

Youth Climate Action For Small Island Developing States

Background:

In order to protect Small Island Developing States (SIDS) from the devastation of climate change, the international community needs novel methods to deepen commitments to climate action and increase ambition to exceed the Nationally Determined Contributions set forth in the Paris Agreement.

SIDS are often the most affected by climate change, while holding the least responsibility for its impacts. Particularly vulnerable to the effects of the changing climate, through natural disasters, rising sea tides, and loss of biodiversity, SIDS do not have the capacity to address climate impacts in the sweeping and comprehensive ways required to protect life, and ensure no one is left behind. The need for strengthened climate resilience in populations facing the impending destruction of their homelands and ways of life cannot be understated.

All stakeholders must be engaged to take critical steps to building climate resilience in SIDs. Youth are crucial partners in ensuring that marginalized and at risk communities in SIDS are protected from the impacts of climate change. Despite already working on adapting to the changing climate, youth still lack financial resources and the institutional support necessary to scale up and amplify their efforts to build climate resilience.

Greater systemic support is required for youth to play a proactive role in the effort to keep average global temperature rise below 1.5°C. If SIDs are to build resilience and address the climate emergency, the international community must find innovative ways to strengthen the work of youth, from the ground up, building capacity for greater collective action by providing youth the tools and frameworks needed for deeper climate action.

Description:

With over 1.8 billion young people in the world, youth-led solutions are becoming an increasingly important, yet underutilized, piece to the puzzle that is solving the climate crisis. This side event will bring together representatives from SIDS, youth-led organizations, and UN agencies to highlight climate adaptation measures implemented by young changemakers living in SIDS, reflect on the challenges of successful youth led climate resilience building initiatives and offer scalable practices that can mobilize youth within local, intergenerational contexts.

In addition to the panel discussion, the side event will create space for dialogue with young SIDS leaders to identify successful actions and solutions that can be amplified, replicated, and adapted to other SIDS contexts, touching a breadth of interventions including: fashion, agriculture, technology, disaster risk reduction, resource governance, youth mobilization, community participatory processes, sustainable consumption and production, and many more.

Co-Organized By:

- UN Department of Global Communications Youth Representatives Steering Committee
- Baha'i International Community
- Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
- Kitchen Connection
- Peace Boat