

# YOUTH CLIMATE JUSTICE HANDBOOK

## Summary for Policymakers





*We are in the fight of our lives. And we are losing. Greenhouse gas emissions keep growing. Global temperatures keep rising. And our planet is fast approaching tipping points that will make climate chaos irreversible. We are on a highway to climate hell with our foot still on the accelerator.<sup>1</sup>*

*An advisory opinion from the ICJ is the most authoritative and constructive route available for an independent clarification of the legal implications of climate change under international law.<sup>2</sup>*



<sup>01</sup> UN Secretary-General's remarks to High-Level opening of COP27, 07 November 2022 (<https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2022-11-07/secretary-generals-remarks-high-level-opening-of-cop27>).  
<sup>02</sup> Government of Vanuatu in Defense of the Future: The case for an ICJ Advisory Opinion on climate change 2022 (<https://www.vanuatuicj.com/why-icj>).

## 01. INTRODUCTION

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On 29 March 2023 the United Nations General Assembly adopted by consensus Resolution 77/276 requesting the International Court of Justice (ICJ) for an advisory opinion on the following questions:

*Having regard to the applicable treaties [...] and rules of general international law [...]*

*(1) What are the obligations of States under international law to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment from anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases for States and for present and future generations;*

*(2) What are the legal consequences under these obligations for States where they, by their acts and omissions, have caused significant harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment, with respect to:*

*(a) States, including, in particular, small island developing States, which due to their geographical circumstances and level of development, are injured or specially affected by or are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change?*

*(b) Peoples and individuals of the present and future generations affected by the adverse effects of climate change?*

The upcoming ICJ climate advisory proceedings offer a unique opportunity for all UN member States to assist in shaping the development of international law. As the questions indicate, the perspectives and experiences of climate vulnerable States - countries that have contributed very little to causing climate change and yet are acutely vulnerable to its impacts - are particularly significant. This significance arises from the basic moral principle that the interests and voices of those most at risk of unjust harm and suffering must be amplified, and not silenced, or ignored.

The Youth and the Civil Society Alliance that has campaigned for the ICJ climate advisory opinion since 2019 believe that the upcoming advisory proceedings are a powerful mechanism by which much more hopeful, positive and sustainable paths can be chosen and mapped out, in law and in action. We strongly urge all governments and leaders - especially those of climate-vulnerable States - to take full advantage of this opportunity.

Since ICJ advisory proceedings arise infrequently, detailed knowledge of their role and processes is not widely-held and queries about them often arise. This [Summary for Policymakers](#), the first part of our [Youth Climate Justice Handbook](#), answers key questions relating to the upcoming climate advisory proceedings:

- **WHY DID YOUTH CAMPAIGN FOR THE CLIMATE ADVISORY OPINION?**
- **WHAT IS AN ICJ ADVISORY OPINION AND WHAT PROCEDURES ARE FOLLOWED?**
- **WHAT ARE THE KEY LEGAL THEMES ARISING FROM RESOLUTION 77/276?**
- **WHAT IS THE YOUTH AND CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS?**
- **WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR CLIMATE VULNERABLE STATES TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE ICJ CLIMATE ADVISORY PROCEEDINGS?**
- **HOW CAN STATES INCLUDE YOUTH PERSPECTIVES AND VOICES IN THEIR WRITTEN AND ORAL SUBMISSIONS?**

The Youth Climate Justice Handbook (the Handbook) has three components. The first is this Summary for Policymakers, which summarises core material designed to assist policymakers' decisions regarding whether, and how, their governments should contribute to the ICJ climate advisory proceedings. The Summary for Policymakers also outlines the Youth and Civil Society Alliance responses to the questions contained in UNGA Resolution 77/276. It was prepared by a research team from World's Youth (WYCJ) for Climate Justice and Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC).

The second component of the Handbook is the Legal Memorandum which presents our responses to the questions contained in UNGA Resolution 77/276, supported by legal argument drawing upon established

principles of international law, treaty provisions, judgments of international and national courts and tribunals, and the work of esteemed legal scholars. It was prepared by experienced practitioners assisted by a research team from WYCJ and PISFCC.

The third component of the Handbook is the Status Report on Principles of International and Human Rights Law relevant to Climate Change, which discusses the Court's advisory function, and presents a detailed and neutral analysis of the existing principles of international law relevant to the request. The Status Report was prepared by the Sabin Center for Climate Change Law at Columbia University with assistance from a WYCJ research team. The Status Report was prepared separately from the other two documents.





## 02. WHY DID WE CAMPAIGN FOR THE CLIMATE ADVISORY OPINION?

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Globally, the IPCC Sixth Assessment Reports make clear that climate change is contributing to humanitarian crises wherever climate hazards are interacting with high vulnerability. Global hotspots of high human vulnerability are found particularly in West, Central and East Africa, South Asia, Central and South America, Small Island Developing States, and the Arctic. Climate and weather extremes are increasingly driving displacement in all regions, with small island States disproportionately affected. Climate extremes and slow onset events are causing catastrophic loss and damage, both economic and non-economic, including to biodiversity and cultural identities, and indigenous-held customary lands.

The climate crisis is an intergenerational injustice of existential proportions. Young people and forthcoming generations will be disproportionately affected by the devastating effects of climate change. Climate change will severely impact every country, but those living in developing nations will face the most dire consequences, and paradoxically, are also those who have benefited the least from the causes of global climate change.

Upon the adoption of Resolution 77/276 Antigua and Barbuda observed: *“We have a treaty regime for the climate, we have a treaty regime for the law of the sea, and we have a treaty regime for human rights. Yet we rarely examine how the obligations and rights of States and individuals are interlinked and build upon one another across these different silos.”*<sup>3</sup>

Only the ICJ has authority and jurisdiction to establish these linkages - not merely between the treaty regimes, but also taking account of established and emerging principles of international law. We believe that drawing these legal interconnections with clarity and certainty will strengthen international and national law addressing the climate crisis. It will also enhance mechanisms by which polluters may be held accountable by those who suffer most from their actions, including small island States and other States highly vulnerable to climate change.

For these reasons, in 2019 27 students from the law school at the University of the South Pacific began campaigning for the climate justice advisory opinion. From this grassroots youth movement an organisation was formed – PISFCC – and commenced seeking support from Pacific Island Forum leaders. In 2020, inspired by PISFCC and recognising the need for a global movement, youth from Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Europe organised themselves as WYCY, members of which have worked to achieve State support in their respective regions.

In 2021 the Government of Vanuatu announced they would lead a diplomatic process to build support among nations for a UNGA resolution seeking an ICJ climate justice advisory opinion, and in 2022 a global alliance of more than 1500 civil society organisations joined together in support of Vanuatu’s diplomacy.

Speaking at the Youth and Civil Society Alliance launch, Vanuatu’s Prime Minister set forth his reasons for accepting the challenge of gathering UNGA support for the climate advisory opinion:

*‘This is for the world’s most vulnerable, for all of humanity, and our collective future. This is about what we must save, not what has been lost. This is a campaign to build ambition, not division. This is a campaign to uplift the goals of the Paris Agreement. This is the young generations’ call for justice to the world’s highest court.’<sup>04</sup>*

### 03. WHAT IS AN ICJ ADVISORY OPINION?

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Pursuant to Article 96 of the UN Charter and Article 65(1) of the ICJ Statute, UN organs are eligible to request an advisory opinion from the ICJ. The General Assembly and the Security Council may request an opinion in respect of “any legal question” while other organs and agencies may request an advisory opinion on legal questions arising within their scope of activities. States cannot request an advisory opinion from the ICJ directly.

Unlike contentious proceedings, ICJ advisory opinions do not resolve specific inter-State disputes with a binding legal judgment, but the law they interpret is binding.<sup>05</sup> Due to the status of the ICJ as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, ICJ advisory opinions carry great legal weight and moral authority. They are often an instrument of preventive diplomacy and help to keep the peace.<sup>06</sup> In particular, advisory opinions requested by the UN General Assembly are “*extremely powerful in terms of authority; that authority comes from legitimacy, and the legitimacy comes from universal State participation.*”<sup>07</sup>

The ICJ is not a legislator, rather a judicial body interpreting existing international law. In doing so the Court exercises its authority in identifying and clarifying both established and emerging international norms, as well as connecting previously discrete areas of law. Advisory opinions assist in providing legal certainty and in progressing international diplomatic objectives without the conflict or controversy that would likely arise from a contentious case relating to State obligations seeking compensation for loss and damage caused by adverse climate impacts.

The urgency and severity of the climate crisis means that the risks of seeking this advisory opinion are outweighed by the urgent need for a stronger and more coherent international legal regime addressing the crisis. That is what we believe the Court will deliver through its opinion.

On the value of seeking an ICJ advisory opinion on climate change, we are convinced that “*Of all judicial routes available [to address climate change] at the international level, an advisory opinion from the ICJ requested by the General Assembly is the most legitimate, constructive, authoritative and non-confrontational avenue that can be selected.*”<sup>08</sup>

The procedures followed by the Court when providing advisory opinions are set out as Annex A in the Legal Memorandum.

<sup>04</sup> Prime Minister Bob Loughman, Speech on the occasion of the launch of the CSO Alliance for a Climate ICJAO, Suva, Fiji, May 2022.

<sup>05</sup> Jorge Viñuales, presentation to the Conference Climate Change and International Law: The Promise of an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice the Hague, 20 June 2022.

<sup>06</sup> International Court of Justice: <https://www.icj-cij.org/en/advisory-jurisdiction>.

<sup>07</sup> Jorge Viñuales, presentation to the Symposium Navigating Pacific Climate Justice to the UNGA 2 June 2022, University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.

<sup>08</sup> Jorge Viñuales, presentation to the Conference Climate Change and International Law: The Promise of an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice the Hague, 20 June 2022.

## 04. WHAT KEY THEMES ARISE FROM THE QUESTIONS?

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*“The draft resolution is carefully crafted by a diverse legal team including some of the world’s finest international lawyers. It reflects not only extensive input from the cross-regional core group of States, but also the aspirations of the youth movement who have highlighted the importance of human rights and intergenerational equity in responding to climate change.”<sup>99</sup>*

PISFCC and WYCJ campaigned for the climate advisory opinion with the aim of promoting the development of stronger and better law around two fundamentally important themes: The first is fulfilling the promise of the international legal principle of intergenerational equity. The second is strengthening the role of human rights law in responses to climate change under international law. The General Assembly has requested the Court to clarify the international obligations of States related to both themes. We discuss below the significance in turn of intergenerational equity, and of human rights, in future legal responses to climate change.

### THE ROLE OF INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY IN RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The grim and unjust reality faced by youth, children, and future generations is that they are forced to confront the impacts of climate change that were caused by privileged people living during the past century. For this reason, the principle of intergenerational equity is becoming increasingly relevant and significant.

The principle of intergenerational equity regards the Earth is a shared inheritance among all individuals, including those of past, present, and future generations. It is a principle that promotes fairness among generations concerning the utilisation and preservation of the environment and its natural resources, including the climate system.

Intergenerational equity is a legal concept linked closely to the equity principle in international law. The equity principle promotes fairness and justice in the distribution of rights. Extending this, intergenerational equity

highlights the importance of considering the long-term future consequences of our actions and the interests of the people who must deal with those consequences. Although distinct, the concepts are interrelated and each is essential in addressing the climate change crisis.

The Youth Climate Justice Handbook - Legal Memorandum cites and explains many instances in which intergenerational equity has been applied in law. This occurs where international agreements, international and domestic proceedings, as well as domestic environmental law and policy recognise, account for, and prioritise the interests of future generations.

In conclusion, intergenerational equity requires the current generation - especially its leaders and lawmakers - to consider the needs and interests of youth, children and future generations when making decisions and taking action. States therefore have a legal duty to consider the impact of environmental degradation and climate change on future generations and to act responsibly as stewards of the planet.

### THE ROLE OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW IN RESPONDING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

The dual challenges of ensuring human rights are secured and preventing harm to the climate system, are deeply interrelated. Climate change significantly impacts human rights in all its dimensions:

From infringing the right to life to the ways in which climate change disproportionately impacts specific groups of people such as indigenous communities, women, children, and people living in poverty. The ICJ has previously recognised this connection noting that *“the environment is not an abstraction but represents the living space, the quality of life and the very health of human beings.”*<sup>10</sup>

When environmental damage threatens people’s health and the quality of life, obligations arise for States concerning the environment which are directly linked to human rights obligations. These obligations are extensive, encompassing a vast array of legal duties enshrined in the applicable legal frameworks. We note below some of these duties, with more detailed analysis and evidence provided in the Youth Climate Justice Handbook - Legal Memorandum.





Grounded in international human rights law, the obligation to protect the right to life encompasses duties to prevent harm to the environment, including from climate change. States are obliged to ensure that they take measures to prevent and mitigate the effects of climate change, to avoid it threatening the lives and wellbeing of citizens. This includes reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting clean energy, and adapting to the impacts of climate change. States have a duty to protect their citizens from foreseeable harm, including harm caused by climate change, and to ensure that their actions do not contribute to human rights violations.

States are obliged to address climate change in order to ensure that individuals and communities have the ability to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development. This includes the full enjoyment of subsidiary rights such as the right to life, adequate food, water, health, housing, productive use of property, cultural practices, and traditions.

States have obligations to ensure the enjoyment of the right to a healthy environment. Such measures include effectively implementing laws and policies that promote environmental protection, providing information to the public about environmental risks and hazards, establishing participatory mechanisms for decision-making on environmental matters, and enforcing environmental standards and regulations.

In fulfilling their obligations to respect the right to health, States must refrain from unlawfully polluting the environment, enact and enforce laws to prevent water, air and soil pollution by extractive and manufacturing industries, and adopt measures against environmental and occupational health hazards.

States are obliged to prevent interference with a person's privacy, family or home. This right includes protection against the effects of climate change, and entails the obligation to adequately address the causes and effects of climate change to protect the right to private and family life.

The right to seek, receive and impart information obliges States to provide appropriate access to information concerning the environment that is held by public authorities, including information on hazardous materials and activities in their communities. Additionally, States are obliged to encourage and facilitate public awareness and participation by making information widely available.

States must provide access to effective remedies through judicial and other redress mechanisms, including restoration of the environment—to individuals and communities who suffer violations to their human rights because of the harm caused by climate change. While domestic authorities are primarily responsible for ensuring human rights are enforced, international and regional human rights systems must also be accessible for victims where domestic remedies are not available or not effective in practice.

Finally, States must integrate the principles of non-discrimination and best interests of the child, together with the intercultural and gender approaches into their climate policies, so as to adequately address the intersectionality of human rights violations arising from States acts or omissions in the face of the climate emergency.



**VOTE  
YES  
For  
CLIMATE  
JUSTICE**

**ACJAO  
#AOLETSGO**

**LET'S GO**

**YOUTH FOR  
CLIMATE  
JUSTICE!**

**AO  
LET'S  
GO!!**

## 05. THE YOUTH AND CIVIL SOCIETY ALLIANCE RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONS

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This section distils relevant passages of the [Youth Climate Justice Handbook - Legal Memorandum](#). Readers should refer to our [Legal Memorandum](#) for sources and further detail.

The preambular paragraphs of UNGA Resolution 77/276 powerfully summarise the context of global climate change at this precipitous moment in history, as well as the institutional and legal steps taken by the international community in responding to it. They describe with clarity the alarming magnitude of the former, and the woeful inadequacy of the latter.

The Resolution nominates ten international agreements and principles of international law to which the General Assembly asks the Court pay particular attention when providing its opinion:

- Charter of the United Nations,
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights,
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,
- Paris Agreement,
- United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,
- The duty of due diligence,
- The principle of prevention of significant harm to the environment, and
- The duty to protect and preserve the marine environment.

The Court is asked to integrate, within a single frame of analysis, consideration of several areas of international law, each of which is itself complex and multifaceted: human rights norms and treaty provisions, climate change and law of the sea treaty provisions, as well as rules of general international law obliging States to exercise diligence in preventing significant harm to the land, the ocean and the atmosphere.

The defining challenge of our time is that we must urgently confront three interrelated crises: of the climate, of human rights, and of our planet's ecology. As UNGA Resolution 77/276 makes plain, there are already substantial bodies of international law acknowledging and addressing each of these crises. Despite this, there is scant judicial guidance considering the interrelations and interactions of the obligations that these bodies of law give rise to.

### HAVING IDENTIFIED RELEVANT LAW, THE FIRST QUESTION ASKS:

*(1) What are the obligations of States under the above-mentioned body of international law to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment for present and future generations;*

### RESPONDING TO THE FIRST QUESTION, OUR POSITION IS:

**I.** The overarching legal obligation States owe to each other, and to present and future generations, is ensuring the climate system and other parts of the environment are protected from anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions.

**II.** This overarching obligation has been firmly established in customary international law, general principles of law, treaty law, and in the rulings of international courts and tribunals.

**III.** Taking into account the principle of intergenerational equity, this overarching obligation of States requires protecting the environment for both present and future generations.

**IV.** Protecting the environment, including the climate, correlates directly with protecting human rights. Very often environmental degradation leads to human rights violations; human rights cannot be enjoyed when severe pollution and climate change curtail, among others, access to health and clean water.

**V.** International environmental law principles inform the application of the law and create legal obligations for all States. They provide guidelines for judges and lawyers in deciding individual cases and inform policy making. They also limit the discretionary powers of courts and act as rules of law when they fill international law loopholes. As directly applicable rules, international environmental law principles create international legal obligations by which States are bound.

#### **THE SECOND QUESTION ASKED OF THE COURT BY THE UNGA:**

*(2) What are the legal consequences under these obligations for States which, by their acts and omissions, have caused significant harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment, with respect to:*

*(a) Small island developing States and other States which, due to their geographical circumstances and level of development, are injured or specially affected by or are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change?*

*(b) Peoples and individuals of the present and future generations affected by the adverse effects of climate change?*

#### **RESPONDING TO THE SECOND QUESTION, OUR POSITION IS:**

**I.** As a general rule of law, the consequence for not upholding international law obligations is state responsibility. State responsibility is based on three primary principles.

First, every internationally wrongful act of a State entails its international responsibility. Second, an internationally wrongful act exists when conduct consisting of an act or omission is attributable to a State and constitutes a breach of an international obligation owed by that State. Third, the characterization of an internationally wrongful act is governed by international law and is not affected by its characterization as lawful by internal law.

As such, when state responsibility is determined, infringing States are required to immediately cease any violation of international law (ensuring that such actions will not be repeated), and have a legal duty to provide reparations to address the harm caused, which may include compensation or other forms of reparation.

**II.** Failures by States to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment from anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases, and for present and future generations, is an ongoing violation of international law that continues to cause harm. This situation must be rectified, and full compliance with international law must be reinstated. Such compliance can only be achieved by taking decisive action to address climate change as required by international law.

**III.** As regards the timeline for addressing climate change, consistently with IPCC findings, we emphasise that climate change requires immediate and urgent action.

**IV.** The legal consequences for States that breach these obligations are those of State responsibility. That is, the obligation to cease harmful conduct and the obligation to provide reparation for the harm caused including, but not limited to, restoring affected ecosystems to their original state if possible. If restoration is not feasible, the infringing State must provide sufficient reparation to affected parties, which may include compensation or other forms of redress.

**V.** Pursuant to international law, injured States have the right to invoke state responsibility for the breach of international law obligations and are entitled to impose countermeasures against the breaching State. countermeasures against the breaching State.

**VI.** Peoples and individuals who are affected by the adverse effects of climate change may take legal action against their governments for failing to uphold their international law obligations. They are also entitled to petition their governments to act against polluter States that infringe their rights, and to file lawsuits seeking compensation from their governments for damages

caused by climate change. When compensation is paid, the State of which they are nationals has the obligation to disburse that compensation to those specific peoples and individuals affected by climate change. Disbursement does not necessarily need to be through direct payments, but can be achieved through programs that seek restoration or compensation of the damage.

**VII.** Peoples and individuals affected by climate change can also enforce their rights before human rights bodies, such as the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights, and the European Court of Human Rights.





## **06. WHY SHOULD CLIMATE VULNERABLE STATES PARTICIPATE IN THE ADVISORY PROCEEDINGS?**

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The UNGA directly asks the Court to consider the plight of *“States which, due to their geographical circumstances and level of development, are injured or specially affected by or are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.”*

We urge the leaders of all States that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change to take advantage of this unique and unrepeatable opportunity to present your own perspectives and arguments on climate justice to the world’s preeminent judicial body, for the reasons set out below.

Firstly, the integrity of the process will be strengthened through the Court hearing directly from a wide selection of those who are especially affected by, or particularly vulnerable to, climate change.

Second, an opinion from the Court clearly setting out legal obligations owed to the world’s most climate-vulnerable countries, and their present and future citizens, will greatly

assist in further securing frameworks of justice and equity within the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement processes.

Third, a central aspect of securing greater levels of justice and equity in the international community’s response to climate change is mobilising higher levels of financial and technical assistance for climate adaptation and mitigation, as well addressing losses and damages suffered.

Fourthly, public and private responses to climate change will in the future be increasingly influenced and shaped by litigation and judicial decision-making. When delivered, the climate advisory opinion will provide authoritative jurisprudence relevant to a myriad of matters to be brought before international and domestic courts and tribunals.

Fifth, an opinion from the Court emphasising the significance and the interconnectedness of States’ legal obligations to both avoid catastrophic climate change, and to defend fundamental human rights, will likely place the interests of climate vulnerable States at the centre of international law responses to climate change.

Finally, consistent with legal obligations for inter-generational equity, we believe that today’s leaders owe a solemn legal and moral obligation to their youth and



future generations of citizens to advocate on behalf of their interests at every significant opportunity. There will be few opportunities to do so that are as significant, and that offer as much potential to force positive change, as the upcoming climate advisory proceedings.

## **07. INVOLVE YOUR YOUTH - A REQUEST FROM WORLD'S YOUTH FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AND PISFCC**

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The civil society campaign that first persuaded the Republic of Vanuatu - and through their leadership, governments throughout the world - has since its inception been propelled and energised by students and young people.

The successful adoption of UNGA Resolution 77/276 was achieved through strong partnerships between high-ambition governments, organised youth and our civil society partners. Vanuatu's Prime Minister was precisely correct in describing the upcoming ICJ climate advisory proceedings as the "*young generations' call for justice to the world's highest court*".

Only States are permitted to participate in the ICJ's proceedings, but all participating States are able to use those proceedings to strengthen and build upon the youth-government alliances that succeeded in bringing climate change - and soon climate justice - to the Peace Palace.

We strongly urge all governments, particularly climate-vulnerable States, not merely to participate in the ICJ proceedings, but in doing so to also ensure the voices of your young people are heard clearly, and that their testimony is placed before the Court.

We urge every participating State to involve young change-makers that are actively working to prevent climate injustice in your country in your written and oral submissions to the Court. Whether this occurs directly or indirectly, in person or through audiovisual technology, it is essential that it be done.

Young people are unable to 'wait their turn' to voice our concerns about climate change - it is the actions and decisions taken in this decade that will decide whether we collectively choose alternate paths to the UN Secretary General's "*climate hell*". We are seeking a future in which all are free to live with dignity and without fear of climate change denying us, and our children, of that freedom.

## PISFCC | OUR STORY

PISFCC began in March 2019 when 27 USP Law students from 8 Pacific Island countries decided to join together to begin a campaign to persuade the leaders of the Pacific Island Forum to take the issue of climate change and human rights to the International Court of Justice. We now have members in every Pacific Island country and from all levels of education, from primary and high schools to postgraduate university students.

Our core campaign remains convincing the governments of the world to seek an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice answering a question that will develop new international law integrating legal obligations around environmental treaties and basic human rights. We are also committed to educating and activating all Pacific Island youth to become aware and take action to help prevent and fight against climate change.

## PISFCC | OUR MISSION

Climate change now threatens to destroy our homeland and cultures, but we will not lie down and accept that fate. Instead, we choose to use our passion and knowledge to fight against climate change at every level - from the grassroots of our communities to the highest levels of national and international government.

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

[pisfcc.org](http://pisfcc.org)



**PACIFIC ISLANDS  
STUDENTS FIGHTING  
CLIMATE CHANGE**

## WYCJ | OUR STORY

World's Youth for Climate Justice (WYCJ) is a global youth-led campaign to take climate change and human rights to the International Court of Justice to seek an advisory opinion. Standing in solidarity with the PISFCC, and recognising that global support was needed to achieve the ICJ for an advisory opinion on climate change, in 2020 youth from Asia, Africa, Latin America, Europe organised as World's Youth for Climate Justice (WYCJ).

In 2021, WYCJ published a report '[Human Rights in the Face of Climate Crises](#)' which was authored by 22 law students from 9 universities across the globe. The report established the demand from youth from across the globe to seek this advisory opinion from the ICJ. On 29th March 2023 the UNGA responded to the call of the young people and the leadership of Vanuatu by adopting, by consensus, a resolution requesting the advisory opinion from the ICJ. This overwhelming support shows the significance of youth-led climate justice initiatives and its impact across the globe. We strive to achieve climate justice through meaningful participation.

## WYCJ | OUR MISSION

WYCJ seeks to convince States from within and beyond respective national boundaries to protect the rights of present and future generations from the adverse effects of climate change. We focus on the operation of the principle of equity, specifically intergenerational equity within the international legal sphere to achieve climate justice. We believe that an advisory opinion on climate change will not just summarise states' existing obligations with regards to human rights and climate change, but it can also deliver a progressive interpretation of those obligations and make global progress with equity towards climate justice.

### VISIT OUR WEBSITE:

[wy4cj.org](http://wy4cj.org)



**World's Youth  
for Climate  
Justice**