

SIKILIZA SAUTI YETU

YOUTH DECLARATION 2025

SAUTI YETU, MKATABA WETU: THE KENYA NATIONAL YOUTH CLIMATE
COMPACT

ADOPTED AT THE 1ST YOUTH SUMMIT ON CLIMATE ACTION, 7-8
AUGUST, KENYA INSTITUTE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION [KISE], NAIROBI –
KENYA



Endorsed by Organization of Africa Youth

Preamble

We, the youth of Kenya, gathered under the banner of the **National Youth Climate Innovation Summit**, held on **7th-8th August** 2025, in the presence of key stakeholders from the government, non-state actors, the private sector, and community organizations. We issue this declaration as a unified call to action. As the generation that will bear the heaviest burden of climate change, we call for structured, meaningful, and accountable engagement in shaping Kenya's climate future and her role in the global agenda. This Declaration outlines our shared aspirations, the challenges we face, the actions we demand, and the commitments we make to drive meaningful change. It is aligned with national, regional, and global policy frameworks, including the Climate Change Act 2023, Kenya Vision 2030, the National Climate Change Action Plan 2023 - 2027, Agenda 2063, Paris Agreement, and the Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs).



Context

Kenya is a beautiful and diverse country rich in natural heritage, yet it faces numerous environmental challenges that collectively threaten the well-being of its people, their health and ecosystems. Inadequate waste management systems have left many neighborhoods with inconsistent garbage collection and poor recycling structures. A cross-section of stakeholders including the corporates, have been slow in integrating and implementing environmentally friendly practices that are sustainable despite the urgent need to reduce pollution.

Youth-led initiatives have the legal backing but often lack access to the necessary resources to make a lasting impact. Funding requirements aimed at facilitating youth involvement and action structurally lock out small and promising initiatives by youth in their diversity. Furthermore, as a consequence of no dedicated youth positions in strategic policy and investment spaces, young people continue to be underrepresented in key decision-making processes on climate change and environmental management despite forming the bulk of Kenya's population. This leads to communities that are disconnected from climate action conversations and efforts. Conclusively, while the **Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR)** policies are in place, they remain largely theoretical, with few stakeholders fully operationalizing their responsibilities.

Shared Principles

This declaration is anchored in the following principles:

- Climate Justice
- Intergenerational Equity
- Participation and Inclusion
- Transparency and Accountability
- Partnerships for Impact



The Declaration

We issue this Declaration as a direct call to action to the National Government, including the Treasury and the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. We also call upon the Nairobi City County Government, particularly the Department of Environment, Climate Change, Water, and Natural Resources, as well as development partners, donors, and the private sector.

1. Youth Leadership and Climate Governance

Issue: Youth are largely excluded from decision-making in national and county climate structures, reducing their ability to inform and influence key policies and deliberate resource allocation.

Call to Action

- Operationalize Section 7 National Climate Change Act, 2023 by mandating youth (representation in the National Climate Change Council (NCCC).
- Allocate at least 30% representation for youth and marginalized groups in County Climate Change Committees.
- Recognition and integration of Kenya Youth Climate Advisory Council (KYCAC) by relevant Government Ministries, Department and Agencies [MDAs] including; National Youth Sector Working Group under the NYC, Council of Governors, National Climate Change Council, Coordination of FLLoCCA Program, and Office
- of the Auditor General
- Nairobi River Regeneration, to prioritize supporting youth participation and initiatives in the circular economy, gender equality in the sector, and a community centered Programme.
- Meaningful, consistent, and structured inclusion of youth in their diversity in the formulation, review, implementation and evaluation of environmental and climate- related policies. This includes involving youth representatives in technical working groups, advisory committees, Climate Change Council, stakeholder consultations and public hearings.



Climate Financing and Technical Support

Issue: Youth-led organizations lack strategic voice and agency to facilitate access to policy spaces and climate financing due to restrictive and bureaucratic eligibility requirements and institutional capacity gaps.

Call to Action

- The Office of the Auditor General , Controller of Budget and National Assembly to disseminate Financing Locally Led Climate Action (FLLoCCA) annual reports
- The World Bank and National Treasury to review FLLoCCA CSOs Engagement Mechanisms on; coordination of the CSO sector, guideline for County Youth engagement, ringfencing of youth funds at County level, publicize FLLoCCA reports and development of engagement and accountability strategy in line with UNFCCC climate finance guidelines
- Establish a National Youth Green Research and Innovation Fund and operationalize County Climate Change Funds supported by government, donors, and private sector co-financing.
- Embed climate finance literacy, awareness creation and bankable county-level youth technical capacity building and green skilling programming.



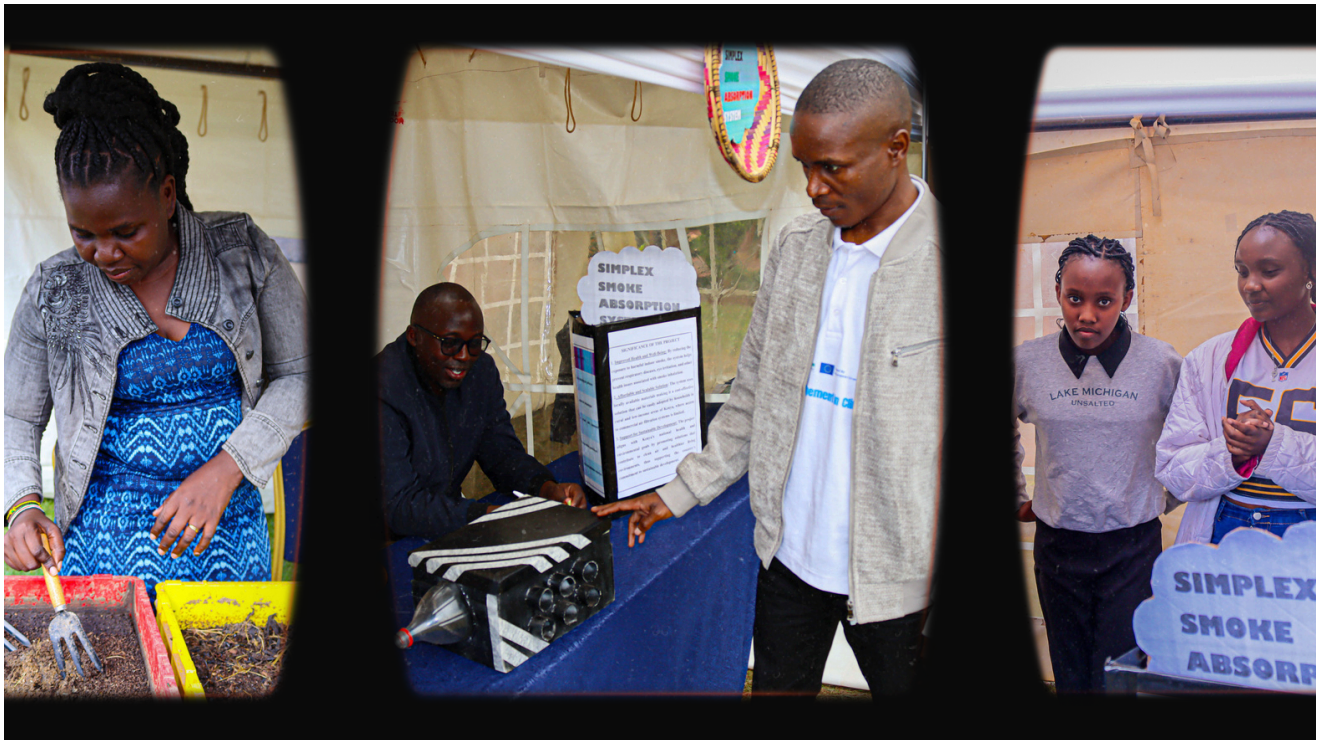
CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Issue: Inadequate infrastructure, limited youth-private sector partnerships, and poor enforcement of waste regulations undermine sustainable waste management.

Call to Action

- Create Public-Youth-Private Partnerships (PYPPs) to operationalize Material Recovery Facilities (MRFs) and local recycling hubs in urban areas.
- Enforce Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) by mandating producer partnerships with youth-led waste initiatives.
- Integrate climate and waste education in school curricula per Article 34 of the Sustainable Waste Management Act.

- Mandate National Land Commission and relevant agencies to implement 2022 Commitment in Bottom Up Economic Transformation Agenda [BETA] to provide circular economy waste separation and recycling sites/infrastructure.
- County Governments to ensure accountability in waste management by providing services to all parts of the towns and cities including informal settlements.



DIGITAL INNOVATIONS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Issue: Kenya's climate change mitigation and waste management efforts are hindered by limited access to innovative digital solutions, resulting in inefficient resource use, increased greenhouse gas emissions, and inadequate waste management practices.

Call to Action

- Implement funding, grants, tax incentives mechanisms and other resources to support youth-led digital innovation initiatives that develop and deploy climate-smart solutions for waste management and climate change mitigation.
- Offer training, mentorship, and capacity-building programs to equip youth with the green and digital skills and knowledge needed to develop and implement digital climate solutions, including data analytics, Artificial Intelligence, and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies.
- Implement relevant policies and regulations that support the development and deployment of digital climate innovations, including data protection, cybersecurity, and intellectual property protection frameworks.
- Support innovative youth initiatives around integration of technology in waste management and awareness raising efforts



YOUTH-LED CLIMATE ACTIVISM AND ADVOCACY

Issue: Kenyan youth are disproportionately affected by climate change, yet their voices and perspectives are often excluded from climate policy and decision-making processes, limiting the effectiveness of climate action initiatives.

Call to Action

- Ensure meaningful representation and participation of youth in climate governance structures, including national and county-level climate change committees, to ensure that youth perspectives and needs are integrated into climate policy and decision-making.
- Provide training, mentorship, and capacity-building programs to empower youth to effectively advocate for climate action, including skills development in advocacy, communication, and leadership.
- Support and amplify youth-led climate activism and advocacy initiatives, including providing platforms for youth to share their experiences, perspectives, and solutions, and promoting intergenerational collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- We demand for an end to conflicts, gangs and Gender Based Violence (GBV) in waste management ecosystem
- The county governments ring-fence 1% of the County Department of climate budget to strengthen capacity of Ward and Sub County Environmental officers and offices on meaningful community engagement
- The county governments and youth to co-create, plan and run environmental protection and climate change sensitization activities collaboratively.

CLIMATE-RESILIENT YOUTH LIVELIHOODS AND ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Issue: Climate change is eroding livelihoods and economic opportunities for Kenyan youth, particularly in climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, and tourism, threatening their economic stability and well-being.

Call to Action

- Provide targeted training, resources, and support to youth to develop climate-resilient livelihoods, including climate-smart agriculture, sustainable fisheries, and eco-tourism practices.
- Provide access to climate finance, grants, and economic opportunities that support youth-led climate-resilient enterprises and businesses, including green entrepreneurship and job creation initiatives.
- Implement policies that support climate-resilient youth livelihoods and economic empowerment, including policies that promote youth access to productive resources, credit facilities, and markets, and protect youth rights and interests in climate-sensitive sectors.



Recommendations

To the National Government of Kenya

- Institutionalize youth representation in all climate governance structures.
- Allocate public funds to youth-led climate solutions through inclusive budget processes.
- Enforce national and county policies and laws that mandate waste segregation and recycling partnerships.

To County Governments

- Implement mainstreamed youth priorities into County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs).
- Build the technical capacities of youth and enable them to access the FLLoCA and County Climate Change Funds
- Establish functional Climate Change Committees across at County, Sub-County and Ward levels
- Subsidise garbage collection costs for youth and young women microenterprises in waste management

To the National Youth Council

- To revamp National Youth Council's Climate Action Sector Working Group to provide a robust platform for youth participation
- To advocate for sustainable, legal and sufficient land access to support youth engagement in circular economy



To Development Partners and Donors

- Align climate funding with the principle of Nothing for Youth Without Youth.
- Support long-term, core funding for youth-led CSOs and innovation initiatives
- Support and partner with Kenya Youth Climate Advisory Council (KYCAC) to achieve its mandate



To the Private Sector

- Lobby corporates to establish Climate Action components in their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policies
- Invest in climate-tech incubators targeting youth-led startups.
- Support green job pathways through mentorships, apprenticeships, and procurement programs.
- Fully implement Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) mandates in partnership with youth-led groups

Youth Commitments

Our commitment is grounded in the belief that no meaningful progress can be made without the full and meaningful participation of youth. We, the youth of Kenya, commit to:

- Mobilize our communities through climate education, digital campaigns, and community projects.
- Hold government and private actors accountable through data, civic audits, and public engagement
- Conceptualize and create innovative and inclusive solutions that serve people and the planet
- Mobilize our communities through climate education, digital campaigns, and community projects.
- Commit to work together with, civil society organizations, private sector, government institutions, international organizations and other stakeholders to amplify our voices and establish our agency.