



UNFCCC YOUNGO – Submission for the Belém Mission to 1.5

A. INTRODUCTION

In line with the Paris Agreement's commitment to "holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels,"¹ Parties can utilize the mechanics of the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to advance domestic climate policy within a global context. NDCs serve as a tool for "pursuing domestic measures"² as a global response to climate change that shall progress over time.³ The NDCs shall also "represent a progression beyond the Party's then-current nationally determined contribution and reflect its highest possible ambition."⁴

Recalling Decision 1/CMA.5 paras. 9, 158 and 161, Parties shall submit new or updated 3.0 NDCs that put us globally on track for 1.5°C-aligned plans, reflecting IPCC AR6 pathways, GST outcomes and the International Court of Justice's recognition that limiting warming to 1.5°C is necessary to reduce the risk of potentially irreversible climate impacts. This is to reflect the enhanced ambition to limit the temperature rise, better upholding the rights of youth and children embedded in intergenerational equity when addressing climate change as a common concern of humankind, as defined by the Preamble of the Paris Agreement.

The Paris Agreement serves as the primary legal and moral foundation for intergenerational justice, transforming the global climate response into a binding commitment to secure a *just* future for the world's youth. Its significance is rooted in the principle of *intergenerational equity*, which acknowledges that present generations act as "trustees of humanity" tasked with preserving a liveable planet for those yet to come. This mandate is critically reinforced by the ICJ Advisory Opinion (2025), which clarifies that States' obligations to ensure the protection of the climate system are owed to both present and future generations. Under this framework, youth are no longer viewed as mere "passive beneficiaries," instead, recognized as essential agents of change and producers of knowledge. In particular, through the operationalization of Article 12 - Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE). By requiring that NDCs reflect each Party's "highest possible ambition," the Agreement provides the necessary mechanism for youth to hold governments accountable for 1.5°C-aligned plans that prevent irreversible impacts. Ultimately, the success of the Paris Agreement represents the definitive boundary between a sustainable existence and the "rapidly closing window of opportunity" to secure a liveable future for all.

¹ Article 2 (1) (a) of the Paris Agreement

² Article 4 (2) of the Paris Agreement

³ Article 3 of the Paris Agreement

⁴ Article 4 (3) of the Paris Agreement;



B. What action areas and solutions have the highest impact potential to support the submission, ambition and implementation of NDCs and NAPs. This could include consideration of:

a. Adaptation Policy and Governance

Parties must decisively elevate the political priority of adaptation to ensure it receives balanced attention and investment alongside mitigation, recognizing that adaptation is a central pillar of climate action rooted in a stringent legal obligation of conduct. Achieving the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) necessitates the implementation of robust monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems – aligned with the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience – that facilitate policy learning and course-correcting outcomes to ensure resilience actions remain iterative and evidence-based.

To bridge the implementation gap, it is essential to unlock adequate and predictable Means of Implementation, including at least tripling adaptation finance and scaling context-appropriate technology transfer to enable all countries to effectively formulate and monitor National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). These NAPs should be designed via a systemic approach that integrates health, food security, and biodiversity protection with nature-based solutions and the preservation of cultural heritage. Ultimately, adaptation governance must prioritize locally led resilience and early warning systems, leveraging Indigenous and local knowledge to fulfill the intergenerational duty of protecting the climate system for present and future generations

b. Finance

“Limited access to local climate finance, lack of inclusion of youth and other communities in climate change decision-making processes, and inadequate investment in the required green skills for a sustainable future are some of the key challenges facing youth and communities globally.”

– Londiwe Dhlamini, South Africa

Finance must be unlocked at speed and at scale. With YOUNGO’s priority of climate finance as recognized in the SB64 Policy Position Paper, “we call on developed country Parties to at least triple public, grant-based, non-debt climate finance by 2035 in line with the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance and Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement, including the tripling of adaptation finance.”



More concretely, the Climate Finance Work Programme shall deliver an actionable USD 1.3 trillion pathway that supports youth-led initiatives – especially those that actively make efforts to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels with a dedicated, accessible, and grant-based approach. We seek simplified application procedures that inform the current existing context and direct access modalities, which unlock finance at speed and at scale.⁵ In its implementation, the system shall serve transformational change towards children and youths in climate-resilient countries and communities, including women, Indigenous peoples, youths on the move, youth-led businesses, and natural ecosystems.

Regarding its enforcement in the NDCs, Parties should leverage the investability of NDCs to further increase the mobilization of finance. This can be done by using an approach of addressing climate, nature, and development objectives that better serves those most affected, which, among the examples, is to provide education on climate adaptation and resilience in secondary and tertiary education. An example includes the Ghana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that guides processes of the national adaptation plans (NAPs) that have been strengthening the institutional capacity of subnational governments in advancing adaptation planning based on the goals in the NDCs that are articulated in the process of NAP.⁶

c. **Technology**

“Youth-led organizations urgently need technology transfers for localized hydro-meteorological tracking and automated earth-moving tools. This targeted support is essential to enable effective, accountable, and locally led NAP implementation.”

– Garang Garang Adim, South Sudan

YOUNGO seeks the cooperation of State parties to elevate the political priority of technology transfer as a means of formulating, implementing, and effectively monitoring their NDCs and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). This aligns with Article 10 of the Paris Agreement, specifically paragraph 4 under Decision 15/CMA.1. Recalling FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, the use of technology shall be maximized to limit the temperature rise of 1.5°C by empowering local communities, protecting children and youth, Indigenous knowledge systems and promoting equitable participation in decision-making processes by tailoring it to social realities and local knowledge systems.

⁵ Francisco Arango, *Planning for the Implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions: : Lessons Learned from the NDC Support Programme (2017–2025)* (United Nations Development Programme, 2025).

⁶ Government of Ghana, *Climate Adaptation Plan for Bekwai Municipal Assembly: Ghana* (2024).



As a means of implementation, we seek for the development of comprehensive policy frameworks that formally recognize children, youth and other rightsholder groups as integral to technology mechanism processes and related planning and implementation. Concretely, we recognize that low-emission and renewable energy technologies can help countries achieve net-zero goals based on their national needs and capacities. Governments should support sustainable energy transitions by expanding renewable energy, improving energy efficiency, and encouraging clean and innovative technologies, while also promoting research, training, and technology sharing to ensure energy systems are safe, fair, environmentally friendly, and respectful of human rights. This includes the AI4Climate Action Initiative established by the Technology Mechanism.⁷

d. Institutional Opportunities

“We want to be part of the governance framework for the effective implementation of the climate policies and action plan. We have the energy; we can connect people to policies and translate content for better implementation, but we need the power, as enshrined in the provided governance mandate. Thus, we ask for the mainstreaming of young people, especially for NDC implementation.”
– Timothy Ogenyi, Nigeria

In realizing the limit of 1.5°C, YOUNGO recognizes the NDCs as a pathway to establishing coordination mechanisms for implementation with development partners. This can enable the maximization of NDC implementation that is in line with the national priorities and development plans and strategies that support the limit of 1.5°C. While partnership can be challenging due to different locations and teams for different projects, the coordinating mechanism may enable a streamlining of support to benefit stakeholders.⁸ More concretely, this can be done by the institutionalization of coordination mechanisms that align with the structure and function of each governance level. Furthermore, offering technical expertise for the coordination and implementation of national action for climate empowerment (ACE) plans.

Streamlining the coordination mechanism supports the inclusion of non-State stakeholder groups, such as women, youth, civil society organizations (CSOs), private sector associations, trade associations, unions, academia, Indigenous Peoples and local communities – which includes topical experts. The method of implementation can vary from formal government-mandated advisory bodies in the form of climate councils and/or informal consultation platforms with non-state

⁷ Technology Mechanism Initiative on AI for Climate Action, UNFCCC, 2026

⁸ NDC Partnership, Best Practice Brief Country Coordination Mechanisms (2026).



stakeholder groups.⁹ YOUNGO recognizes this in its 2025 Global Youth Statement, 2022-2026 ACE Action Plan, as well as SB64 Policy Position Paper; that such streamlining can enhance NDC implementation, including its articulation in NAPs, which strengthens efforts for States to fulfill their ambitions. Young people are essential actors for developing, informing, and implementing climate solutions. As a result, these efforts can institutionalise meaningful participation of children and youth in NDCs-NAP development, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The latter builds technical capacities for children and youth participation for the COP31 Action Agenda, including implementation partnerships, planning processes, and access to funding opportunities.

A model can be exemplified by the Peruvian government, wherein non-State actor stakeholders are formalized in the inter-stakeholder climate change coordination mechanism. This enables and further strengthens participatory processes and the strength of institutions related to climate action at the National Commission on Climate Change (CNCC).

e. Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)

As acknowledged in the 2025 Global Youth Statement and the 2022-2026 ACE Action Plan, young people are essential actors for developing, informing, and implementing climate solutions. The Belém Mission to 1.5 must recognize the role of intergenerational collaboration, including by promoting the role of the NDC Youth Clause pillars, which call on parties to acknowledge climate risks impacting young people, promote climate education as a tool for ensuring climate solutions endure, and partner with young leaders to advance climate solutions. Furthermore, Belém Mission to 1.5 should acknowledge the role of citizen science as part of accountability frameworks and gender and age-disaggregated data, such as through the NDC Equity Tracker, which finds that inclusive NDCs are core for more ambitious outcomes.

f. Arts, Culture & Heritage (ACH)

Research indicates that uniform global climate support mechanisms are often ineffective. The success of policy implementation depends heavily on specific political, economic, and social contexts. When policies are designed as broad, generic mandates, they risk failing due to a lack of adaptability to local challenges and a failure to account for domestic interest group politics

Cultural values are the lens through which communities understand climate risks and determine their level of trust in institutions, and thus act as the bedrock of

⁹ NDC Partnership, *Best Practice Brief Country Coordination Mechanisms*.

trust. The ICJ Advisory Opinion highlights that climate change poses an imminent threat to the very cultural traditions of populations. Therefore, policies that do not align with these values are likely to face resistance from domestic constituencies.

Integrating cultural heritage and Indigenous and Local Knowledge (ILK) stands as a strategic necessity to increase the legitimacy and long-term ownership of climate actions rather than being a social preference. The UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience explicitly prioritizes protecting cultural heritage and preserving practices guided by traditional knowledge systems.

To operationalize these principles, we recommend the following institutional and cooperative pathways:

I. Parties should institutionalize cultural governance by integrating governmental ministries of culture and heritage into national climate governance structures, thereby facilitating more effective horizontal coordination and cross-sectoral mainstreaming. This governance framework must be bolstered by strengthening institutional and human capacity through communication strategies that leverage local languages, storytelling, and creative media to ensure that technical climate information is both accessible and actionable for diverse stakeholder groups. Finally, consistent with the stringent standard of due diligence required for environmental protection, governments should require cultural impact assessments as a formal component of the standard environmental impact assessment (EIA) process to proactively identify and mitigate potential adverse effects of mitigation and adaptation projects on cultural heritage sites and traditional practices.

II. Parties should formally recognize Indigenous Peoples and local communities as Core implementation partners. Drawing on successful models, such as Fiji's iTaukei traditional resource management to ensure adaptation efforts remain evidence-based and culturally appropriate.¹⁰ Sustaining these partnerships mean building enabling environments that unlock targeted adaptation finance for the preservation of cultural practices and heritage sites becomes critical. This directly aligning with Target (g) of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience. Ultimately, there needs a transition to community-led adaptation; shifting power to local actors to develop their own solutions and secures long-term implementation through deep community engagement and ownership.

¹⁰ Yuki Yoshida et al., "Perspectives on Climate Change and Adaptation in Fijian Villages Contemplating Relocation," *Frontiers in Climate* Volume 7-2025 (2025), <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/climate/articles/10.3389/fcmeans>, which,alignsto be securelim.2025.1579299.



III. Parties should integrate specific cultural and Indigenous indicators into national MEL systems to track the effectiveness of culturally-rooted adaptation actions, ensuring these processes are underpinned by Indigenous and local knowledge rather than generic metrics. To address transboundary climate risks, there shall be support for regional knowledge-sharing platforms and South-South exchanges. In turn, leveraging cultural diplomacy and localized expertise to identify high-impact solutions. Ultimately, by aligning NDCs with these Arts, Culture, and Heritage strategies, Parties can move beyond narrow technical targets toward a participatory, country-driven approach that fulfills their legal and ethical obligations to secure a liveable and sustainable future for present and future generations.

C. What is required to further strengthen international cooperation to enhance ambition and enable the effective implementation of NDCs and NAPs? The youth voices, knowledge and their participation is required for enhancing NDCs and NAPs.

".. we are the ones paying the price, standing alone in the face of this drought."

– Al-Dagamseh, Jordan

" ... underscores the critical role of international cooperation in strengthening climate budget tagging systems, improving transparency and accountability of adaptation expenditures, and supporting the mobilization of climate finance aligned with national priorities"

– Inès Ndacayisaba, Burundi

a. Institutional Coherence and the Global Stocktake

Parties must transparently communicate the specific ways in which GST outcomes have informed their updated NDCs to ensure collective accountability to the Paris Agreement's long-term goals. It is critical that the Baku Adaptation Roadmap (BAR) serves as a vehicle to strengthen coherence across the UNFCCC adaptation architecture, creating systematic linkages between NAPs, Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), and Adaptation Communications. This integrated framework must remain fully synchronized with the second Global Stocktake (GST2) process, in accordance with the mandates established in Decision 12/CMA.7 and Decision 3/CMA.6.

b. Science-Based Accountability and Intergenerational Justice

All 2035 NDCs, GST Implementation Packages, and Mitigation Work Programme (MWP) outcomes must be rigorously guided by the best available science,



specifically the IPCC AR6 pathways, and remain strictly accountable to the 1.5°C temperature limit. Short-term political considerations shall not be permitted to dilute climate ambition; instead, NDCs shall be designed to withstand shifting domestic priorities and ensure long-term, stable implementation. In order to fulfill the legal and moral obligations of intergenerational equity, as reinforced by the 2025 ICJ Advisory Opinion, it necessitates transparent progress tracking and the delivery of actionable solutions against the GST compass to protect the rights of both present and future generations.

c. Sectoral Just Transitions and Social Protection

Parties shall embed sector-specific just transition plans within their 2035 NDCs and GST Implementation Packages. This can be done by prioritizing transformative action in the energy, industry, and transport sectors. These strategies must operationalize the managed phase-down of fossil-intensive industries while simultaneously providing robust social protection measures and reskilling programs for affected workers. Ensuring this transition shall account for the equity and inclusivity of children and youth, plans shall be developed through participatory processes that prevent future generations from inheriting the costs of current extractive injustices.

d. Inclusive Governance and Transparency Frameworks

There shall be a formalized requirement for reporting on public participation and leadership, having a specialized focus on children, youth, and women in all their diversities across both UNFCCC and national-level processes. To synchronize this with the GST, Parties should transparently report on the implementation of child-sensitive, youth-inclusive, and gender-responsive policies and actions. Moving beyond ad hoc consultations, NDCs 3.0 must institutionalize the engagement of these essential agents of change through the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) to ensure that paper ambition translates into measurable accountability on the ground.

D. CONCLUSION

To secure a liveable future, the transition to the implementation era under the Belém Mission to 1.5 must be anchored in accountability that goes beyond technical compliance.

Central to this transition is the principle of climate justice and increased ambition, which requires that all NDCs 3.0 be rigorously aligned with the 1.5°C temperature limit to prevent irreversible climate impacts and fulfill States' legal obligations to present and



future generations. This ambition must be guided by the reports of the IPCC as the authoritative and shared point of reference for the best available science, ensuring that mitigation and adaptation strategies are evidence-based.

However, this scientific mandate must be applied through the lens of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), recognizing that the standard of due diligence required of a State is not a static metric but is determined by its specific national circumstances and available resources.

Finally, the legitimacy of these climate plans depends on inclusion in both language and participatory frameworks, necessitating the elimination of linguistic and structural barriers that currently marginalize frontline communities. By institutionalizing the participation of CSOs, Indigenous peoples and local communities, youth through hybrid models and multilingual, community-informed data systems, Parties can move beyond ad hoc consultations toward a whole-of-society approach that converts financed pledges into locally committed, long-term action.

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