



**THE STATEMENT OF  
YOUTH IN THE UNITED  
ARAB EMIRATES 2023**

**We, the young people, and children of the United Arab Emirates, representing a diverse and forward-thinking generation under the age of 35, advocate for the following eleven essential themes in the pursuit of climate action and sustainability. This statement received insights and input from 155 youth based in the UAE who participated in the 2-day local conference of youth in the UAE, 2023.**

## **1. Youth Engagement in Climate Action and Sustainability**

We recognize the urgency of youth involvement and commitment to driving change and achieving the sustainable development goals in less than seven years. Young people are among the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and will bear the most consequences. For these reasons the involvement and participation of youth in climate negotiations is not negotiable.

We call for recognition and attention to the local conferences of youth, it is through the local gatherings that innovation for context-based actionable solutions will be sparked with leaving no one behind. A more sustainable model should be adopted by YOUNGO to facilitate these events around the globe and ensure efficient linkages between LCOYs across the globe.

We support the UAE's National Youth Strategy that looks at the five major transitions in a youth's life in a 20-year span; from ages 15-35, youth transition through these critical stages: Education, Work, Adopting a healthy and safe lifestyle, Starting a family and Exercising their citizenship and we call for more investments to the youth energy in the UAE.

## **2. Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation**

We aim to develop actionable solutions that are relevant to the local context of the UAE. We recognize the threats posed by rising sea level and salinity, heat waves and dust storms. We advocate for adaptive technologies for water and soil desalination.

We harness technology to create innovative climate solutions that accelerate the journey towards the sustainable development goals and Net Zero targets.

We support the UAE Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative in alignment with the Paris Agreement, which calls on nations to prepare long-term strategies to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and limit the rise in global temperature to 1.5 C compared to pre-industrial levels.

## **3. Education for Sustainable Development**

We advocate for an education system that instils awareness and sustainable practices.

We celebrate the role of art in raising awareness, inspiring action, and expressing the urgency of sustainability challenges.

We support the UAE National Higher Education Strategy 2030 pillar The Competitive Research Funding initiative which creates a platform to provide funding for research in vital sectors and stimulate the collaboration between higher education institutions and the private sector.

We are dedicated to facilitating young people throughout the UAE in gaining access to green job opportunities and developing green skills across multiple sectors.

#### **4. Sustainable Natural Resource Management and Biodiversity Conservation**

We are committed to safeguarding natural resources and biodiversity for a sustainable future. We consider the Biodiversity Strategy of the United Arab Emirates 2014-2021 in all our actions and activities. The strategy focused on mainstreaming biodiversity in all economic and social sectors, reinforcement of knowledge sharing and capacity building for upgrading and addressing biodiversity management, improvement of biodiversity status through habitat protection, genetic diversity, and restoration of degraded ecosystems, reducing pressure on marine and terrestrial biodiversity; and enhancing regional and international cooperation on biodiversity cross-cutting issues.

We advocate for Nature-based solutions (NbS) to address both climate and biodiversity-related challenges.

#### **5. Food and Nutritional Security**

We are committed to aligning our efforts with the UAE National Food Security Strategy 2051 to build more resilient food systems, drive research for development, sustain food safety, raise awareness on sustainable diets and carbon footprint of food, and ensure quality data and information availability. We are committed to promoting sustainable local food production to enable the access to healthy, sufficient, safe and nutritious food for an active and healthy lifestyle at affordable prices at all times, including emergencies and crises.

#### **6. Waste Management, Food Loss/Waste, Sustainable Lifestyles, and Circular Economy**

We call the urgent need to reduce the high rates of food loss and waste in the UAE due to their detrimental impact on ecosystems and greenhouse gas emissions.

We promote sustainable waste management practices such as recycling, repurposing, and composting and embracing circular economy principles for cleaner, and more sustainable systems in the UAE.

#### **7. Energy Transition and Renewable Technologies**

We recognize the need for just transition to renewable energy sources and the development of innovative technologies to reduce carbon footprint.

We are committed to aligning our efforts with the COP28 UAE Presidency initiative, Energy Transition Changemakers, which aims to foster private sector collaboration in delivering innovative and scalable decarbonization projects globally and demonstrate solutions to help enable and accelerate the energy transition.

We call for youth involvement in the energy transition in the UAE.

#### **8. Private Sector Contribution to Empower Youth and Corporate Sustainability**

We call for the private sector to support youth-led sustainability initiatives and invest in entrepreneurs and start-ups that are driving climate action. We encourage the private sector partnerships with other stakeholders including non-for-profits organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia, research centers, international organizations and governmental organizations in youth-led sustainability initiatives.

## **9. Mobilization of Private & Sovereign Capital for Climate Finance and Resilience**

We advocate for improved access to climate finance with participation from private capital and sovereign wealth funds to both youth-led Mitigation and Adaptation projects, to address the multi-trillion financing gap to achieve Net Zero goals. We emphasize the need for implementation of a global moratorium on financing prospecting and exploration for new coal resources, heavy-polluting oil, and all fossil fuels in nationally or internationally protected conservation areas.

## **10. Climate Misinformation, Climate Reporting, and Journalism**

We recognize the impact of spreading climate misinformation, green washing, and deceptive marketing practices on consumers.

We advocate for the promotion of climate literacy and accurate climate reporting and data to combat misinformation and foster informed decision-making.

## **11. Climate Action Through the Lens of Gender**

We recognize that climate change is not gender neutral and women are among the vulnerable groups hit hardest by its impacts.

We advocate for the importance of gender-inclusive climate action and empowerment in addressing climate change challenges through capacity building, knowledge dissemination and research.

As the youth of the United Arab Emirates, representing nearly 50% of the population, we commit to driving climate action, and contributing to a sustainable and greener future for our nation and the world. Together, we strive to create actionable solutions, and take our well-deserved seats at decision making tables.

## **ABOUT THE LOCAL CONFERENCE OF YOUTH IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES IN 2023**

The 2023 Local Conference of Youth in the United Arab Emirates was organized and hosted by the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA) and co-hosted by Zayed University Dubai Campus. The theme of the 2-day conference was "Putting Youth at the Heart of Climate Action" and was attended by 200 participants. The event received sponsorship from Schneider Electric, Siemens Middle East, and Accuracy. The organizing partners included the Arabian Youth Environment Programme, Arab Youth Council for Climate Change, Global Shapers Dubai Hub, Kulna Environmental Club-Zayed University, United Nations Global Compact Network-UAE, and the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in the UAE. The knowledge partners comprised the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment, Abdulla Al Ghurair Foundation, ACWA Power, Arab Youth Center, Environment Agency – Abu Dhabi, EEDAMA, Emirates Nature-WWF, Fujairah Research Center, Middlesex University Dubai, TAQA, The Climate Consultancy and UNICEF Gulf Team.

### **USEFUL LINKS**

[National Youth Strategy](#)

[National Food Security Strategy 2051](#)

[National Higher Education Strategy 2030](#)

[UAE Net Zero by 2050 strategic initiative](#)

[Biodiversity Strategy of the United Arab Emirates 2014-2021](#)

[Paris Agreement](#)

[Energy Transition Changemakers](#)