

# THE PROBLEM

The uncurbed release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere is contributing to drastic changes to our planet's climate. Millions of people around the world are already feeling the effects: mega-storms and floods, heatwaves and forest fires, prolonged droughts are becoming more extreme and more frequent. And if we don't reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it's going to get worse. The principal source of greenhouse gases is the burning of fossil fuels: coal, oil and gas.

**100** fossil fuel companies are responsible for **71%** of global greenhouse gas emissions since **1988**.

Source: CDP Carbon Majors Report

## It's a human rights issue

The climate crisis threatens human survival and all human rights – to life, health, housing, water and sanitation, and livelihood. And it disproportionately affects people already marginalised by poverty and discrimination.

Millions are already suffering from its catastrophic effects and this will get worse, magnifying existing inequalities, creating ruin for current and future generations. As governments fail to act on climate change, we are seeing the biggest inter-generational human rights violation in history. The people worst affected are those who are least responsible for it:

- less industrially developed countries
  - poor and marginalised communities
  - young people and future generations.
- Historically some countries – such as the UK – have produced more greenhouse gases than others.

Climate change will cause **250,000** deaths a year in **2030-2050**, resulting from malaria, malnutrition, diarrhoea and heat stress.

Source: World Health Organisation

## The solution

States are obliged to uphold our human rights. They must tackle the climate crisis quickly and humanely – and the measures they take must not violate human rights.

- Rich countries have benefited most from fossil-fuel economies – they must lead the way and help others.
- All governments need to act. They must work to:
  - Halve greenhouse gas emissions from 2010 levels by 2030 and reduce them to zero by 2050
  - Stop using fossil fuels as soon as possible
  - Make sure climate action reduces inequality and does not violate people's human rights
  - Make sure everyone participates in decisions about their future, particularly those most affected by the climate crisis or the transition to a fossil-free economy.

Current pledges made by governments to mitigate climate change would lead to a catastrophic **3C increase** in average global temperatures over pre-industrial levels.

Source: UN Environment Programme

## Human rights defenders

All over the world people are defending the right to a clean and healthy environment. They demand action from governments, campaign against fossil fuel extraction, oppose pollution and defend the land and water their communities depend on.

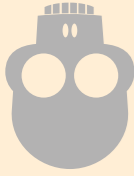
Their work often puts them in danger from political and corporate vested interests. In a time of climate crisis, the world needs environmental rights defenders more than ever. We must all stand up for them when they are threatened.

'I'm not going to be shut up, no matter what.'

Nonhle Mbuthuma, land rights activist in South Africa

**77%** of the human rights defenders killed in 2018 worked on land, indigenous peoples' or environmental rights.

Source: Frontline Defenders



# OUR PLANET OUR RIGHTS

A pocket guide to human rights in the climate crisis



## What you can do

### Support the climate strikes

Find your nearest youth-led climate protests. You'll see Amnesty supporters there.

### Educate yourself and others

Come to film screenings or speaker events about climate change and human rights. You'll learn more and meet new people to campaign with.

### Ask questions

If you hear someone suggesting 'solutions' to climate change that would harm people, then challenge their proposal and think twice before working with them.

### Write letters

Take part in Amnesty's Write for Rights letter-writing campaign to show solidarity with people at risk and help make them safer.

### Join an Amnesty group

There are Amnesty groups in schools, universities and communities all over the UK, campaigning for human rights everywhere.

## Amnesty and climate crisis

Amnesty International is a movement of ordinary people standing up for humanity and human rights, with more than 7 million supporters around the world. Concern for humanity and human rights must be at the heart of all efforts to tackle the climate crisis.

We began work on specific climate-related issues in 2009. Students at Edinburgh University called for Amnesty International to take a more concerted approach to climate change – a proposal adopted by our global governing body.

Meanwhile, Amnesty youth members in many countries are taking part in the global protests calling for climate justice and for swifter action from governments.

**'We should fight like we're running out of time because we are. And we should fight like this is the only planet we have because it is.'**

Claudia Gancayco, Fridays for Future, Philippines

**802** strikes in **101** countries  
**Friday 26 July 2019**

Source: Fridays for Future



**'It's abundantly clear that climate change is already having an impact on human rights. And that this impact will only intensify in coming years'**

Kumi Naidoo, Amnesty International secretary general

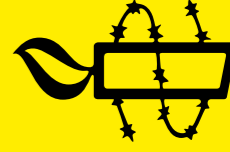
**'Everybody is welcome, everybody is needed.'**

Greta Thunberg, whose lone protests inspired the Fridays for Future movement

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