

YOUNG CLIMATE ACTIVISTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD PREPARE TO CONFRONT WORLD LEADERS WITH THEIR DEMANDS AT COP26 IN GLASGOW • #WorldisWatching

Why are young people from Argentina, Mexico, Nepal, the Philippines, Russia, Uganda, the US, and countries worldwide traveling to Scotland? They are youth delegates to COP26 – the most historic climate conference of their lifetime – where they will present their demands to world leaders.

They are painfully aware that our world is at a crossroads - and COP26 is a watershed moment. They've experienced firsthand the devastating impact of the climate crisis on their people, and on their countries. They now feel they must stand up for a whole generation of young people--and for the collective well-being of future generations.

They want world leaders to take immediate and meaningful action, with the sense of urgency the climate emergency demands. They are determined to work with these leaders to develop, fund and put into action concrete, effective, science-based policies and strategies to combat the effects of climate change—before it's too late.

*Young people have been told to wait, but they are tired of waiting.
Now is the time for their voices to be heard. Now is the time for us to listen, and act. NOW!*

**A Call to Action: #FutureGenerations from the book,
*Stone Soup for a Sustainable World: Life-Changing Stories of Young Heroes***

These COP26 youth delegates are featured in the book, *Stone Soup for a Sustainable World*.

- [Shreya K.C.](#) (Nepal): As founder of Nepal Youth for Climate Action, Shreya is working tirelessly to empower young people to get involved with climate campaigns. “We, young people from the least developed countries like Nepal, have the passion and knowledge to drive climate action. We desperately need collaboration and funding,” she says. “As a Nepali youth delegate to COP26, I have to speak about the harsh reality we are facing due to the climate crisis. Millions of Nepali people are impacted adversely by unexpected heavy rainfall, floods, and landslides. Millions will not be able to continue their lives. COP26 must deliver giant progress on the 'loss and damage demand' so that Nepal can adapt and build resilience.”
- [Vanessa Nakate](#) (Uganda): When Vanessa, the only young black woman, was cropped out of an AP photo with youth leaders standing together with Greta Thunberg at the World Economic Forum in Davos, she used this slight to draw attention to the climate crisis in Africa. “Many Africans are losing their lives; countless more are losing their livelihoods,” she says, and adds, “We can't eat coal. We can't drink oil.” International spokesperson and founder of Rise Up Africa with her new book, *A Bigger Picture*, Vanessa will share her powerful vision with world leaders and invite people to financially support her Green Schools Solar Panel Project to educate Uganda's children.
- [Jerome Foster II](#) (U.S.A) Jerome is a man on a mission. “I always understood what BLM (Black Lives Matter), women's rights, and other mainstream social justice movements were about,” he says. “But I never realized that these had anything to do with climate change. When I did, I decided to do something about it.” And so, as a high school student, he created [The Climate Reporter](#), an online publication featuring young climate activists worldwide. Later he helped organize Jane Fonda's first Fire Drill Fridays in front of the White House - and was then invited to serve as an intern for U.S. Congressman John Lewis. Now, at 19 he is the youngest member of President Biden's Environmental Justice Advisory Council, and an ardent spokesperson for young people on the front lines of the global climate crisis.
- [Xiye Bastida](#) (Mexico/NYC): A powerful, articulate 19-year-old, Xiye is a leading voice for Indigenous and Global South climate activism. Having seen massive floods as a 12-year-old in her hometown in Mexico, when she and her family moved to New York City, she rallied hundreds of her fellow students for the Global Climate Strike to call for a response to the increasingly volatile weather emergencies. Xiye's

venture, Re-Earth Initiative championed the Escazú Agreement to give access to environmental justice and protect environmental defenders in Latin America and the Caribbean. “Cooperation is key,” she says. “We need people to not focus on just one goal without thinking about all the others. Having all kinds of people from all types of backgrounds will make this possible.”

- [Mitzi Jonelle Tan](#) (Philippines) "I grew up being afraid of drowning in my own bedroom," 22-year-old Mitzi said, after another super typhoon. As the founder of Youth Advocates for Climate Action Philippines (YACAP), Mitzi is demanding climate justice for the Global South MAPA (Most Affected People and Areas). “We’ve learned to swim and stay resilient. Our struggles continue and our resistance persists. As the fossil fuel industry and those in power try to keep us quiet, we persist. To our so-called leaders, especially in the Global North: The fossil fuel industry, and this profit-oriented system built off of the exploitation of the marginalized *will drown* in our calls for justice. So, I hope you know how to swim.”
- [Nicki Becker](#) (Argentina): As the 21-year-old founder of Jovenes Por El Clima (Youth for Climate Argentina), Nicki and her group succeeded in getting the national government to declare a climate emergency, which set the stage for wide-sweeping reforms in Argentina. “We were given the climate crisis and we must face up to it,” she says. “We *must* build a more fair and just future. We need everybody on board. I challenge you to talk about the climate crisis. Demand that the people who are making decisions today decide based on the scientific evidence, such as the IPCC report. There is hope. Hope is in that movement that we must build.”
- [Arshak Makichyan](#) (Russia): Upon his return from COP25 in Madrid, Arshak returned to Pushkin Square to join in the FridaysforFuture strike movement. The Russian police arrested him for staging an unlawful “mass protest” – of three people—and he was sent to prison for six days. For his courage and determination he gained media attention around the world. “I’m tired of the feeling that Russia is from another planet,” he says. “Activism in Russia is different, we *are* different, but we must become part of *global* solutions. It's not okay that activists in Russia are ignored. We have a difficult country, a difficult history, and, most likely an even more difficult future. But we've earned hope for a bright future, and we're going to fight for it." Over the past year, 330 young people in 140 countries have worked together develop a global declaration of demands to challenge the world's leaders to tackle the climate crisis...NOW!

Among their ambitious, *but feasible and essential* demands:

- Divest from all fossil fuel investments, reinvest in green energy, and ensure a just transition led by workers and impacted communities.
- Center climate justice in all key policy decisions.
- Stop all open pipelines and oil extraction initiatives from Line 3 in the U.S. to Cambo in Scotland.
- Hold large corporations accountable for their actions contributing directly to the climate crisis.
- Create policies that protect activists’ rights to peaceful protests and safeguard democracy around the world.
- Remove the economic, political, and social influence of fossil fuel companies from key climate negotiations.

Here is their letter: [MOCK COP26 Letter to World Leaders](#)

“To change everything, we need everyone.” Greta Thunberg

About the Stone Soup Leadership Institute's Young Heroes Award

KC Shreya (Nepal) is the fourth recipient of the Institute's Young Heroes Award. This Fund provides financial support, mentorship, training, and partnerships for young leaders featured in the book, [Stone Soup for a Sustainable World](#). Past recipients include **Vanessa Nakate (Uganda)** for her Green Schools Solar Panel Project; **Benita Davis (Guyana)** for her leadership with the River Guardian Project; and 16-year-old **Autumn Peltier, Water Walker (Anishinabek Nation, Canada)**. The Stone Soup Leadership Institute is a 501c3 nonprofit organization founded in 1997 whose mission is to develop multimedia tools to build the next generation of leaders to create a more just, equitable and sustainable world. For over a decade Walter Cronkite served as the Institute's honorary chairperson, to shine the light on those who are championing a more just, equitable, and sustainable world.

