



Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water

We acknowledge the
Traditional Owners of
Country throughout
Australia and recognise
their continuing connection
to land, waters and culture.
We pay our respects to
their Elders past and
present.

Youth & DCCEEW

Youth Advisory Council



"The Youth Advisory Council is instrumental in ensuring young Australians shape policy decisions and drive climate action. Our work is crucial in transforming passion into sustained advocacy, driving enduring and impactful policy change."

*David Matabishi and Niamh Kealy,
Co- Chairs*



Recognising and listening to youth voices with reciprocity means that systems have the capacity and willingness to change.

Young people have always been critical, fearless and unyielding in our advocacy for climate action, and we do things differently from those that have occupied this space before us.

We leverage our resources, our voices, our technologies, anxiety and fear for what may come into strength and power. Our influence can be both in the process and outcome of decisions being made ensuring that we are not only at the table, but have a role in constructing the room where decisions are made.

The Youth Advisory Council on International Climate Change is a diverse group of young Australians aged 18-30 who bring both lived and professional experience in climate action.

The Council was established in 2025 as part of the Australian Government Office for Youth's 'Engage! A Strategy to include young people in the decisions we make'. It has made a space to ensure youth perspectives are integrated into Australia's positions on climate action and heard on a global stage, through the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC process.

"Youth leadership must go beyond having a space to be heard and become a space for active engagement in high-level climate decision-making. It is most effective when the spaces provided for it are actively used by governments and authorities to elevate climate action."

How we work

We operate through a consensus-based approach, valuing diverse perspectives and delivering practical, forward-thinking recommendations on Australia's climate policies, particularly regarding international engagement.

- Elevating youth perspectives on climate and energy transition policies.
- Building literacy among young Australians around international climate policy.
- Strengthening partnerships between Australia and Pacific youth on shared climate priorities.
- Ensuring intersectional approaches to climate action that consider race, class, gender, and geography.

What We See

Young Australians are committed to addressing the challenges posed by climate change. Nearly three-quarters of young Australians believe the federal government must take stronger action on climate change, creating momentum for ambitious climate policies in the new parliamentary term.

To us, youth leadership in the climate space means we can represent the diversity of youth voices, demonstrate why they matter to senior leaders and work collaboratively to create the necessary change.

"Having been to COP, I have observed that young people are seen but their voices are not heard at the decision-making table or negotiations room. As a leader in the climate space, I see my role as being to bridge this divide to ensure youth voices shape the international climate agenda."

Kupakwashe Matangira, Council Member



Our Vision

We seek to represent and amplify the length and breadth of youth voices on climate change. We aspire to have a tangible impact on Australia's international negotiations, Australia's just transition to net zero and demystify climate negotiations among young Australians.

The Council seeks to meaningfully expand youth engagement and literacy with domestic and international climate policy and elevate youth empowerment for climate activism and decision making.

Inclusion and Diversity at the Heart of Climate Action

We are committed to embedding a human rights approach in our functioning and advocacy so that we strengthen and empower Australian youth voices to meaningfully influence climate policy.

The Council seeks to amplify engagement with climate action for all, recognising that everyone has a right to participate in decisions that impact them. Ensuring this right means embodying cultural safety, acknowledging the importance of diversity in shaping widespread decision-making processes and seeking to act beyond awareness and competency and with integrity and accountability.

We recognise the wealth of knowledge and caring responsibilities safeguarding communities and the environment that Indigenous peoples and women perform, often without meaningful recognition. We seek to amplify these knowledges and their participation where possible.