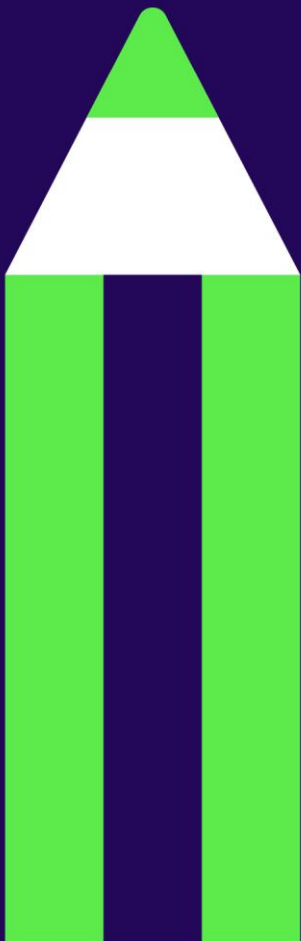
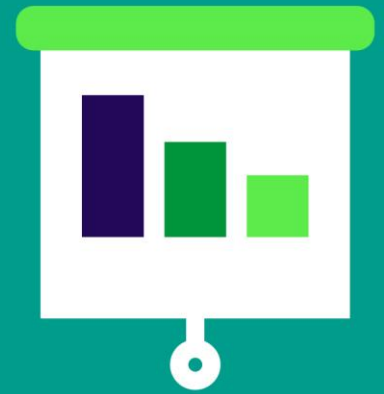


The Climate Connection



Youth Voice on Climate Action

India

#TheClimateConnection
www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection

The Global Youth Letter on Climate Action is a call for action from young people globally, directly addressing the leaders attending COP26 – the 26th UN Climate Change Conference, in Glasgow, November 2021.

It is the result of a large-scale research exercise between the British Council and not for profit social enterprise Catalyst in Communities, who used a mixed methodology approach to garner the views, experiences and aspirations of 8,000 young people across 23 countries.

Aiming to be as representative as possible in terms of gender, background, location and socio-economic status, the research team worked through global COVID-19 restrictions to amplify the unheard voice of the climate debate: today's young people. Research for the report was carried out between January and March 2021.

The Global Youth Letter on Climate Action, and accompanying 8,000 Rising campaign, is part of the British Council's [The Climate Connection](#) programme, a global platform for dialogue, cooperation and action, connecting millions of people through shared solutions to the climate crisis.

Read the Global Youth Letter on Climate Action, the research report and join in the 8,000 Rising campaign here:

www.britishcouncil.org/climate-connection/get-involved/global-youth-letter

India's young people and climate action

The following letter and accompanying data represent the views and perspectives of young people in India.

It is a collective statement of all those who participated in the Global Youth Letter on Climate Action research in India and can be used as a starting point for leaders and policy makers to understand how to address young people's concerns in relation to climate change, and how they can use this untapped potential in to bring about climate action.

We hope the following letter inspires both young people and decision makers across India and beyond to work together to find sustainable solutions to climate action.



Dear COP26 leaders,

Namaste! We, the young people of India, are here to share our aims and aspirations for the future of our country, and our planet.

Our country is enriched with diverse landscapes, from the magnificent Himalayas to the Bay of Bengal, and cultures, from colourful festivals, to love of sport and films. We have been growing fast, and today we have the second largest population in the world.

Those of us who contributed to this collective statement represent the unheard voice in the climate conversation. We are both female and male, and come from a diverse range of communities and have different levels of education and employment. We include people with disabilities and ethnic minorities, as well as those from rural and urban areas.

However, we all believe that climate change is one of the biggest threats facing our country, so we are here to collectively call for climate action!

How climate change affects us

Across both our cities and the rural areas, we've started to experience diverse impact of climate change.

The six main effects of climate change we see are:

1. Loss of forest cover
2. Decreased agriculture productivity
3. Dry seasons (frequent/severe)
4. Rises in temperature
5. Uneven rainfall pattern
6. Loss of biodiversity.

By participating in this research, we have become more familiar with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and better informed about COP26.

For us, the four most important Sustainable Development Goals are:

1. SDG 2: Zero Hunger
2. SDG 1: No Poverty
3. SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being
4. SDG 4: Quality Education

But perhaps the most critical threat to our good health and well-being is climate change, and, linked to this, there is a need to improve access to clean water and sanitation and affordable clean energy. Through this letter, we are presenting our views on how we can work together to address these issues.

Our call to action!

Most of us believe we have the skills to address the challenges India is facing. We are prepared to adopt a greener lifestyle by changing habits and by wasting and consuming less resources. We



know how to use social media and other technologies that can help spread the positive message. We can and are willing to share our knowledge with other young people and older generations.

Still, just 60 per cent of us have participated in climate awareness exercises, and even less have engaged in mitigation actions. This needs to change if we are to reduce the impact of climate change.

We realise that policy makers and civil society organisations can't deal with the problem alone.

What we want from our leaders

Leaders and policy makers, we are asking you to include us in meaningful ways, so together we can develop solutions to all these challenges!

We, as a diverse group, are prepared to act, but we can't do it alone, and neither can you. But you do have the power to 'mainstream' youth climate action and to engage us in meaningful ways. You can better prepare us by giving us broader access to knowledge and skills, by allowing us to contribute to policy making, and by drawing on our potential within climate mitigation and adaptation interventions in India.

Nearly 80 per cent of us believe a combination of policy-level changes, education through multiple channels, including social media, and campaigning through activism can be used as a powerful tool to address climate change. Only together can we stop climate change and address the other challenges faced by India's young people.

Our voices

'Please give young people a chance to speak out. There are many Greta Thunbergs out there, they are just never heard' **Female voice**

'Climate change is a major threat to our environment, societies and economy, endangering our well-being and prosperity, so we need to address this issue.' **Rural voice**

Our parting message

The youth of today will be the decision-makers of tomorrow. So, it is essential that young people in India are aware of environmental and climate issues, so they can contribute to addressing these global challenges. Collective action is needed to create policies and government programmes that can mitigate and adapt to the adverse impact of climate change. We are asking you to include and consult us in plans and actions to address the major environmental challenges facing our country, and our planet.

