

Press Release from Saving Our Planet: Youth Demand Seats at COP25

“Young people are 25% of the population, and 100% of the future” is the message I heard countless times at COP24. It’s time for this message to be translated into action. **Youth must be part of the negotiations determining our future, and the future of our precious planet. This is why I am launching an international petition to demand that each country includes at least 2 young people (age 16-25) on their negotiating delegations starting at COP25, and beyond.**

My name Joelle Moses. I am a Canadian university student, working as a ‘Youth Engagement Specialist for an NGO called Saving Our Planet, and a delegate to COP24. I’ve been working as a climate activist for a few years now, and share a common frustration with other youth activists, who are fed up with our leaders for taking insufficient action, while excluding us from the most important decisions of our lifetimes.

The COP conferences have been going on for 24 years now, yet still, global emissions have not decreased. Over and over again, our political leaders profess the need for increased ambition, while neglecting to take the action they call for, and that they promised under the Paris Agreement.

In response to the failures of our politicians, young people around the globe are rising, mobilizing, and leading the change that our world desperately needs. At COP24, I’ve been inspired by the motivation and capacity of my fellow young peers. **Without economic or political incentives holding us back, young people do not just call for increased action, *we do it.*** However, while young people were present as observers at COP24, we are almost entirely excluded from the decision-making processes at the negotiation table.

At this table, leaders continue to hinder meaningful progress, leaving the Paris Agreement, and the future of our planet, on the brink of collapse. Those who hold the power and at these negotiations are failing their people, with our entire planet’s stability on the line. Evidentially, it’s time to reconsider the processes that allow for such inaction. Most importantly, it’s time for some new voices around the negotiation table. As uttered by a delegate from South Korea, **“We cannot deliver the same responses, and expect different results”**. Let this be the last COP driven by leaders who are [disregarding scientific](#) warning bells, and knowingly propelling us towards global catastrophe.

Mandating two young people per country on each negotiating delegation will bring 386 new voices to the negotiating table: voices who don’t just want to talk, but who want to take real action. We aim to present this petition to the [UN 2019 Climate Summit](#) in September 2019, which the Secretary General recently called for. This petition is in-line with the UN’s new [Youth2030 strategy](#), which pledges to meaningfully include youth in all UN processes.

All organizations and individuals are encouraged to sign and share this petition.

Media Contacts:

Joelle Moses • Youth Engagement Specialist, SOP • joelle.moses1@gmail.com

Stephan Savarese • President and co-founder • StephanS@SavingOurPlanet.net

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Administrative Information:

- Joelle Moses attended COP24 as a 'Youth Engagement Specialist' for 'Saving Our Planet' and as a delegate of 'Sauvons Le Climat'
- '[Saving Our Planet](#)' is an International NGO registered in France as a public interest non-profit, under Association Loi 1901, Registration Number W751235109.

Science Ignored by Policymakers:

- On 8 October 2018, the UN IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a [stark warning](#) that global warming must be kept to a maximum of 1.5C.
- Without urgent action there is a high risk of extreme heat, drought, fires and floods, leading to crop failure, sea level rise and poverty for hundreds of millions of people. The IPCC said that to keep global warming to a maximum of 1.5C, the world needs to achieve Net-Zero CO2 emissions by 2050.
- The latest [UNEP Report](#) reveals that the ambition in national implementation plans needs to increase by a *fivefold* if we are going to keep global warming below 1.5C and keep our planet conducive to life.
- [Leaders at COP24](#) have blocked these scientific findings from being included in the Paris Rulebook
- Currently, only 3 out of 184 countries have pledged to enhance their NDCs, and the funds needed to materialize existing NDCs are [direly insufficient](#). Global leaders are knowingly propelling us towards global catastrophe, and time is running out.

Petition Logistics:

- This petition urges the UNFCCC to institute a mandate that all state delegations must include at least 2 young people (age 16-25) on their negotiation delegations to COP25, and all climate conferences in the future
- We propose that each country may exercise sovereignty in their selection process of youth delegates, but recommend that they consult with Civil Society Organizations to select representative, diverse, and qualified youth delegates