



National Child and Youth Statement on Climate Change

Australia 2025

Acknowledgements

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Acknowledgements

We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across Australia on which the 2025 Local Conference of Youth took place. We honour their deep and enduring connection to Country, and the environmental stewardship that has been carried out with care, knowledge, and responsibility for tens of thousands of years. We value the steadfast leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait people, who despite ongoing legacies of colonisation and dispossession, continue to work to safeguard Country from the impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental degradation. We have much to learn, and increasingly little time to act.

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Images supplied by Imogen Kane, Lara Robertson, Melanie Wong and Zoe Grayan.



Foreword

"This Statement carries the voices of a generation no longer willing to wait. A collective both diverse yet united, with clarity, courage and conviction. In our cities and regions, from coast to coast – across this continent young people spoke not just of rising seas and broken systems but of what could be built in their place. A future rooted in justice, led by those who have long protected land, sea and sky.

As Australia looks to co-host COP31 with our Pacific neighbours, we call on public and private sectors to work together to exceed targets and establish child sensitive responses to climate disasters. Within this Statement, young people have laid out a blueprint and a willingness to secure a just and prosperous future. A plan for leadership that is accountable, and for a future where no one is left behind. These words are their offering. The time to listen to them, and deliver on their aspirations, is now."

- Lincoln Ingravalle and Layla Wang, UNICEF Australia Young Ambassadors

"Young people recognise that an ambitious, immediate and just transition is necessary to mitigate the intersectional risks posed by the climate crisis. This National Youth and Child Statement provides an invaluable opportunity for young Australians to speak up and share their insights on climate change, a crisis that deeply affects youth, with the policymakers whose decisions and actions dramatically shape their future. I urge you to not only reflect on the demands described in the statement, but to also act upon them. It is clear that effective intergenerational collaboration and meaningful youth inclusion is essential for true progress. It is not enough to merely rely on the National Youth and Child Statement to provide this: young people must be actively empowered to engage in climate action to support them in channeling their energy, passion and creativity into change. This empowerment must be accessible, with efforts to include youth experiencing disadvantage, including regional and rural young people, critical.

As a young person who has grown up in regional Australia, I know firsthand that whilst rural youth experience the frontline impacts of climate change, we remain amongst the most disconnected from decision making spaces. Australia's bid to host COP31 provides a key opportunity to include more frontline voices, such as rural youth, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pasifika youth. Decision makers cannot waste this unique chance to prioritise the inclusion of youth in the climate policy space. We are the people who will inherit the choices made today. We have a right to a seat at the table where our futures are being decided."

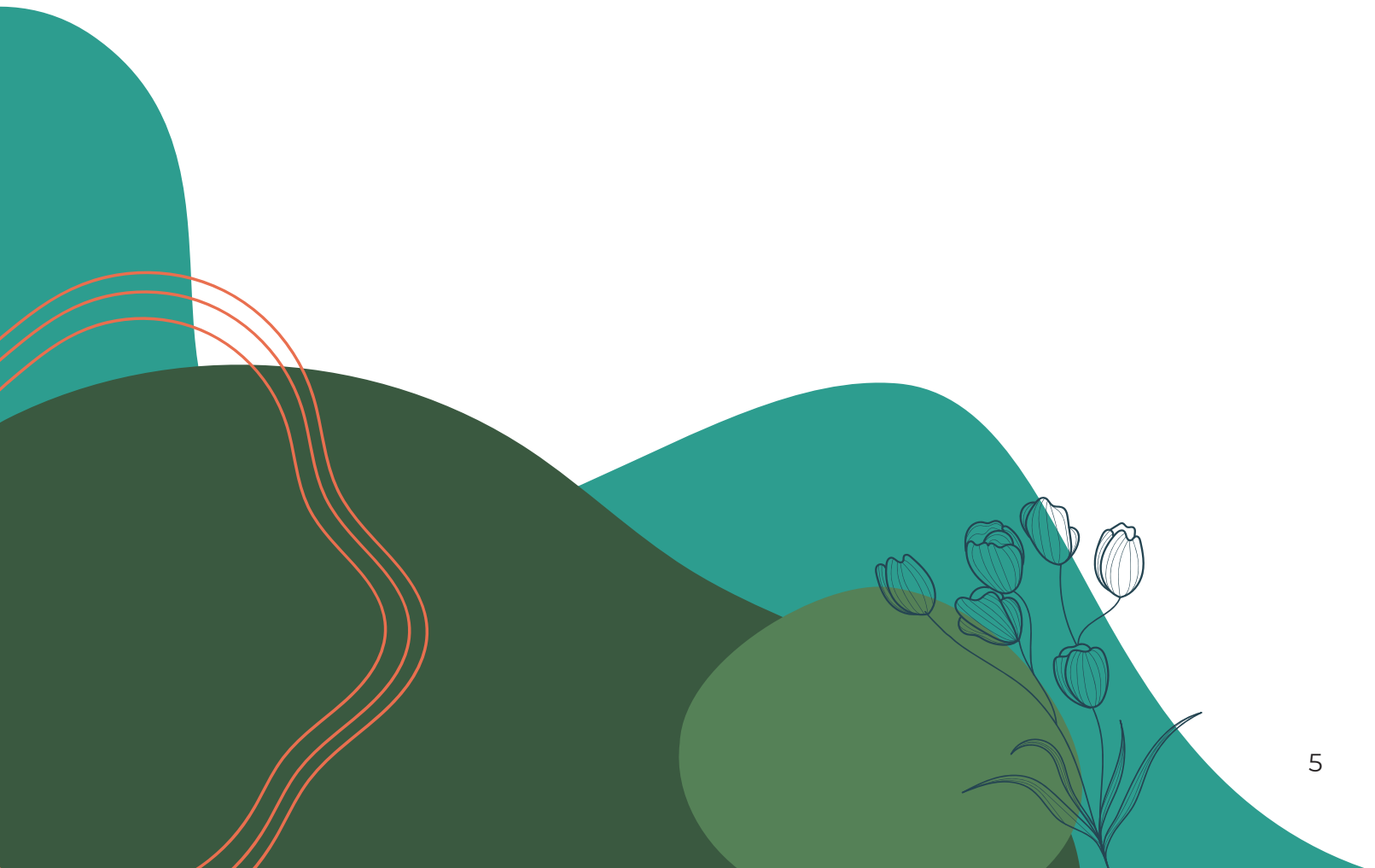
- Maya Farmer, AYFICE COP29 Youth Delegate and 2025 LCOY Facilitator

“Young people across Australia have been clear about what they need, what they expect, and what they are prepared to push for. They spoke from experience, living through extreme weather, economic pressure, mental health strain, and systems that too often delay or dilute promises. They also spoke with purpose. Through the Local Conferences of Youth, those voices were brought together, sharpened, and carried beyond rooms where decisions are too often made without them. What follows is not a checklist of complaints. It is a layered, practical set of expectations grounded in justice, connection to Country, and intergenerational responsibility. It demands partnership instead of tokenism, shared power instead of performative gestures, and accountability instead of vague commitments.

Australia is on the cusp of a pivotal moment as it prepares to co-host COP31 in our region. The global conversation about climate, equity, and sustainable futures will be louder, the contrast between words and action will be clearer. Young people have done their part, they've listened, reflected, organised, and laid out what a fair, resilient and credible future looks like. Now the onus is on leaders, institutions and communities to match that clarity with decisions, to give real weight to youth insight, and to move beyond short-term optics.

What you hold here should serve as a reference point, a challenge, and a guide. The work ahead will be uncomfortable if it is honest. That discomfort is a signal that change is possible, and that real progress starts when those in power stop asking for permission to act and start following through.”

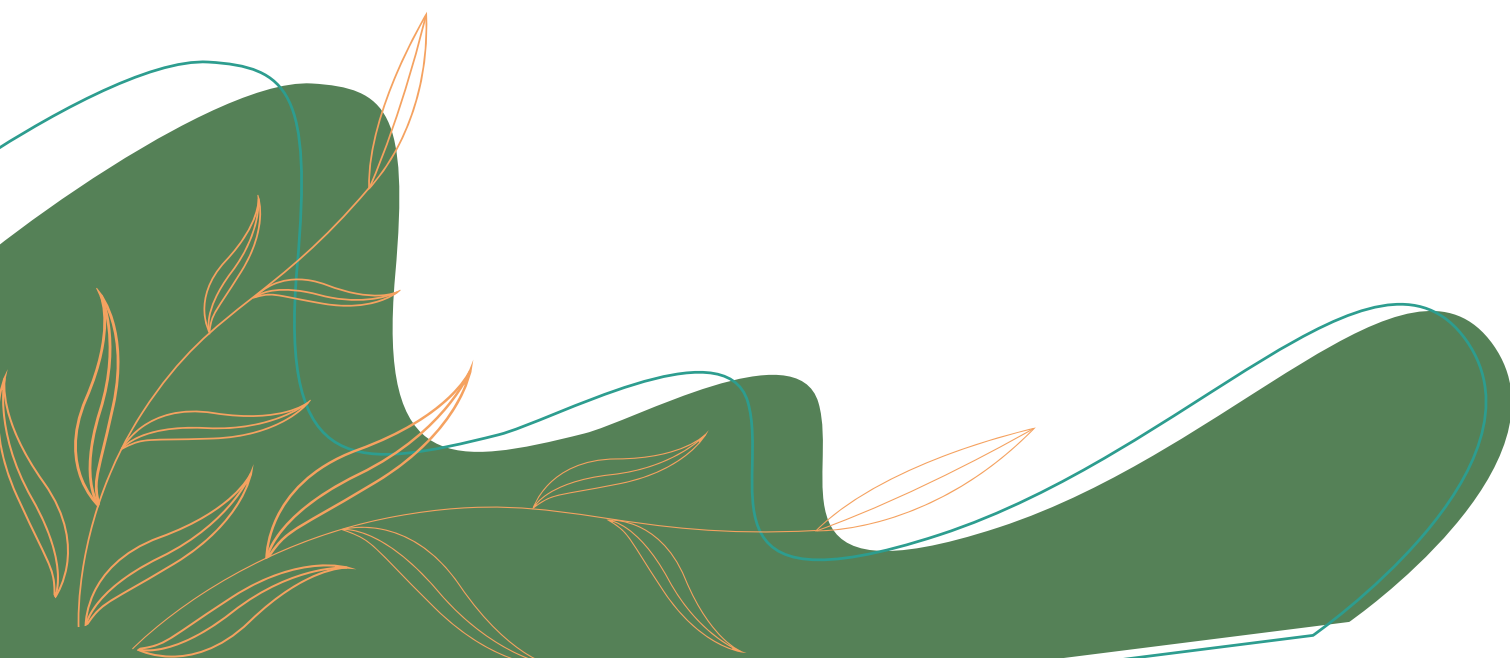
- Caleb Henley, UN Youth Head of Climate Impact



Introduction

The 2025 Australian Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) took place against the backdrop of intersecting environmental challenges, a worsening cost-of-living and economic crisis, and ongoing global conflicts. During consultations, children and young people voiced how climate change is impacting their communities; including homes and cultural heritage damaged, education disrupted and families displaced by floods and bushfires. Many spoke of growing climate anxiety and grief, fueled by an awareness of ecological and cultural loss, and the apparent deprioritisation of climate action by those in power. From these observations came calls for change and strengthened ambition. Young Australians advocated for structural and justice-based climate interventions that centre Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and intergenerational equity. Young Australians also pointed to the need for systemic change and policies that address the root causes of ecological collapse, including fossil fuel dependency and short-term economic thinking.

The 2025 National Child and Youth Statement (the 'Statement') - captures the realities of children and young people growing up in Australia. It outlines actions they deem necessary for achieving just and equitable climate change action. Drawing on twenty-seven in-person consultations, an online survey, and two national online LCOYs held between May and August 2025, the Statement reflects the voices of 812 young people aged between 10 and 30. It summarises the issues raised across a broad range of themes, including health and wellbeing impacts, the need for mitigation, adaptation, and adequate disaster response, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, and meaningful Pacific Partnerships. The LCOY sought to platform perspectives from across Australia's diverse geographies. Consultations were held in most capital cities, and in some regional areas including Dubbo, Coffs Harbour, with contributions from the Uluru Youth Dialogue. All LCOY consultations took place under the endorsement of YOUNGO, the official children and youth constituency to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).





2025 LCOY Statistics

Total 812 participants: Aged 10 - 30

27 face to face LCOY consultations

2 engagement opportunities (e.g surveys)

Trained 62 LCOY facilitators (young people)

Supported/collaborated with an additional 15 organisations (11 youth-led organisations)

Participants from all states and territories, including pacific diaspora and indigenous young people

The LCOYs were designed and led by young people from UN Youth Australia, Australian Youth for International Climate Engagement (AYFICE), and youth ambassadors from UNICEF Australia, with support from UNICEF Australia staff. Several partner organisations also hosted LCOYs, including the Uluru Youth Dialogue, Gen Z Abroad, Leaders 2050, and Monash International Affairs Society (MIAS). Valuable contributions to the drafting and review of this report were made by the Youth Climate Policy Centre (YCPC). We extend our gratitude to all the children and young people who participated in the consultations, helped organise LCOYs across Australia, distilled the consultation outputs, and contributed to the writing of the Statement.



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, decision-making and practices

Context

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples hold deep and enduring knowledge of Australia's environment, grounded in a profound and continuous connection to Country. For tens of thousands of years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders have sustainably managed land, water, and ecosystems through sophisticated cultural and ecological practices. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are among the most affected by climate change - despite contributing the least to its causes. Rising temperatures, extreme weather events, and changing landscapes are damaging sacred places, disrupting cultural practices, and threatening community wellbeing. The unique experience and ecological expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and cultural infrastructure that integrates ancient knowledge and current observations, means that their leadership is critical for the success of sustainable environmental stewardship, and energy transition pathways.

"We intimately know Country, and the waters, and skies. Without us at the table things are not going to get better... Country is responding the way it is because of the way that things are going on in the world at the moment."

Participant, Uluru Youth Dialogue

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are hit first and hardest by climate change. We have the knowledge and tools to mitigate climate change. But only if we're supported in a respectful way can we pass on the benefit of our knowledge to the whole community."

Participant, Uluru Youth Dialogue



Key insights

- While there are environmental management initiatives that recognise the value of local and Indigenous knowledge, the systematic integration and operationalisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge in climate policies is lacking. Cultural burning, for example, offers ecological and disaster mitigation benefits; reducing fuel loads in the cooler months of the year, to prevent larger, more severe fires during the drier months. Yet, its use by government agencies remains limited to mainly savanna ecosystems in northern Australia.
- As extreme weather events force displacement from Country, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples face disruption to place-based practices, hindering the intergenerational transfer of cultural and ecological knowledge and connection to ancestral lands. Extreme weather can also severely damage physical markers of cultural knowledge, including sacred rock art.
- Political cycles and short-term decision making undermines an intergenerational approach to ecological governance and caring for Country. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities make intergenerational decisions with the responsibility of passing Country onto their children. Non-Indigenous governance often involves decision-making influenced by shorter term electoral or policy pressures.
- Environmental degradation can obstruct the recognition and exercise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander land rights and Native Title. For example, mine waste leaking into waterways from abandoned or decommissioned sites may prevent the formal return of Native Title where remediation obligations remain unmet.



Recommendations

1. Embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership across all stages of climate policy and implementation. This includes ensuring their ecological knowledge is integrated into school and university curricula, and enabling child and youth representation supported by Elders in policy-making processes.
2. Advance rights-based structural reforms that uphold self-determination and increase authority over decisions affecting Country. This includes recognising and protecting land rights and Native Title, particularly in areas impacted by environmental degradation, and ensuring Indigenous Data Sovereignty in climate planning.
3. Establish and maintain genuine partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, guided by principles of free, prior and informed consent, shared or deferred power, and culturally appropriate decision-making. Conduct consultations on Country and ensure participatory evaluation led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
4. Deliver community-led consultations that honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems, languages, and cultural authority. Meaningful dialogue must be culturally safe and respectful, avoiding the use of overly technical language and climate jargon that can create barriers to inclusion.
5. Develop inclusive and expansive platforms for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people to engage in climate policy. This should be done through genuine co-design with children and young people and Elders to ensure cultural safety, relevance, legitimacy and resourcing for sustained.

Health and wellbeing

Context

Climate change is contributing to widespread health impacts in Australia due to increasingly frequent and intense heatwaves, floods, droughts, and bushfires. These weather and climate hazards can cause direct fatalities, increase the prevalence of infectious diseases, and degrade air, water and food systems, which have disproportionate impacts on children. Climate-related stressors are also contributing to worsening mental health, particularly among children and young people and communities facing repeated climate disasters. Although these impacts are widespread among individuals, localities, and institutions, they can be particularly severe in regional and remote communities with limited healthcare access, for socioeconomically disadvantaged groups, those already living with chronic illness or disability, and children. Australia's *National Health and Climate Strategy*¹ outlines key priorities for developing a climate-resilient health system, but its success depends on effective implementation and adequate funding to turn these goals into action, stewardship, and energy transition pathways.

"Trauma and insecurity take away hope."

Participant, New South Wales

¹ Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. (2023). National Health and Climate Strategy. <https://www.health.gov.au/our-work/national-health-and-climate-strategy>

Key insights

- **Mental health impacts from climate change are increasing, with many children and young people reporting experiences of climate and eco-anxiety.** Feelings of dread, helplessness, and pessimism are common, alongside a strong sense of responsibility to protect the environment—despite limited power or resources to act.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people experience deep anxiety and grief stemming from a close connection to Country** and witnessing its degradation. As one participant shared, "There's a lot of stress for our mob when they feel like the country is hurting."
- **Climate change is intensifying cost-of-living pressures,** particularly around food, energy, and insurance. These impacts are felt most acutely by children and young people in low-income, regional, and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander communities where climate-driven ecosystem changes are threatening access to traditional food sources. As one young person shared, "Our mob rely on the reef to subsidise groceries and the cost of living."
- **Young people from agricultural communities highlighted the compounding effects of climate change on farming livelihoods.** Droughts and floods are contributing to financial hardship, food insecurity, and mental health struggles, with growing uncertainty around water security and sustainable farming practices.
- **Climate change is expected to worsen existing health risks, particularly in remote and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.** In tropical and humid regions, inadequate housing infrastructure increases vulnerability to diseases such as scabies and Group A Streptococcus, which can lead to rheumatic heart disease (RHD) -a condition for which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have the highest rate globally.
- **Young people are concerned of the potential amplification of gender-based violence** driven by climate-related stressors, including economic hardship, social instability, and displacement caused by extreme weather events.

Recommendations

1. Deliver equitable, culturally safe, and climate-resilient healthcare across metropolitan, regional, and remote communities and strengthen the health system's capacity to withstand extreme weather events and climate-related disruptions.

- a. Build capability across the health sector to respond to climate-related physical and mental health impacts. This includes:
 - i. Upskilling nurses and volunteer ambulance officers—especially in regional areas—on infectious diseases and emergency procedures
 - ii. Supporting the recruitment and training of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals, and cultural awareness training for non-Indigenous practitioners to ensure culturally safe care.
- b. Expand access to virtual healthcare, including telehealth and video consultations, to maintain continuity of care during climate emergencies such as floods and bushfires—particularly for children and regional communities.
- c. Increase child and youth mental health support, with targeted funding for child- and youth-focused services. Reduce stigma and support community-led initiatives addressing climate anxiety, trauma, and stress, especially for vulnerable populations.

2. Improve housing and infrastructure in remote communities to support health and wellbeing in warmer, more humid conditions. Key measures include:

- Affordable and reliable air conditioning, supported by local repair training.
- Housing regulations adapted to local climate conditions, beyond reliance on air conditioning
- Passive cooling strategies such as roof ventilation, adjustable windows, vegetation barriers, and improved

washing infrastructure.

3. Prioritise early intervention through community and school-based health programs including screening and education on asthma, cardiovascular issues, and mental health.

4. Accelerate decarbonisation of the health sector through mechanisms including:

- a. Transitioning ambulance fleets to electric or hybrid vehicles, with investment in regional charging infrastructure.
- b. Funding hospitals and healthcare centres to electrify energy use and improve efficiency.

5. Integrate climate and sustainability education into health training, ensuring entry-level curricula prepare future professionals for climate-resilient care.

6. Engage healthcare professionals in structured consultation to ensure decarbonisation efforts maintain or improve patient safety and quality of care.

7. Support low-carbon healthcare practices through targeted communication on the emissions profile of current systems and procedures.



Child and youth education, engagement and awareness

Context

Equipping children and young people with knowledge about climate change, including the science, impacts, and solutions, is essential for building the capacity of current and future generations. Climate education helps children and young people understand climate policy decisions, empowers them to influence those decisions, and equips them with the skills to advocate for stronger action. Climate education is not limited to classrooms; it can also occur through conversations with peers, social media, and community engagement initiatives. As part of Australia’s federal government’s Engage! Strategy, a commitment was made to collaborate and connect with, and empower children and young people to build capacity to engage with the government.² In delivering climate education, it is important to elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledges. The deep, place-based understanding of sustainability and environmental stewardship held by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is essential for creating effective climate solutions.

² Australian Government, Office for Youth. (2024). Engage! A strategy to include young people in the decisions we make. <https://www.youth.gov.au/office-youth/engage-strategy>

There is so much going on in the world right now and it's very easy for young people to feel overwhelmed by it all and want to dis-engage...the cost of living crisis is a true problem for young Australians and this often takes priority over other issues, understandably. However, these issues are intertwined and this needs to be better recognised by our Government. Young people are tired of inaction, we often feel burdened with the problem of climate change even though we aren't the ones to cause it.

Online survey respondent,
New South Wales



Key insights

A lack of meaningful action on climate change is eroding trust in governments, corporations, and NGOs to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. Children and youth voices are also often excluded from climate conversations, leading to a sense of disempowerment.

- **There is a noticeable societal and government deprioritisation of climate issues** due to competing priorities such as cost of living pressures and geopolitical tensions.
- **Climate science education is inconsistent across schools and regions**, contributing to unequal awareness and understanding. National discourse tends to focus on the symptoms of climate change, including cyclones, floods, and extreme rainfall, without addressing the root causes, such as emissions from fossil fuels. This results in a lack of awareness about the impact of personal actions, such as emissions from cars.
- **The politicisation of climate change makes it challenging for children and young people** to discuss the issue openly, as it may be perceived as extreme or polarising.



Recommendations

1. The Federal Department of Education should work with States and Territories to integrate sustainability and climate change into school curricula using a holistic, interdisciplinary approach that connects science, society, and politics, and enriched with experiential learning opportunities beyond the standard curriculum, including bringing in practitioners and community knowledge.
2. Ensure climate education envisions a **climate-secure future**, exploring diverse cultural relationships with nature—particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives. Education should go beyond scientific facts and risk projections to inspire young people to imagine and plan for a sustainable, liveable world. Use local success stories and community-led projects to provide practical, hopeful examples.
3. Keep climate education **apolitical and inclusive**, grounded in objective, fact-based, and solution-oriented content. Avoid fear-based narratives and ensure children and young people from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds are actively engaged in climate learning and action.



Nature, Biodiversity and the Ocean

Context

Australia's ecosystems are in crisis. Unique biodiversity and vast ocean systems are under threat from extractive industries, unsustainable development and the escalating effects of climate change. Coral bleaching, ocean acidification, biodiversity loss, and rising sea levels are persistent threats. However, the laws and processes in place for nature protection are currently inadequate. Although the Australian Parliament passed the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Amendment (Reconsiderations) Bills 2025, more substantial reform of the EPBC Act is long overdue. Current laws allow major fossil fuel projects to proceed with inadequate scrutiny of their impacts on climate change. The Samuel Review provided a comprehensive, evidence-based, practicable pathway to modernise these laws, and meet the needs of today's climate policy environment.³ In the oceans, the growth in exploration for deep-sea mining to extract minerals such as lithium, cobalt, and nickel from the seabed, is unregulated and presents significant threats to deep-sea ecosystems.

³ Samuel, G. (January 2021). Second Independent Review of the EPBC Act



Key insights

- **The expansion of deep-sea mining poses a significant anthropogenic stressor of the deep seabed surface and habitat.** Concerns of deep-sea mining and the environmental impact are heightened by the lack of research and evidence on the extent and longevity of the biological impacts of deep-sea mining, including impacts to species diversity and carbon storage.
- **Ocean acidification and coral bleaching,** driven by unchecked carbon emissions, are degrading ecosystems essential to food security, culture and coastal resilience.
- **Overfishing and habitat destruction,** enabled by weak regulation and profit-driven practices, are accelerating biodiversity loss in ocean and coastal regions.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples possess deep, place-based knowledge of ecological care, but continue to be excluded from decision-making,** funding and governance in conservation and climate policy. We need to integrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge into how we take care of nature.



Recommendations

1. **Support the moratorium on deep-sea mining**, including the granting of exploration licences for deep sea mining projects. Support the Pacific nations advocating for a global pause on deep-sea mining until robust environmental safeguards are in place. Expanding industrial extraction into the deep ocean without an understanding of the consequences carries high risks.
2. **Support research to better understand the environmental impacts of deep-sea mining** to support the evidence base against the industry's development. This includes funding independent scientific studies and collaborating with Pacific-led research initiatives.
3. **Advance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-governance of biodiversity and marine policy**, including Sea Country protection, self-determined conservation programs, and long-term funding for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led initiatives. While some co-management models exist, structural reforms and sustained funding are needed to embed co-governance nationally.
4. **Expand existing and establish new marine protected areas (MPAs)** through Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led and community-based planning, prioritising biodiversity hotspots and ecosystem corridors.
5. **Deliver on commitments to reform the EPBC Act to implement the recommendations of Samuel Review**, allowing the minister to consider the impact of a project's emissions on climate change, and establishing a national Environmental Protection Authority.
6. **Increase investment in blue carbon and nature-based adaptation**, including restoration of mangroves, seagrasses, reefs and wetland systems, with an emphasis on community stewardship and long-term ecological health.



Mitigation, NDCs, Energy transition

Context

The energy system represents the largest source of global CO₂ emissions, and its decarbonisation is critical for achieving net zero.⁴ Although Australia has policy frameworks to reduce domestically produced emissions, it lacks a strategy to reduce fossil fuel exports which contribute to climate change. Coal, oil, and gas developments and exploration licenses continue to be approved and extended.⁵ Australia also continues to provide substantial public funding to fossil fuel projects through fuel tax credits and infrastructure funding.⁶ The upcoming submission of Australia's second Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) provides an opportunity for Australia to demonstrate greater ambition beyond its current commitment to reduce emissions by 43% below 2005 levels by 2030. Emissions removals projects occurring alongside emissions reductions must be based on high-integrity credits; greenwashing and reliance on low-integrity offsets have eroded trust in climate policy. Alongside the energy transition, a circular economy can promote environmental, economic, and social goals by reducing reliance on landfills, lifting materials productivity, reducing food insecurity, and strengthening economic resilience.⁷ The Australian government has committed to a doubling of the circularity of the Australian economy by 2035. This ambition is welcome, however progress on this goal has been slow.

4 IPCC AR6 Chapter 6: Energy Systems.

5 DISR (2024). [Resources and Energy Major Projects 2024 Report](#)

6 [Australia Institute 2024](#). Fossil Fuel subsidies in Australia 2024.

7 Productivity Commission (2025). Australia's circular economy: [Unlocking the opportunities](#)



"Australia could be a world leader in the climate world - they could be leaders in the transition away from coal, and develop the renewable industries further. Australia has a powerful position on the international stage...use it to stand with the other countries suffering on the frontlines of the climate induced disasters."
Participant, New South Wales

Key insights

- **Children and young people want the federal government to demonstrate greater responsibility in reducing Australia's contribution to global emissions.** The current level of ambition in the NDC, long-term strategies and national policies is insufficient to achieve the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement and the pledge to triple renewable energy by 2030.
- **Building new clean energy infrastructure must enable sustainable development,** increase the circularity of the economy, and create well paid jobs to support communities through the transformation of our energy systems. This includes increasing renewable energy generation backed by battery storage, and creating jobs in industries including green hydrogen; critical minerals processing and green metals manufacturing.
- **Community engagement in the energy transition is essential,** including meaningful consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and with communities whose economies will be affected by the decommissioning of fossil fuel infrastructure.
- **There is a lack of transparency and integrity from Australian firms** over the progress of their decarbonisation. There is a rise in greenwashing; with schools, businesses and organisations presenting themselves as environmentally sustainable, without implementing any actions that tangibly reduce emissions.
- **Governments at the federal and state levels need to move beyond short-termism** and treat climate policy and the energy transition as an investment in our shared future, not as a cost to be delayed or pushed onto the next generation.

Recommendations

1. **Adopt a 2025 NDC that includes a science- and 1.5 degree aligned 2035 emissions reduction target** which reflects increasing ambition relative to existing targets.
2. **Place a moratorium on any new coal, oil, and gas developments,** exploration licences, or extensions of existing licences.
3. **Prioritise direct emissions reductions and avoid an over-reliance on land-use change to offset emissions** by limiting the use of carbon offsets in the Safeguard Mechanism. Firms should be required to implement real reductions in their emissions to meet their obligations. While Australia's terrestrial ecosystems offer important mitigation potential, their carbon storage capacity is vulnerable to be weakened by extreme heat and wildfi res. Approaches such as afforestation and forest management also carry signifi cant uncertainty regarding the permanence of stored carbon.
4. **Lift integrity standards in the voluntary carbon market, and limit use of carbon offsets to restore trust in certification schemes.** This includes progressing reforms to the Climate Active certification scheme which were promised in 2024 and not delivered.
5. **Phase out fuel tax credits for the mining sector,** and use the savings to build low-emissions infrastructure and fi nancial support for Indo-Pacifi c neighbours.
6. **Strengthen social licence for clean energy infrastructure**—including generation, storage, and transmission—by embedding community inclusion and trust-building into every stage of project development. Communities must feel that their voices matter, their quality of life will be protected, and they are active participants in the energy transition.



Just Transition

Context

A just transition⁸ is a foundational principle of climate justice. For young Australians, particularly those in coal-reliant towns, legacy manufacturing corridors and extraction communities, a just transition means more than shifting from fossil fuels to renewables. It is about repairing broken trust, restoring dignity to communities who have powered the nation, and ensuring that no one is left behind as we move towards a cleaner, more resilient future.

Young Australians have described a transition process that is too often technocratic, centralised and divorced from the lived experience of those most affected. Policy is written in Canberra, yet imposed on Gippsland, Gladstone, the Hunter and the Pilbara without meaningful engagement. This dynamic has fuelled a sense of disenfranchisement, of being treated as liabilities to manage, rather than partners in a shared national project.

For many communities, fossil fuel industries have been not just a source of employment, but the bedrock of identity, intergenerational purpose, and place. To remove that without a bold, deliberate and equitable reinvestment in people and services is not a transition, it is abandonment. Children and young people are not resisting change; they are demanding that change be done with them, not to them.

Australia has the capacity to deliver a gold-standard model of just transition. A model that rebuilds social cohesion, strengthens democratic legitimacy, and aligns climate ambition with economic fairness. But this will not occur by default. It requires deliberate planning, adequate funding, and co-governance with communities at the centre.

- **Young people in regional and industrial towns feel forgotten in the energy transition.** Transition

⁸ For the purposes of this Statement, 'just transition' refers specifically to the equitable shift away from fossil fuels in coal-reliant towns, legacy manufacturing corridors, and extraction communities—ensuring these regions are supported through inclusive planning, reinvestment, and community-led decision-making.



"Hear the voices of the ones who will be most affected".

Participant, Victoria

"A fair and inclusive clean energy future."

Participant, New South Wales

Key insights

strategies are seen as city-centric, lacking meaningful engagement with those who will be most affected. Governments and the wider population need to listen and share decision-making power, not impose solutions that lack lived experience.

- **There is deep uncertainty about what comes next.** While the promises of clean energy are frequently made, participants reported a lack of clarity around jobs, education pathways, and the future of their communities. The reality is “a mass exodus once young people hit university age.” (Participant, Victoria)
- **Employment is only part of the picture. Children and youth from transitioning regions stressed that work is tied to identity and place.** The decline of coal and manufacturing industries has ripple effects, affecting mental health, social cohesion, and intergenerational stability and prosperity.

- **Education and upskilling opportunities are limited or inaccessible.** Training is often designed for those already in formal employment or metropolitan areas, excluding those in remote, regional or lower-income settings. At this stage of the energy transition, there lacks a clear and easily digestible education and training platform focused on children and young people in transitioning communities and upskilling.
- **Communities lose out to private interests.** There is frustration at governments prioritising corporate interests over community wellbeing. Participants felt that fossil fuel companies receive support long after mines close, while communities are left with degraded environments and underfunded services.

Recommendations

1. **Centre children and young people, regional communities and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices in transition planning.** Transition strategies must be co-designed with the communities they affect. This includes establishing formal mechanisms for youth and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation, on-Country consultation, and local decision-making authority to ensure accountability and equity. This ensures the energy transition is equitable and does not exacerbate existing injustices. A lack of consultation or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership risks a transition becoming ‘green colonialism’.
2. **Continue to deliver targeted education, skills training and employment pathways in transitioning regions.** Ensure that young people in coal, gas, and industrial regions have access to meaningful and secure opportunities in emerging industries. This includes vocational programs, school-to-work pipelines, and tertiary pathways that are place-based and community-informed. For example, there could be a gateway initiative for schools to do work experience in the hydrogen industry.
3. **Invest in public infrastructure that revitalises and connects regional Australia, as a core component of a just and climate-resilient transition.** Enhancing regional transport, digital access, and public services will not only reverse the child and youth “brain drain,” but also support sustainable employment and strengthen local communities—ensuring that the benefits of the energy transition are felt equitably across the country.
4. **Redirect fossil fuel subsidies into local benefit and long-term resilience.** Phase out public funding for fossil fuel production and redirect those resources into clean infrastructure, social services, housing, mental health, and regional development initiatives, ensuring that transition benefits are felt where they are needed most.
5. **Ground Australia’s transition in truth, justice, and international responsibility** by increasing climate finance contributions, supporting fair trade and technology sharing with vulnerable nations, and aligning domestic transition policies with international commitments such as the Paris Agreement and Pacific Islands Forum 2050 Strategy.

Adaptation

Context

Australia's capacity to adapt to a changing climate depends on the actions taken now to reduce both current and anticipated adverse impacts driven by increasing greenhouse gas emissions. As a country highly vulnerable to climate-related impacts, adaptation efforts must be science-based, community-led, and responsive to local needs. Planning should address risks to health and social services, infrastructure and the built environment, as well as ecosystems and biodiversity. It must also consider the differing climate vulnerabilities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, regional and remote communities, and other at-risk populations. The release of Australia's first National Adaptation Plan and National Climate Risk Assessment presents an important opportunity for the federal government to outline how it will prepare the country for escalating climate risks and guide coordinated resilience-building across sectors.

Key insights

- **Community infrastructure is not sufficiently climate-resilient**, with schools, hospitals, transport systems, and housing frequently damaged or rendered inaccessible during extreme weather. Flooding, bushfire, and heatwave events disrupt education, healthcare, and emergency services, particularly in regional and rural areas.
- **Climate impacts do not occur in isolation** - children and young people across Australia are experiencing the compounding effects of multiple, intersecting crises including the rising cost of living, housing insecurity, and ongoing global conflicts as well as climate change. These together create a complex web of vulnerability. Such overlapping challenges, or "poly-crises," heighten the urgency for coordinated, well-resourced adaptation planning.
- **Libraries and community centres are underutilised in adaptation planning**, despite their potential as safe spaces during crises. Children and young people suggested these spaces should be prioritised and better resourced, especially in vulnerable communities where they offer education, resources, cooling, shelter, and connection.
- **There is a lack of culturally sensitive adaptation strategies**, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities whose connection to Country is deeply affected by environmental degradation and displacement. This includes a lack of intellectual property protections for Indigenous knowledge.

"Everyone deserves the chance to a safe life."

Participant, New South Wales

Recommendations

1. **Invest in climate-resilient infrastructure** across schools, hospitals, transport, and housing, particularly in regional and rural areas. This includes updating building codes to reflect future climate risks, relocating essential services out of flood-prone zones, and ensuring continuity of education and healthcare during disasters.
2. **Prioritise and resource community spaces such as libraries and youth centres as part of adaptation planning.** These spaces represent recognisable critical hubs for safety, cooling, connection, and information during climate emergencies, especially for vulnerable populations.
3. **Incorporate systemic and cascading risks into adaptation planning in addition to sectoral and state-level risk assessments.** The risk of maladaptation and unforeseen negative outcomes is increased by policies that do not account for multiple compounding and interacting hazards where these are present.
4. **Prioritise evidence-based policy-making.** This includes ensuring that adaptation decisions are informed by the latest and most relevant evidence, both from scientific risk modelling and local knowledge of on-the-ground climate impacts. It also includes strengthening processes for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of implemented policies, and the creation of frameworks that enable the assessment of whether a given intervention has been successful in reducing climate risks.
5. **Undertake structured collaboration and co-design approaches that incorporate capacity building, to determine the adaptation needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, rather than relying on consultation.** Adaptation efforts need to be inclusive, locally relevant, and informed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge systems and connection with Country, including historical observations, weather knowledge, and current community practices.




Disaster response, recovery and preparedness

Context

With climate change intensifying the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, there is an urgent need for robust, community-informed disaster preparedness and response systems. Children and young people are disproportionately affected by climate-related disruptions to education, mobility, and mental health, yet often lack access to tailored support mechanisms. The increasing reliance on volunteer-based emergency services, such as the Rural Fire Service (RFS), has placed unsustainable pressure on under-resourced personnel, particularly in regional and remote areas. In this context, governments must take proactive responsibility for equipping individuals and communities with the tools, infrastructure, and knowledge required to navigate climate-induced crises. This includes ensuring educational continuity during disasters and enabling households to develop contingency plans for evacuation and recovery

While communities frequently demonstrate resilience and self-sufficiency in the aftermath of disasters, government-led recovery efforts must be timely, coordinated, and responsive to local needs. Infrastructure repair and service restoration should be streamlined to avoid prolonged disruption. Regional and remote communities—often at the frontline of climate impacts—require targeted support from local councils and state and federal governments, underpinned by clear accountability frameworks. Recovery processes must also extend beyond human-centric approaches to include the protection and restoration of sacred sites, ecosystems, and biodiversity. A harmonised approach across all levels of government is essential to ensure that disaster preparedness and recovery efforts are inclusive, culturally responsive, and environmentally comprehensive.

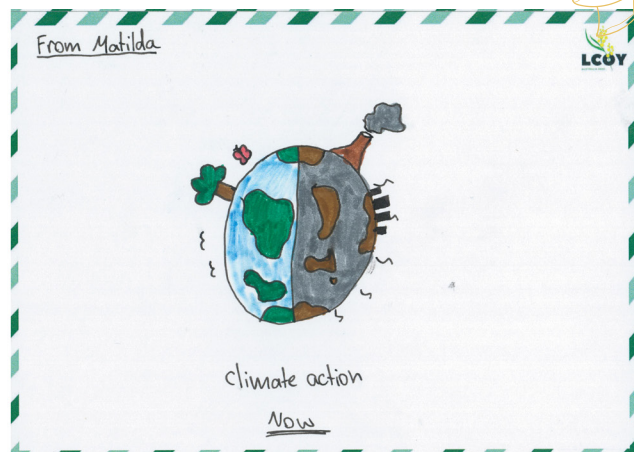


"The damage incurred extends beyond the loss of property or home—it has a severe mental and psychological impact too."

Participant, Victoria

Key insights

- **Disasters disrupt essential services**, particularly education, with school closures due to flooding and bushfires impacting students' learning, wellbeing, and long-term educational outcomes—especially in regional and remote communities. Recovery efforts must prioritise educational stability and adaptability to minimise long-term impacts on learning and development.
- **Emergency services are under-resourced and over-reliant on volunteers**, such as those in the Rural Fire Service (RFS), who face increasing demand without adequate structural support or investment.
- **Recovery is most effective when led by communities themselves**, however, many communities feel unsupported by government-led recovery efforts and report a lack of flexibility to recover in ways that reflect their local needs, values, and identities.
- **Environmental and cultural assets are overlooked in recovery**, with insufficient attention paid to the restoration of ecosystems, native wildlife, and sacred sites affected by disasters.
- **Local councils currently lack clear guidance and accountability** from state and federal governments on disaster preparedness and recovery. This has led to inconsistent responses across regions and missed opportunities for coordinated action.
- **Recovery services are often fragmented, complex, and difficult to access**, particularly for marginalised groups. There is a need to streamline support systems and improve the delivery of recovery assistance.
- **Public education on disaster preparedness remains inadequate**, with limited awareness of emergency procedures, available support services, and climate-related risks.



Recommendations

6. Establish a nationally coordinated disaster recovery framework that streamlines support services, ensures timely infrastructure repair, and integrates community-led approaches to recovery.
7. Expand recovery programming to ensure continuity of education for young people affected by climate-related disruptions. This should include flexible learning pathways, remote access options, and tailored support for students whose schooling has been interrupted by disasters such as floods and bushfires.
8. Increase investment in emergency services, including paid staffing, training, and equipment for volunteer-based organisations like the RFS, to ensure readiness for escalating climate risks.
9. Fund proactive preparedness initiatives, such as community-based contingency planning, localised risk assessments, and climate modelling that is publicly accessible and tailored to vulnerable regions.
10. Invest in disaster-resilient infrastructure, including flood-proof schools, emergency shelters, and transport networks that can withstand extreme events and support rapid recovery.
11. Deliver targeted public education campaigns on disaster preparedness, including step-by-step emergency procedures, evacuation planning, and access to support.

Loss and damage

Context

Australia is one of the world’s largest exporters of fossil fuels and leads in per capita CO₂ emissions.⁹ As a developed country that continues to contribute significantly to the climate crisis, Australia has caused economic and non-economic losses and damages from climate-related disasters —such as bushfires, floods, heatwaves, and coastal erosion—that are increasingly displacing communities and degrading ecosystems.

These impacts are felt most acutely by countries with the least capacity to respond.¹⁰ Between 2000 and 2019, 55 of the most vulnerable countries lost an estimated US\$525 billion, despite only contributing to 4% of global emissions.¹¹ Young people in consultations expressed frustration that developed nations like Australia continue to benefit economically while vulnerable communities—particularly in the Pacific—are left to bear the brunt of climate destruction.

A dedicated Loss and Damage Fund is a critical mechanism to address these injustices by ensuring that high-emitting countries compensate those least responsible and most affected.¹² While Australia has pledged \$50 million to the UNFCCC Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) at COP29, this falls short of the scale required.

Although loss and damage is not formally included within the UNFCCC’s climate finance framework, it is increasingly recognised as a distinct and essential pillar of global climate action. With the International Court of Justice (ICJ) advisory opinion potentially opening pathways for legal liability, Australia must act proactively—not reactively—by increasing its contributions and leading with integrity and compassion.

9 Mitchell & Turnbull (2025). [UN chief urges Australia to aim higher as it debates climate goals](#). BBC News.

10 Dafermos (2025). [Climate finance and global justice](#). Climate Policy.

11 Jue Xuan Wang (2024). [COP29 climate finance deal: why poor countries are so angry](#). The Conversation.

12 Pill & Hammersley (2024). [A climate loss and damage fund that works](#). Lowy Institute.

“Country is destroyed, money is made, but it’s never spent back into those communities.”

Participant, Uluru Youth Dialogue



Key insights

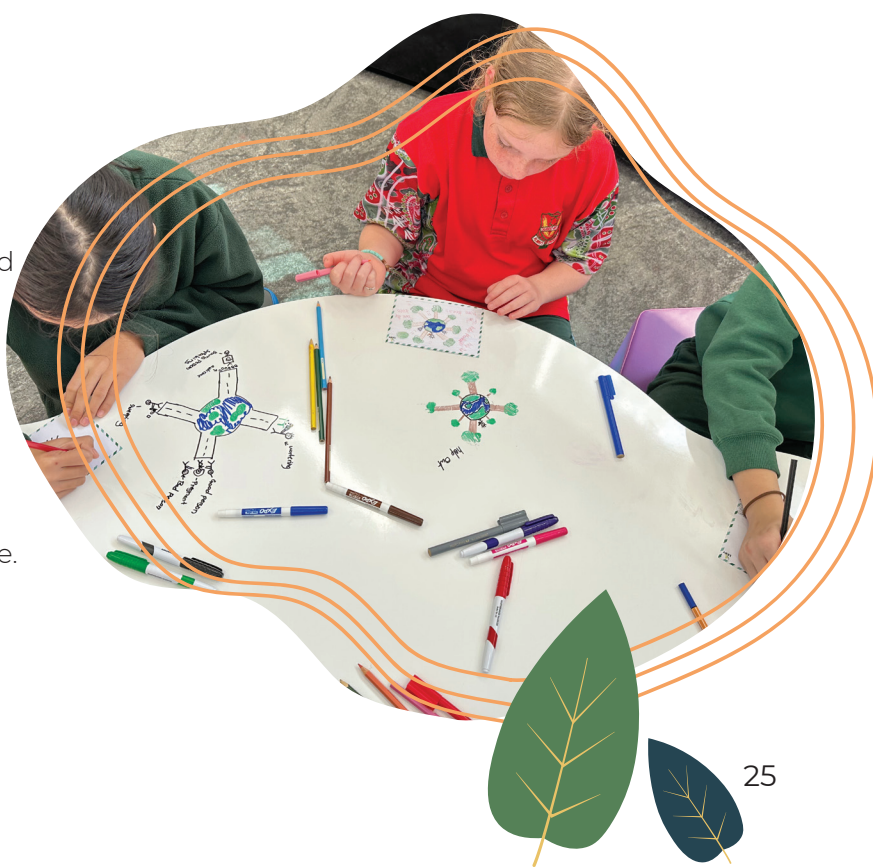
Children and young people view Australia's current commitment towards loss and damage as **insufficient** given its financial capacity and contribution to climate change.

- **There is strong support for Australia to increase direct support to Pacific nations**, particularly through mechanisms that reflect the priorities of Pacific communities. This needs to go beyond one-off aid and include:
 - ◊ Dedicated and additional funding to the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage and Pacific-led mechanisms such as the Pacific Resilience Facility.
 - ◊ Capacity building and technical assistance, including support for traditional knowledge-led climate solutions and community-based adaptation practices.
 - ◊ Disaster preparedness and response infrastructure, such as climate-resilient housing, water systems, and coastal protection to reduce reliance on post-disaster aid.
- Child and youth-focused education and training programs, including green skills development and climate literacy initiatives tailored to Pacific children and youth.
- Legal and diplomatic solidarity, such as backing Pacific-led international efforts like the ICJ advisory opinion and bilateral agreements that safeguard mobility, sovereignty, and cultural heritage.
- **Children and youth participants called for proactive leadership—not reactive legal compliance**—in addressing climate harm and supporting those most affected.
- **Greater transparency and accountability in how Australia reports and delivers climate-related funding is needed**, ensuring that contributions are additional, responsive to community-defined priorities, and not conflated with mitigation or adaptation finance.



Recommendations

1. Increase Australia's contribution to the UNFCCC Fund for responding to Loss and Damage, in line with its historical emissions and regional responsibility.
2. Ensure that all Loss and Damage contributions are additional to existing climate finance, and not counted toward mitigation or adaptation targets.
3. Support Pacific-led calls for fair and accessible Loss and Damage mechanisms, including through diplomatic engagement and regional solidarity.
4. Improve transparency and accountability in Australia's climate-related funding, including clear reporting on how funds are allocated, monitored, and evaluated for impact.




Climate and migration

Context

As the rising seas oceans wash away entire islands, bushfires rage through rural communities, and flash floods wipe out infrastructure across the globe, the need for comprehensive climate mobility frameworks becomes increasingly urgent. Our neighbouring Pasifika families are particularly vulnerable to climate change-induced migration due to the geographical vulnerability of low-lying island states, as well as rural communities in Australia. Threats, such as sea-level rise, threaten the very existence of ancient communities and create mass forced displacement.

Addressing climate mobility requires much more than simply expanding entry pathways into Australia. This alone does not address the cultural trauma and irreplaceable connection to land that is destroyed by forced displacement. Ancient customs are being destroyed by climate change, and communities cannot continue existing as they have for thousands of years. Testimonies from children and young people at the Local Conferences of Youth emphasise the importance of holistic policy frameworks which not only provide logistical support for persons displaced by climate change, but also mental health and culturally appropriate community support frameworks.

A major legal gap leaves victims of climate change vulnerable: climate refugees remain excluded from protection under the scope of the Migration Act 1958 (Cth). While the 2024 Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union was a welcome step toward safeguarding climate mobility, much work remains to be done in this space to ensure adequate support frameworks for all, including domestically displaced rural communities in Australia.



"It worries me deeply to think about how many more families across the Pacific will be forced to leave their vanua – their land, their identity – not by choice, but by the rising seas. Our people are not just losing homes, but histories, languages, and a sense of belonging that cannot be rebuilt elsewhere."

Participant, Taveni Island, Fiji

"Every time I go back to my village, I see more and more houses needing to be built on stilts because they don't have the funds to move their families or because the tide brings in more and more sand."

Participant, Sese Village, Fiji

Key insights

Climate-induced displacement is escalating across the Pacific and within Australia, with rising seas, bushfires, and floods forcing communities to leave ancestral lands and cultural heritage sites.

- **Displacement is not just logistical—it is deeply emotional and cultural.** Children and young people are concerned about the loss of identity, language, and belonging that accompanies forced migration.
- **Children and young people in regional Australia feel increasingly at risk of displacement,** citing inadequate infrastructure, limited planning, and insufficient support mechanisms to respond to climate disasters.
- **Integration and access to services for displaced communities is uneven,** with children and young people highlighting the need for inclusive, compassionate migration policies that reflect the lived realities of climate mobility.
- **Climate refugees remain excluded from formal protection frameworks,** with Australia’s Migration Act 1958 (Cth) failing to recognise climate-induced displacement as grounds for refugee status. This legal gap leaves vulnerable communities without access to resettlement, support services, or long-term security.



Recommendations

1. **Expand the statutory scope of ‘refugee’** under the section 5H of the Migration Act 1958 (Cth) to include climate-induced forced displacement.
2. **Strengthen regional solidarity for vulnerable Pacific nations** through increased support of Pasifika-led solutions such as the Pacific Resilience Facility.
3. **Build on the precedent set by the Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union** by establishing similar bilateral agreements with other vulnerable Pacific nations, that safeguard mobility, sovereignty, and cultural heritage.
4. **Support international law efforts to recognise statehood continuity** including advocacy for the Pacific Islands Forum 2023 Declaration on the Continuity of Statehood and Protection of Persons in multilateral discussions beyond the Pacific.
5. **Ensure climate-displaced persons have access to the same settlement services as Convention Refugees** under Australia’s Humanitarian Program. This includes mental health support, housing assistance, education access, and culturally appropriate community services.
6. **Embed inclusivity and compassion in migration policy design** by establishing formal consultation mechanisms with climate-displaced communities. Ensure their lived experiences shape policy decisions, including migration pathways, settlement support, and cultural preservation.
7. **Recognise climate displacement as a human rights and justice issue by enshrining protections in public policy.** Guarantee climate-displaced peoples—particularly from Pacific nations—access to safe and dignified migration pathways, secure housing, culturally appropriate services, and opportunities to maintain community and identity across borders.



Pacific Partnerships

Context

Australian foreign policy in recent years has placed increasing emphasis on bilateral and multilateral relationships with our Pacific neighbours. Regional threats such as sea-level rise and deep sea mining threaten the environmental stability of the Pacific, requiring stronger partnerships and solidarity from Australia. As climate change threatens the existence of more and more Pacific communities, it's more important now than ever that Australia steps up as the region's largest power.

Australia is in a unique position regarding the Pacific; we are a member country of the Pacific Islands Forum, yet we do not experience the same immediate existential vulnerabilities as our neighbouring states. This places a unique responsibility on Australia to promote regional harmony and support our neighbours in the context of climate change.

In the wake of the International Court of Justice's Advisory Opinion on Climate Change¹³, we cannot ignore that Pacific nations are taking the global lead in climate justice activism. This landmark legal precedent was initiated by a group of Pasifika university students; a testament to the inherent value in elevating Pasifika child and youth voices and establishing more partnerships. To ensure a stable, prosperous region, Australia must continue to invest in Pacific partnerships, and support traditional knowledge mitigation systems in the region.

¹³ International Court of Justice. (2025). Advisory Opinion on the obligations of States in respect of Climate Change. Available at <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/187/advisory-opinions>

Key insights

- **Pacific nations are disproportionately impacted by climate change**, facing existential threats such as sea-level rise, biodiversity loss, and ecosystem degradation, yet often lack the resources and support to respond effectively.
- **Pasifika voices are underrepresented in global climate discourse**, despite leading regional and international efforts in climate justice.
- **Children and young people emphasise the need for genuine, respectful engagement**, calling for Australia to move away from paternalistic approaches and toward partnerships grounded in humility, reciprocity, and shared decision-making.
- **Children and young people are advocating for stronger climate solidarity**, including emissions reductions in Australia to reduce the burden on vulnerable Pacific communities.
- **Opportunities for child- and youth-led engagement** between Australian and Pasifika are highly sought after, including leadership summits, mentoring programs, and regional dialogues.
- **Cultural awareness and gender inclusion are critical**, with children and young people highlighting the importance of integrating Pasifika cultural perspectives and ensuring the active participation of Pasifika women and girls in climate policy and programming.

"All nations, no matter how small, have a voice and should be actively listened to."

Participant, New South Wales



Recommendations

1. Increase aid and support for Pacific-led initiatives, such as the Pacific Resilience Facility, ensuring funding mechanisms are responsive to local priorities and community-defined resilience strategies.
2. Align Australian partnerships with the Pacific Islands Forum 2050 Strategy, embedding long-term commitments to regional sustainability, equity, and climate adaptation.
3. Foster respectful and reciprocal partnerships with Pasifika-led grassroots organisations through empowering funding models which truly build capacity and avoid dependency.
4. Increase support for traditional knowledge-led solutions to climate mitigation by partnering with regional bodies such as the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific to scale First Nations and community-based mitigation practices.
5. Increase investment in child- and youth-focused climate literacy and green skills programs (such as expanding the Australia Awards Program) to include renewable energy, climate adaptation, and environmental governance training for Pasifika children and youth
6. Establish a Pasifika Youth Climate Advisory Council, to formalise children and youth leadership in regional climate policy and ensure sustained engagement with decision-makers.
7. Provide training, mentoring, and travel support to enable Pasifika child and youth participation in regional and global climate forums, including COP and Pacific Islands Forum summits.
8. Guarantee Pasifika youth representation at global negotiations, by funding visas, travel, and accreditation for at least 100 youth delegates annually.
9. Integrate Pasifika perspectives into Australian policy and education, through consultation, curriculum reform, and Pacific literacy initiatives that promote cultural understanding and regional solidarity.
10. Fund preventative infrastructure measures, such as climate-resilient housing, water systems, and coastal protection, to reduce reliance on post-disaster aid and strengthen long-term resilience.



COP31

Context

With COP31 potentially being hosted by Australia and the Pacific, the world's eyes will be on Adelaide. How the Australian Government will choose to design this conference and use the privileges of the COP Presidency is both a privilege and a test: will we show up as collaborators, or custodians of the status quo? The climate crisis is an existential threat already lapping at the doors of our Pacific friends. Sea-level rises, the collapse of fisheries, and increased coastal erosion are already impacting life across the region. In this context, the Government must meaningfully engage young people and those on the front lines of the climate crisis in the design and delivery of the conference.

Australia is uniquely positioned as a developed nation inside the Pacific Islands Forum that has not been subject to the same degree of imminent climate impacts. This position, and commitment to hosting in partnership with the Pacific, imbues us with a duty to elevate the voices of Pasifika youth in the conference. It is their voice, voices and activism, as exemplified in the International Court of Justice Climate Advisory Opinion campaign¹⁴, that is shaping global legal norms. Embedding children and youth perspectives in the planning and delivery of COP31 will demonstrate a serious commitment by the Australian Government to intergenerational equity, moving beyond performative inclusion, and reflecting a just approach to regional leadership.

¹⁴ International Court of Justice. (2025). Advisory Opinion on the obligations of States in respect of climate change. Available at <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/187/advisory-opinions>



Key insights

- **COP31 is seen as an opportunity to centre First Nations¹⁵ and Pacific leadership** given their communities are predominantly based in climate-vulnerable areas such as floodplains, remote coastal regions, or low-lying islands. Their communities also face compounding vulnerabilities from climate-related stress alongside existing inequalities in housing, health, education, and infrastructure. Their voices must be at the core of COP31 planning and delivery.
- **Children and young people want meaningful roles at COP31** - while children and young people are often celebrated symbolically in climate discourse, their actual power in climate decision-making is limited. Governments and corporations are eager to platform children and

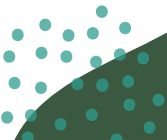
teenagers in marketing, public events, or social media campaigns - there is concern that at COP31, children and youth will be used to legitimise the process while decisions happen elsewhere.

- **Accessibility and equity is an ongoing challenge for conference participation** with significant barriers to entry for less affluent children and young people across Australia and the Pacific to attend. This includes access to badges, the opportunity to engage with negotiations, mentoring, and funding for travel.

"All nations, no matter how small, have a voice and should be actively listened to."

Participant, New South Wales

¹⁵ The term 'First Nations' is used here to be inclusive of First Nations communities across the Pacific Region, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia.



Recommendations

1. Appoint First Nations and Pacific youth leaders to formal COP31 roles such as the Presidency Youth Climate Champion role and voting advisors on key committees, to ensure structural and meaningful opportunities for both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Pacific children and youth.
2. Establish a Children and Youth Advisory Taskforce to the COP31 Presidency to embed children and youth leadership in planning and delivery, including co-designing key sessions, side events, and negotiations. Provide training and shadowing opportunities to build capacity and ensure active participation of children and young people in negotiations, with support given to, and in consultation with and inclusion of, international formal mechanisms such as YOUNGO.
3. Prioritise the procurement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander suppliers in all programming and secure dedicated budgets for cultural events. Integrate cultural protocols into all official meetings and side events, including a Welcome to Country and Acknowledgments of Country.
4. Provide bursaries for young people across the Pacific, covering travel, accommodation, and accreditation, to ensure representation from across the region.
5. Continue to support pre-COP engagement including child- and youth-led consultations and taskforces whose outputs feed into the formal COP processes.



Dear Future Generation,

I know climate change is a big issue but we are trying our best to fight it. As a young individual I am trying to contribute to the initiative of tackling climate change, and I hope that we will achieve it soon. You will get a good environment due to the efforts we are putting in I hope. So be
From a young person in Australia. Considerate and Caring

Dear person in COP's

I know that the Great Barrier Reef is in danger, there has been coral bleaching due to rising sea water temperatures. As someone who once got to visit the reefs, I believe it would be a real shame for future generations to not be able to see the beauty of the ocean. Also, I think your job must be quite tough and there must be a lot of environmental policies that you navigate. ~~to say thank you~~
From a young person in Australia

Dear The Australian Government

Please continue to work towards our climate goals. In such an often unpredictable world, we need unity now more than ever.

What better unity is there than protecting the world our future generations will inherit. So please, be mindful, aware, conscious, and focused.

We trust you will fight for us and our future.

From a young person in Australia

Dear Prime Minister Albanese

I write this letter strongly urging you to consider Australia's current position as the second largest LNG exporter of the world, and the fact that Australian fossil fuel companies pay little to no tax ~~from~~ the profits of their exports despite receiving large amounts of government subsidies. I strongly urge you to consider using the potential increased revenue to accelerate Australia's and its Indo-Pacific neighbours energy transition.
From a young person in Australia

Dear

I feel that although the world is currently also practicing and participating in renovating, but I feel and as per my work, I think there's a massive repository of waste that could be potentially transformed into energy. The underdeveloped nations which have become a dumping grounds could use some funding and build up of infrastructure to set such institutions. These, will eventually lead to a booming economy, renewable energy resources and also a cleaner environment. Which would help contribute to mitigating adverse effects on climate change.

From a young person in Australia

Dear people of Earth ♥... (COP)

I feel the world is heavily influenced by the changing climate caused due to pollution. Just want to let you know ~~pollution~~ create measures to have a sustainable & good weather.
From a young person in Australia

Dear United Nation,

Please stay natural and stay strong against influence from power and help us to fight climate change

From a young person in Australia

Dear Mr Prime Minister

Due to the bushfires a couple years back, footy and rowing training got cancelled. Unacceptable. Please make sure I don't miss footy again due to too much smoke.
~~can~~

From a young person in Australia

Dear Albo

Please consider the west of Sydney, those towing the poverty line, the youth who are inheriting our country. We're all pieces of this puzzle, necessary to make the world go round. So think of us in your decision making.

From a young person in Australia

Dear LULA,

THANK YOU for your strong actions on climate, particularly on your anti-deforestation initiatives. The Amazon ^(Amazonia) is the world's lungs, and we need to protect them for future generations.

[Proteja a Amazônia!]

From a young person in Australia

Dear COP

Many of my family and friends were impacted by the 2019 fires in South Eastern NSW, with many left without homes. This left me wondering about the options/positions of those from less fortunate areas (e.g. Tuvalu). 'Climate Refugees' **MUST** be recognised as an official category under international law!!! Protect future victims of climate change, Please!!!
From a young person in Australia

Dear COP

Please be decisive about Climate Change. We need you to be catalysts of change. Your decisions impact the lives of many generations to come.

From a young person in Australia