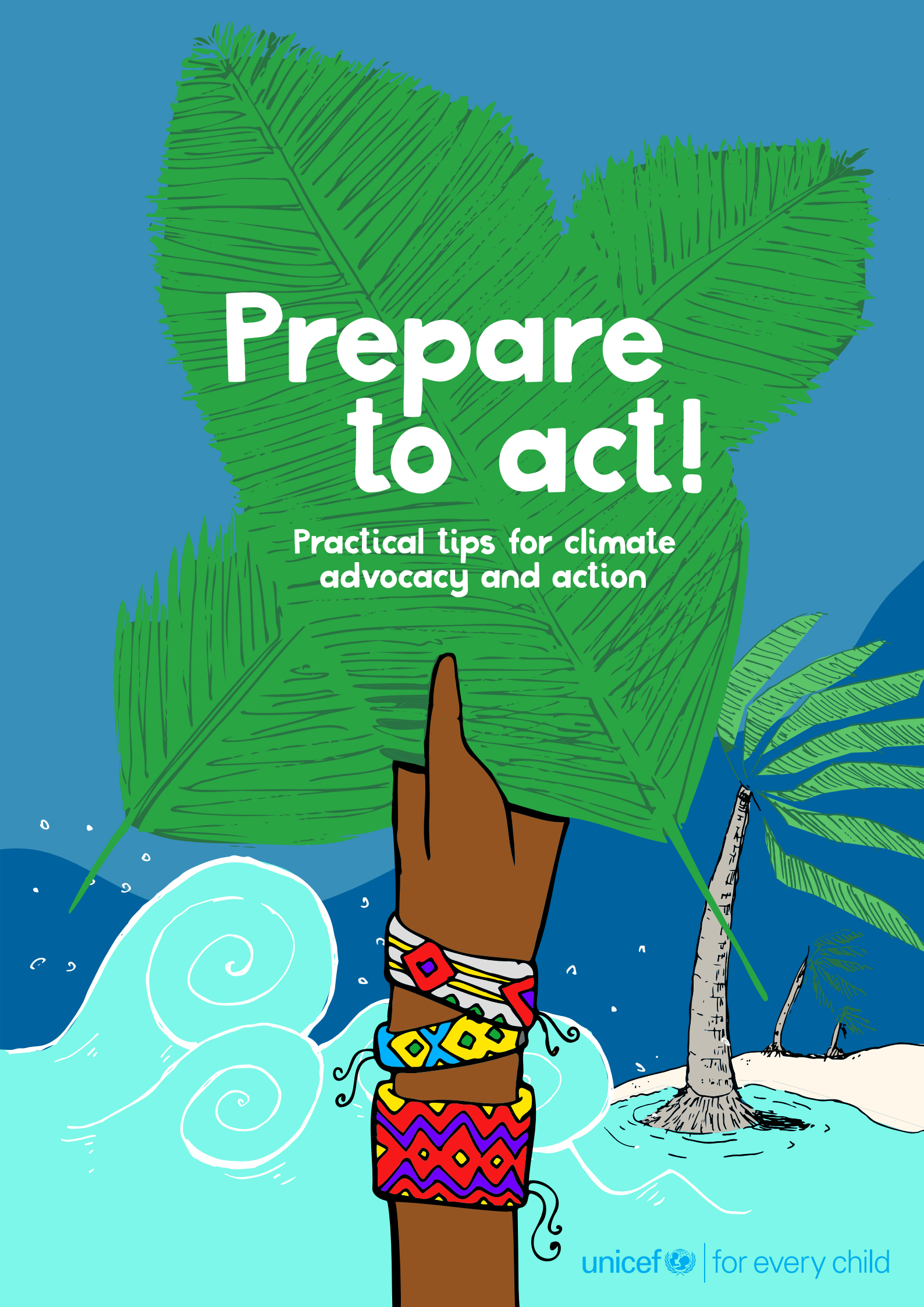


# Prepare to act!

Practical tips for climate  
advocacy and action





## **Prepare to act. Practical tips for climate advocacy and action**

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Panama City, Republic of Panama, 2021

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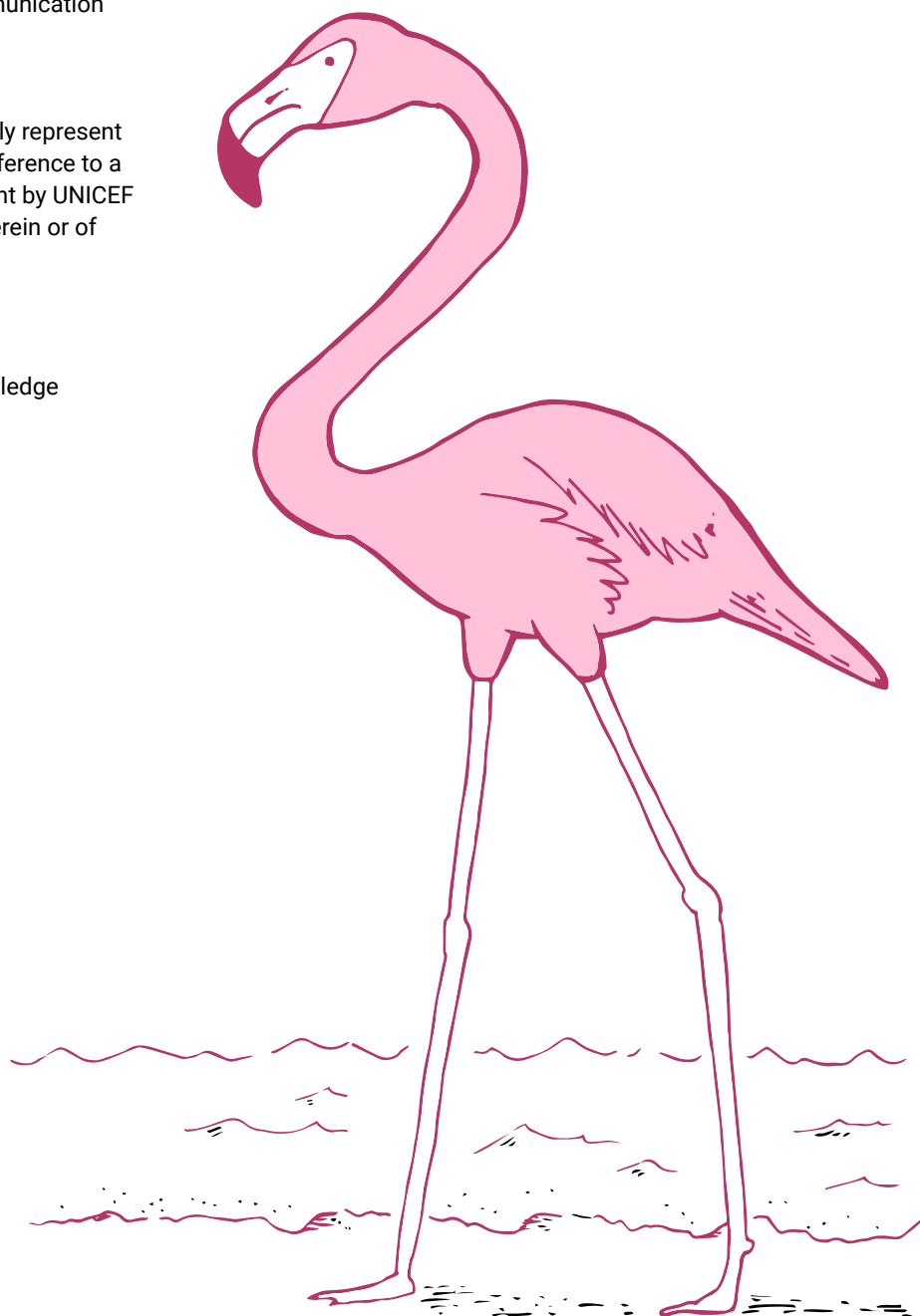
**Design:** Matías Daviron

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# Prepare to act!

Practical tips for adolescents and young people to help you  
prepare for climate advocacy and action.

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# Foreword

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“We, as young people, are agents of change in different sections of society. We are not being left behind in **climate action**: our voices are being increasingly heard and we are demanding the right to **participate fully**. In fact, our participation is a right that should be central to the formulation of public policy.”

The **Toolkit for Young Climate Activists in Latin America and the Caribbean** was created by young people who, like you, are concerned about our planet's situation and who, as activists, have faced many challenges when advocating and taking action.

Our goal is to share clear, concise, easily understandable information that describes the course of global, regional and national climate action, in order to prepare you for **full and informed participation**.

The booklets are interrelated and are designed so that you can read them in succession and progressively deepen your knowledge of each of the topics. You can also consult them independently, according to your needs.

## They are:

**Tools for climate action:** Key tools for making progress towards the global climate action goals and the Sustainable Development Goals, including the Paris Agreement, nationally determined contributions and other tools.

**What is climate governance?:** Information on climate governance and the decision-making process at national and international levels, including the Framework Convention on Climate Change, how it works and the mechanisms for participation.

**Prepare to Act!:** Practical advice and accounts of other activists' experiences to help you develop the skills you need to take part in and influence the climate agenda.

**The Paris Agreement for young people:** Details of the Agreement, its importance and all its articles in simple language.

**Escazú Agreement for young people:** Essential information on the Agreement, its importance and its articles in simple language.

**Climate glossary for young people:** Important concepts and definitions that every climate activist needs to know.

This booklet uses the terms “youth” and “young people” to refer to adolescents and young people between 15 and 24 years old.

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# Acknowledgements

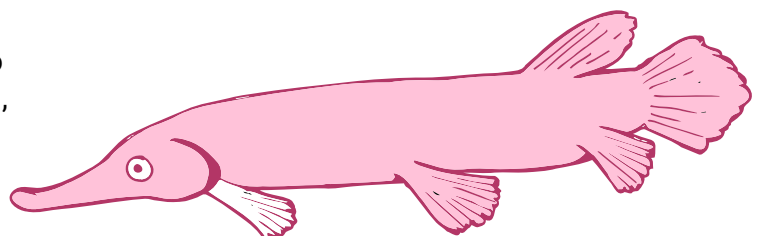
The toolkit was written by Sara Cognuck González, a young climate activist from Costa Rica, and Emilia Numer, a UNICEF consultant. All the content was co-created with young climate activists from 15 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

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# Introduction

The aim of this booklet is to provide you with useful tips to help you participate fully in climate action. We believe that a great way to prepare is to follow the advice of other adolescents and young people who have experience of dealing with situations similar to those you are or will be going through.

We have made a list of the most recurrent challenges we face as young people and we are sharing our experiences and tips to inspire and help you as you get involved in climate activism.



We will begin by explaining what we mean when we talk about adolescent and youth participation.




Then, we will give you some general tips that will help you in most situations that arise.



For each of the situations identified by youth activists, you will find a list of useful tips and the concrete experience of an adolescent or young person.




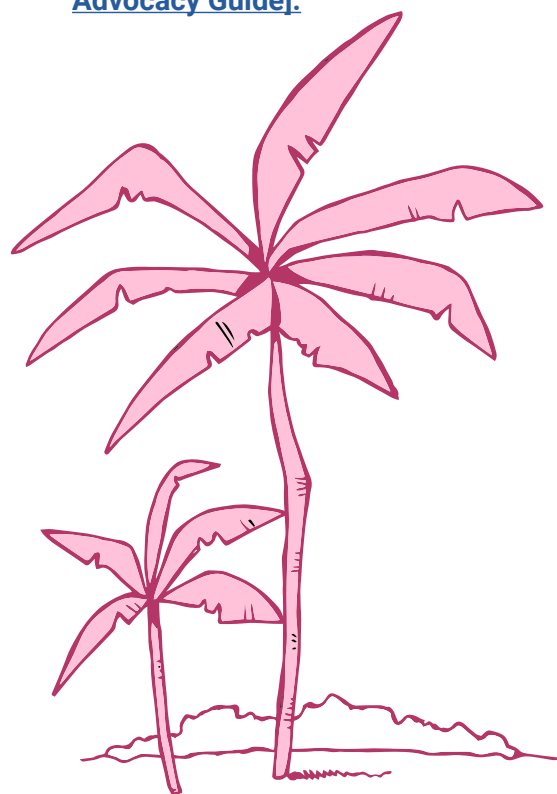
Finally, we have added a list of useful resources that you may find helpful. Four of them were the main resources we used to develop this guide:

 [Engaged and heard! Guidelines on adolescent participation and civil engagement.](#)

 [UNICEF Youth Advocacy Guide.](#)

 [Advocacy Toolkit.](#)

 [Manual de Incidencia Juvenil \[América Solidaria Youth Advocacy Guide\].](#)

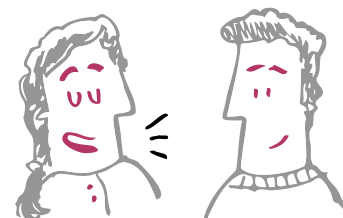




# What do we mean when we talk about adolescent and youth participation?

We are referring to adolescent and youth participation when adolescents and young people, individually or **collectively**, take part in something, express their points of view and influence matters that concern them either directly or indirectly.

*collectively = in a group*



Sometimes, participation can be **passive**, and consists of listening and informing yourself about an issue without trying to change or control the situation.

On other occasions, participation can be **active** and refers to when you get involved in researching an issue, defining and developing actions you can take, and raising awareness to change your own or other people's behaviour. Advocacy, for example, is a form of active participation that uses a collective voice **to defend and protect human and children's rights and support different initiatives and causes**.

Spaces for adolescent and youth participation are increasingly being promoted but, in some cases, participation is merely symbolic, manipulated or insecure. Before you participate, **it is important to identify whether participation will be meaningful, effective and ethical**.<sup>1</sup>

To do this, you can consider the following:

**Space:** make sure that the space in which you will be participating is safe and inclusive and allows you to form and express your opinion.



**Influence:** ask what actions will be taken with regard to the views and ideas you share (will my participation influence the outcomes of the event?).



**Voice:** confirm whether you will be able to express your opinions freely and in the way you choose.



**Representativeness:** identify whether you are representing your individual voice or a collective voice on behalf of youth. Make sure the mechanism for participation is open and inclusive.



**Audience:** check that those who are participating will listen and consider your opinions, and that your participation is not simply tokenistic.



Source: Lundy, L., 'Voice is not enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', British Educational Research Journal, vol. 33, no. 6, pp. 927-942, <[www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01411920701657033](https://doi.org/10.1080/01411920701657033)>, accessed 15 June 2021.

<sup>1</sup>United Nations Children's Fund, 'Engaged and heard! Guidelines on adolescents participation and civil engagement', UNICEF, New York, 2020, <<https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/reports/engaged-and-heard>>, accessed 15 April 2021.



# Important considerations to protect yourself and ensure your participation is safe

Before participating, it is important to make sure that any action you take will not put your safety at risk. For this, we offer the following tips.



## Analyse the context.

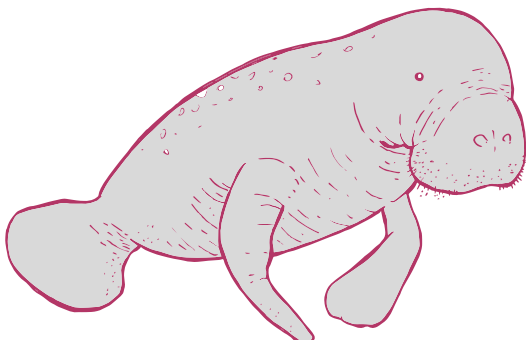
It is important to analyse your particular context: what is the social and political context of your country? Who is for or against your cause and how might it affect you? What risks might you run if you openly state your opinions, ideas and initiatives? How can you protect yourself? If you believe that your physical or mental integrity is at risk, you can think about what other mechanisms you could consider to make your case in order to keep yourself safe. If you live in a complex context, do not be discouraged but look for safe mechanisms for participation, knowing the limits that will keep you safe.



## Your participation must always be with your consent.

No one can force you to participate or manipulate your opinions. If you are participating in something, you can always withdraw at any time you want. If you are under 18, remember that you must always have the consent of your parent or legal guardian. If you start participating in a movement or organization, it is also important to give your consent and ask for a list of the activities and requirements they will need from you.

*If you are under 18, you can take a look at the Convention on the Rights of the Child to learn about your rights.*

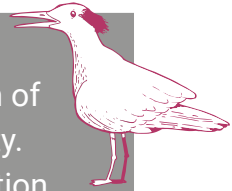


## Find out who organizes the activities you will be participating in.

To do this, you can use the checklist below.

### Checklist

- Be clear about the origin of and reasons for the activity.
- Check that the organization offering the activity is serious and respected.
- Consider the motivations of those organizing the activity.
- Assess the type of support the organization is providing to avoid being involved in "greenwashing".



*Greenwashing refers to when an action is sold as "green" or "environmentally friendly" but is not really. Always pay attention and do your research so that you do not end up involved in this type of action.*



## Know your rights.

If at any time you feel that your rights are being violated or you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, it is important to be clear about who you should report it to. This may be a trusted adult or the organizers of the activity you are participating in.



## Protect your privacy and safety.

You can decline any invitation to participate that you believe may jeopardize your integrity or go against your ethical values. Be careful who you share sensitive information with, such as your home address, the address of someone you know or your place of work or school.

### **Always rely on a trusted adult.**

Especially if your participation is away from home. Identify the adult or circle of trust that you can lean on and let them know that, if you need their support, you will contact them. If you are under 18 years of age, you must always be accompanied by an adult.

### **Always carry an emergency contact card with you.**

This card can include contact details for your parents, a trusted adult, the organizers of the activity you are participating in and the local police of the place you are staying.

### **Protect your personal social networks and post only when it is safe to do so.**

There may be opportunities to share aspects or content about your participation on social media. Always ask first if it is okay to do so. Bear in mind that in some situations there is information that should be handled more carefully in public. Whenever possible, use the social networks of the movement you belong to instead of your personal accounts. When using your personal accounts, set them up with higher privacy settings to avoid exposing yourself to strangers.

*Find out more from the website [Voices of Youth](#).*

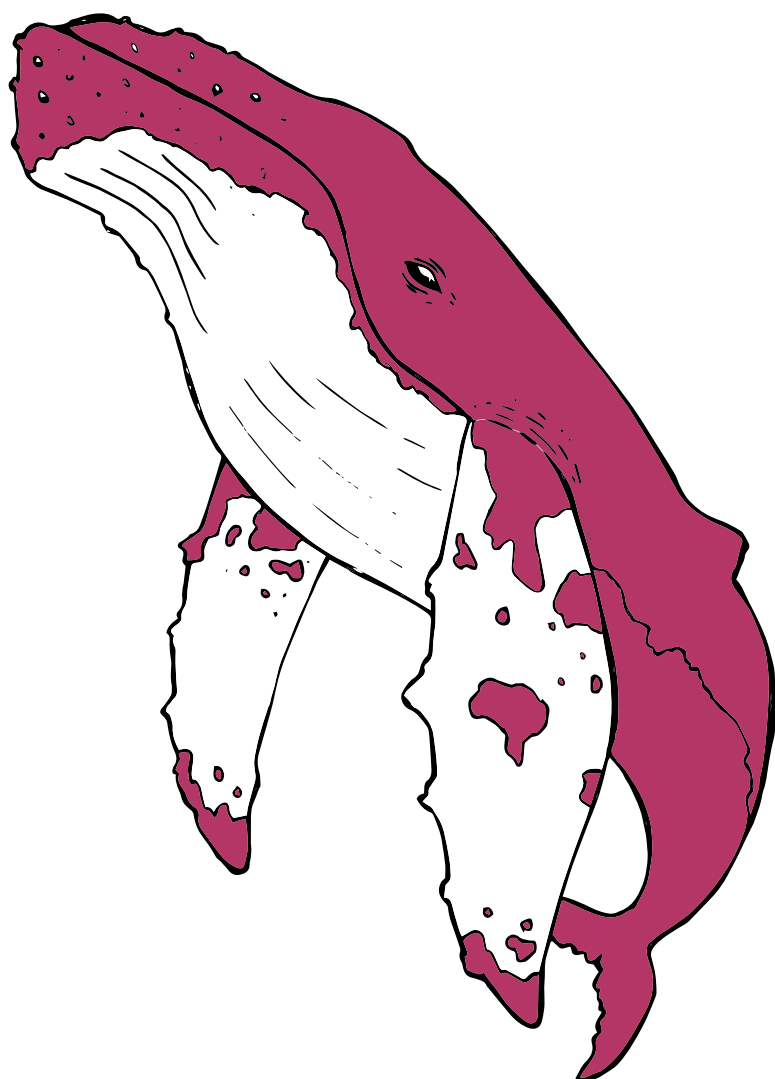


Some young activists even have two social media profiles: one personal and one for their activism. That may be an option to protect yourself.

### **Identify safe ways to get around**

if you are participating in an in-person event. It is important to avoid lonely places and identify safe points along the way, such as a store or area where there are police. Also inform your colleagues and family members of your route and make sure you have enough battery and credit on your phone: this way, if you feel lost or disoriented, you can call someone you trust or share your location, even in real time. You can also write down the vehicle's licence plate number or give an estimate of the time you will be travelling.

### **If your participation is online, be careful who you interact with,** especially if conversations are only between two people. Try to chat with people you recognize, as people are not always who they say they are online. During virtual calls is not a good idea to exchange data or confidential information.



# Tips for engaging in climate action

Now that you understand what it means to participate and what you need to remember to do so safely and meaningfully, let's consider a series of tips that will help you in various situations that may arise. We have identified a list of recurrent situations that we, as activists, have to deal with.

We will start by giving you **general tips that can help you on multiple occasions**. We will then move on to give you **more specific advice** for the situations identified by youth activists:

## GENERAL TIPS

**General tips** for participation.

## PARTICIPATION IN EVENTS

**Participation in climate action events**.

## ORGANIZING EVENTS

**Organizing events** for climate action.

## PARTICIPATION IN PANELS

**Participation in panels** on climate change.

## PARTICIPATION IN INTERVIEWS

**Participation in interviews** on climate issues.

## PARTICIPATION IN MEETINGS WITH AUTHORITIES

**Participation in meetings with local, national and international authorities**.

## CONSULTATIONS AND REVIEWS

Participation in **consultations and reviews** of climate policies and tools.

If you are just getting started in climate action, we recommend you read the resources in the [“Additional resources”](#) section.

These will help you start your climate action plan by identifying the challenge you want to address, how you can research it, what steps you need to take for proper planning, and basic concepts for engagement and advocacy.



## ORGANIZATION CAMPAIGNS

**Organization and participation in campaigns** for climate action.

## LOBBYING

Participation in **lobbying** for climate actions.

## NETWORK OF CONTACTS

Strengthening your **network of contacts** (networking).

## BUILDING ALLIANCES

**Building alliances** for climate action.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Tips for taking care of your **mental health**.

# 1 General tips for participation

This list of tips includes those we believe can help you in any of the situations that are common for young climate activists. We have divided them into three stages: tips for **before** you participate, **during** your participation and **after** you participate.

## Before

✱ **Find out more!** Read and research the topics to be covered or discussed. Participatory spaces can address climate change and climate action issues that are complex or have many elements that need to be considered. By doing a little research beforehand, you can find out what data exist, what work has been done on the subject, what progress has been made (find out what your local area, country or region is doing) and what the main challenges are. You will then be able to provide better ideas, comments and proposals. In addition to research in books or on the internet, you can talk to leaders and experts in the field and prepare specific questions on the issues you want to learn about. You can always cross-check the information you have found or obtained to make up your own mind.

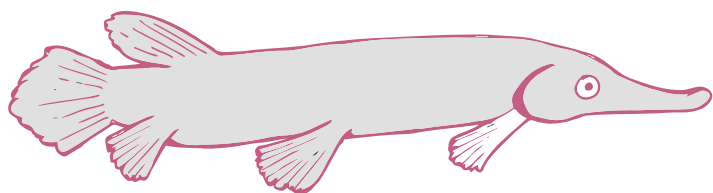
Try reading 'How to strengthen your message with data'.

### Make sure your sources are reliable

- Check if they have the name of the author or creator of the content.
- See if there are bibliographic references that will enable you to verify the data and information provided.
- Compare what the experts say with what you found in the article.
- Check the date to see if the information is current.

### Here are some good examples of sources of information

- Official reports produced by your government on environmental or climate issues.
- Reports generated by the [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change](#).
- [World Bank data](#).
- Studies on recognized sites such as [Google Scholar](#).
- [Climate Watch Data](#).
- [World Resources Institute](#).
- [World Meteorological Organization](#).
- [United Nations regional databank for statistical follow-up to the SDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean](#).



✱ **Identify the most important messages.** It is important to be clear about **the main messages you want to convey** in order to better prepare your intervention or your contributions. Core messages form the focal points of your cause. You can take the opportunity to transmit these in any space in which you are invited to participate. The main messages include the target audience, the issue your cause focuses on, and the action you are seeking to take as a call to action.

- Use language that is easy to understand.
- Use data that can be compared to something people can quickly understand and which is from reliable, official sources such as expert organizations.
- If you are working in a team, come to a consensus with your colleagues on what the main messages will be.
- Tailor your messages to your audience. Your message to the general public will not be the same as your message to your government when seeking its action.
- You can write a few words on a piece of paper that will help you remember your main messages. Keep them with you at all times.

✱ **Consult with other young people.** Sometimes there are only a few spaces for youth participation, meaning that sectors of society are often excluded, such as indigenous people, people of African descent, people with disabilities, migrants, rural populations and children. When you participate in a space, even as an individual, you are often there representing youth generally.

- Be sure to encourage a range of voices and, above all, underrepresented people.
- You can provide feedback to other young people who are involved in a space. Your opinion is very important and can be incorporated indirectly through the consultation process.
- You can do face-to-face consultations at your school or in a public space, such as a park, as well as virtually.

- Invite your friends and post the message on social media so that more people know about the consultation process and can participate.
- It is important to mobilize and find associations or groups of different people. This way the message will reach different groups.

✱ **Advocate for the participation of other young people and adolescents.** It is important to be clear about **the main messages you want to convey** in order to better prepare your intervention or your contributions. Core messages form the focal points of your cause. You can take the opportunity to transmit these in any space in which you are invited to participate. The main messages include the target audience, the issue your cause focuses on, and the action you are seeking to take as a call to action.

✱ **Identify the authority in your community, area or country.** Countries have been establishing climate change authorities; this is usually the Ministry of Environment. There are also municipal or departmental bodies that have a climate action brief, which makes them an authority at the local level. You can also identify the relevant authority for youth and adolescents, as this could support you in your climate cause. Once you identify them, you can:

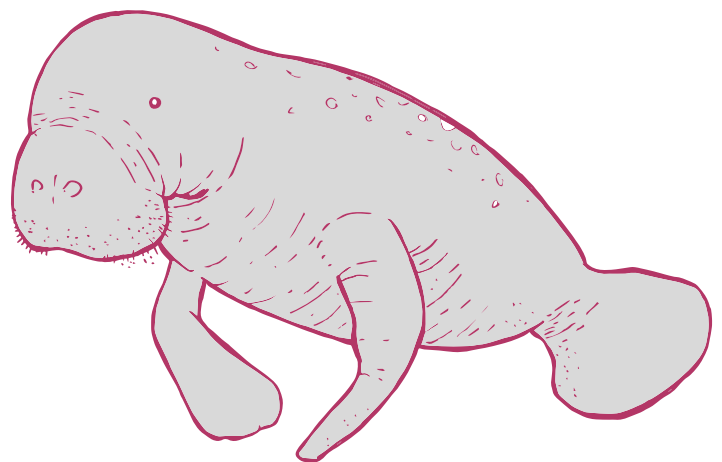
- Begin to establish official channels of communication.
- Request spaces in official media or even social networks.
- Depending on your country context, it may be difficult to approach your authorities, in which case maybe you can identify allies and intermediaries such as UNICEF or other United Nations agencies. There may also be organizations or representatives from other sectors of society, such as local government, academia, civil society organizations and the private sector.

## During

- ✱ **Be yourself.** We often feel nervous when participating and thinking about what we are going to say makes us forget to be ourselves. It is very important to remember at all times that your personality and your passion is what will motivate people to join your cause. Being yourself also means using phrases and words you normally use and dressing the way you feel most comfortable.
- ✱ **Make good use of your time.** It is important to try to use the main messages you have defined to better guide your intervention. Also include the messages that emerged from the consultation with young people and adolescents. Try not to stray from your central message, especially if time is limited (check the timings for your speech and any questions), for example, in a question and comment section at an event.
- ✱ **Stay calm.** We know that these kinds of intervention are always going to cause nerves and stress, but it is important to stay calm. Take a deep breath and focus on your core messages. Your mission is to get your message across! It is okay if you did not say something you planned to say or if you got something wrong in your speech. You can stop and continue the sentence without any problem. You will get better with practice. If possible, look for a familiar face or contact; that way you will feel more confident.
- ✱ **Create respectful spaces.** It is important that spaces for participation are respectful. You may not share all the same ideas but it is important to respect those who think differently. If a conflict arises, you can try to get the parties involved to talk and, if the situation persists, you can ask them to leave to avoid escalating the conflict.

### What to do in an environment with people who deny climate change?

You should know that you are under no obligation to expose yourself to complex environments to defend the climate agenda. You have every right to choose the spaces in which you participate, depending on your safety, judgement and time availability. If you choose to engage in denialist contexts, it is important that you are able to debate on the basis of rigorous data and information, identifying myths or falsehoods. Avoid using technical language and always be respectful. Remember that you can leave the space whenever you want.





## After

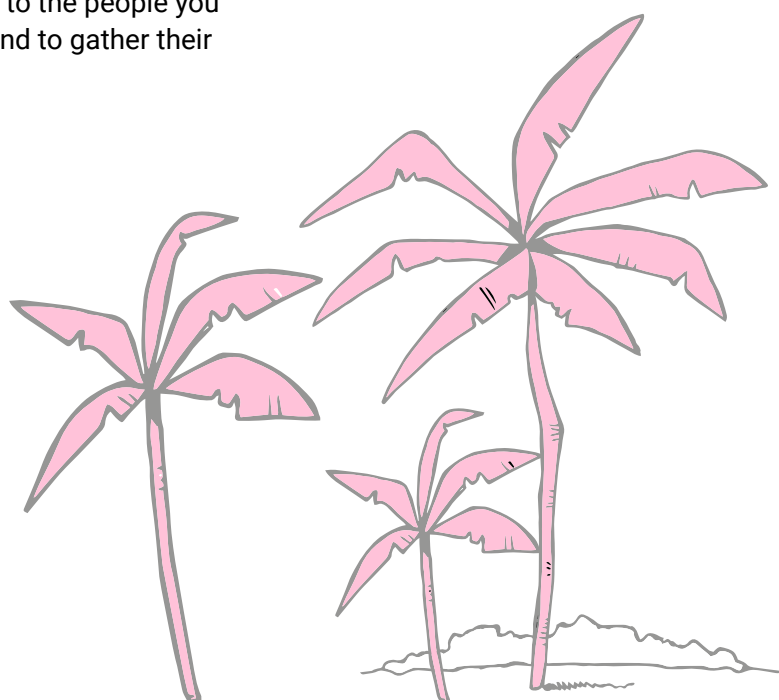
✱ **Follow up.** In general, there is usually a report following an event, conference, panel or meeting. You can request this so that you know what the results and conclusions were. In addition, you can check if they are really including your contributions or the contributions of the other young people and adolescents; if not, you can request that they be included by sending an e-mail to the authority or person in charge of the report. You can also meet with other young people to discuss the final report or key messages that came out of the activity. Follow-up is one of the most important actions in climate action!

✱ **Share what you learn with other youth and adolescents.** You can share the report (if available) or any other resource. Another option is to share your notes or what you or other young people and adolescents remember about the activity. You can set up a format for sharing information, adding the date, meeting place, participants' names, agenda and agreements reached. You can use your social networks to share the most important messages or spread them among your close groups in person. Communicating your input can motivate more people to participate and also serves as feedback to the people you consulted with beforehand to gather their opinions.

✱ **Reflect on your participation.** It is always important to recognize where you can improve: it will then become easier and easier to participate in climate action forums.

- You can ask the people who organized the activity, acquaintances and other young people for feedback on your participation.
- You can also value the participation of other young people. Remember to make constructive comments with respect and empathy.
- Reflect on what you learned; perhaps they mentioned topics you had never heard of or considered. Think about what was discussed and look for more information to continue learning.
- Events, panels and interviews are often recorded or streamed on social media. You can watch the recording to identify what your strengths were and where you could improve.

**These were some general tips to make your participation meaningful and safe; now we will give you some more specific tips that we hope you will find useful. Let's go!**





## 2 Participating in climate action events

### Brief description

More and more events are being organized at the international, national and local levels to discuss the actions that each actor is promoting to advance the climate agenda and address existing challenges and gaps, with the aim of generating knowledge, drawing road maps or building a proposal collectively.

We can participate in these spaces and influence them so our voices are taken into account and the decisions taken are **ambitious**. Generally, these events (such as workshops, exhibitions, conferences and congresses) bring together many different actors involved in the climate agenda, such as the public and private sectors, academia and civil society. These events are increasingly taking place virtually, giving adolescents and young people greater opportunities to participate.

Here are some tips from young activists for before, during and after climate action events.

### Before an event

- \* **Find the event.** You can search for events on the internet and social media: following other activists or climate movements is one way to find out about events that might interest you. You can also visit the websites of organizations, leaders or influential people on the subject or follow them on social media to be aware of what they are sharing. Some examples are YOUNGO, UNICEF, UNFCCC, UNEP, UNDP, WWF and Greenpeace. If you do not have good internet access, you can also ask the authorities or other influential people in your community in person.
- \* **Identify who is organizing the event.** It is always good to identify who is organizing the event you are interested in. If you are unsure of how to participate, you can write to them or look for them personally to ask questions and request spaces, so that more young people and adolescents can participate.

- \* **Be clear about your participation.** If you have been invited by the organization, ask all necessary questions about the objectives of the event, how it will take place, the topics or agenda to be discussed and what they expect from your participation. It is important to be clear that some events are more participatory than others.

- \* **Invite other young people and adolescents to participate in the event.** The more young people and adolescents who participate, the better. They will be able to contribute more from their perspective or gain new knowledge that will help you in your climate cause.

### During the event

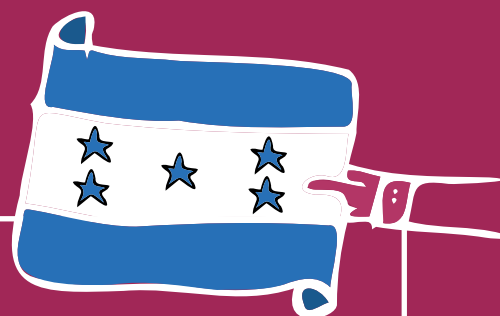
- \* **Participate in whatever way you feel comfortable.** When you are attending an event without an assigned role, you can consider speaking, asking questions or just listening. Either option is a valid way of participating.
- \* **Take advantage of opportunities to present your ideas, challenges, proposed solutions and key messages.** Everyone who is there is looking to have those kinds of interactions.
- \* **Exchange ideas.** If the event is in person this will be easier. You can approach other people to exchange ideas and delve deeper into other aspects related to the theme of the event. You can do it virtually if the appropriate spaces are enabled, such as group video calls or chats. You can also write an e-mail to people who participated or make contact with them through social networks.
- \* **Find out if there are other young people and adolescents participating.** You can learn about their positions and their actions on the theme of the event and join forces.

✱ **Connect with leaders, influencers or authorities in your country or community.** If the event is in person, it will be easier to approach the leaders or authorities of your country or community and, in this way, gain more allies for your cause. If the event is virtual, you can take advantage of the spaces that are created or ask if they can provide you with an e-mail address.

✱ **Take a notebook with you and note down** what interests you most, what you need to research and learn more about (words or concepts you do not know), as well as the people you meet. After the event, the recordings are often shared and you will have a chance to watch again if you did not get everything you wanted to.

### After the event

✱ **Make the most of your participation.** Take the opportunity to formulate other actions based on what you have learned; for example, you can pass on the information to others in your country, town or community.



### My learning about decarbonization and the role of young people

My name is Carlos Núñez and I am a member of Sustenta Honduras. I would like to share with you our experience of the [Country Dialogue on Decarbonization](#), to which we were invited to learn about progress in this area. The event also included the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Presidential Secretariat for Climate Change in Honduras (CLIMA+), Monterrey Institute of Technology and the University of Texas at Austin. The country's authorities also participated.

We were able to participate in the event due to an invitation from EuroClima+ and the Presidential Secretariat for Climate Change in Honduras.

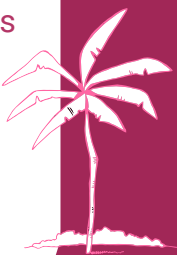
Our participation allowed us to learn some things that I would like to share with you to encourage you to participate in activities related to climate action:

- Youth advocacy is a key factor in the development and communication of the National Decarbonization Plan.
- Science must support the decisions and actions. In this case in particular, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in Honduras, promoting academic research in parallel with youth empowerment towards climate action.
- Decarbonization is an ambitious process and it is essential that no one is left behind in the conversation, especially young people, because we are key actors in the process.

Read more here: [What is climate governance?](#)

## Participating in the Conference of the Parties (COP)

Few adolescents or young people are able to travel to participate in a COP; some participate as members of their country's official delegations and others as representatives of civil society. There are also actions you can take in your country that will influence the climate agenda being discussed at the COP.



✳️ **Check your country's climate agenda.** Central governments bring their own agenda to the COP: you can try to influence them to bring issues that are a priority for young people and adolescents. You can also check if your local authority is going to participate and find out about their agenda.

✳️ **Address the main issues that should be discussed at the COP on social media.** Social media is a good way of reaching out to the media and authorities. You can even use a hashtag that allows your opinion to gain a wider reach. Find out the issues carried over from the previous COP. Look for analysis of some of the issues discussed at COP sessions to be able to convey a more accurate picture of the situation.

Here are some more tips from other young people with regard to participation and advocacy at a COP.

## Influencing the COP

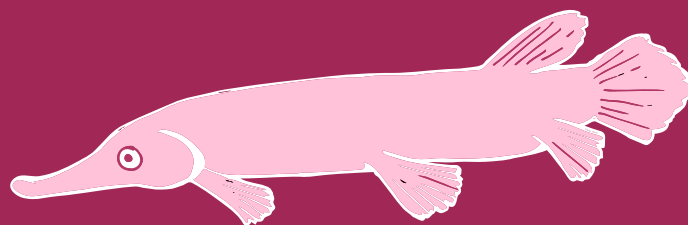
### ✳️ Make a plan!

- decide on the message you want to take to the COP;
- determine your goal for that meeting;
- identify the decision makers and influencers you want to interact with;
- decide what methods you will use.

✳️ **Advocate for the creation of spaces for youth and adolescent participation.** Countries and accredited organizations can include young people and adolescents in their delegations. You can ask them for a meeting to explain the importance of doing so.

✳️ **Get to know the road map your country will follow when preparing for the COP and participate in the consultation processes.** You can give your opinion through consultations with authorities, organizations or representatives of young people and adolescents. Your opinion is very important.

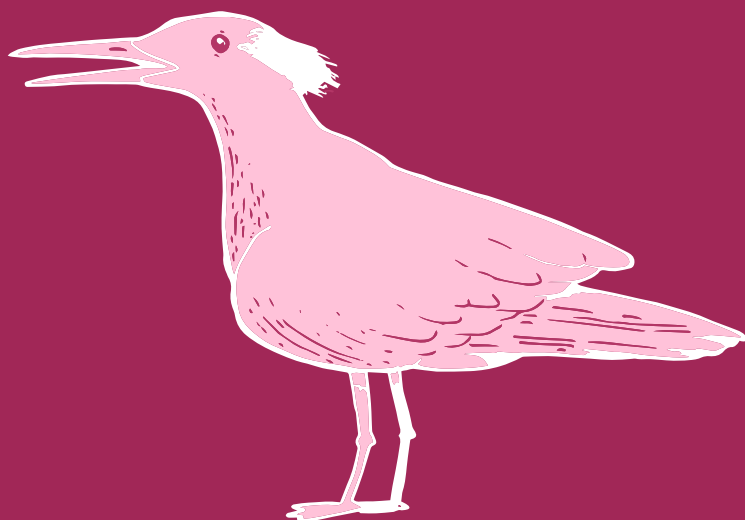
YOUNGO is the youth representation at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. YOUNGO has the Local Conferences of Youth (LCOYs), which are organized by young people in the different countries, and a Youth Conference (COY) that takes place prior to the COP to coordinate young people's participation.



## Attending the COP

- ✱ **Attend as part of a delegation.** One way to attend is as part of delegations sent by countries. You can advocate for spaces through the authorities and their staff or through partnerships with other organizations that have already established these channels, such as the UNICEF office in your country, other United Nations agencies or civil society organizations. You can also advocate for the creation of a space in the delegations of organizations that are [admitted as observers](#) and accept young people. Social media is a good way to contact an organization.
- ✱ **Set a budget.** The COP and related events may take place abroad, so it may be costly for you to attend. It is important to set a budget in advance, which should include the costs of tickets, transport, food and lodging. As young people, it is often very difficult to afford the trip and that is why it is a good idea to seek financial support from organizations or institutions that have the resources. You can ask whoever invites you if there is a possibility of financial support as part of the event, either for you or, if you are a minor, also for your companion.
- ✱ **Identify the main issues to be addressed at the COP.** Each COP may be on a different topic but there are always different main issues that remain in the negotiations and processes taking place at the COP. You do not need to be an expert on the topics but you do need to know what they are.
- ✱ **Be clear about how you will participate.** Ask all the necessary questions about the role you will play. It is also very important to be clear about the objectives you want to achieve through the event you are participating in, as well as how it will take place and what is expected from your participation.
- ✱ **Set a personal agenda.** The different sessions of a COP take place simultaneously so you may find it useful to identify which areas you are most interested in covering. If you create a personal agenda based on your interests, you will be able to make the most of the conference. There will be a variety of sessions to choose from.
- ✱ **Take advantage of opportunities** to raise your ideas, difficulties, proposed solutions and key questions. Everyone who is there is looking to have those kinds of interactions.
- ✱ **Try to connect with new people.** At a COP, there are people from all countries and organizations from different sectors, so you can create great alliances and even network with national and international decision makers. Be sure to ask for their contact details so you can follow up on the issues that have been discussed.

*You can read more in What is climate governance?*



\* **Learn about the processes you are observing.** You will find different spaces within the COP, such as the negotiations where decisions are made or the dialogues where the positions of the countries are presented. You can learn more about these in order to have a better impact.

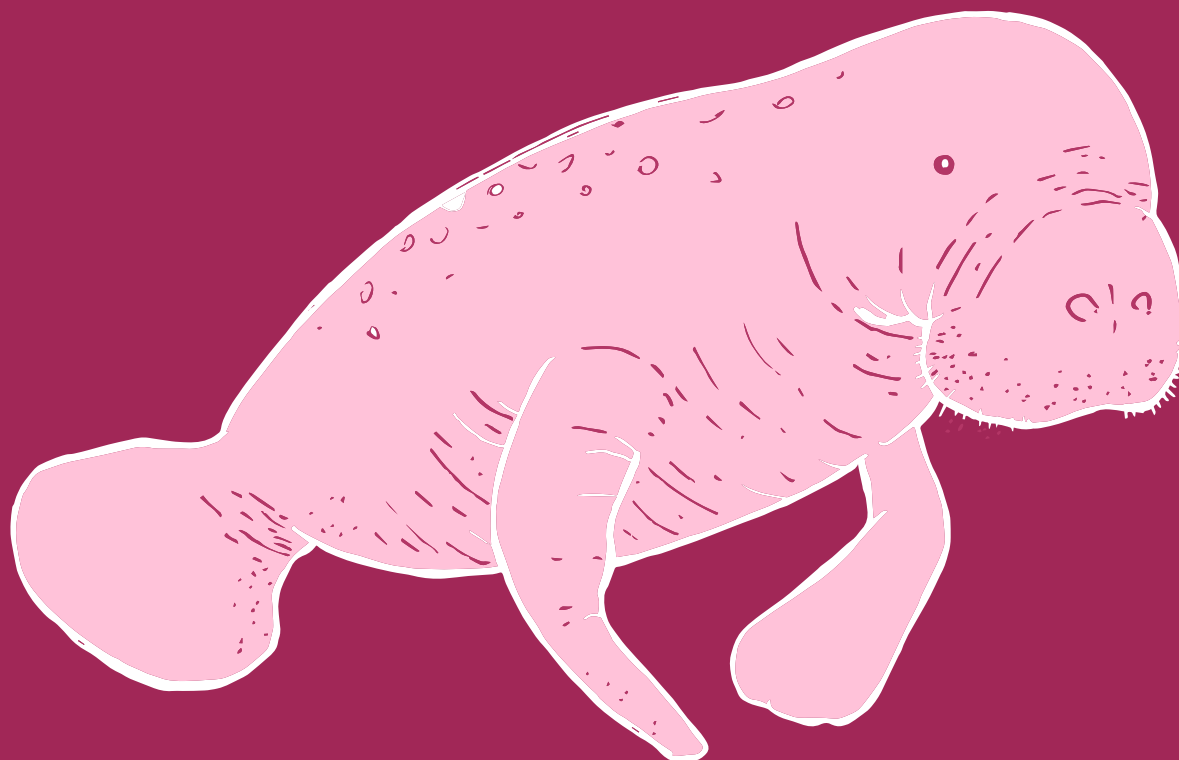
\* **Take a notebook with you and note down** what interests you most, what you need to research and study better, and the people you meet.

\* **Take a break when you need it.** You are free to leave the COP whenever you need to; these are very intense spaces so sometimes it is necessary to take a short break.

**Remember:**

Do not underestimate yourself; young people often think they lack the skills or abilities to participate but remember that all of your experiences and ideas are really important and that is what you need to be able to participate.

In the booklet [What is climate governance?](#) you can read about the experiences of young people who have already participated in a COP.



### 3 Organizing events for climate action

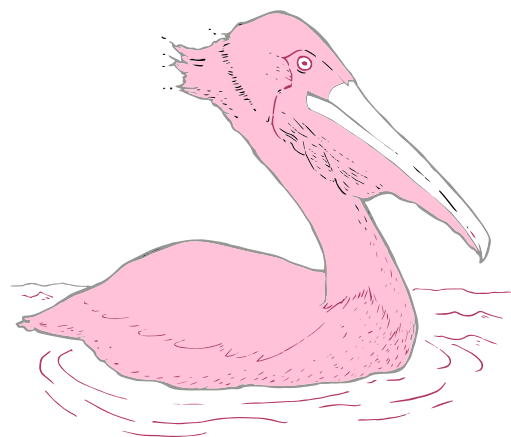
#### Brief description

You can organize events to help you move towards your climate cause goals. Events can bring together more young people and adolescents to create joint proposals, speed up actions or exchange experiences. You can also invite climate change leaders or authorities in your community or country. These events could be workshops, talks, Local Conferences of Youth (LCOY) or panels, to name just a few. The virtual format even allows you to easily attend events with people in other countries, allowing you to make new contacts, expand your network, including people who are more difficult to connect with, and enrich your experiences and points of view.

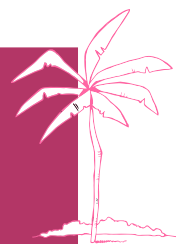
Here are tips from young activists on what to do before, during and after organizing an event on climate change issues.

#### Before

✱ **Form an organizing team.** You can find other young people and adolescents to form a team that will be in charge of organizing the event and assign responsibilities to each of them. You can include people with different profiles: the more diversity in the team, the better. It is important to ensure gender parity and to include people who form part of groups that have been historically excluded, and you should take their needs and views into consideration.

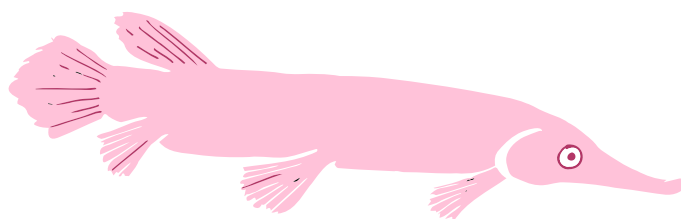


When putting the team together, bear in mind the skills needed by members to complement each other: teamwork skills, active listening, responsibility, problem solving, design skills, public speaking skills, technical knowledge on the topic of the event, etc.



✱ **Establish the objective, the target audience and the results you hope to achieve.** On this basis, the activities and people responsible for them can be planned. It is important to pay particular attention to defining the methodology, especially if it is a virtual event with groups.

You can find out more in the [Youth Advocacy Guide](#).





✱ **Set a budget.** You may need money to hold the event and cover some expenses such as hiring a space, transport, accommodation, refreshments, communication costs and simultaneous interpretation into other languages or sign language, among others. Having a clear budget will help you approach organizations or institutions that have funding and apply for financial or other assistance. Decide what kind of support you want for your event and what kind of allies you are looking for. Make sure they really share your cause. That way you can avoid getting resources from organizations involved in greenwashing.

✱ **Invite organizations, leaders or influential people to be allies of your event.** You can make contact through social media, a letter or an e-mail. An ally can help you spread the word, contribute their knowledge and experience, provide more contacts, help you with networking and even give you logistical support. Reach out to organizations such as UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations.

✱ **Share innovative ideas with your team.** Do not try to replicate other events: try to make yours original and really respond to a specific problem. Organize sessions with your team to share ideas!

✱ **Establish mechanisms to make your event inclusive and participatory.** If the event is virtual, you can conduct consultations outside of the meeting or send messages to young people to gather their opinions. If the event is in person, you can seek financial support to mobilize people who do not have resources to travel. You can also have interpreting and sign language services or generate mechanisms to attract the views of more people indirectly. Sometimes it is not easy to get funding, so it is important not to get frustrated and try to make the event as inclusive as possible within the means at your disposal.

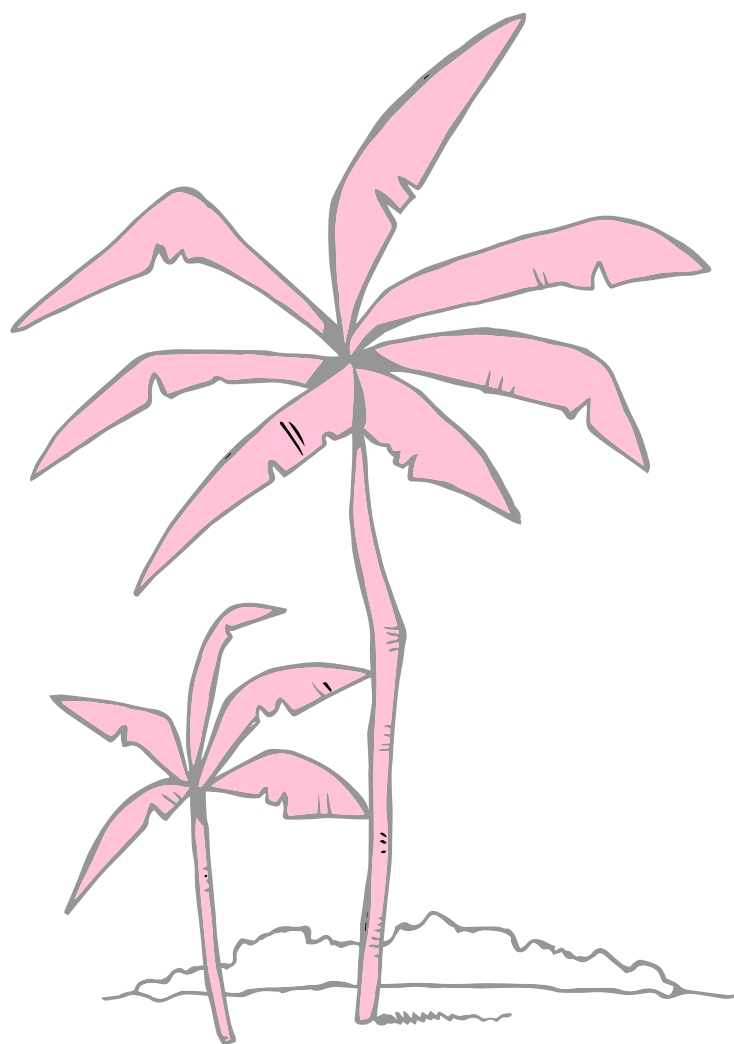
✱ **Give the event as much publicity as you can.** You can use social media, popular spaces in your community (such as schools or community halls) or ask leaders, influencers or people you know to send out invitations.





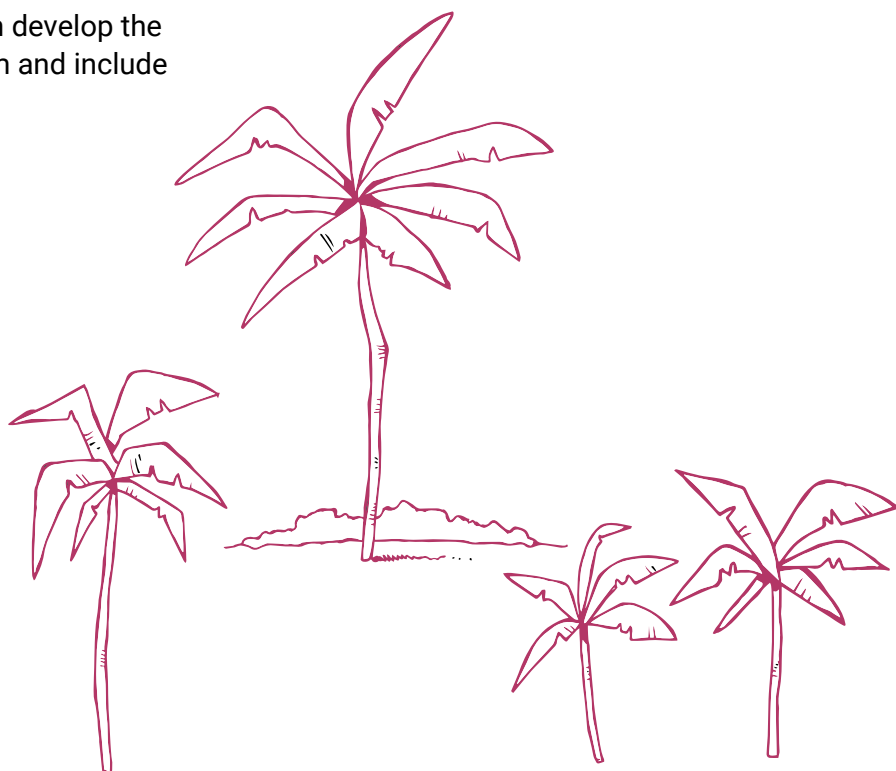
## During

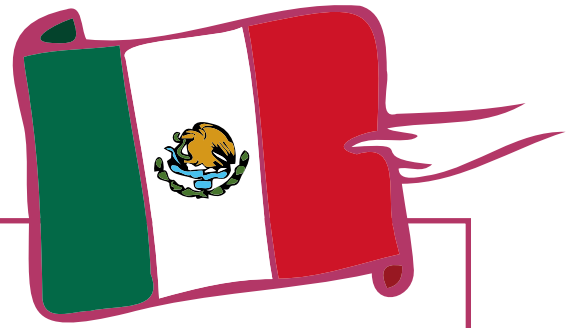
- \* **You can apply interactive dynamics that allow people to build trust and have a space to participate.** You can use different tools for this: provide space for each person to introduce themselves and explain their reason for participating or working on climate action; or use a live survey or a quiz game. You can find many free and paid resources on the internet that can help you make the space more dynamic and encourage people to get to know each other better. Try to make activities interesting and entertaining to encourage participation. It is a good idea to try the activity beforehand.
- \* **Take notes on what participants say.** It is important that the organizing team has people who are responsible for taking notes on the different opinions and proposals that arise during the event. They can use sheets or a virtual application, such as [jamboard](#). Recording the event is always a good idea.
- \* **Try to make the event participatory.** You can have general spaces and smaller or thematic dialogue groups that allow you to address different topics. If the event is digital, you can have virtual break-out rooms but make sure that each room has a sufficient number of people and is diverse, so that the conversation is enriching and constructive. If the conversation does not flow, it is always good to share your own ideas to encourage others. If it is virtual, you can enable a whiteboard where opinions can be shared, in addition to chatting. Do not force anyone to speak: it is important that participation is free and voluntary.
- \* **Livestreaming.** You can stream the event live through social networks or highlight the most important points as they happen. You can also create a hashtag and invite participants to use it in their posts.



## After

- ✱ **Organize the notes or data collected during the event.** This way you will be able to structure the content that was created. You can do this through an Excel document or similar, or you can also do it in a notebook.
- ✱ **Hold working sessions with the organizing team to finalize the final event report.** It is important to write a short document with the main points that were addressed. In some cases, a declaration or memorandum may also be created. You can use these sessions to polish the writing and give structure to the document. You can also hold an evaluation session with the team to consider lessons learned and possible improvements for future events.
- ✱ **Develop a plan of action.** You can include the most important actions you are going to implement based on the outcomes of the event. The event should not be seen as an isolated activity: it should serve to unite efforts and advance the climate cause. You can develop the action plan with the organizing team and include new organizations.
- ✱ **Use the report you produced to “make news”:** you can post some of the results on your social media or even write press releases to community, local or national media.
- ✱ **Send thanks to those who participated.** It is good to provide a certificate of participation, as this will motivate them to continue supporting your cause. This certificate can be signed by the organizer and by the organizations that supported your event. You can share the summary document setting out the most important points, as well as the recording, the presentations and the contact details of the panellists and the organization. You can also send an online form to gather feedback. It is very important to recognize the work of those who participated as volunteers.





### What is it like to organize a LCOY?

My name is Montse Fonseca García. I am a young activist from Mexico and operational director of Global Environmental Education. I was a member of the organizing team for the Local Conference of Youth (LCOY) in Mexico, where young people were invited to learn and take action on the climate crisis.

These were the first steps we took to organize the LCOY:

- We chose a diverse team whose members were able to complement each other in line with the needs we identified for organizing the event.
- We created different thematic working groups: relations, marketing and design, logistics, main coordination and inclusion, so that each stage of the process as well as the outcomes would always take inclusion into account.
- We established the central theme of the event based around five topics: food, health, energy, transport and education.
- We drew up a prior training and education map so that the young people participating in the LCOY could improve their knowledge of the central topics of the event.

The main barrier we experienced was the pandemic: we had to stop everything for months and adapt our ideas to the new situation. With the new conditions, the planning time was very short, the process was complicated and tensions increased. But the project went ahead, thanks to an excellent, diverse and dedicated team that believed in the goal as much as I did. We understood that it was a necessary event and worth the effort.

I would like to tell you that, for me, a climate change event for young people changed my life. It was a defining moment that encouraged me to pursue activism and environmental and climate education professionally, so organizing an event can be much more far-reaching than you might imagine.

### Remember:

Organizing an event is a challenge but it is also a great experience that allows you to actively involve more people in your cause.



## 4 Participating in climate change panels

### Brief description

There has been an increase in young people's participation on climate change panels, and that is a very positive thing. These panels are far-reaching spaces where people from different areas interact. They enrich the conversations, allowing for new perspectives and even initiatives to be generated. Panels can reach a wide range of audiences, and the virtual format has created more opportunities for young people everywhere to participate in panels through webinars.

Here are some tips from young activists on what to do before, during and after participating in a panel on climate change issues.

### Before the panel

- ✱ **If you have been invited as a panellist, ask any questions you have about the panel.** It is important that you are clear about the specific topic to be discussed, as well as other logistical aspects such as the time, date and duration of the event or who will be part of the audience and the rest of the panel. You can accept or decline the invitation as a panellist: you are not obliged to participate.
- ✱ **Apply to be a panellist at a specific event.** The most common way to participate as a panellist is through an invitation from the panel organizers. However, on climate action issues, there are many panels where you can apply to be a panellist. If you find such a request on social networks or on the internet, take advantage of the opportunity.
- ✱ **You can give up the space if you have already participated in other panels.** It is always important to listen to other voices, so give someone else the opportunity to participate (we all need to support each other to be able to participate in these events!)
- ✱ **Assess the diversity of the panel and challenge it if necessary.** You can identify if there is a variety of groups of people represented on the panel, for example, if there is a balance of gender, ethnicity and youth. If you think that diversity can be increased, you can suggest it to the panel organizers. Diversity is important in climate action! Avoid talking about any sector of the population that has not been invited to the panel (for example, a webinar on the role of indigenous peoples in climate action if there are no indigenous people among the participants).
- ✱ **Practice your presentation as many times as necessary.** You can practise in front of your family, group of friends or even in front of a mirror. You can also record yourself to see how you are doing. The important thing is that you can practise your presentation until you feel ready. You can even practise with openended questions on the topic to be covered in the panel.
- ✱ **Research the other panellists and find out who will be moderating the panel:** this way, you can feel more confident. You can also find out where the event will be held. If it is virtual, familiarize yourself with the application that will be used: make sure you have it installed on your device, that you connect in advance, that your camera, audio and microphone work, and that you can share your screen (if you plan to use a presentation). Generally, the event organizers will ask you to log in beforehand to check that everything is working properly. Try to find a quiet space to connect where you feel comfortable, without a lot of background noise and with a stable Internet connection.
- ✱ **We suggest you read the general tips at the beginning of this document,** especially those in the "identify your key messages" section.

### During the panel

- ✱ **Conclude your intervention with strong messages.** This means your intervention will leave a mark on the people who listened to you. You can balance the emotion and sentiment of your cause with the data you have found.
- ✱ **Take notes on the interventions of the other panellists.** You will thus be able to identify the most important points made by other participants and refer to them during your presentation. It is often enriching when the interventions of the panellists are interrelated, so that there is collaboration rather than separate interventions.
- ✱ **Take the time to answer questions.** If you are asked a question, you can take a moment to think about the answer to better organize your ideas and be clearer in your response. If necessary, you can ask people to move on to other questions while you prepare your answer.
- ✱ **Answer only the questions that you feel most confident about.** If you feel you do not have the answer to a question, you can simply say that you cannot answer that particular question at that time. Take advantage of the moment to highlight a message that you have not already highlighted. For example: "I don't really have a clear answer to that question right now, but I'd like to note that...."

### After the panel

- ✱ **You can connect with the other panellists.** Panels are often attended by people who are influential in climate action or who are part of the climate authorities in your community or country. You can take advantage of this to establish contact with these people and carry out joint actions. If the panel is a virtual panel, state your desire to stay connected with the panellists during your presentation. You can even share your contact details with the audience.





### Our participation in local panels as a method of advocacy

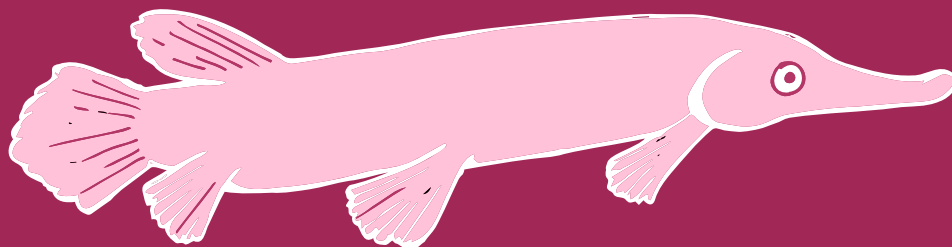
My name is Francisco Javier Reyna Lucero. I am an activist in Bolivia, a member of the Indigenous Youth Network of Latin America and the Caribbean and co-founder of Semilla de Agua. I have had the opportunity to work with youth groups dedicated to combating climate change in indigenous communities. Because of my experience, I was invited to participate as a speaker in the panel “Innovation and traditional knowledge pre COVID-19. Proposals from indigenous youth”. The panel was aimed at creating an exchange of experiences and synergies among Latin American indigenous youth in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

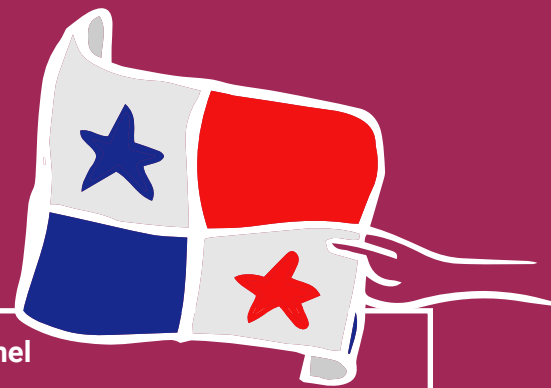
While preparing for the panel, I performed the following actions:

- I looked at the research that has been done in my community over the last 10 years to find data and evidence.
- I interviewed active agents in my community to find out their motivations, understand the difficulties they encountered and hear about the evolution of the projects.

It was a good experience to be able to participate in the panel, as I was able to learn different things that I would like to pass on to you:

- We need to listen to people who have implemented similar projects in their communities: this has helped me to reconsider the methodologies I have been using.
- It is important to know the municipal, state, federal and international laws that permit us to act as indigenous youth.
- You need to create a logbook for projects for dates, good practices, sound documentation of our participation, photos and videos of the key elements. This will give us reference documentation that can serve as informative support when participating in panels.





## Policy, community and the future: my experience on a national panel

Hi! I am Beatriz Reyes, President of the organization Jóvenes y Cambio Climático de Panamá. Like Francisco, I would love to share with you my experience of participating in a panel, in my case a national panel called “Policy, Community and Future”, which was part of the [Climate Crisis and Water Forum: Everyone’s challenge](#).

From my participation, I learned that young people can capture the attention of the public on all issues and that we are able to express our ideas freely because we are not pursuing individual interests but rather a strong conviction that urgent action is needed to stabilize the climate or to achieve equality in human rights, for example.

I’d like to share some tips with you now that you’re going to start participating in panels:

- Know your audience: not everyone has the same knowledge. This will help you better adapt your interventions.
- It is good to have a good command of body language; we often forget that this is also very important, so we must include aspects such as posture, the movements we make with our arms and facial expressions.
- Unexpected problems can always occur. Perhaps going blank is the most common problem but the reality is that people often do not realize it. If this happens to you, breathe for a few seconds and organize your thoughts again.
- Always speak from the perspective of young people and to young people. You should include the essential role of youth in climate change in your interventions. If I could participate in a panel again, I would speak more strongly about this.

If possible, speak in your native language, in my case Spanish. I think it’s important because we need to make the voices of the Latin American and Caribbean region visible, and that includes people who speak to us in English. If your language is English, try to make it easy for other people to speak in their native language as well.

### Remember:

It is normal to be nervous about participating in a panel. The main thing is to take advantage of the opportunities and get your message about climate action across. It will become easier and easier to participate in panels with practice.





## 5 Participating in interviews on climate issues

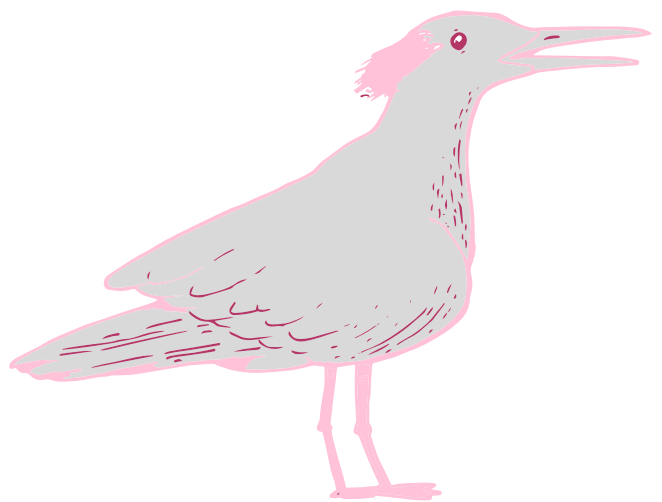
### Brief description

An interview is an important space in which to **get your climate action message out**. It should convey what you know about the issue in order to raise awareness and call for climate action. Be sure to convey a message that is easy for everyone to understand, not just those who specialize in the topic.

Here are some tips from young activists on what to do before, during and after an interview.

### Before

- \* **Ask as many questions as you need to be clear about the type of participation and what will be discussed in the interview.** You can accept or decline the interview according to your interests. You can also request the questions in advance.
- \* **Find out as much as you can about the media and the person who will be interviewing you:** who is the target audience? Who reads, watches or listens to that media? What kind of interviews has that journalist done in the past?
- \* **Identify the audience you want to influence.** This way you can better tailor your message to a specific audience. Find out who is affected by the issues at the heart of your cause, who the direct and indirect actors are, and if there are stakeholders. It is good to map these people or groups.
- \* **Use your experiences or those of other young people and adolescents.** It is important that your message conveys your experiences, so that you can appeal to people's emotions and motivate them to join your climate cause. You can also use the interview to highlight the reality of many other young people and adolescents who have difficulty in raising their own voice.
- \* **You should always be clear about the sources of your information.** Bear in mind the source of the data you will provide; you can even name those sources during the interview.
- \* **Talk to the person who will be interviewing you beforehand.** This will help you feel more secure. If you are unable to do this, try to watch an interview the person has done before to get a feel for their style and the type of questions they ask.
- \* **Practise the interview with someone.** Imagine the questions you might be asked and practise until you feel ready. Practise with family, friends or in front of a mirror, or you can even record yourself.
- \* **Do not let language be a barrier.** Interviews are often conducted in another language, so you can ask if interpreting will be provided. If interpreting is not available, you can ask a family member or colleague to help you prepare and ask the interviewer to provide you with the questions in advance. You could suggest answering the questions in writing, if possible.



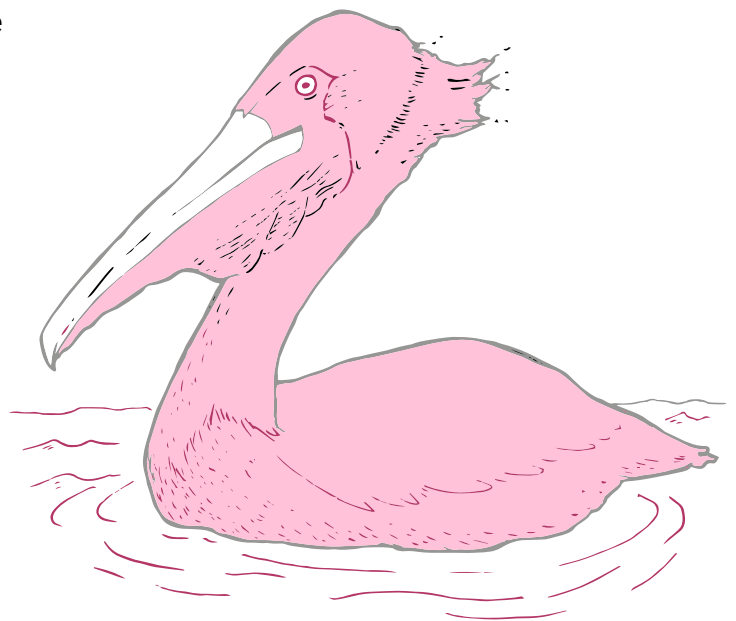
You can read more about the most important messages in the general tips at the beginning of this guide.

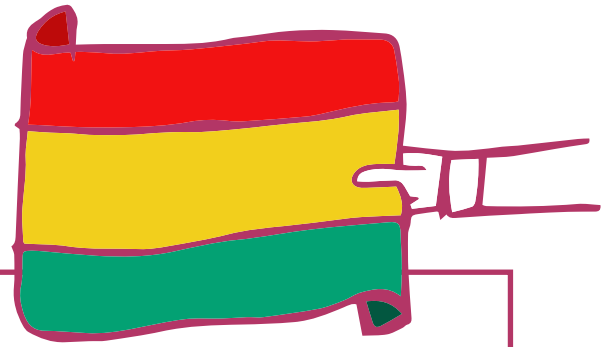
## During

- \* **Practise enough not to need to read your main messages.** You can keep a sheet of paper handy with your notes but avoid reading them carefully to make you look more natural. The key is to repeatedly practise the messages you want to convey.
- \* **If you are going to mention specific details, be ready with the source you used.** The data you used will thus be reliable and anyone who wants to can verify the information. Keep in mind the links or web pages where you looked for the information so that you can share them if you are asked to do so.
- \* **Try not to use very complex language.** If you use very complex, technical or advanced language, you may limit the scope of your intervention to specialists in the subject.
- \* **You can close your participation in the interview with a very powerful message.** It could be a concrete fact or an invitation to join your climate cause. The more people who hear it, the better!
- \* **You can record the entire interview if it is written,** as a backup in case misinformation is published or statements you did not make are attributed to you.

## After

- \* **You can ask to review and validate the interview (if it is not a live interview).** If there is something you do not want to be included in the interview, you can tell the interviewers.
- \* **Review the recording or transcript of the interview, take notes and analyse what your strengths and weaknesses were.** This will help you to do better in the next interview.
- \* **Find out the reach of your interview.** You can find out who it has reached and if any media have replicated it.





### My activism through interviews

Hi, I'm Nina Py Brozovich. I'm a young activist from Bolivia and I would like to tell you about my experience of participating in interviews. Since I began my environmental activism in 2019, I have participated in several interviews. It is difficult to say precisely how many interviews I have done but I would say around 30. I participated in these interviews on behalf of Fridays For Future Bolivia.

To prepare, I usually use a notebook to write down ideas related to the topic of the interview, relevant experiences, as well as facts and figures that illustrate what I am going to say. It is important to give a logical order to the ideas written down to ensure they are clear and so that you can remember and transmit them when answering the questions. I also usually talk to my family and friends about the interview beforehand so that I am aware in advance of what concerns or questions may arise.

Over time, I have learned that the key to giving a good interview is to prepare for it and master the subject matter. It is always best to answer a question or give an opinion on a topic that you have already spent some time thinking about and researching, so that you do not speak from intuition or provide incorrect information to people who are listening.

### Remember:

Doing something for the first time is always a bit scary but it is important that you take advantage of opportunities to spread your key climate action messages. With practice, you will get better and better at it and you will be able to help other young people and adolescents prepare for their interviews.



## 6 Participating in meetings with local, national and international authorities

### Brief description

In climate action, opportunities may arise to participate in working meetings with decision makers in your community, country or even internationally.

**As climate activists, one of the main objectives is to be able to reach these bodies, where you can participate in creating initiatives and solutions to advance the climate agenda, taking into account the needs and difficulties faced by children, adolescents and young people.** You can voice your perspectives and proposals at these meetings, share your experiences and influence the decisions that are made. These spaces are becoming increasingly common in countries around the region; however, the institutionalization of adolescent and youth participation in decision-making environments must continue to be promoted.

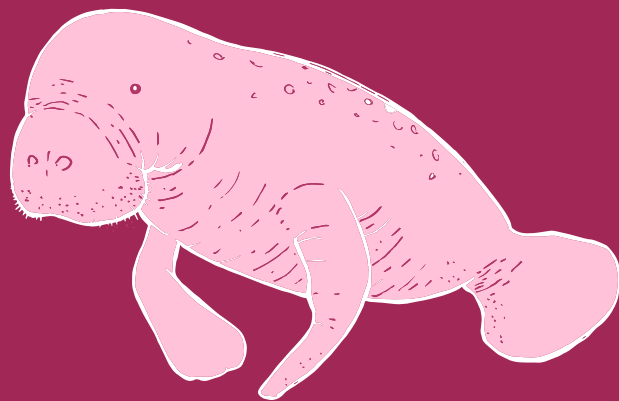
Here are tips from other young activists on what to do before, during and after a meeting with decision makers.

### Before

- ✱ **Be clear about the outcomes you expect from the meeting.** You can set a goal collectively with other young people and adolescents. For example, promoting the development of a public policy or a tool that is part of your country's regulatory framework.
- ✱ **If you are organizing a working meeting with decision-making authorities, you can invite the authorities or leaders,** and indicate the points to be addressed and the purpose of the meeting. You can send e-mails to the people you are going to invite, encourage them through social media or use the channels created by other organizations.

✱ **If you have been invited to a work meeting, make sure to ask any questions you have.** You need to know the purpose of your participation and who the other guests at the meeting are. You can also find out if you are attending this space as an individual or on behalf of young people. It is also advisable to ask about the logistics of the meeting and if there will be any financial cost to participate. You can ask for documents or reports (if available) and read them beforehand.

✱ **It is advisable to seek support to strengthen your communication and negotiation skills.** These kinds of skills and abilities are important in meetings with decision makers. You can seek support through an organization or by joining with other young people and adolescents. For example, you can approach a teacher who you think has good communication skills and ask for advice on how to improve your skills.



Read the "Meeting with Leaders" section of the [Advocacy Toolkit](#), which contains lots of ideas and information.

## During

- \* **If you are the one organizing the meeting, it is important that you start by explaining the purpose of the meeting,** the agenda for the day and what you hope to achieve. Make a space for all attendees to introduce themselves. It is important to who is participating in the meeting: this will help you to be strategic when you intervene and continue to strengthen your networks. When you have to introduce yourself, remember to say where you come from, who you represent (if you are speaking on behalf of an organization) and briefly explain the work you or your organization or group are doing. It is important to highlight that there is a lot of work and a large number of people behind the cause.

*You can read more in the Advocacy Toolkit.*

- \* **Listen carefully to the speakers and take notes.** It is important to recognize and respect other positions, even if you do not share them, to foster a healthy exchange of experiences in which agreements can be reached. Take note of the points that seem interesting to you.
- \* **Focus on the points you have in common with other people** rather than creating conflict or arguing about a negative aspect.
- \* **Try to reach agreements to advance your climate cause and achieve your goal.** It is important to be very clear about what we need other people to do. Sometimes you have to negotiate: to do this, you will need to offer something that you can contribute as a young activist, such as providing training on a particular issue to people in a community. You will also need to determine the extent to which you are willing to negotiate. You do not need to solve everything at the first meeting; progress may take time but you should not give up your cause.

- \* **Establish follow-up actions if agreements are made at the meeting.** This is essential to continue working with the people you met and, above all, to follow up on progress in the agreements. You can suggest communicating by mail, meeting from time to time or more informal channels such as WhatsApp groups. We advise you to ask the people attending the meeting for their e-mail address, phone number or contact card.

## After

- \* **Produce a report of the content discussed during the meeting.** This way it will be easier to follow up. If agreements were made, you can include them. It is important to share the report with the people attending and with all those who are part of the organization or group.
- \* **Meet with other young people and adolescents and make a plan to follow through on the agreements made at the meeting.** It is important to do your part to move the agreements forward as well. You can establish responsibilities and set a joint agenda.



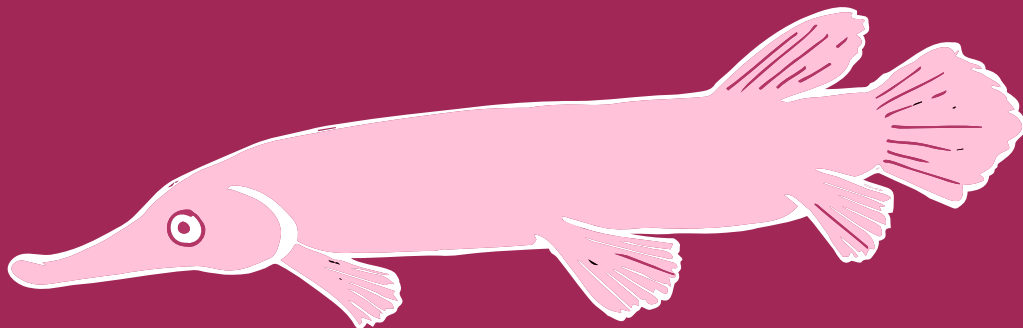
### Changes from the local level

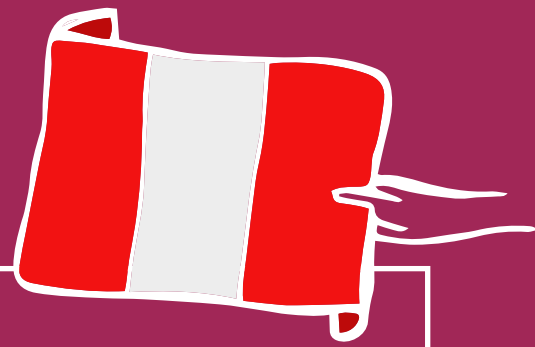
We are Robin Martínez, Edras Mejías, Elmer Gómez and Nery Rodriguez and we are young activists from Guatemala. We want to tell you about our experience of participating in developing an action plan with local authorities, institutions and organizations to strengthen work on climate issues. As volunteers with the organization Paz Joven, we were promoting this process in our community, San Luis de Jalapa.

Our role was to gather opinions and information and so we conducted surveys and interviews and reviewed previous studies. We also organized meetings with the Community Development Council (COCODES) and local authorities, as well as with the institutions present in our community.

When we participated in meetings with local authorities, or with the institutions present in our community, we always felt confident thanks to the knowledge we had previously acquired through training courses.

From our participation, we were able to learn that, as young people, we have the potential to make ourselves heard but we need to improve the mechanisms by which to include our voices and bring more people on board. We also learned that more needs to be done to bring about change at the local level and that we need to include all sectors that are in our communities. Climate action starts at the local level.





## Participation at the national level

Hello, my name is María Grazia Campos. I am a young activist from Peru, and a member of the Youth Interest Group that is promoting and strengthening processes of youth participation for the monitoring of public policies on climate change. This will enable us to contribute to the National Commission on Climate Change.

My participation in this space came about because I saw a call from the government aimed at young people who wanted to be part of the Youth Interest Group being promoted by the Ministry of Environment of Peru, with the support of the National Secretariat of Youth. I decided to run and was elected via a ballot. The Group comprises 52 young people between 18 and 28 years of age. We met with national authorities with the aim of:

- empowering youth on climate change in municipal and regional commissions;
- applying an intergenerational approach to public policies;
- influencing environmental policies more broadly through government and parliament.

One resource that I have found very useful has been the Young Climate Activists Toolkit. We have even used it to create a climate action plan in my department.

If I could give you some advice, it would be to remember that the authorities are there to help us. Do not be afraid to raise any doubts, concerns or demands that you have to improve people's quality of life. It is important to emphasize what is needed but also to highlight your work, your activism and the goals to be achieved so that you can work together.

## Remember:

You can reach agreements in these meetings that will help you advance your climate cause. It is important to be clear about what you are going to request and follow this up to ensure that the agreements are followed through.





## 7 Participating in consultations and reviews of climate policies and tools

### Brief description

Countries work on climate policies and with tools that will enable them to advance their own agenda. Some of these policies or tools may be targeted at communities. It is essential that young people and adolescents participate in creating these policies so that they reflect their needs and uphold their rights.

You can read more about these policies and tools in the [Climate Action Toolkit](#).

When young people participate in consultations and reviews of climate policies and tools, progress is made in integrating their perspective, facilitating the creation of child, adolescent and youth sensitive climate policies.

Here are some tips from other young activists on what to do before, during and after a consultation process or review of climate policies and tools.

### Before

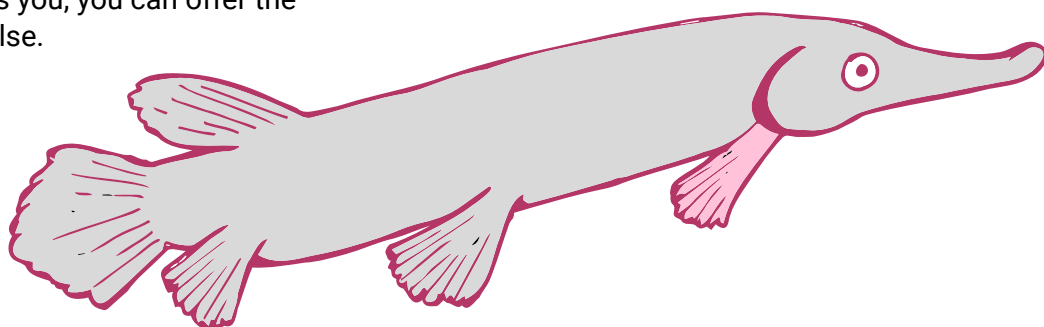
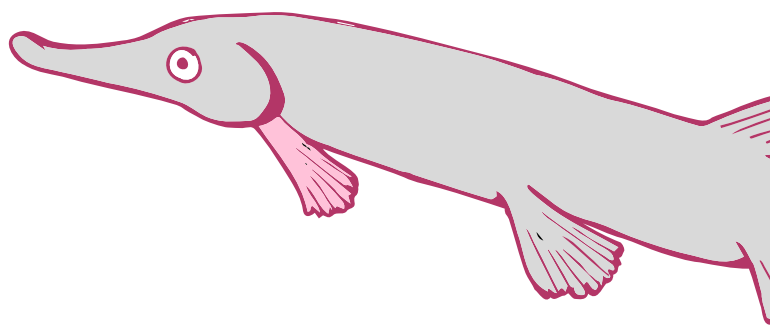
- ✳ **If you have been invited to participate in the process, clarify any doubts.** It is very important that you ask about the objective of your participation, the expected outcome of the process and who is involved.
- ✳ **In addition, you can request and read drafts or final documents of the climate policy or tool to be reviewed, if they already exist.** These documents are often very long so it is a good idea to start with the table of contents and summary. If you do not have time to read it beforehand, or if you consider that it is not a subject that interests you, you can offer the space to someone else.

- ✳ **It is advisable to read about similar climate policies or tools in your country or how other countries are developing them, in order to identify good practices and lessons learned.**

It is possible they may already exist, that some gaps could be filled in these other documents or that you may replicate the efforts yourself. Rely on someone who may have some knowledge of the core issue of this climate policy or tool so you can identify gaps and needs that exist and whether the policy is helping to address them. You can also connect with young people involved in similar processes in other countries or in your country and ask for advice.

- ✳ **You can make notes and comments while you are reading the material in advance.**

This will help you begin to formulate possible interventions or suggestions that you are going to make during the review or consultation process.



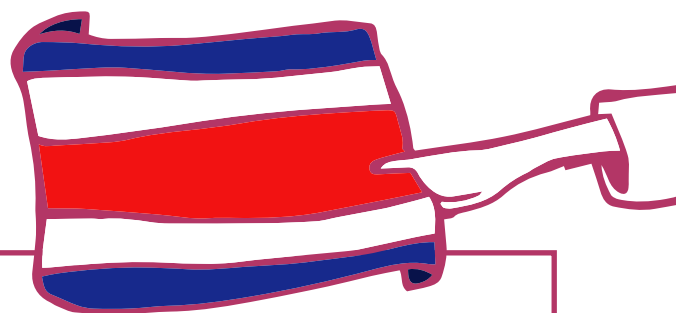
## When you review the policy or tool

- ✱ **You can communicate with other young people and adolescents participating in the process.** This will help build your confidence. If you are the only young person, you can find someone else you have interacted with and share experiences or knowledge.
- ✱ **You can use your personal experiences or knowledge to make interventions and comments.** It is also important to include what you were told by young people and adolescents during the consultation processes. It is important to remember this is your climate cause and you are representing an important sector of society.
- ✱ **Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the policy or tool** and, if possible, make concrete proposals that could improve the strengths and diminish the weaknesses. You can check that it is inclusive by taking into account the role of each sector of society, especially young people. It is also important to ensure that it is a child and adolescent sensitive policy or tool, that is, it addresses the specific vulnerabilities of these groups and ensures that their rights are fulfilled. You can also make sure that it takes into account the principles of intersectionality, gender mainstreaming, intergenerational justice and climate justice. This should be addressed throughout the policy document or climate toolkit, including in the results framework, targets and indicators, as well as in the development, implementation and monitoring process.
- ✱ **Look for other similar policies and tools** that are considered “best practice” and which can serve as a reference for the one you are reviewing. You can contact young people from other countries who have participated in similar processes.
- ✱ **Provide inputs on mitigation and adaptation.** You can provide input from your experience of working in communities or on the main challenges you have identified for young people and adolescents to adapt to and participate in climate change mitigation.
- ✱ **Pay attention to language.** It should be simple, inclusive and non-discriminatory. Language should also inspire action.
- ✱ **Offer recommendations for expanding outreach.** The climate policy or tool needs to reach all people; often this does not happen. You can recommend alternatives for implementation, for example, discussions with coastal communities about how an adaptation policy will positively impact them.



## After

- ✱ **You can ask the people in charge of the process to share the final results with you so that you can check your input was taken into consideration in the final version.** These meetings are usually concluded with a final document that needs to be published, a procedure that can take some time.
- ✱ **Partner with other individuals or youth organizations to take action to promote the implementation and monitoring of climate policies or tools.** It is even a good idea to keep in touch with those who were responsible for the process.



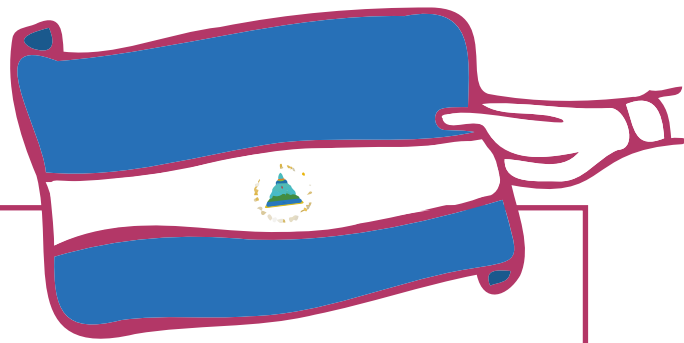
### Significant participation in updating the NDC

My name is Natalia Gómez. I am the President of the Costa Rican Youth and Climate Change Network and I participated in the updating of the [Nationally Determined Contribution of Costa Rica](#) (NDC). The NDC is an instrument that unifies the commitments that member countries of the Conference of the Parties have made to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. During my participation, I represented the Youth and Climate Change Network.

I was able to participate in this process thanks to our advocacy initiatives to ensure spaces for youth participation in the process. As a result, young people were considered a key stakeholder and this allowed us to participate in the whole consultation process and in creating the contributions, especially the climate empowerment actions. We were also able to support the inclusion of different groups of young people in the process.

*You can read more in [Tools for Climate Action](#).*

In preparation for my intervention, I researched and enquired about NDCs and learned about the content of the previous NDC in my country and the sectors involved. Through my participation, I learned that young people can make contributions in spaces with experts and that our participation allows our perceptions and visions to be taken into account when updating and implementing the NDC.



## How to influence the climate agenda by participating in SDG reporting

We are members of the Youth Network for Water Nicaragua and we want to tell you about our participation in producing the report for target 6.5.1 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) nationally. We were able to participate in this process through the invitation of the Global Water Partnership, Nicaragua. The report generated was submitted to the United Nations Environment Programme through the direct channel of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources.

Our role was to participate in the Coordination Commission for the implementation, development and evaluation of the instruments used for the report. In addition, in order to give continuity to the work carried out, an “Interinstitutional Commission for the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector” was formed in the country, of which we form a part.

We prepared for the event in different ways: some took an online course facilitated by the organization, to which we were invited to consolidate our knowledge. Others read the documents provided to us in order to play an active role in the process and asked the commission coordinators relevant questions to be clear on how we could play each role throughout the process.

We learned that state entities and non-governmental organizations have different ways of working and that it is very important to listen to all sectors of society to manage truthful and transparent information. We were also able to build trust, which allowed us to intervene in a respectful and safe manner in the different working groups, always putting forward young people’s point of view.

### Remember:

The climate policies or tools that are created in your country or community set out specific guidelines for different aspects of climate action; it is important that these guidelines consider young people, the barriers they face and the proposals needed to address these barriers.



## 8 Organizing and participating in campaigns

### Brief description

Campaigns raise awareness of climate change issues and increase public pressure on decision makers and leaders at the international, national and local levels. They also enable you to publicize your cause with the public. Campaigns can be highly diverse, and can include different types of action. Here are some general tips; for more detailed information on how to create a campaign, we suggest you check out the [Advocacy Toolkit](#), which lists different types of campaigns and their benefits, and the [Youth Advocacy Guide](#) if you want to learn more about what a media campaign is all about.

Here are tips from other young activists on what to do before, during and after you get involved in organizing a campaign.

### Before

#### \* Be clear about the objective of your campaign.

This will help you better define your actions; a campaign aimed at promoting the passing of a climate change law is not the same as a campaign to collect waste. Your actions will depend on your objective, which is why it is useful to answer the following questions: what do we want, for what purpose and when do we want it? You can then establish why a campaign is the best choice for your cause.

#### \* Find out if there are other similar campaigns active.

It is better to link efforts than to replicate them. You can contact the other campaign organizations to offer your support and join in. You can do this through social media or by attending an activity organized as part of the campaign.

\* **If you have been invited to a campaign, you can ask all the questions you need in order to understand your role in it.** You can also see whether it includes other young people or adolescents. Do not be afraid to ask. It is better to be clear.

\* **If there are no similar campaigns active, you can start your own.** Select the type of campaign you want to run. Each type is implemented differently. It depends a lot on your target and who you want to influence.

\* **Form an organizing team.** You can look for other young people and adolescents to form the team that will be in charge of organizing the campaign and assign responsibilities to each of them. You can include different profiles: the more diverse and inclusive the team the better. It is also important to ensure gender parity.

You can read more about the different types of campaign in the [Advocacy Toolkit](#).



- \* **Define your target audience.** It is important that you determine which people or groups of people you want to influence and that you are clear about the level of influence you want to exert (community or local, national, regional or global).

You can read about these levels of influence in the *Youth Advocacy Toolkit*. Remember that your goal can range from adolescent girls in your school to everyone in your country.

- \* **Decide on your campaign message.** It is important to convey a simple but powerful story. A simple structure could be: who + what do we want or need + what for?

To learn more about designing campaign messages you can read this guide from Greenpeace.

- \* **Seek support or training for the people organizing the campaign.** This support can come from other networks or organizations in your community. You can also ask other climate leaders or activists for support; see the tips we have provided in the other sections to further develop skills such as public speaking or meeting with decision makers.

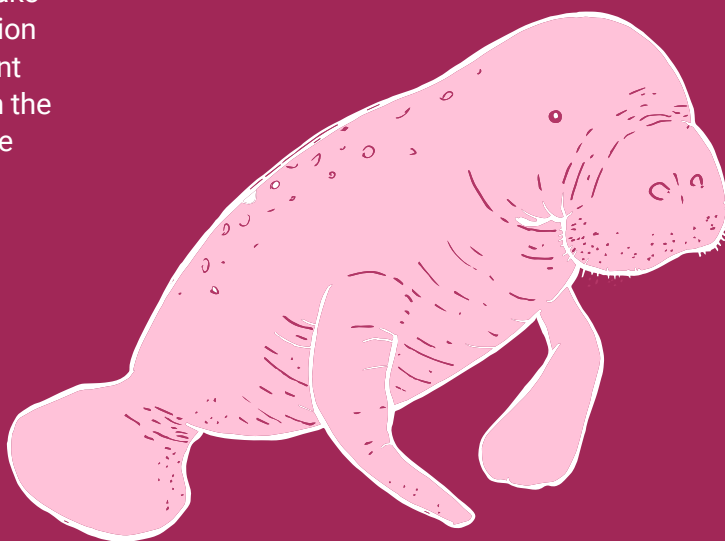
## During

- \* **Share the main messages.** As you carry out the different actions of the campaign, remember to spread the word about the main messages, so that more people will join your cause. Encourage the people who are in the campaign to share those messages as well. Ensure that key messages are conveyed in a peaceful manner.

You can read more about the main messages at the start of this guide, in the general tips section.

- \* **Spread the word about your campaign.** It is important to spread content on social media or share content with leaders and influencers who can in turn share it. An Instagram post can have a wide reach and get more people on board.

- \* **Propose practical actions that people can easily implement.** In this way, your campaign will have a greater reach. You can develop a strategy where you determine the actions, the expected outcomes and the people who will take responsibility. It is not necessary for every action to have an individual strategy but it is important that all the individual actions developed within the campaign are coherent and help to achieve the proposed objective.

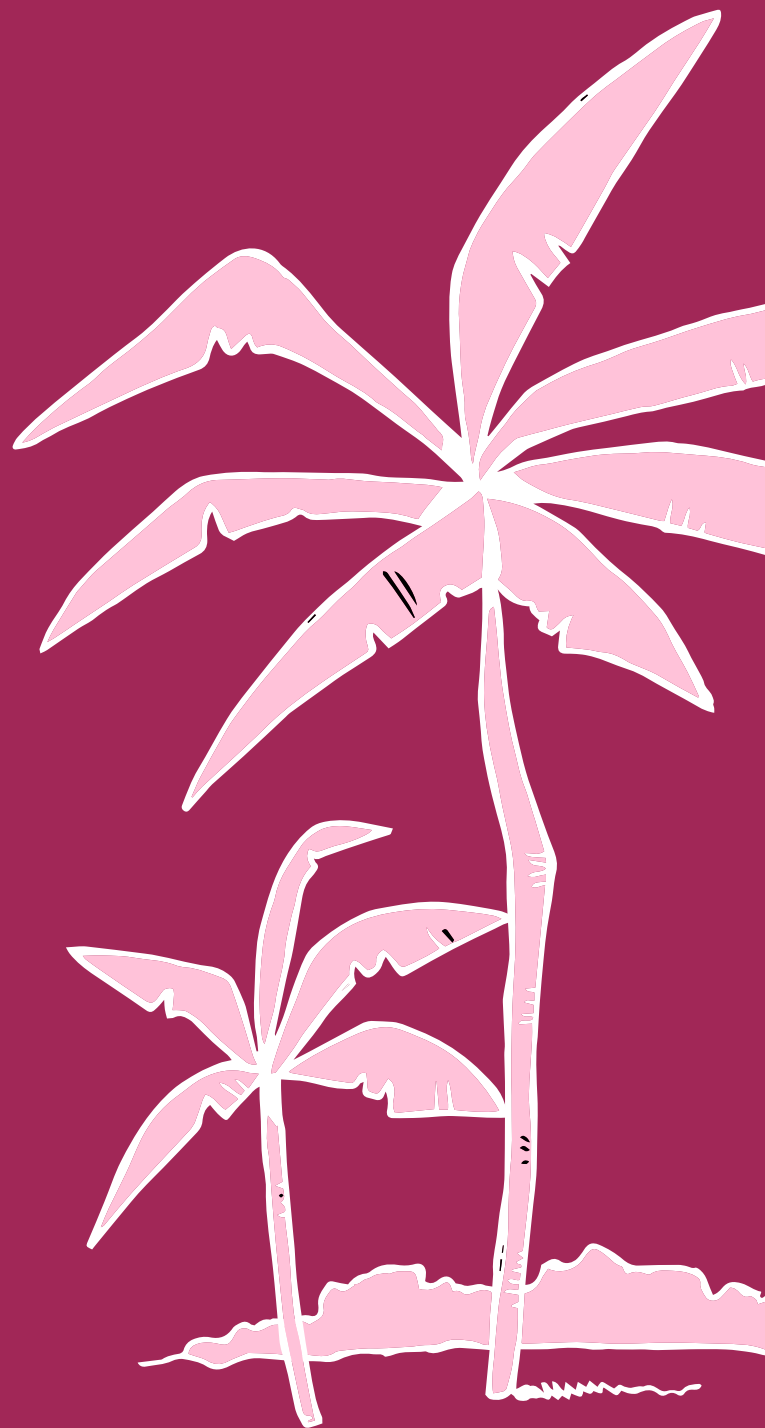


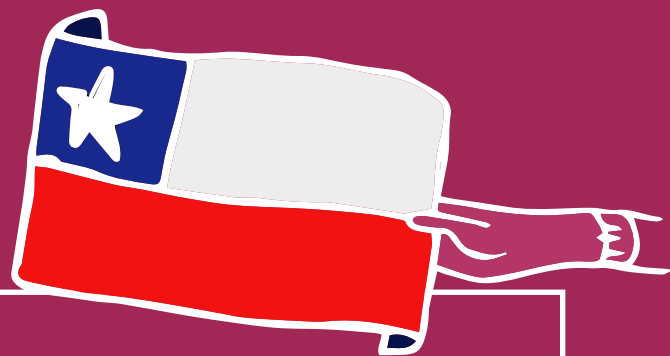


- ✱ **Invite the press.** You can invite the press to attend campaign activities, either in person or online. You can do this through social media by contacting specific journalists.
- ✱ **Try to develop innovative actions.** You can use art or digital media or look for strategic points in your community to develop the actions. Always bear in mind the audience you want to influence and the objective of the campaign: not all actions fit.

## After

- ✱ **Produce a campaign report** that includes the progress you have made, including actions, outreach and achievements. This helps you be accountable to people who are participating in the campaign or who have supported it. If you have not achieved the goals, you can explain how progress has been made towards them.
- ✱ **Establish what next actions need to be taken,** how to expand the reach of the campaign, or the changes that need to be made to better advance towards your goals. It is important that you are flexible to the possible changes that may need to occur, without losing sight of your main objective.
- ✱ **Connect with more organizations and expand your network** to get more people on board. You can always amplify the call to action and think of the campaign as just one part of your cause.





## Steps in the Escazú Now Chile campaign

Hi, I'm Sebastian Benfeld, a young activist from Chile and a young advocate for the Escazú Agreement. I want to tell you about my experience organizing the Escazú Now Chile campaign. It all began in March 2020, when a group of young people set out to start a campaign to ensure that Chile would not be left out of the Escazú Agreement.

You can read more in the Escazú Agreement for Young People booklet.

Throughout 2020, we were trying unsuccessfully to get our country's president to sign the agreement. This did not discourage us. On the contrary, we gave new direction to the campaign and sought the commitment of the presidential candidates. So far, the vast majority have expressed their interest.

I'm not going to lie to you: starting the campaign was not easy. The first step I took was to organize other young activists to form a team, set a clear goal, design a strategy and work together to make it happen. Despite this, we encountered a number of difficulties. We didn't have any money or resources to promote our campaign. We were just a group of young people and volunteers. But we realized that real power lies not in financial resources or in the number of contacts we have, but in ourselves: in the talents and skills we donate to a common cause.

I think the key to our campaign was also innovation. We were always willing to question the plans and strategies we had and to rethink how to improve them. It took all of our creativity and ingenuity to come up with new alternatives and paths that would allow us to reach our goal.



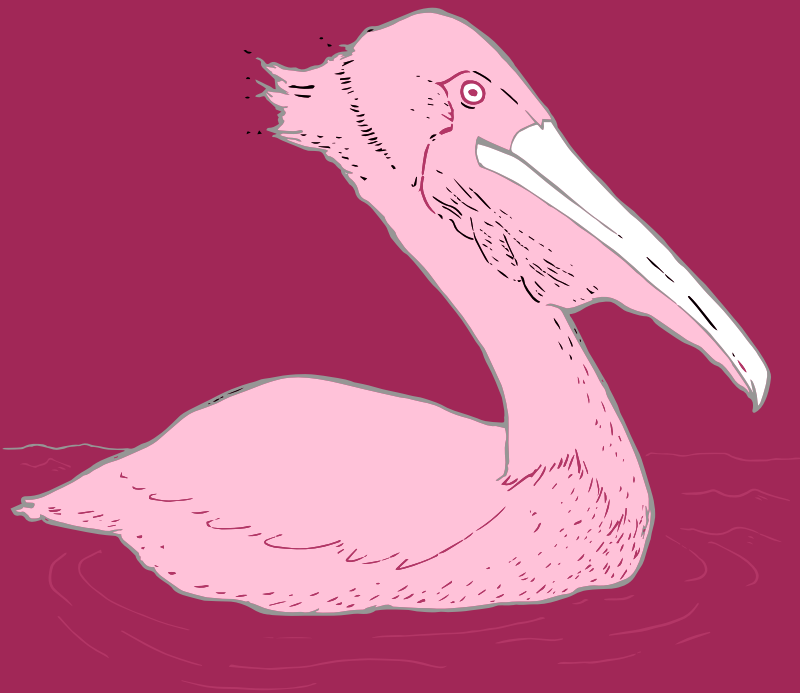
### My participation in Operation Firefly

Hi, I'm Leto Sánchez Bidarte. I'm a young person from Uruguay and I would like to tell you about Operation Firefly, an amazing project I was involved in. Operation Firefly focuses on energy efficiency and was launched in 2016. Its main objectives are to:

- create benchmarks in energy efficiency;
- promote efficient habits and behaviours;
- generate a social impact that will allow actions to be implemented for a reassessment of energy resources and environmental care.

To achieve the objectives, the project focuses on technological and educational change. We came up against different obstacles but the important thing was that we always came together as a team to solve them. Actually, I think that's the main strength of our project: the ability to solve everything as a team and the different ages, skills and ideas of the members favours diversity in our solutions.

I would also like to tell you that, in my opinion, part of the success of the project lies in the fact that the objectives were achievable and that we always had the target population in mind, the students of the school.





## HEY: our experience of a regional campaign that went global

Hi, we're Ashley Lashley and Abigail Johnson and we're ambassadors for the Healthy and Environment-friendly Youth (HEY) campaign. We want to tell you about the efforts we made to start our campaign and make it successful. For starters, HEY is a campaign initiated in the Caribbean that aims to create a generation of young people committed to adopting healthy and environmentally friendly lifestyles, as well as leading efforts to build inclusive societies in which life and dignity are prioritized, rather than just economic growth.

*Twenty-three young people from different countries (Afghanistan, Aruba, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Brazil, Cameroon, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ghana, Haiti, Jamaica, India, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Senegal, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda and the United States) are participating in the campaign. In addition, we have the support of governmental and non-governmental agencies and civil society.*

Our first steps were to:

- Set an agenda that included the objectives we wanted to achieve and the actions needed to achieve them.
- Seek partners, including organizations with which we share goals and visions.
- Enable the recruitment of young people and a selection process to start implementing the proposed ideas together.

We believe that the main barrier we had was adapting to the virtual environment because the campaign was launched right at the start of the pandemic and this forced us to move all the activities online. Although it was complicated at first, it ultimately benefited the campaign, enabling us to expand the reach of HEY and contact more young people around the world.

We consider the campaign to have been successful because of:

- The hard work and dedication we put in from the beginning and the efforts of the young HEY ambassadors.
- The support we had from our partners at all stages of the campaign.
- The possibility of expanding outreach through events such as the Global Youth Network Summit on Climate Change and Health, in collaboration with UNICEF, and the Children's Environmental Rights Initiative.
- The joint development of the Student Declaration on Climate Action in the Caribbean, as well as the launch of the Joint Call for Climate Action, which was signed by 56 athletes with disabilities.

## 9 Participating in advocacy or lobbying for climate action

Advocacy is very important for climate action, as it allows us to influence decisions on climate change. How to approach decision makers varies from country to country but the following are some more general tips.

Here are tips from activists on what to do before, during and after lobbying.

### Before

- ✱ **Set out the objective to be achieved through lobbying.** It must be a realistic goal. For example, if you want your local government to develop a climate adaptation plan, the objective would be to get your local government to develop a climate adaptation plan.
- ✱ **Identify your target audience.** You can find out which institution is responsible for the issue you are lobbying on and also identify which authorities make decisions on the issue. You can then do some research to find out more about them in advance and see if you have any points in common. For example, find out what the media is saying or what people are saying on social media.
- ✱ **Analyse the context in which the decision is made.** Some of these decisions are made in Congress, by the country's presidency or by local government, and each of these spaces has a different dynamic that you need to understand. You can also recognize who the opposition is: there is always an anticlimate action lobby that it is important to identify.
- ✱ **Find out if there is already a lobbying process under way in relation to your objective.** There are often processes already up and running and other people and organizations working on the same objective as you. Instead of starting a parallel process, you can coordinate your participation with groups that are already lobbying.
- ✱ **Establish what activities you will promote for political lobbying.** It is a good idea to create a plan indicating the activity, the person in charge, the content, time and resources. Some of the most common activities are non-violent demonstrations, sending letters or using social networks as a way to gain public exposure and generate more pressure. It is important that each person can take responsibility for these activities.

**Lobbying** is defined as a set of actions aimed at influencing legislative processes and public policy decisions in a country. It is important that lobbying is based on evidence and reliable information. Lobbying is sometimes incorrectly associated with corruption. In reality, public policy advocacy is an important practice and it is essential that it takes place in a transparent and ethical manner.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>América Solidaria, 'Manual de incidencia juvenil', AS, <<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1A-0wWvcQqlciNz8uYZybNKxv9KyxlIIZp/view>>, accessed 10 April 2021.

## During

- \* **Implement the defined activities but remain flexible.** Always do so in a respectful and peaceful manner. Remember to focus on your goal. As you go through the activities, you may find that some can be modified or others need to be added, so it is best to be open to change.
- \* **Share information.** You can share relevant information on the core issue of your lobbying with decision makers: this may be digital documents, physical documents, videos, audios, etc. This is one way to make sure that decision makers can take informed decisions.
- \* **Raise awareness.** If you are in contact with the decision makers you can arrange meetings to discuss and raise awareness of the issues at the heart of your cause. You can also run these sessions with other people interested in joining your cause and being part of the lobbying work.

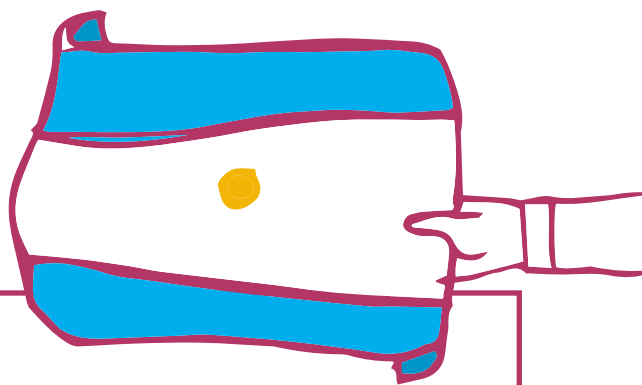
## After

- \* **Thank them for their time.** After the participation of decision makers, you can send them a note thanking them for their time and reminding them of the next actions and the need for them to support your cause.
- \* **Follow-up on the work of decision makers.** You can do this through the media, by consulting official mailings or through social networks, which are nowadays one of the main ways in which decision makers provide information about their actions and agenda.
- \* **Join other networks or lobbying spaces.** There are organizations and individuals lobbying for climate action on the local, national and international agendas. You can identify those in your community or country and ask them for a space to participate.

See section Participating in meetings with authorities.







### From the streets to Congress: my lobbying experience

My name is Nicole Becker, I am a young activist from Argentina and a member of Youth for Climate. I want to tell you about my experience lobbying the Congress of Argentina to declare a state of climate emergency in the country. The target audience of our lobbying were senators and deputies.

Our main actions consisted of mobilizations attended by more than 15,000 people. We also met with senators to explain the reasons why we were demanding that they vote in favour of a declaration of climate emergency. We even sent them e-mails and made phone calls. I would call it emotional lobbying, since we had no money but a lot to say.

The main obstacle we encountered was that the commission that was supposed to approve the Declaration had never met because it didn't care about the issue. That was the norm in Argentina at that time (2019). That's why we had to put pressure on public opinion and start appearing in the media so that more people could find out what was going on.

If you asked me for three successful lobbying strategies, I think I would say the following:

- These achievements are collective: even if there are some people determined to lobby on a day-to-day basis, this is no use if there is no movement applying pressure in the background.
- You have to join more organizations and movements. There is strength in numbers.
- Do not forget that there are things that seem impossible but, if there is a movement exerting pressure, this may cease to be the case.

Through all this experience, I have learned that demands can pass from the street to the decision makers (in my case, Congress). Only mobilization and active participation will save us from the climate crisis we are experiencing.

### Remember:

In climate action, lobbying is necessary to get the points you consider essential onto the public agenda and consolidate them.



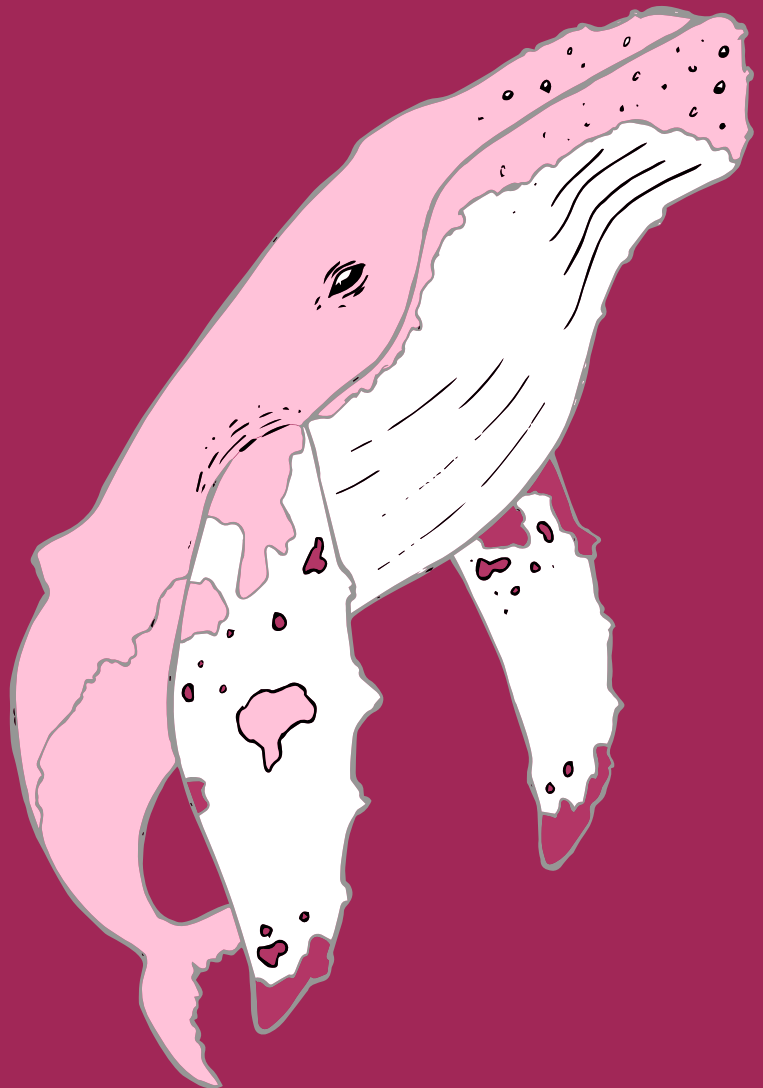
## 10 Strengthening your network of contacts (networking)

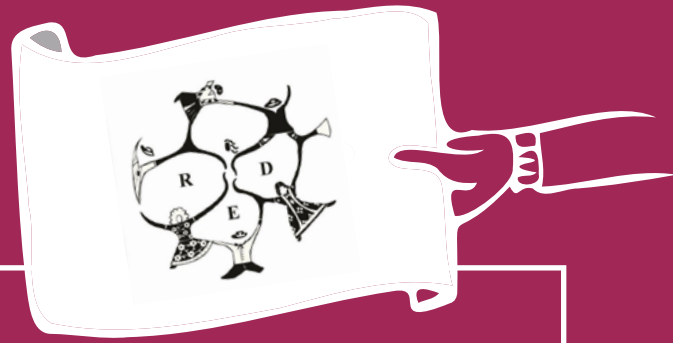
Climate change is a collective problem and so the solution must also be collective. That is why it is important to create a network of contacts that will enable you to advance your cause or join others who are active. You will find many spaces that will allow you to strengthen your network of contacts, so you should make the most of them. The more people act together, the greater the impact.

Here are some tips on how to strengthen your network.

- \* **Set a target for your networking.** This will help you to know who you need to contact. The target should be set according to your cause.
- \* **Organize the contacts you already have.** You can include friends, classmates from school, college or work, neighbours and other young activists with whom you work. If you do not know what they do, find out: maybe there are people who can contribute. You can even keep track of the contacts you have and then add new ones.
- \* **Identify the type of people you want to network with.** You can look for people with whom you share a cause or who have different climate action goals that can complement each other. They may be people who inspire you or who are leaders in a field related to your topic. You can also get creative and connect with people who do not work specifically on your issue but with whom you may have common ground for action, such as human rights activists. You can also identify people who work in the media to gain a wider reach.
- \* **You can draw up a plan** in which you can keep track of the different spaces or opportunities that exist for networking. It is important that these are spaces that include young people and adolescents. If these do not exist, you can start one yourself, for example, by promoting a virtual meeting of young people through a video call or a face-to-face meeting. You can also talk to adults to invite them to open their space up to youth and adolescents.
- \* **Arrive early to face-to-face events.** You can take advantage of the time to chat informally to more people. At face-to-face events there are usually breaks or pauses for refreshments: take advantage of these to chat to other attendees.
- \* **It does not need to be an in-person space; you can also network through social media.** Make contact with the people you are interested in making part of your network through social media profiles, résumés or portfolios. LinkedIn is a good platform to meet people you are interested in. This can be useful if, for example, you saw someone on a virtual panel, in a meeting or video, or if you read an article that you found interesting.
- \* **You can practise with your friends or family beforehand.** You can do this by taking on different roles: someone takes on the role of the person you want to talk to and you practise a possible dialogue. With practice, it will become easier. You can practise different situations: you meet someone in a lift, at a climate change event or on a panel.
- \* **It is a good idea to have a business card.** It can be physical although this will require a financial outlay. Another option is to have a virtual card that can easily be shared via mobile or read with a QR code, or you can also use LinkedIn. This card should include your name and contact information. This can be your phone number, e-mail address or a social media profile.

- ✱ **If you know someone, you can ask to be introduced.** Sometimes, however, we will be alone so it is important to be confident and strike up a conversation.
- ✱ **You can start the conversation with a greeting** and continue with your name and the organization you belong to. If you do not belong to an organization, you can say what your topics of interest are and ask the other person for their name and what they are interested in. You can also identify in advance who will be at the event and the specific people you would like to connect with. For each of these people, you can prepare a couple of questions that they might find interesting and that will help get the conversation rolling informally.
- ✱ **Be open to new ideas.** When networking, you are going to meet new ideas that may be different from your own. Do not rule out any possible contact because of that; first check if there are common aspects.
- ✱ **Exchange ideas respectfully.** Always exchange ideas within a framework of respect because, after a good dialogue and exchange, you will better understand if this is a person you can keep in touch with or with whom you want to work.
- ✱ **Be patient,** networking can take a long time.
- ✱ **Having the contact details of a person will not automatically create benefits for you: you will have to cultivate a relationship.** The rule for networkers is to follow up within 24 to 48 hours. E-mails are a quick way to do this but this depends on the contact you have obtained; it can also be a phone call or via a social network.





## The importance of networking

I am Kantuta Conde and I form part of the Centro de Estudios Multidisciplinarios Aymara (CEM-Aymara) and the Red de Jóvenes Indígenas de América Latina y el Caribe. I would like to tell you about my networking experience.

It all started with my participation in the **Fifteenth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**, a global gathering of indigenous organizations that allowed me to meet other organizations. My first contact was the Global Caucus and, in order to start our conversations, we used the rights of indigenous children and youth as an area of common ground. To my surprise, the Global Caucus had an Indigenous Youth Network at the Latin American and Caribbean level. Through them, I was able to connect with that network and begin to undertake actions at the community level, as well as participate in an exchange of information and experiences regionally.

From this experience, which is still ongoing because we never stop strengthening our networks, I would like to tell you about some situations that may be useful or motivating for you:

- I was able to identify my first Global Caucus contact because he spoke at the event and mentioned the young people of Bolivia. At the end of his talk, I approached him and suddenly other young people who heard us talking came up as well. Remember to be attentive to the speeches.
- Once I had made contact with these young people, we were very supportive of each other during the Permanent Forum sessions and, after the Forum, we continued supporting each other through joint campaigns. All the organizations were complementing each other to broaden the impact of our actions. Networking has helped us with our goals.
- We consolidate our contacts by creating a list with information from each person. We are continuing to fill the list with more contacts: in fact, on the website of the Indigenous Youth Network for our region, we have a form where you can take notes and continue to strengthen your network of contacts while participating in the actions that we have been able to implement.



# 11 Building alliances for climate action

Through networking, you can often go further and establish an alliance that enables you to increase the reach of your climate cause. In this regard, we recommend you read the following experience.

Here are some tips from other young activists on how to work on building alliances.

- ✱ **Set common goals.** On the basis of issues that unite you around the climate cause, you can set objectives that will direct your efforts in the context of an alliance.
- ✱ **Negotiate goals.** In an alliance, you often have to negotiate the aspects to focus on in order to achieve the different causes of the people or organizations. That is why it is important to negotiate on how to proceed without giving up your cause.
- ✱ **Set realistic deadlines in an alliance.** Always remember that goals need to be met, so it is important that deadlines are realistic.
- ✱ **Be sure to send minutes on the creation of the alliance,** including objectives, goals and timelines that were agreed upon. Such documents may receive comments and feedback that will improve the alliance. You can also record each of the actions of the alliance.

✱ **You can include more people or organizations,** as long as all parties agree.

✱ **Reach out to the people who are being affected by the issue your climate cause addresses.** These people know the problems very well, so they can form an essential part of the alliance and contribute to proposals and actions.

You can read more about how to work on alliances in the [Advocacy Toolkit](#).





### Alliance for youth-led climate action

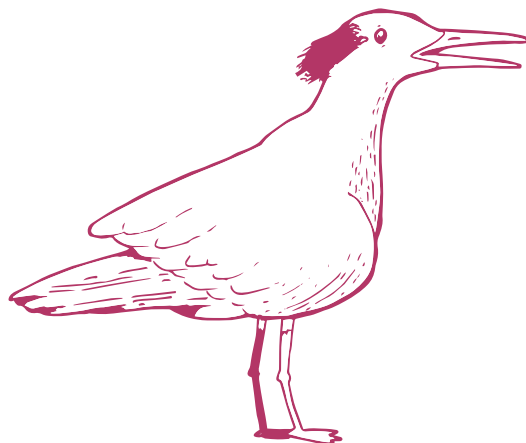
My name is Paloma Costa and I want to tell you about my experience of building alliances at the Latin American and Caribbean level to create a network of young people from Latin America and the Caribbean and to organize a regional youth consultation to identify the key elements of climate action.

As these were regional alliances, I started by identifying profiles through my social networks. I also identified some through recommendations from other people. The interactions basically took place via WhatsApp.

Once I was able to connect with the different people, we began to talk about the issues and, using a Deep Democracy method, we were able to set an objective, collectively, among all of us. This whole process was virtual.

I think the main challenge we had in moving forward with the alliance was the differences in the profiles of the people who were going to participate. Diversity was essential to the whole process but trying to bring so many different profiles together was a challenge, as some were more active or reactive, while others took longer to feel confident of participating. I think we were able to move forward by understanding that diversity is necessary and by having dialogues and conversations in which everyone could contribute.

Now we are consolidating the alliance but, if I could give you some general advice, it is that it is important to define previous agreements, establish deadlines and keep the whole process open.



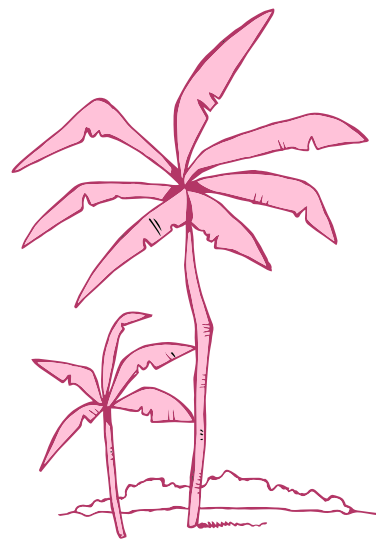
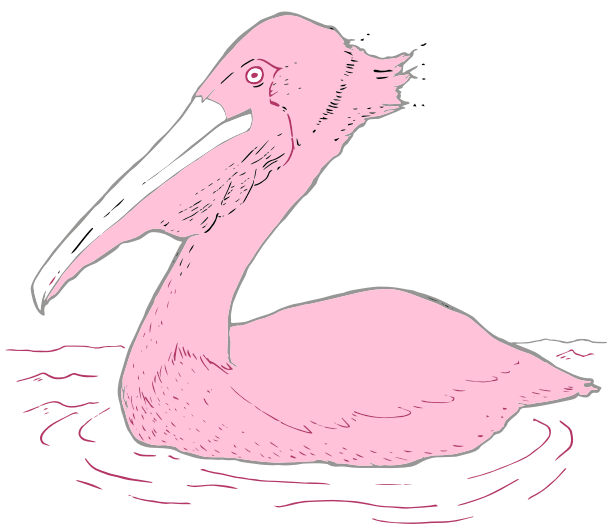


Here are a few extra tips for working in partnership with the press.

✱ **If you want to attract more attention from people in the media, it is important that you sell your cause in a special way.** You can include big narratives, trends, stories that are easy to tell, anecdotes that are interesting to everyone and have the potential to be remembered, or something that relates to other existing news.

✱ **Be clear about the reason for contacting the media.** Set a clear goal and establish what you hope to achieve. Also decide on what type of media you prefer. While social media is very important these days, you can also reach different audiences more broadly through radio, print and television.

✱ **Try to be brief and concise.** People working in the media normally have very busy schedules and very little time for conversation. It is advisable that you prepare the ideas you want to convey beforehand, so that you do not forget anything.

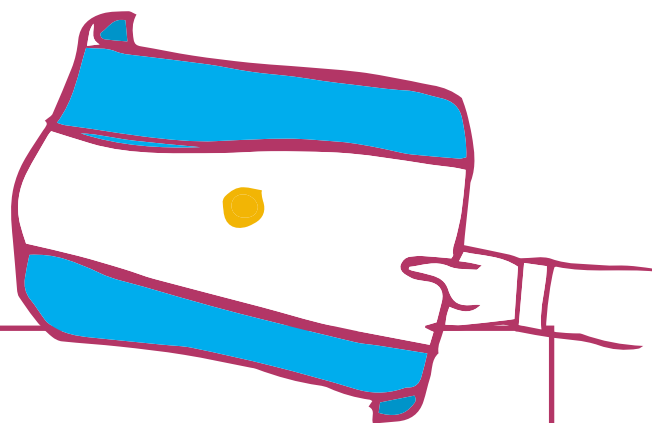


You can read more about how to write a press release in the [Advocacy Toolkit](#).

✱ **Reach out to the media to inform them about your cause.** The most common way is a press release, which is a summary of your story or cause. It is used to gain media attention.

✱ **Invite the media to your activities as part of your cause.** You can do this publicly through social media, or you can contact them by e-mail or visit their offices, if they are in your community. If people from the media attend the activities, you will have a greater reach.

✱ **Always be honest and avoid changing your messages just to gain media attention.** It is better for people not to hear it than to pick up misinformation about you and your work.



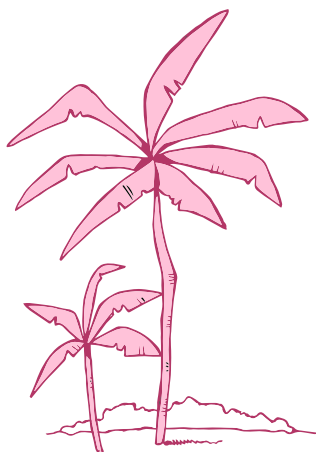
### Developing human connections with the media.

I am Eyal Weintraub, a young activist from Argentina and a member of Youth for Climate. I want to tell you how I have been able to work with the media to promote the message of the climate and environmental cause. The media outlet I have worked with is [Perfil](#), which has social networks, a virtual and physical newspaper, different magazines and a television channel. It all started because the journalist who coordinates issues related to ecology and the environment approached us to find out more about an action we were carrying out, since we had published a press release with our contact details on it

Based on this first interaction, we started to chat to answer questions and share content. We usually chatted via WhatsApp or a phone call. In the beginning, when there wasn't so much trust, I tried not to send audios because, if the other person is very busy, they can be annoying and slow down communication.

The main obstacle we encountered was getting a constant flow of publicity rather than a one-off thing. For this it is important to develop a human connection with the journalist. It is essential to decide who in your organization or group will be the one to establish that link, including meeting in person and talking about how you can work in a way that is mutually beneficial. Remember that we should not just seek to work with environmental journalists.

Through this interaction and alliance-building, we have been able to publicize all the mobilizations and mass events that we do. We have been able to publish opinion articles on national issues and thus influence the public agenda. This has also enabled us to spread the word about Youth for Climate, as they even offered us a column in which to write every two weeks.



# Tips for taking care of your mental health

Climate activism is very exciting but it can also become tedious and we can get confused, climate anxious or demotivated. The important thing is to know what to do when this happens.

Climate anxiety or eco-anxiety is described as the chronic fear of environmental ruin and a recent psychological disorder affecting an increasing number of people who are concerned about the climate change crisis.<sup>3</sup>



**You are not alone.** You can often feel alone in your activism, especially in the beginning. It is important to always keep in mind that there are a lot of young people doing the same thing. You can read their stories and even get in touch with them. You can also create a space for dialogue in which you can share these experiences.



**Remember that you are part of a movement that stands on the shoulders of others.** Young people and adolescents have already made previous efforts and advances that support your activism today. Do not be overwhelmed by the extent of what needs to be done. Just move towards the goals you have set for yourself. Represent the space adequately so that it will prevail in time and future generations will have more opportunities.



**Do not take full responsibility.** When you are the person driving a cause, you may come to believe that you have to do everything but you have to learn that you should not take all the responsibility. You can team up and work together. Everyone has a set of skills and abilities that can be helpful to the cause.



**Recognize what is happening to you.** A good step is to acknowledge what is happening to you, be approachable and take the time to resolve the situation.





**Remember to breathe.** Frustration or anxiety can often make us forget how to act. When that happens to you, practise breathing exercises. Try to focus all your energies on breathing, closing your eyes and letting your mind go blank. This can help you calm down.





**Seek support.** Try to seek support from someone close to you who you can talk to and share how you feel. Personal support and encouragement are two very important elements to continue.

<sup>3</sup> Clayton, S, et al., 'Mental Health and Our Changing Climate: Impacts, Implications, and Guidance', American Psychological Association, and ecoAmerica, Washington, D.C., 2017, <<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2017/03/mental-health-climate.pdf>>, accessed 15 May 2021.

 **Existing resources.** Remember that there are different resources available that can support you on this journey of climate activism. You can visit the UNICEF website or also approach their country offices. They can even support you by putting you in contact with other young people. You can also look at resources of the [World Health Organization](#).

 **Enjoy opportunities for rest and relaxation.** Such opportunities are a right for children and adolescents. After a long day of activism, it is important to have somewhere to unwind doing your favourite hobbies. You can also have spaces with your friends outside of activism. It is always healthy to laugh and share fun moments.

 **Separate your activism from your personal life.** It is important to focus on your personal life and your development. Try not to think about activism when you are engaged in other areas of your life.

 **Professional help.** It is okay to seek professional help because that is putting your mental health first.



# Additional resources

[Acción climática local: una guía para jóvenes de América Latina](#) [Local Climate Action: A guide for young people in Latin America]: was created with the aim of building the capacity of young people in Latin America to promote climate action. It has a lot of useful resources for those who are just starting out. Available in Spanish.

[Advocacy Toolkit](#): Full of ideas, tools and inspiring stories. The resources it includes can be used to undertake concrete and effective advocacy actions. It has been specifically designed to lobby for the right to education but most of the ideas are also useful for climate action. Available in Spanish, English and French.

[Climate Change Toolkit for Students and Youth](#): Aims to provide resources for those working to address this gap through participatory community education. Available in English.

[Climate Change: Youth Guide to Action](#): Aims to inspire, inform and engage more people in taking action on climate change. Available in Portuguese and English.

[Engaged and heard! Guidelines on adolescent participation and civic engagement](#): Provides information on the what, how and why of adolescent participation and civic engagement. Available in English and Spanish.

[Guía para entablar conversaciones climáticas](#) [Climate Conversation Toolkit]: Developed to provide an accessible methodology to facilitate climate change conversations among people on a day-to-day basis to create communities organized to take action and demand timely action from responsible sectors. Available in Spanish.

[Manual de Incidencia Juvenil](#) [Youth Advocacy Manual]: Created to provide advice on advocacy from the experience of adolescents in Latin America. Available in Spanish.

[Manual sobre incidencia pública](#) [Advocacy Manual]: This tool complements concrete public advocacy actions that seek to generate changes in public policies, promoting justice, respect for human rights and all the values that sustain a democratic culture. Available in Spanish.

[Plan 12](#): this is a fourmodule course that allows you to learn ways of creating and strengthening projects. It can be useful if you are interested in developing a climate action project at the community level. Available in Spanish.

[Voices of Youth](#): A digital community created by and for young people, where they can share information and experiences related to different issues, mainly climate action. You will find articles written by young people and adolescents on issues related to climate change. Available in English, Spanish, Arabic and French.

[Youth Advocacy Guide](#): This guide is specific to advocacy, (but if you are just starting out there are many things you can use!). It guides you through the process of factfinding, planning and building momentum, as well as engaging in policy development and making individual lifestyle choices. Available in English, French and Portuguese. As of September 2021, the Spanish version was still in production.



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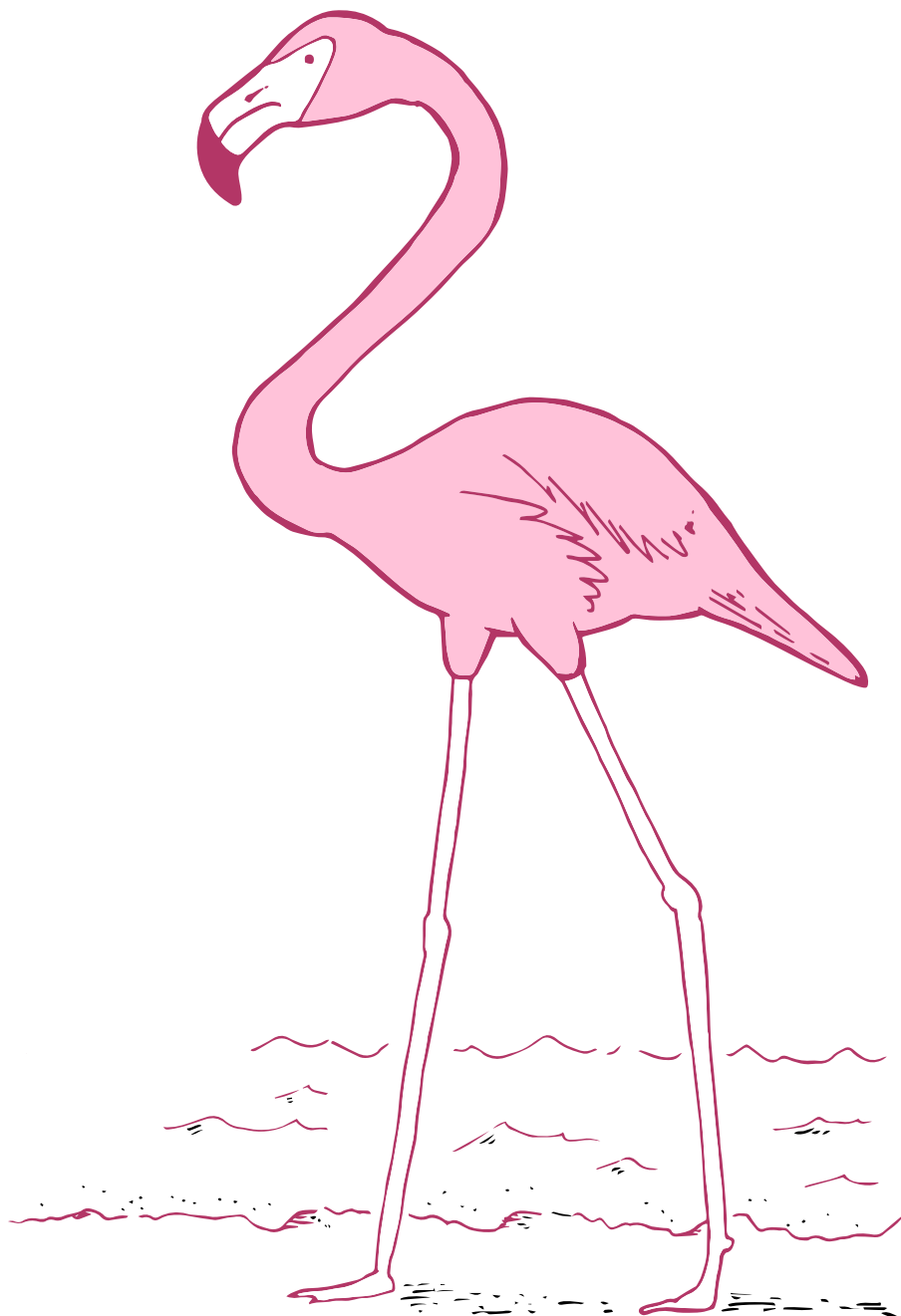
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