

International youth climate movement proposal

The aim of the campaign is to create a truly grassroots global youth climate movement able to take action in a coordinated way and mobilise a million young voices to raise awareness, tackle the root causes and bring about positive solutions to climate change.

1 Does it focus on a significant issue of human rights, poverty and/or environmental injustice

The issue of climate change is a challenge facing the entire global community, and therefore it is vital that we strengthen our ties with youth across the world. Yes, we need to campaign on specific issues and bring about change in the UK; but at the same time we need to become more involved with the rest of the international youth movement to make a stronger impact. Since climate change is not an isolated issue, it would be beneficial to work with and empower students/youth from other countries to make our collective cry louder and campaigning more effective.

The world now has a clear timetable for agreeing a strong, effective global climate treaty by 2015.

This campaign would tackle key emerging climate justice issues with a core focus on building effective, skilled and interlinked networks of young climate campaigners in the run-up to a mass global climate movement mobilisation in 2015.

It would function as an umbrella project enabling students to act in global solidarity with key emerging climate justice issues as they arise, with students leading decision-making on targets and tactics chosen in each year up to 2015.

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2 Is an issue raised by those affected or in solidarity with them.

Right now, human activity and corporations are changing our climate. In the global South, those least responsible for causing climate change are being hit first and hardest. It is also a huge intragenerational issue - ie. climate change is caused by older generations but will disproportionately affect young people alive today and future generations.

The campaign would respond to the demands of those most likely to be affected by climate change, building solidarity links internationally with youth in these countries.

3 Can it be tackled by People & Planet as a student network.

This campaign strand would link up student groups across the network with other youth/student groups in the wider international youth climate movement. It has the potential to be flexible, allowing each group to choose the focus of their campaigns or projects, whilst also striving to share ideas, skills and unite groups around common shared goals whenever reasonable.

An example would be specific exchanges of similar age-ranges or interests, possibly having a central website where groups could sign up which would allow each group to link up with another group in the world, working on issues that both are active in.

In the build up to agreement around a global climate treaty in 2015, People & Planet could play an absolutely crucial role in mobilising young people to speak out for strong, fair and effective action.

4 Does it include a variety of campaign goals and targets that can be developed?

Yes, these would be set by the network based on key opportunities each year, and provide flexibility to mobilise a mass youth movement around the most pressing actions to stabilise the global climate and bring about positive solutions each year.

Some broad, overarching goals would be to:

- Mobilise an annual co-ordinated global youth climate action day/week- for example by expanding GoGreen week into an international week of action.

- To create and develop links with youth groups across the globe that are actively campaigning on global issues. For example, by expanding on the links built during the Tar Sands Youth Exchange project
- Use new technologies to develop exchanges/links between specific People & Planet groups and other groups around the world, whilst avoiding the creation of additional carbon emissions by flying students around the world.
- Develop powerful action tools and skill/knowledge sharing platforms to help build capacity of young activists, for example by promoting a global online forum and blog space on the People & Planet website, to communicate and network with international youth climate movements.
- Organise and carry out co-ordinated events/actions, either with the specific international exchanges or with the whole network.

5 Is it meaningful to students across the People & Planet Network, by age, geography, interest experience and skills?

Students in the People & Planet network voted resoundingly in 2009 to continue campaigning on climate change until at least 2015. Since it is such a flexible campaign, any group will find a use for developing ties with other international groups of students on issues they are interested in, ie. campaigning on climate change issues.

It will be meaningful to students who are both new to campaigning and who are more 'old timers', because it can involve every level of campaigning from awareness-raising at a local level, to participating in global direct action around key issues (for example, the Keystone tar sands pipeline). It will not only be meaningful to students across the People & Planet network, but it will also connect and inspire students and young people across the world to be part of an international climate movement.

6 Does it have opportunities for cooperation with other groups, including those in the Global South?

Yes. There would be ample opportunities for co-operation and co-ordinated actions with groups across the globe, for example by building on the Tar Sands Youth Exchange, and linking with similar communities who are resisting environmental injustice and calling for intragenerational justice.

7 Can it be contributed to by People & Planet in a unique way and plays on our strengths as a student network?

As People & Planet is the largest student campaigning network on climate change in the UK and has over 40 years experience of empowering young people to take action on the issues they care about, we can make a unique contribution by sharing our skills, knowledge and dedication to campaigning with other international youth climate movements. We can also help to spread our unique democratic model which puts young people in the driving seat to choose the issues they most care about and supports them to bring about the change they want to see.

8 Does it have a body of research and resources available to us in order to develop the campaign?

People & Planet support office and groups already have extensive links to several networks that have research and resource capacity relating to this campaign (the UKYCC, FOE Europe, Avaaz, 350.org). We can link with these existing organisations and share our skills and resources to build up a strong international movement. Furthermore, People & Planet has the skills to coordinate international youth exchange programmes, such as the Tar Sands Youth Exchange, which gives

us an excellent background to expand and develop on our links with campaigners in the global South.

9 Does it fit in with and draw from current and past People & Planet's campaigns?

People & Planet has campaigning for international climate justice for over 10 years, mobilising thousands of students to take action at international climate negotiations and for a strong, fair deal.

We were one of the 6 founding members of the Stop Climate Chaos coalition and helped organise the biggest climate demonstrations the UK and world have ever seen in the run up to Copenhagen. It draws on People & Planet's years experience of campaigning on the environmental issues- most recently on the effect of Tar Sands in communities in the global South.

10. Is it likely or able to be funded?

Research by the People & Planet office suggests this going to be THE major area for climate change funding over the next 3 years and represents the best opportunity in terms of securing environmental/climate change funding. There are already strong links developed with key funders such as European Climate Fund and others.

The Tar Sands Youth exchange probably couldn't be replicated on a bigger scale as it would be very costly (both in carbon and money) but there would be several more effective ways to develop grassroots communication via the internet, blogs, video, co-ordinated mobilisations and international events such as summer camps etc. There would also be increased possibilities for funding from international organisations, as the campaign would be working on a larger scale, ideally in partnership with other organisations.