

Youth Activism and its Impact on Climate Policy

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Description

Youth activism has emerged as a powerful force in shaping climate policy worldwide. With a passionate commitment to safeguarding their future, young activists have taken to the streets, social media and international forums to demand urgent action against climate change. This article delves into the profound impact of youth activism on climate policy. It explores how youth-led movements have influenced policy decisions, pushed for greater accountability from governments and corporations and inspired a global shift towards sustainable practices. By highlighting key examples and outcomes, this article underscores the crucial role of youth activism in accelerating climate policy reform. In recent years, the urgency of addressing climate change has galvanized the world's youth to raise their voices and demand meaningful action from political leaders and institutions. The phenomenon of youth activism has gained traction as a formidable agent of change, propelling climate policy discussions to the forefront of the global agenda [1,2].

Greta Thunberg's solitary strike in front of the Swedish Parliament in 2018 ignited a spark that soon evolved into the global Fridays for Future movement. Millions of young people across the world followed suit, walking out of schools to demand swift and substantial measures to combat climate change. This movement's ability to mobilize and amplify the voices of the youth has been pivotal in pressuring governments to prioritize climate policies. One of the most tangible impacts of youth activism on climate policy is the tangible shift in policy priorities. Protests, marches and sit-ins organized by young activists have compelled governments to reevaluate their climate strategies. In 2019, the European Union declared a climate emergency after consistent pressure from youth-led groups. This declaration not only acknowledged the gravity of the situation but also led to increased funding and support for renewable energy and emissions reduction programs [3].

Youth activists have extended their influence beyond governments to corporations. Initiatives like the Global Climate Strikes have drawn attention to corporations' contributions to climate change through unsustainable practices. As a result, many companies have faced mounting pressure to align their business models with sustainability goals. Furthermore, youth-led campaigns advocating for divestment from fossil fuels have prompted institutions and investors to reconsider their financial support for industries linked to environmental degradation. The impact of youth activism on climate policy extends to the international stage. The voices of young activists have been amplified at major climate conferences, such as the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP), where they have addressed world leaders directly and demanded stronger commitments. The prominence of youth representatives in these forums has underscored the intergenerational

inequities of climate change and catalysed more ambitious goals and agreements [4].

Beyond policy halls and international negotiations, youth activism has sparked grassroots change that reverberates through communities. Young activists have been instrumental in mobilizing local initiatives such as tree planting drives, waste reduction campaigns and educational programs about sustainable living. These efforts create a bottom-up approach to combating climate change, promoting environmental consciousness at the grassroots level. Despite the undeniable impact, youth activists encounter significant challenges. They often face scepticism and dismissal from older generations who perceive them as lacking experience or understanding of complex policy dynamics. Additionally, the emotional toll of bearing the weight of a planet's future can be overwhelming. However, these challenges have only fuelled the determination of young activists, pushing them to refine their arguments, gather data and collaborate across borders to strengthen their cause [5].

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Conflict of Interest

There are no conflicts of interest by author.

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