

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S
YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP
ON CLIMATE CHANGE

2020

GLOBAL YOUTH OUTREACH
OUTCOME REPORT

CONTEXT

Upon the closing of the UN General Assembly Week, UN Secretary General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change (hereafter referred to as 'YAG') embarked on a journey of surveying the views of young climate leaders all around the world about the **best pathways to recover better through the six climate-positive actions** (hereafter referred to as 'SCPA') outlined by the Secretary General in his Climate Strategy are implemented. The process was concluded on November 17 with the Global Youth Consultation, involving participants from around 25 countries of the world and assuring an equitable representation of .

The outcomes systematized in this document aim to inform and establish the views and diverse perspectives of young climate leaders on what they recommend as success in implementation of the SCPA and how the relevant stakeholders including governments and the wider UN Climate community can be held accountable in the pathway to recovering better.

KEY INSIGHTS

The background of the entire page is a photograph of two workers in safety gear suspended by ropes against a dramatic sunset sky. The workers are positioned on the left side of the frame. The sky transitions from a deep orange near the horizon to a pale blue at the top. In the bottom right corner, two industrial smokestacks with orange and white horizontal stripes are visible, set against a dark, silhouetted forest.

Investments in green jobs are high on the youth agenda, as climate anxiety is currently intertwined with uncertainty about the future of jobs. There is a lot of concern about lack of prioritization of green jobs and just transition in COVID stimulus packages. In a situation when there is no internationally agreed taxonomy of green jobs, youth are worried that the advancements in this field can be marred by greenwashing. Across all the discussions the need to deliver scalable educational programs and packages for young green entrepreneurs sounded loud and clear. Overall, the youth consulted are looking with hope to green jobs as enhancers of both sustainability and competitiveness credentials of their countries.

Not bailing out polluting industries post-COVID is a demand over which the youth is unwilling to compromise. The widespread anger about money wasted on fossil fuel subsidies in 2020 is justified. However, there is a consensus in favor of providing funds for the workers in these industries to withstand current and future shocks by helping them reskill and upskill, as well as investing in increasing competitiveness of green jobs. Participants at the consultations expressed doubts that SCPA can be implemented at national level if there are no clear definitions and metrics in place for what formally qualifies as a polluting industry and what does not.



Indigenous people and climate action was one of the priorities in the Global Youth Consultation. Youth developed a consensus on the necessity of respecting, recognizing and enforcing the rights of the indigenous people and local communities over their lands, forest and territories, respecting their worldviews, strengthening their traditional economies and empowering their eco-friendly way of living, which is based on their traditional knowledge and practices, and enabling them to contribute towards climate action. Human rights violations of the communities due to developmental projects remain a huge problem, and non-participatory environmental policies often have unintended and unforeseen consequences on the communities. The Youth also emphasized that COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected the communities both in terms of health and has caused gross human rights violations. It was also highlighted that doubling of protected areas to cover 30% of the globe as proposed in the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework will lead to the biggest land appropriation and human rights violation of indigenous and local Communities. The current ambitions and approach to the conservation and protected areas has to be reconsidered.

The meaning of **working together** has multiple facets for the youth. First, it is about sharing ideas and practices on climate education.

Secondly, it is about giving no actor a free pass on underdelivering on their climate commitments.

Thirdly, working together requires ample intergenerational dialogue, a racially diverse discussion, inclusion of LGBTQ+, indigenous and traditional people, people with special needs, refugees and IDPs - in short, appreciating intersectionality.

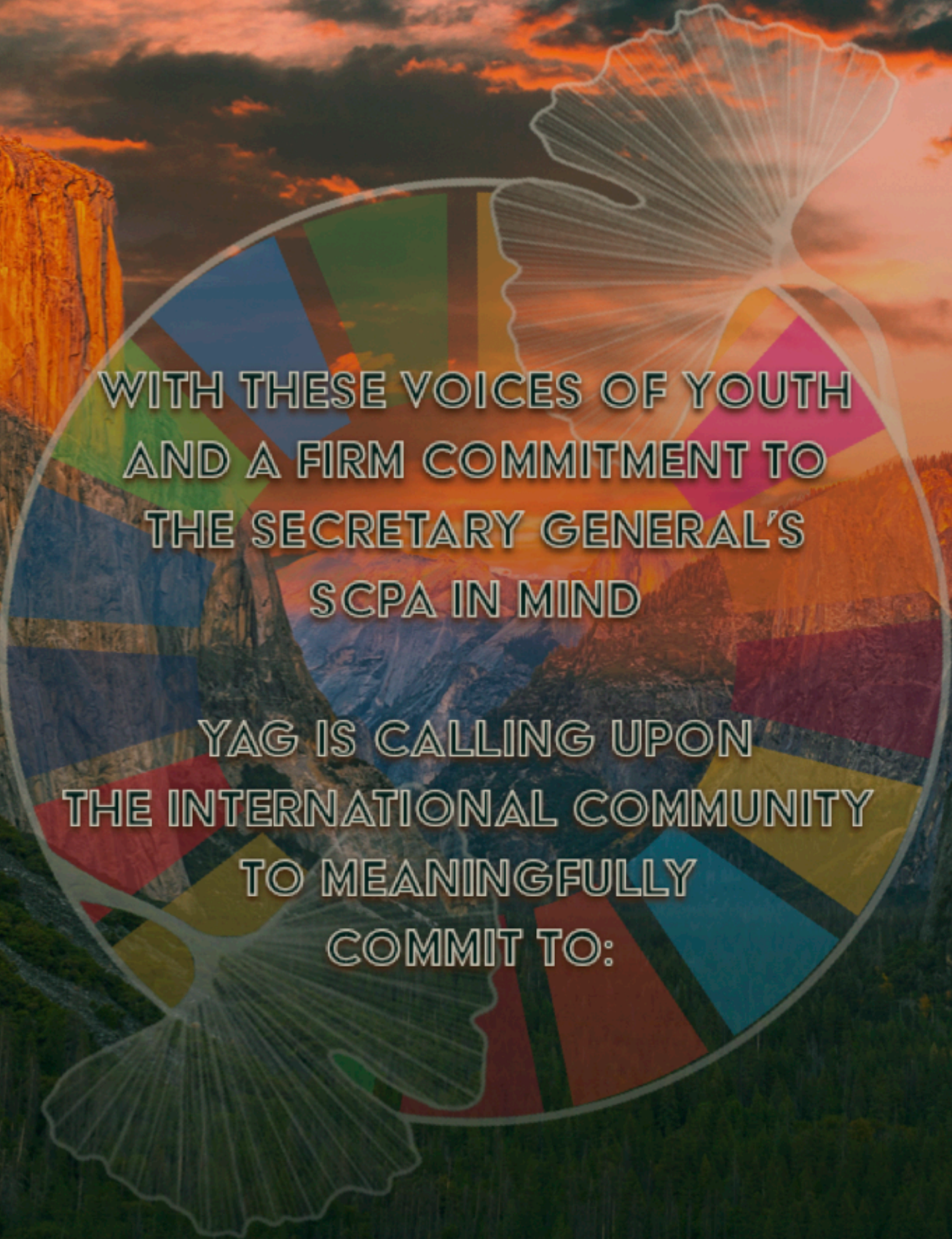


The pathway towards a **Net Zero Emission Transition** away from fossil fuels must work in a just manner that takes into account communities that rely on oil and gas industries. We must utilize a 3 fold approach, with responsibilities delegated to the government, civil society, and private sector.

The role of government will be to look beyond politics and work with all relevant stakeholders to hold polluting industries accountable so that they close loopholes and enforce taxes that go towards funding climate change legislation.

The role of the private sector will be to adjust to demands set by climate legislation and work to innovate more sustainably. The role of civil society will be to be the pipeline in which all the sectors are involved in decision making. Both the private sector and civil society should also work together to hold the government accountable






WITH THESE VOICES OF YOUTH
AND A FIRM COMMITMENT TO
THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S
SCPA IN MIND

YAG IS CALLING UPON
THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY
TO MEANINGFULLY
COMMIT TO:


ACTIONS




Respecting, recognizing and enforcing the rights of the indigenous people and local communities over their land and forest needs to be prioritized for Climate Action. This will strengthen their traditional economies, respect their worldviews and empower their eco-friendly way of living and conservation practices based on their traditional knowledge and practices enabling them to contribute towards climate action. Emphasis needs to be given to the communities for protecting and supporting them amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

Involving indigenous and local communities as an integral part of the climate action decision making process

Along with that it is also important to protect the human rights of the Communities, which are often violated due to developmental projects and illegal activities. Thus, emphasis needs to be made on ensuring free, prior and informed consent and adequate participation, through consultation protocols, of the Indigenous Peoples', other traditional forest dwellers and local communities, framed under international and national laws to prevent unforeseen consequences.




Acknowledging and defending the full potential of oceans to tackle the climate crisis. There is a need to protect the oceans by 2030. It is essential to create a global network of oceans sanctuaries to put millions of square kilometers off limits to destructive industries and over-fishing.




Protecting our forests and ecosystems through stronger laws based on the best relevant practices in the domain of accountability and the principles of inevitability of punishment for those who destroy our social environment and non-regression of environmental safeguards. Categorizing ecocide and ethnocide as crimes that must be punished and answered for in front of the international community is essential. Investigation of and prosecution for these crimes must involve the socio-environmental observatories where different actors involved in the processes on the ground are presented.







Promoting through smart regulation the importance of value chains capable of spearheading economic and social development via sustainable practices, such as forest's people economy, instead of the outdated ones. Authorities should ensure that sustainable business performance is rewarded in various forms, like special certification and labelling of their products, tax credits, and others. Governments should make sure that the procurement processes provide a level playing field by accounting for the environmental costs of the products provided by bidders.



Recognizing the link between the international debt problem and climate action and acting swift in allowing the most vulnerable countries to convert part of their debts into resources for fulfilling NDCs, based on the best practices of the debt-for-nature swaps endorsed by the IMF, beginning with July 2021.



Creating binding international guidelines for banks and asset managers on climate risks akin to the Basel III framework on financial risks, based on already existing voluntary and industry guidelines. Without committing to achieving this milestone, there will always be loopholes for greenwashing and continuous bankrolling of the extinction of our environment.



Establishing a global multi-stakeholder partnership committed to provide a Green Youth Guarantee to the Generation COVID in the form of mass relevant high school-to-university/vocational school training for green jobs. Climate and health crises are unfolding together with the youth unemployment crisis, and the latter requires action as swift and monumental as the one performed by coalitions such as COVAX, GAVI and CEPI in order to deliver COVID vaccines to everyone.

It is imperative to guarantee meaningful Intergenerational solidarity through dialogues that ensure participation of different stakeholders in a deliberative way, especially the ones directly affected by the impacts of climate, such as women, young people and members from marginalized communities. Thereby emphasizing on more proactive steps to ensure intersectional and intergenerational equity.