

COP 28: 30 November – 12 December 2023

Expo City, Dubai, UAE

Our Voice. Our Future.

What YMCA expects from COP 28



YMCA delegates
set clear priorities
for the 28th annual
United Nations
climate meeting



Table of Contents

- 03 Introduction
- 04 YMCA at COP
- 05 Goals: Fossil fuels; Just Transition; Youth Voices
- 06 YMCA Vision 2030
- 7-9 Goal #1: Phasing out fossil fuels
- 10-11 Goal #2: Ensuring a Just Transition
- 12 Goal #3: Youth voices
- 13 Our projects
- 14 Meet our delegates



Introduction



The global YMCA Movement spans **120** countries and **12,000** local associations. It employs around **90,000** staff and is supported by **920,000** volunteers.

Its vision is a world where every person lives in harmony with self, society and creation. Its mission is to empower young people and communities worldwide to build a just, sustainable, equitable and inclusive world where every person can thrive in body, mind and spirit. We empower young people and communities to be and to lead the change they want to be.

Its quest for a Sustainable Planet is the third of four Pillars of YMCA Vision 2030. Approximately **70** National YMCAs worldwide are currently working on environment-related issues. Though we are updating our data, pre-Covid YMCA worldwide ran an estimated:

By the numbers

Environment-related programmes



Climate youth-led solutions projects in 2021-22



People reached

People reached



YMCA at COP



Why is the YMCA attending?

As one of the oldest and largest youth organisations in the world, the YMCA raises the voice of young people locally, nationally and globally.

The YMCA has been at the last seven COPs. COP is the global platform at which it will say, on behalf of all young people, that climate change is an existential threat to the future of young people worldwide.



YMCA is advocating for:

- 1.Reducing dependence on fossil fuel and all greenhouse gases, embracing renewables while enhancing energy efficiency, and broadening global energy access.
- 2.Promoting a just and inclusive transition into a cleaner and greener economy for marginalised or at-risk communities.
- 3.Promoting youth visibility and decision-making power at regional, national, and international levels, advocating for the voice of future generations of earth.

The YMCA plans to:

1. Increase awareness among policymakers and business leaders of our advocacy goals.
2. Develop and cultivate new relationships with potential partners, stakeholders and funders.
3. Collaborate with our partners offering leadership opportunities leading up to and at COP 28.

YMCA does green things, and at COP, it uses its voice to call on others to do green things, too.



YMCA goals for COP



The YMCA delegates from six continents head to Dubai with numerous defined objectives. YMCA wishes to see COP:

- 1 **Send a clear message** for the phased elimination of fossil fuels and all greenhouse gases by no later than 2050, including the phased halving of fossil fuel use by 2030, with higher-income nations leading the way and establishing ambitious targets for renewables, energy efficiency and expanded energy access.
- 2 **Secure agreement** to launch a successful global ‘stocktake’, which can clear the path for immediate implementation of current Nationally Determined Contributions through sector-specific policies and measures, particularly within the domains of energy, nature, and food systems.
- 3 **Reinforce a Loss and Damage Fund**, securing commitments for new funding and advances in alternative resource streams.
- 4 **Take decisions** for the Global Goal on Adaptation, as outlined during COP 27.
- 5 **Secure commitment** to increasing public financial support from developed nations beyond the USD 100 billion annual threshold, aligning with the financial requirements of developing countries.
- 6 **Ensure that all financial flows** are aligned with the overarching objectives of addressing climate change.
- 7 **Propose a clear plan of action** for the Just Transition to a green economy, ensuring that no one is left behind as communities adopt climate-neutral policies.



YMCA Vision 2030

In July 2022 the YMCA made history. At the 20th World Council, YMCAs across the globe voted to adopt YMCA Vision 2030 — our first-ever shared strategy and plan.

Vision 2030 serves as a roadmap for every YMCA’s strategic goals. Closely aligned to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, Vision 2030 empowers communities and young people worldwide to build a just, sustainable, equitable and inclusive world. Under the ‘Sustainable Planet’ Pillar of Vision 2030, our three strategic goals are:



Locally

The YMCA will take steps towards becoming a climate-neutral Movement, building a roadmap that will allow all YMCAs to make measurable & meaningful progress in their policies and practices based on local realities.



Community-wide

The YMCA inspires its members, volunteers, staff and community stakeholders to champion environmental responsibility, while also integrating climate education components for young people and communities worldwide.



Globally

The YMCA will champion global solutions and policies to support a Just Transition to a Green Economy, making sure that no one is left behind as we work together towards the regeneration and protection of our planet.

To meet these goals, the YMCA must:

- Increase its capacity towards decarbonization
- Connect and build resources with stakeholders and partners to help with a net zero strategy
- Enhance programmes to include climate education components
- Stay up to date on scientific and policy information directly relevant towards climate education and green jobs
- Advocate to ensure nobody is left behind as we work towards the regeneration of our planet.



Goal #1

Phase out

fossil fuels



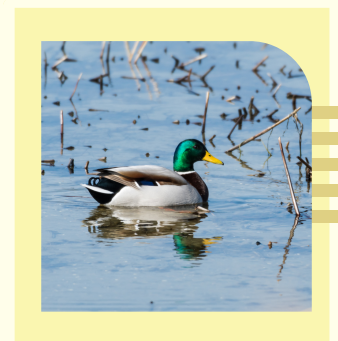
YMCA advocacy priorities for COP 28

We call on leaders to agree on a just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels, embracing renewables while elevating energy efficiency and broadening global energy access.

I. Why we are calling for change

The world is experiencing accelerating climate change, marked by soaring temperatures, extreme weather patterns, and irreparable ecological change. This is primarily due to greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels, methane, and other gases. The toll of extracting and burning these fuels is stark, manifesting as air, land, and water pollution, habitat destruction, and ecosystem degradation, with far-reaching consequences for all.

Young people will be disproportionately impacted by climate-related decisions, and marginalised communities will continue to bear the brunt of these impacts, underscoring a moral imperative to rectify these injustices and safeguard the rights and dignity of all, especially the most vulnerable. Reconceptualizing our relationship with energy is vital for the prosperity and success of all peoples and ecosystems across the planet. The best time for advocacy on this issue was decades ago. **The second-best time for advocacy on this issue is now.**





Phase out fossil fuels

(continued)

II. Phasing out fossil fuels

- We call for the immediate establishment of ambitious, science-based targets to phase out the use of fossil fuels globally. This includes gradual but accelerated transitioning away from coal, oil, and eventually natural gas as primary energy sources, with phase-out approaches starting in high-income countries before low-to-medium-income countries.
- We ask for an end to all subsidies for fossil fuels and the redirection of such funds towards clean energy initiatives and social programmes that support affected workers and communities.
- We believe that a responsible transition must invest in retraining and job placement for workers in the fossil fuel industry, ensuring that no one is left behind and ensuring that Rare Earth Metal (REM) mining does not duplicate or exacerbate harm across communities and ecosystems.

III. Accelerating the use of renewable energy

- We ask for greater investment in research, development, and implementation of renewable energy solutions which is required to make clean energy more affordable and accessible to all.
- We call for the modernization and integration of energy grids worldwide, making them more resilient, efficient, and capable of integrating renewable sources seamlessly.





//// Fossil fuels ////

(continued)

IV. Affordability and access

- We firmly believe that the transition to renewable energy will create jobs, spur economic growth, and reduce energy costs for consumers. A sustainable future is also an economically vibrant one.
- We call for international cooperation in the sharing of renewable energy technologies and best practices, ensuring that no nation is left behind in this transition.
- We state that access to clean & affordable energy is a fundamental human right. We advocate that nations with higher GDPs should extend access to renewable energy towards marginalised communities globally.



Conclusion

At this critical moment for the future of our planet's history, we need bold, decisive action. By committing to phasing-out fossil fuels and associated subsidies, accompanied by ambitious targets for renewable energy, we can mitigate the worst impacts of climate change, protect our environment, and create a more equitable and sustainable world for future generations.

We urge leaders, policymakers, and citizens worldwide to endorse and implement the principles outlined in this manifesto. Together, we can forge a path to a brighter, more sustainable future for all. Our commitment to this cause is unwavering, and we stand united in our resolve to make it a reality.





Goal #2

Ensuring a Just Transition



The YMCA believes that we should all commit and take action for the protection and regeneration of our planet, preparing for a Just Transition to a world where humans live in full harmony with nature

Why a Just Transition?

Addressing the critical issues of climate change and environmental degradation is pivotal due to their direct impact on reduced productivity, job losses, and inequality. We stress the disproportionate impact these challenges have on the most vulnerable and marginalised segments of society, including our young people. The Covid-19 pandemic further exacerbated these issues. Policies that aim to mitigate and adapt to climate change must bear in mind the frontline and marginalised populations that are disproportionately impacted, as well as communities that rely on fossil fuels as they transition to a green economy.

Furthermore, by being proactive in ensuring that nobody is left behind in our global transition to a Green Economy, we have better chances of having these policies stand the test of time.





Our asks to policymakers



▶ Just Transition definition

- Ensure the definition of a just transition includes nature positivity and implementation plans in partnership with local communities and indigenous peoples.
- World Leaders must swiftly agree and implement local frameworks which include indigenous perspectives to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030.
- Governments should recognize the interconnected challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, crafting policies that address both issues.
- Having a worldwide objective focused on achieving a net-positive result for nature by 2030 is essential to ensure a future where humanity lives in harmony with our planet's ecological limits, promoting a nature-positive future.

▶ Climate finance

- A 2023 solidarity package must include new and additional resources for the Loss and Damage Fund created at COP27. We hope to see a doubling of resources for adaptation and funds for early warning systems.
- The Just Transition Work Programme should provide guidance to national governments on how to design such pathways in a just and equitable manner, with the full participation of all stakeholders and enhanced international cooperation.

▶ Reskilling and green skills

- Green Skills must be at the heart of young people's education, prioritising development capacity towards green jobs and sectors.
- Inclusive reskilling schemes with a human-centric approach should be developed for communities dependent on fossil fuels transitioning to greener economies, ensuring that the local economy can thrive after the transition. For those who cannot be reskilled appropriate subsidies should be offered.
- Capacity and development for current and future workforces must be inclusive and must prioritise the needs of vulnerable groups, as mentioned by the International Labour Organization (ILO).



Goal #3

Youth voice and

decision making

▶▶▶▶▶ Why youth-led solutions (YSL)? ◀◀◀◀◀

Young people have many skills and answers to meet today’s challenges. Rather than being told what to do; they must be empowered to bring their own solutions where the world's leaders have often failed them.

YMCA associations are deeply rooted and trusted by their communities, empowering the most marginalised young people and encouraging them to lead the charge for change. The YMCA offers an unprecedented ability to 'scale up' initiatives in multiple countries, regions, and communities.

Our asks to policymakers:

Invest in YSL



Empower young people

Prioritise youth-led solutions and put critical resources, such as seed funding, directly into the hands of young leaders.

Allocate resources to convene youth representatives and give special attention to mobilising funding that ensures equitable representation of delegates.





Our projects

around sustainability



The YMCA of the Rockies launched a plastic wrap initiative.

In the past three years, YMCAs across the globe have taken action to safeguard our environment through numerous programmes and initiatives. Here's a look at just a few:

Feature films

In early 2022, we released six films featuring YMCA youth-led solutions around climate action. The stories show the ideas, initiatives and young leaders who created solutions to address the climate crisis in their communities. [Learn more.](#)

Case studies

The plastic wrap initiative at the YMCA of the Rockies in the USA began as a staff grassroots effort. They identified the YMCA wasted a lot of plastic and money each year by wrapping the towels in single-use plastic to take them to the lodging units. [See their solution.](#)

Projects

In September 2023, for instance, the [Y-Urban Environment Club](#) of the YMCA Madagascar made their community a better place on World Cleanup Day.



The Y-Urban Environment Club recently cleaned up the area around a local hospital.



Meet the team

Our delegates include a mix of COP veterans and first-timers and will represent the voices of young people worldwide at COP 28.



Shakil Karim
Head Delegate



Mair Kelly
YMCA Ireland



Dibora Tameru
YMCA Ethiopia



Tudor Rus
YMCA Romania



Marie Jeanne Ndeu Diouf
YMCA Senegal



Amy Wolf
YMCA USA



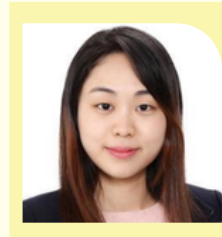
Ylli Alija
YMCA Kosovo



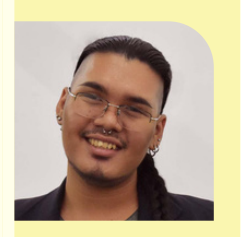
Sofia Canessa
YMCA Uruguay



Killian Abellon
YMCA Canada



Yura Rhee
YMCA Asia Pacific



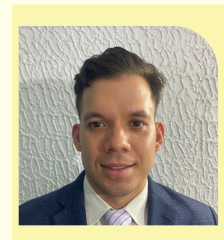
Lester Dellosa
YMCA Philippines



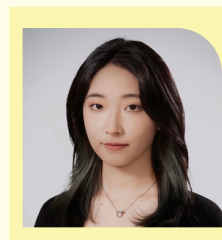
Krystal Leung
YMCA of Hong Kong



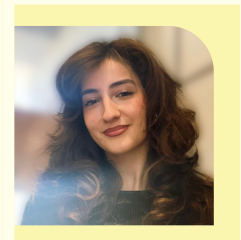
Marion Bonnet
YMCA Canada



Sebastian Gomez Recio
YMCA Colombia



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