

# Indian Youth Climate Network @ COP 28

FINAL REPORT



Prepared By



**IYCN Delegation**



# Background

Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) is a youth-led organisation working for the cause of mobilising youth for innovating climate solutions since 2008. It is registered as a society under Societies Registration Act, 1860. IYCN operates as a network of volunteers and organisations across India with the aim to make the youth movement more proactive and informed on climate change and related issues.

The Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) has been at the forefront of mobilizing and empowering the youth of India to actively engage in climate action. Founded with a vision to address environmental challenges, IYCN has consistently worked towards fostering sustainable practices and advocating for meaningful policies. The Network operates at the intersection of youth empowerment, environmental education, and climate change awareness, playing a crucial role in shaping the narrative around climate action in India.

Over the reporting period, IYCN has undertaken diverse initiatives aimed at creating awareness, building capacity, and catalyzing impactful projects.



The participation of the Indian Youth Climate Network (IYCN) in the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP 28) marked a significant chapter in our commitment to advancing climate action and amplifying the voices of the youth in India. As a dedicated platform for young climate enthusiasts, IYCN embarked on this transformative journey with the overarching goal of contributing to global dialogues on climate change, sustainable practices, and collaborative solutions.

A delegation of 6 member participated in COP 28, UAE this year. Hailing from various background (Policy, Engineering, Mathematics, Social Science, Research etc) the young delegates demonstrated Indian Youths commitment to just energy transition, climate advocacy, youth engagement, circular economy and waste management through well coordinated efforts during the conferences.

EU\_REI played a key role in supporting two IYCN COP 28 delegates.





# IYCN Delegates Profiles

## Srishti Singh

### Board Member

Srishti comes with a decade of international climate change experience in Policy Advocacy, Community Engagement and Capacity Building, including leading a UNFCCC award winning initiative – Global Resilience Partnership Programme – to build the climate-resilience capacities of urban poor in South Asia.



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## Mahim Dawar

### Board Member

Mahim is an environmental engineering graduate from IIT Bombay working as an associate consultant at Mastercard. With a background in sustainable development financing at the UN HQ and stints in the ESG space, his diverse skills enhance discussions on climate adaptation and innovation.



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## Pratishtha Kumari

### Board Member

She is a research scholar at IIT Delhi. Her areas of interest include biomass valorisation, sustainable food packaging, circular economy, life cycle assessments. She is also a Commonwealth visiting scholar at Imperial College London.



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## Ankit Singh

### National Coordinator

Ankit is a mathematics graduate delving into the realm of Environment, Climate Change & Sustainability Studies at TISS, Mumbai. Passionate about climate advocacy, he energizes fellow youth with his commitment to shaping climate policies and fostering innovative ideas.



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## Ayadi Mishra

### Member

Ayadi is an Architect turned Technologist studying in IIT Bombay. She advocates for nature and biodiversity, and serves as the chair for WAT-GP.



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## Achintya Ghosal

### Regional Coordinator

Achintya is a senior at Hansraj College pursuing Mathematics(H), heavily involved with the Youth in Climate and related domains. At CoP28, he looks forward to the Just & Clean Energy Transition negotiations with the CBAM, IRA's in play as well as Youth advancements in the Climate Space.



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# Objectives:

IYCN delegation had planned its objectives way before the COP 28, some of them are listed bellow:

- **Advocating Youth-Led Solutions:** To advocate for and showcase the innovative and impactful solutions devised by the youth in India in response to climate change challenges.
- **Promoting Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency:** To highlight IYCN's pioneering work in circular economy initiatives and resource efficiency, with a focus on the "Agents of Change" exhibit.
- **Youth Engagement and Collaboration:** To actively engage with global youth networks and initiatives, fostering collaborations and partnerships for more effective climate action.
- **Just Energy Transition & Health:** To contribute insights and perspectives on just energy transition during the side event, "Just Energy Transition in South Asia: Challenges and Transformational Opportunities."
- **Elevating the National Youth Statement:** LCOY India team 2023 inaugurated and presented the national youth statement formulated at LCOY India 2023, emphasizing the influence and recognition of youth initiatives in the climate action space. IYCN and BBG cohosted the LCOY 2023.

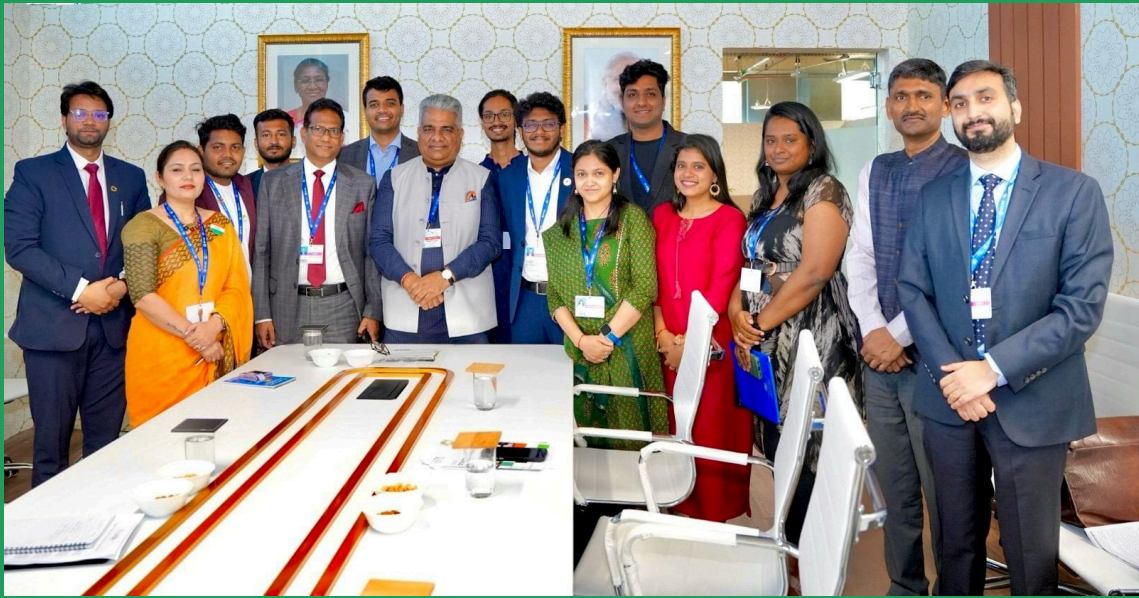


Side Event on Just Energy Transition



Launch of National Youth Statement by LCOY India Team 2023





Indian Youth Delegation Meeting with Hon'ble  
Cabinet Minister Shri Bhupendra Yadav



IYCN at Climate Forum of Indiaspora



## **Involvements :**

### **Exhibit - Agents of Change:**

IYCN held an exhibit in the blue zone, showcased groundbreaking work in circular economy and resource efficiency, with the "ZeroWasteHub" featuring 100+ youth innovators and their waste management solutions.

### **IYCN & EUREI @ COP 28:**

Featured the Impact Report of the year long project with EU-REI and also collected Global youth recommendations in the waste management and circular economy space.

### **Mash Global Project #28 for 28 led by Canada High Commission:**

As a youth partner, IYCN played a pivotal role in showcasing 28 youth changemakers and their solutions, emphasizing global collaboration in addressing climate challenges.

### **Panel Discussion - The Climate Youthquake: A Call to Action:**

Active participation in a panel discussion exploring the transformative power of youth activism, collaborations with institutions, climate education, and upscaling efforts.

### **Side Event - Just Energy Transition in South Asia:**

IYCN organised and participated in a side event discussing the challenges and opportunities associated with a just energy transition and health, highlighting youth perspectives.

### **Direct Interaction with Minister Bhupendra Yadav:**

A high-profile meeting with Hon'ble Bhupendra Yadav, the Cabinet Minister of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, emphasizing the role of Indian youth in climate space and also how IYCN has been leading the way towards more sustainable future.



## Outcomes at COP 28

It was great learning and exposure for the entire delegation. As this year out of 6 delegates from IYCN, five delegates were witnessing their first COP.

### Influence on National Youth Statement:

The direct involvement of Cabinet Minister Bhupendra Yadav in the inauguration of the national youth statement showcased the impact and recognition of youth initiatives in climate action.

### Collaboration with Mash Global:

Collaboration with Mash Global Project and active engagement in global youth networks highlighted the essential role of Indian youth in the global climate movement.

### Showcasing Circular Economy Initiatives:

The "Agents of Change" exhibit spotlighted IYCN's work in circular economy and resource efficiency, contributing to a vision of a sustainable future.

### Youth Empowerment:

The panel discussion on "The Climate Youthquake" emphasized the transformative power of youth activism and the critical role of collaboration with established institutions.

### Insights and Learnings:

Valuable insights gained from pavilions, panel discussions, and engagements in various COP 28 activities contributed to a deeper understanding of global climate initiatives.

## **Delegate Narrative: Ankit Singh**

### **"Empowering Indian Youth: A Deep Dive into the Indian Youth Climate Network's Impactful Presence at COP 28"**

COP 28, held in the UAE, witnessed a transformative engagement from the Indian Youth Climate Network, where I had the privilege of leading a delegation that passionately advocated for youth-led solutions in the face of climate change. This article delves into different experiences and initiatives undertaken by the delegates of IYCN, spotlighting our endeavors in circular economy, waste management, youth & energy, and global collaboration.

During the first week at CoP 28, IYCN delegation focused on the exhibit and side events planned in the blue zone. Agents of Change: Circular Economy & Resources Efficiency and Zero Waste Hub Exhibit: One of the standout features of IYCN's participation was the "Agents of Change" exhibit in the blue zone. With invaluable support from the EU Resource Efficiency Initiative (India), this exhibit showcased IYCN's groundbreaking work in the circular economy. The highlight was the "ZeroWasteHub," where over 100 youth innovators presented their pioneering solutions in waste management, contributing to a vision of a sustainable future.

**Collaboration with Mash Global Project:** As a youth partner in the Mash Global Project #28 for 28 under the leadership of Canada High Commission, IYCN played a pivotal role in showcasing 28 youth changemakers and their solutions at COP 28. This collaboration exemplified the need for a global alliance in addressing climate challenges, with a special spotlight on the significant contributions of Indian youth in climate action space.

**Just Energy Transition and Beyond:** IYCN actively engaged in various activities during COP 28, including a noteworthy side event titled "Just Energy Transition in South Asia: Challenges and Transformational Opportunities" which was COP28 presidency recognised side event. This provided a platform for IYCN to share insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with a just energy transition. This side event was planned with Climate Action Network South Asia.

Interactions with influential figures like Dia Mirza highlighted the importance of collaboration between youth, academia, policymakers, and industries to effectively combat climate change.

**The Climate Youthquake: A Call to Action:** A defining moment for me as national coordinator for IYCN was involvement in the panel discussion on "The Climate Youthquake: A Call to Action by Future Stewards" organised by INDIASPORA. This platform allowed for an in-depth exploration of the transformative power of youth activism and the significance of collaboration with established institutions. The discussion encompassed climate education, the imperative of upscaling efforts, and the critical role of youth in instigating change.



**Youth and Energy Focus:** Second week began with a dedicated focus on youth and energy, culminating in a high-profile meeting with Bhupendra Yadav, the Cabinet Minister of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). This discussion not only emphasized the crucial role of the Indian youth in steering energy transitions but also underscored the importance of direct engagement with policymakers.

**National Youth Statement and Direct Interaction with Cabinet Minister Bhupendra Yadav:** The impact of IYCN extended beyond exhibits and discussions. The inauguration of the national youth statement formed by LCOY India 2023, at the India Pavilion, with the direct involvement of Cabinet Minister Bhupendra Yadav, showcased the influence and recognition of youth initiatives, particularly in the realm of the Climate Action.

**Reflections and Learnings:** As an individual focused on carbon markets, energy, and agriculture, my journey at COP 28 involved absorbing the insights shared in various pavilions like Energy Pavilion, Food Pavilion and Women and youth pavilion more specific in International Solar Alliance pavilion, Global Alliance for Sustainable Planet pavilion, Global Carbon Council Pavilion, SDG Pavilion etc. The outcomes, spanning climate finance, the global stock-take, and an increased focus on adaptation, underscored the global community's commitment to addressing climate challenges comprehensively. COP 28 served as a defining moment for IYCN and Indian youth at large. Our journey encapsulated a steadfast commitment to sustainable practices, global collaboration, and active engagement with policymakers. Looking toward the future, the lessons learned, and experiences gained at COP 28 will undoubtedly propel the Indian youth towards greater contributions to the global climate movement.



## Delegate Narrative: Ayadi Mishra

### "Nature and Climate - A Reflection on Representation, Negotiations and Narratives"

This COP was the very first climate cop with a health, food and a nature theme; but there is much more to do in the space of nature-biodiversity nexus as evident with the conference's outcome itself. Although this was the "best yet" in terms of forests and conservation, we still have the same hiccups as the loss and damage fund and every other niche in finance - how much, for whom, when and how - all of which still remain. During the two weeks, with GYDI and with IYCN, I ventured into the space of nature and climate to understand this space better.

**JTWP/GGA/GST Negotiations:** The scheduling, "ticketing system", the layouts and the entire structure was confusing to say the least for even "veteran COPpers". This left a lot of us scrambling to understand what was happening in closed rooms and many were announced after the fact. In such a space, it truly helped to have a network, a "coalition" to fall back to - a group of people who had each other's backs and supported voices together.

In the opening negotiations with the announcement of the L&D fund, through a hotbed of pledges and the constant clapping of the rooms on the announcements themselves, these as a matter of fact pale in comparison to the need for this "finance gap" and, as shown in several memes, amount to half of the annual salary of famous sportsmen. As shown in the 2020 study supported by The Nature Conservancy, it estimates a staggering \$700 billion a year in order to "reverse biodiversity loss and the loss of natural areas" by 2030.



Image 1 - FAO Pavilion Moderation (Source: FAO)



Image 2 - Opening Intervention, YOUNGO (Source: IISD)

And coming to the very ending days of negotiations where we had silent posters for GGA, staked out the whole night and the "line of hope action" as the negotiators went inside their room for the final text truly showed the extent to which all of us remained steadfast in our commitments to represent what/who we came for at "COP". The truly sad moment was the closing or the "consensus" with the AOSIS chair effectively not present inside, and the tears in the eyes of the people who knew we lost 1.5. One thing remains certain still, we will continue to fight - be it 1.5/1.6 - the hope is never lost, but the losses this year



after the hottest year on record, will be immeasurable and unforgivable.

**Youth coalitions and the APMDD call to action:** We saw protests after protests every day in the “mandated zones” where issues from all around the world were showcased out to the general masses. With the Asian People’s movement leading a host of “Actions” i was happy to see the CSOs, Youth, Researchers/Scientists and NGOs alike come together in such actions as well as the large global action on the 9th of December. Seeing all 2500+ of us congregate and talk about all the shared trauma, the pain and the anger really spoke volumes on the silence in the lobby spaces and the hearts that cried out together in the people’s plenary. Being there that day on the ramp, holding up the posters and flags for hours on end was nothing compared to the survivors so bravely pouring out their stories and asking for our collective support.



Image 3 - Fossil Fuel Protest (Source: IISD)

Image 4 - Towards the Global Action (Source: IISD)

**Nature and Biodiversity in Climate:** The apparent love affair of climate negotiations with carbon was palpable throughout the two weeks, where nature and nature based themes took the backseat in terms of ecosystems themselves. Delegates and Pavilion volunteers would often joke about the location of the nature hub as an ode to the “importance” given to the theme itself - last and forgotten. Evidently the event on nature, biodiversity and oceans day titled “Halting and Reversing Forest Loss by 2030” was to have an announcement by president Al Jabr which didn’t happen owing to the more pressing matter at hand - fossil fuels.

However throughout the second week, I ventured to represent the Global South coalition and the work in restoration through events, delivering talks and participation, exhibitions and being in negotiations that mattered to us all. Starting with the Interfaith Biodiversity Network summation of the week, I delivered a TED Talk with FAO and IUCN on behalf of the youth task force in the UN Decade as a call to action in their flagship event, spoke about the importance of Behavioral Change Campaigns, and then focused on parameters of education through the work I do with UICCA and YOUNGO’s ACE and MENA Youth

Network in separate Green Zone events.

Going over my own personal outcomes, being my first time traversing through this space, I was privileged to deliver the opening interventions for children and youth through YOUNGO alongside Mohammad Usrof from Gaza, all through the loving guidance of Hemavathi, Zi Han, Amalie, Timothy and Elizabeth from the constituency. Further, we as the Nature working group of YOUNGO, along with my Co-CP Roaa from Sudan were able to highlight our demands to the High Level Champions, have informal consultations, host 3 side events for young people in this space, and were further given the opportunity by the World Bank Group for roundtables and candid conversations to state our demands, asks and possible convergences.



Image 5 - Post Negotiations, with HE Razan Al Mubarak (Source: Author)  
Image 6 - Friends from the UN Decade (Source: Author)

**Reflections and Learnings:** COPs are never as “good” as one might “expect” while going on to their very first international “lobbying” centered space. Change is slow and laborious, it takes a lot of collective strength to rise back up and do what we came here for in such a place of privilege. Through all this said, Nature and Biodiversity saw some important wins this COP. The aim of “halting and reversing deforestation and forest degradation by 2030” from Glasgow was finally addressed formally for the first time in the final GST texts. We had more promises for halting “illegal” deforestation, creating the UN framework for maintaining the non-market investment in forest health and that the adaptation framework needs to further strengthen parameters of nature and ecosystem health to achieve its goals.

Although a majority of Montreal’s objectives (from the GBF) were left out, the “consensus” reclaimed the “urgency to address” the same. This might have taken the last bit of hope in bureaucratic systems, but in a positive note enflamed the need and the work of CSOs in the space for us to collectively push for these rights. I come back with incredible learnings, asks and a “need” to do much much more this year - for all the voices witnessed and those lost.