



## **YOUTH STATEMENT FOR THE OCEAN**

As young people, we stand at the crossroads of environmental responsibility and future leadership. The health of our ocean is inextricably linked to the wellbeing of our planet and future generations. The ocean provides food, regulates our climate, and is home to most of Earth's biodiversity. Yet, the largest ecosystem on our Blue Planet is facing unprecedented challenges, most notably pollution, overextraction of natural resources and climate change. As youth, we are passionate about safeguarding this vital resource and ensuring a sustainable future, for all species.

The Global Youth Declaration on Environment is a pivotal commitment statement that emerged from the Global Youth Environment Assembly on 17-18 February 2024, in Nairobi, Kenya. This declaration represents the collective voice of youth from diverse regions, backgrounds, and perspectives, uniting in a resounding call for effective, inclusive, and sustainable global actions to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. It encapsulates the aspirations, insights, and recommendations of the youth delegates, signaling their unwavering dedication to shaping a greener and more sustainable future. The Global Youth Environment Declaration 2024 calls for positive environmental change and broader international efforts to safeguard our planet for future generations.



Today, in line with the Global Youth Declaration on the Environment 2024 and its key aspirations, we call on governments to take immediate and decisive action to protect our ocean and secure the future of our unique, habitable, blue planet.

To do so, we offer the following recommendations for immediate action:

### **1. Embed ocean education in school curricula at all levels**

Currently, ocean education is severely underrepresented in school curricula. We call for the inclusion of comprehensive ocean literacy programs across all levels of education to ensure that students understand the critical role the ocean plays in supporting life on Earth. By integrating ocean studies into science, geography, and the Cross Curriculum Priorities of Sustainability and Indigenous Perspectives, we will arm future generations with the knowledge to understand our dependence upon the ocean to sustain life on earth, and thus empowering future generations to become informed stewards of the marine environment. Understanding the interconnectedness of the ocean and human activities is essential to foster responsible, long-term management and policy development relating to our natural world.

### **2. Increase youth participation in decisions that impact their future**

Young people are the stakeholders of the future, yet our voices are often excluded from critical decision-making processes that affect the health of the environment, including



the ocean. We call for greater opportunities for youth engagement in policymaking, ensuring that young leaders have meaningful roles in shaping policies related to marine conservation, sustainability, and climate action.

Creating formal structures for youth participation will not only bring fresh perspectives to the table but also ensure that those most impacted by today's environmental challenges have a say in creating and implementing solutions.

We urge governments to take immediate steps to adopt these recommendations, as they are essential first steps in ensuring the longevity of our ocean and a thriving, healthy, sustainable future for all. Youth have the passion, knowledge, and drive to lead this change, but we need to be given the tools and opportunities to act. Together, we can turn the tide on ocean degradation and build a sustainable future for generations to come. And it starts with action.