

Understanding the Paris Agreement and climate negotiations



What is the Paris Agreement? What does COP stand for? This guide explains these and other key concepts on how countries adopt international agreements through climate action negotiations.

Adapted from the [Young Climate Activists in Latin American and the Caribbean](#) toolkits, developed by young activists and UNICEF experts, the Climate Action for Youth series will provide you with the knowledge, tools, and resources to participate in global youth climate action and advocate for change.



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

1. What is the UNFCCC?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**) is an international agreement signed by 197 countries.

It aims to stabilize greenhouse gas levels and prevent dangerous interference with the climate.

Countries that signed the Convention are known as Parties.



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

2. What is COP?

COP stands for Conference of the Parties.

It is the decision-making body of the Convention, which meets every year to assess the progress that countries are making to tackle climate change.

COP26 means it is the 26th Conference of the Parties.



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

3. What is the Paris Agreement?

A **treaty** created by the UNFCCC and adopted at COP21 in Paris.

It's important because countries agreed to lower emissions, use mitigation and adaptation measures, recognize human rights in all climate actions, and support developing countries.



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

4. What are NDCs?

Nationally determined contributions (**NDCs**) are the commitments made by the countries that signed the Paris Agreement.

Each country sets the actions it will take to reduce carbon emissions.

NDCs are reviewed and updated every five years.



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

5. Contribute to your country's NDC process

- Research when your country is reviewing NDCs and who is responsible
- Reach out to them to participate in the NDC review process
- Don't have mechanisms in place for this? Advocate for youth participation processes
- Lead inclusive youth consultations in your community
- Monitor the implementation of updated NDCs and keep the pressure on!



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

It's your turn! Do you enjoy blogging, creating visual content or writing poems? You can share your thoughts on how climate change is impacting your community or how you are taking climate action. Submit your content through Voices of Youth [following these steps](#).



Image Credit: Voices of Youth

Does climate change impact you?

Climate change directly impacts your rights, like the right to food, clean air and water, education, healthcare, development and more. Check [this guide](#) to learn why the climate crisis is a child rights crisis.



Image Credit: Mukah Ispahani

Climate Action, The Essentials

Learning about the impacts of climate change and understanding the severity of this crisis is the first step to take climate action.

What is the cause of climate change? What is the difference between mitigation and adaptation actions?

This guide explains key concepts like global warming and the impacts of climate change.

💡 Looking for some extra inspiration? Read some of the [blogs](#) and [videos](#) created by young climate activists [here](#).



Image Credit: VoY