

**FORUM:** Human Rights Council (HRC)

**QUESTION OF:** Promoting, respecting, and protecting Human Rights when Addressing Climate Change and Environmental Degradation

**MAIN SUBMITTER:** Australia

**CO-SUBMITTERS:** Ukraine, Peru, Canada, Costa Rica, United States of America, Austria, China, Netherlands, Germany, Japan, Italy, Belgium, France, Hungary, Switzerland, Spain, United Kingdom

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL,

*Recognizes* that Climate change and environmental degradation have devastating effects on human rights, including the right to life, the right to health, clean water, food and housing,

*Affirming* that climate action must prioritize safeguarding human rights and that people's lives should not be put in jeopardy to address climate change,

*Recalling* the Paris Agreement, which recognizes the necessity of respecting human rights in the fight against climate change,

*Reaffirming* the need to prioritize people's rights when thinking about climate change, where policies and actions must take into account human rights,

THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL,

1. Calls upon Member States to address the problem of water contamination without violating the human rights regarding clean and uncontaminated water and the safety as well as the health of the citizens through means such as but not limited to:
  - a) the introduction of stronger pesticide regulations for farmers provided through policies that are against water pollution, and ensuring the right to access uncontaminated water for all agricultural and communities, which will be implemented by:
    - i. strengthening water purification systems in countries mostly influenced by extreme hazards that influence the quality of water,
    - ii. establishing legislation concerning the use of plastic in the production of goods;
  - b) recommending solutions to the areas that have been affected by the issue of water contamination, ensuring their daily life is not at risk, solutions such as but not limited to:
    - i. monitors that check the levels of pesticides, as well as monitor the chemical constitution of the water in order to detect chemical imbalances and ensure the level of safety in waters is reached,
    - ii. using chemicals that help restore the chemical balance of the water, so citizens have clean drinking water;

2. Calls for States to make early-warning information regarding climate change effects and natural disasters accessible and available to all sectors of society to ensure better protection of overburdened communities from pollution and environmental harms, by means such as, but not limited to:
  - a) directing agencies to address and prevent disproportionate and adverse environmental and health impacts on communities, including climate change through:
    - i. holding a public meeting to share information on resulting health risks and necessary precautions,
    - ii. Interrupting programs and shows, which are broadcasted on television, in case of a climate emergency in order to ensure proper warning for all citizens in advance,
  - b) requiring agencies to notify nearby communities of the release of toxic substances through:
    - i. making all adaptation and mitigation plans publicly available, transparently financed and developed in consultation with affected groups,
    - ii. monitoring, with the use of modern technology, relevant human rights indicators, in the context of climate change, in order to track the varied impact of climate change across demographic groups and effective and human rights-compliant climate action;
3. Urges Member States to ensure that appropriate adaptation measures are taken to protect and fulfil the rights of all individuals, prioritizing those living in vulnerable areas and are most endangered by the negative effects/impact of climate change, in order to secure that all individuals have the necessary capacity to adapt to climate change, through means such as, but not limited to:
  - a) devoting sufficient resources such as food, water and personal hygiene products to the implementation of economic and social rights of all individuals through:
    - i. organizing donation drives of necessary supplies to all individuals whenever needed,
    - ii. organizing campaigns for the acknowledgement of the rights of all individuals when tackling the issue of climate change of all kinds such as media campaigns and public campaigns
  - b) constructing adaptive capacities and competencies in vulnerable communities;
4. Urges the implication of climate justice and protection from environmental harm by all citizens and most importantly due to disproportional effects of climate change:
  - a) ensures the safety of citizens in high-risk areas providing them the right to receive support to adapt to their changing environment,

- b) enhances the need to create access to resources, such as technology and infrastructure, that help communities cope with the negative impacts of climate change,
  - c) recommending policies that consider the implication of all citizens in protecting their rights to a healthy environment and ensuring that they are not neglecting the matter of importance;
- 5. Recommends the aim for sustainable development in countries that are affected and proposes future goals for sustainable solutions such as aiming for development that meets the needs of its population today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs have the right to a healthy environment;
- 6. Supports global education to connect human rights and climate change by:
  - a) teaching students about sustainability and climate justice with the implementation of special subjects, such as biology, and assemblies hosted by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs),
  - b) using social media campaigns to raise awareness through:
    - i. stories,
    - ii. posts,
    - iii. sponsorships with influential people,
  - c) encouraging young people to take action through: volunteering actions, advocating;
- 7. Proposes specific actions or interventions that should be taken to address human rights violations or gaps in existing protections such as:
  - a) the establishment of a national human rights institution to address systemic discrimination in a particular country or recommend changes to:
    - i. laws,
    - ii. regulations,
    - iii. practices that hinder the protection of human rights.
  - b) deciding to take specific resolutions, policies, actions, or recommendations that are aimed at promoting and protecting human rights;
- 8. Urges Member States to strengthen environmental and human rights policies by:
  - a) creating and enforcing regulations that protect both the planet and the people who live and depend on it;
  - b) addressing these issues collectively as environmental degradation and climate change directly impact human rights such as, but not limited to:
    - i. the right to health,
    - ii. the right to self-determination.