health, food security, and access to water.
- That the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean possess a wealth of cultural, natural, and ancestral knowledge essential for building sustainable solutions.
- That the youth of the region, diverse in identities, territories, and contexts, have the right and the capacity to actively participate in environmental decision-making.

Recognizing

- The local and regional efforts that have promoted recycling programs, reforestation, environmental education, and the creation of green areas.

- The growing commitment of municipalities, communities, youth organizations, and social actors that foster environmental awareness and action.
 - The existence of emerging regulatory frameworks in some countries, which represent a first step toward the effective protection of ecosystems.
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We express

Our concern regarding the main environmental challenges:

1. Pollution of water, air, and soil, linked to solid waste, plastics, and urban emissions.
 2. Water crisis due to the scarcity of drinking water, river pollution, and inadequate wastewater treatment.
 3. Deforestation, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation, worsened by extractive activities and agricultural expansion.
 4. Inefficient waste management and limited transition toward circular economy models.
 5. Impacts of climate change, manifested in droughts, floods, and heatwaves affecting the most vulnerable groups.
 6. Institutional weaknesses and the limited inclusion of youth in environmental governance.
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We demand

1. Comprehensive environmental education at all levels, with cultural and territorial relevance.
 2. Binding youth participation in decision-making spaces, with diverse representation and access to funding for youth-led initiatives.
 3. Strengthening of public policies that regulate pollution, protect ecosystems, and ensure climate justice.
 4. A just transition to renewable energy and the promotion of sustainable transportation, reducing dependence on fossil fuels.
 5. Protection and restoration of critical ecosystems, including forests, wetlands, rivers, and marine areas.
 6. Inclusive and transparent climate financing that directly reaches communities and youth organizations.
 7. Protection of vulnerable groups, ensuring no one is left behind.
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As youth, we commit to:

- Mobilize and collaborate regionally to drive collective solutions.
- Promote environmental education and climate action within our communities.

- Defend social, climate, and environmental justice in all spheres of influence.

Call to Action

We urge States, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society to work alongside youth in the implementation of real, effective, and urgent solutions to the environmental crisis.

The voice of youth is both present and future. There will be no sustainability or climate justice without us.