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Submitted to Updating Aotearoa New Zealand's Approach to International Climate Change Negotiations
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What is COP, and how does New Zealand participate?

Submitter Details

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Association - please select any that apply

NGO

If you are submitting on behalf of an organisation, please provide your organisation name:
UNICEF Aotearoa (National Committee for UNICEF in New Zealand)

Location

New Zealand

Section 1: What do you think New Zealand should be seeking to achieve through our participation at COP?

How can New Zealand best use COP to advance effective and ambitious global action?

Enter your answer here:

What areas are most critical for New Zealand to promote effective and ambitious global action at COP?

Importance - Global emissions reduction (Mitigation):

Importance - Increasing resilience (Adaptation):
Most Important

Importance - Climate finance and technical support for climate action in developing countries:
Most Important

Importance - Aligning global financial flows with the net zero transition:

Importance - Loss and damage:

Importance - Nature-positive climate action (e.g. through native ecosystems and nature based solutions, addressing the linkage between the biodiversity and climate crises):

Importance - Trade policies and instruments that support climate action:

Importance - Agricultural sector climate action:

Importance - Circular economy and sustainable industry (e.g., reducing plastic waste, etc.):

Importance - Technology, innovation and transfer of technology:

Importance - Other (please specify below):
Most Important

Why? Tell us more:

Child-sensitive climate policies and plans, and access to safe water and sanitation, universal healthcare and quality education, as evidence shows that these significantly reduce children's vulnerability to climate impacts.

Global action is needed on all of the areas listed above to ensure and preserve futures for children.

The climate crisis is a child rights crisis. It threatens children's survival and ability to grow and thrive, despite them being the least responsible for

contributing to it. Central to addressing these threats is building the climate resilience of, and access to, safe water and sanitation, universal healthcare and quality education; evidence shows that these significantly reduce children's vulnerability to climate impacts. The progress made for children and young people over the last few decades, and their future prosperity are at risk of reversal, which could be devastating – both for them and for wider society.

Young activists are demanding that policymakers and planners consider their unique realities, rights and needs in decision-making, and involve them in decisions that will define their future. Many point out that current action falls far short of the level of ambition required to protect children, their families and their communities, let alone future generations.

Their views are backed by evidence — including from the most recent NDC submissions. A UNICEF analysis of 103 new and updated NDCs shows only 35 to be child sensitive. While this number reflects a growing attention to children and young people compared to the previous round of NDCs, the UNICEF analysis suggests that current provisions for addressing their needs and priorities will be insufficient to stop or even slow the severe impacts that climate change will have on them, particularly if global emissions targets are not met. In other words, there is an urgent need to dramatically increase global commitment to child-sensitive and child-inclusive policies, plans and decision-making.

How can New Zealand best leverage participation in COP to support our own low-emissions transition?

Enter your answer here:

What areas are most critical for New Zealand to promote our domestic transition through our participation at COP?

Domestic Transition - Insight into other countries' transition policies (e.g. on just transition, or implementation of nature-based solutions):

Most Important

Domestic Transition - Cooperation with other countries to support New Zealand's transition (e.g. on transport, attracting used EVs):

Domestic Transition - Promoting New Zealand as a low-carbon tech proving ground/green investment destination:

Domestic Transition - Access for New Zealand businesses to world-leading international businesses' transition technologies and business models:

Domestic Transition - Export opportunities for cleantech or carbon-efficient New Zealand exporters:

Domestic Transition - Other (please specify below):

Why? Tell us more?:

UNICEF Aotearoa is a national committee for UNICEF in Aotearoa-NZ and are 'civil society' in this context. We have a strong focus on securing opportunities for young people, specifically including rangatahi Māori, from Aotearoa to participate in COP.

UNICEF Aotearoa is firmly committed to being a genuine and respectful Treaty partner and considers that a just transition is central to Aotearoa New Zealand's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Learning from how other countries are developing policies on just transition will be helpful to inform Aotearoa's approach. At the same time, UNICEF Aotearoa considers that it is an opportunity for the government to contribute to global transition discourse by demonstrating genuine partnership with iwi, hapū, whānau and hāpori Māori, including with tamariki and rangatahi Māori, to ensure that their voices are part of a just transition.

A just transition is also critical for children and young people who have the least responsibility for climate change.

UNICEF considers young people's participation in COP to be critical at every-level of decision-making to ensure their voices are heard, including:

- o at the highest and most influential level, as part of the negotiating party; and
- o other means of participating with the government in COP.

UNICEF acknowledges that robust training will be required for any young person in this role, as for the adults who participate. We strongly recommend that the government plans, provides and adequately funds training for young people to be involved in COP, whether as a member of the negotiating party, and/or other means of participation.

If you are a business or you represent a Māori, civil society or industry organisation, are you considering participating in COP? Why/why not?

Enter your answer here:

Supporting the Pacific is a key component of our approach to COP. What do you think is important to consider as we do this, and why?

Enter your answer here:

Children and young people in the Pacific are some of the least responsible for climate change yet will bear the greatest burden of its impacts. Many are directly and disproportionately affected by more frequent and intense climate-related stresses and extreme weather events, including from heatwaves, floods, wildfires and cyclones. Climate-induced food and water security is of further concern.

• UNICEF Aotearoa supports the need for ongoing flexible climate financing and building Pacific resilience. We are committed to ongoing partnership with MFAT to support development in the Pacific.

Indigenous leadership: What role should New Zealand play in amplifying indigenous voices in the global climate change regime? How can we do this most effectively?

Enter your answer here:

UNICEF Aotearoa supports amplification of indigenous voices and leadership, including indigenous children and young people's leadership. We recommend that the government amplify tamariki and rangatahi Māori voices and leadership in the global climate change regime. Engaging and partnering with young indigenous leaders to find out how they want to share their voices and stories is an appropriate starting point, together with appropriately resourcing the participation of these groups and devolving decision-making authority to them.

Nature-positive climate action: How should we seek to ensure our global response to climate change also improves the resilience of our native ecosystems, and avoids harm to biodiversity?

Enter your answer here:

Should New Zealand be pursuing other aims at COP not mentioned above? If so, what, and why?

Other aims:

UNICEF Aotearoa considers the government's participation at COP to be a significant opportunity to demonstrate to our global partners how to effectively include and involve young people in COP as part of the negotiating party, and through other means of participation and influence. It is critical that children and young people, who have been leading much of the world's climate activism, are able to meaningfully participate, have their voices heard and be able to influence climate decisions.

UNICEF Aotearoa encourages the government to declare the climate crisis a child rights crisis, thereby giving voice to the children and young people who have been leading climate activism and providing a platform on which they can be heard by government. We also encourage the government to sign up to the Intergovernmental Declaration on Children, Youth and Climate Action. COP 28 could be an opportunity to discuss this with some of the 38 countries that have signed this Declaration, including some of our Pacific neighbours.

How should we be looking ahead to the prospect of an Australian COP in 2026 to support New Zealand and Pacific interests? Should it affect how we participate in COP in the run up to 2026?

Australia COP:

Section 2: How should New Zealand engage at COP?

What role do you think New Zealand should aim to play at COP? E.g. should we seek to be seen as a constructive bridge-builder, or be more prepared to be an outlier? Why?

Enter your answer here:

Who should we be working and aligning with, and why?

Enter your answer here:

Is New Zealand part of the right initiatives and coalitions to achieve our COP objectives?

Not Answered

Why? Why not?:

What should we do differently?:

How should we give effect to our Treaty partnership with Māori in how we engage at COP?

Enter your answer here:

With respect to children and young people, ensure measures to systematically ensure that the voices of tamariki and rangatahi Māori are heard and that their views are considered in climate decisions and in fora such as COP. Further, to be effective Treaty partners, we recommend that Māori, including tamariki and rangatahi, are part of the delegation to COP with decision-making rights to ensure their voice is heard in negotiations. At a local level, we support decision-making being devolved to iwi, hapū, whānau and hāpori Māori to guide the direction for their peoples and communities.

Who do you think should be represented at COP to drive the outcomes New Zealand seeks?

Enter your answer here:

Children and young people's views, and specifically the views of marginalised groups including Māori, Pasifika, disabled, children in out-of-home care and children in low-income households, should be represented at COP.

In addition, young people themselves should be represented at COP, including rangatahi Māori. We strongly urge the government to include young people as part of the negotiating party, as well as broader participation in-person at COP. Just as adult participants are funded and trained, young people's participation must be adequately funded, and participants must receive appropriate training to enable them to fully participate and contribute to this opportunity.

Climate Finance

What outcomes would you like to see internationally in relation to climate finance?

Enter your answer here:

What do you think New Zealand should do to support climate finance being accessible and effective for the Pacific?

Enter your answer here:

What kind of funding arrangements for addressing loss and damage from climate impacts do you think New Zealand should support?

Enter your answer here:

What features would you like to see in the new collective quantified goal on climate finance?

Enter your answer here:

How would you like to see New Zealand use COP to support broader reform in the financial system and the redirection of financial flows to align with the goals of the Paris Agreement?

Enter your answer here:

How do you think New Zealand can use COP to support the alignment of financial flows in our own country with the Paris Agreement and our climate change targets?

Enter your answer here:

Gender and climate change

How should New Zealand advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of climate change at the UNFCCC?

Enter your answer here:

What concrete actions can New Zealand take to advance gender-responsive climate policies and actions internationally?

Enter your answer here:

Gender equity is closely linked to the advancement of children's rights: where women's rights are upheld, children's rights also tend to flourish. We support ongoing gender balance in the delegations and particularly support the inclusion of girls and young women to be part of the government delegation to inform gender- and child-sensitive approaches.

Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform

How should Aotearoa engage with the LCIPP?

Enter your answer here:

What can we do to support and empower Māori to engage in the work of the LCIPP?

Enter your answer here:

How can we better connect the work of the LCIPP at the international level to grass-root indigenous climate action, and specifically, what iwi, hapū and Māori communities are doing on climate domestically?

Enter your answer here:

Human rights and climate change

Human rights is a cross-cutting issue. How do you think New Zealand should advocate for countries to respect, promote and consider their human rights obligations when taking action to address climate change?

Enter your answer here:

We support the acknowledgement that climate change poses an immediate threat for the full enjoyment of human rights. In relation to children and young people, the climate crisis is a child rights crisis. It threatens children's survival and ability to grow and thrive, despite them being the least responsible for contributing to it.

New Zealand's International Human Rights Action Plan states we will play a leadership role in advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities. How should New Zealand advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities in the negotiations and at COP?

Enter your answer here:

New Zealand has an International Human Rights Action Plan which sets out our international human rights advocacy priorities through to 2023. Are there any specific human rights that you see as most important for New Zealand to advance in the context of climate change?

Enter your answer here:

Youth and climate change

Youth is a cross-cutting issue. How do you think New Zealand should advocate internationally for young people when taking action to address climate change?

Enter your answer here:

As UNICEF Aotearoa has previously mentioned, the climate crisis is a child rights crisis. It threatens children's survival and ability to grow, thrive, live, learn and play, despite them being the least responsible for contributing to it.

Young people are regularly at the forefront of climate activism; they are the leaders of today, and of the future.

UNICEF Aotearoa advocates for ongoing participation of young people in COP delegations and negotiations for every country, and encourages the government to advocate for this to other countries. We further encourage measures to ensure ongoing and systematic inclusion of young people, including indigenous and marginalised groups of young people, in COP and global climate decision-making so that their views are reflected and understood in climate decision-making.

How can views from young people be better understood and reflected in negotiating positions?

Enter your answer here:

Involving children and young people, including indigenous and marginalised groups, and sharing decision-making power with them in this context, is critical to achieve this aim.

Section 4: Provide General Feedback

You are welcome to provide feedback on any part of the proposal to update New Zealand's approach to international climate negotiations.

Add your comments, ideas, and feedback here:

UNICEF Aotearoa's consistent message throughout our submission is that the climate crisis is a child rights crisis. We encourage the government make a declaration that this is the case, to highlight the climate crisis as a child rights crisis as one of their key messages at the 2023 COP negotiations. To support this, we advocate for children and young people to have a voice as part of the Aotearoa delegation and invite the government to give them equal voice within the delegation.

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