

Principles and Policy Guidance on

# Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region





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# **Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region**



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ISBN: 978-92-807-3883-4

Job Number: DEL/2382/NA

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**Suggested citation:** United Nations Environment Programme (2021). Principles and Policy Guidance on Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region. Nairobi.

**Production** United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights)

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CHILDREN'S  
DAY 20 November

WORLD  
RE

my daughter ♥

# Foreword

The global environmental crisis undermines the fundamental rights of every child in countless ways through the climate emergency, air pollution, lack of access to safe and sufficient water and the rapid decline of biodiversity. We see this with unprecedented clarity now that the most vulnerable and marginalized children and communities are grappling with compounding challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. The current pandemic has highlighted that a failure to take action to address all aspects of the global environmental crisis threatens a wide range of human rights including rights to life, health, food, water, culture, a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and of course children's rights.

Three years ago, in 2018, my predecessor John Knox, the first Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment submitted a ground-breaking report on the relationship between children's rights and environmental protection. The report clarified the many ways that environmental degradation can harm children as well as the unique vulnerabilities of children. In the ensuing three years, there has been a growing understanding of the basic human right to a healthy environment, the need to keep the best interest of the child at the centre of our joint efforts to achieve a sustainable future, and the vital role that children themselves can play in identifying, advocating for, and implementing solutions.

In October 2020, the 45th session of the Human Rights Council adopted a pioneering resolution on realizing the rights of the child through a healthy environment (A/HRC/45/30). The resolution calls on States to ensure that the best interest of the child is a primary consideration in environmental decision-making and urges States to take a wide range of ambitious actions to guarantee that children can grow, learn and play in a healthy environment.

Progress has been made in recognizing and strengthening the linkages between children's rights and the right to a healthy environment, and informative resources are increasingly available (such as the Special Rapporteur's recent reports on clean air, a safe climate, healthy ecosystems, safe and sufficient water, and good practices). However, many States continue to request guidance on how to involve children in climate and environmental policies, engage them in decision-making and protect their environmental rights. We are pleased to offer such guidance, developed with the full participation of a diverse group of experts, including youth, from countries across the South East Asia region.

Children and youth are already driving change around the world, voicing their expectations that governments must accelerate ambitious action to ensure a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment for their future. As States emerge from the nightmare of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is time to fulfil the dreams of our children by placing the UN Sustainable Development Goals at the heart of all recovery actions. We trust that the Principles and Policy Guidance in this document will inspire policymakers to meet the challenges that children have laid down for them, motivate all members of civil society to support children and young people to ensure their future, encourage businesses to do their part, and give children and youth in South East Asia and other regions of the world a tool they can use to promote and defend their rights, including a healthy environment.



**Dr. David R. Boyd**

UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights  
and the Environment





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*No group is more vulnerable to environmental harm than children. Air pollution, water pollution and exposure to toxic substances, together with other types of environmental harm, cause 1.5 million deaths of children under the age of 5 every year, and contribute to disease, disability and early mortality throughout their life. In addition, climate change and the loss of biodiversity threaten to cause long-term effects that will blight children's lives for years to come. Making matters worse, children are often not able to exercise their rights, including their rights to information, participation and access to effective remedies.*

[Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Environment on the relationship between children's rights and environmental protection, 2018.](#)



# Acknowledgements

These Principles and Policy Guidance were developed through a collaborative, inclusive, multi-stakeholder process initiated by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights), with the participation of the Children's Environmental Rights Initiative (CERI), the ASEAN Youth Organization, the UN Major Group on Children and Youth (UN MGCY), the UNEP Major Group on Children and Youth (UNEP MGCY), and the Asia Pacific Youth Caucus.

We would like to thank all those who provided valuable feedback on the Principles and Policy Guidance, including: the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment; Child Rights Coalition, Cambodia and Asia; Save the Children; Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization, Cambodia; Pesticide Action Network Asia Pacific; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; and King & Wood Mallesons, Sydney, Australia.

Dr. Georgina Lloyd of UNEP, Ms. Seonmi Choi of UNICEF, and Ms. Romchat Wachirarattanakornkul of UN Human Rights provided overall direction and technical input. The drafting of these Principles and Policy Guidance was led by Ms. Patricia Moore, consultant to UNEP and UNICEF. Mr. Sujay Natson, consultant to UNICEF, and other UNICEF, UNEP, and UN Human Rights colleagues provided further technical review.







# Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) reported that, as of 2019, 33 per cent of Southeast Asia's population was under the age of 19. Southeast Asia is part of the most disaster-affected region in the world with 85 per cent of the disaster risks climate-related. The impacts of climate change and environmental degradation caused by air and water pollution, hazardous chemicals and substances, toxic wastes, and the loss of biodiversity risk undoing much of the gains made in child health and development and threaten the fundamental rights of the child.

In 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) made the link between children's rights and the environment in the context of the risks that pollution creates for children's health and in the context of education. The World Summit for Children in 1990 adopted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and in 2002 the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration "A World Fit for Children", which was reaffirmed in 2007. The 1990 World Declaration included a 10-point programme, one element of which is a commitment to work for common measures to protect the environment so that children can enjoy a safer and healthier future. One objective of "A World Fit for Children" is to protect the Earth for children and minimize the impact of environmental degradation on them. In 2016, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on human rights and climate change that calls for addressing the adverse impacts of climate change on children's right to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.



In 2018, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment (the Special Rapporteur) submitted a report to the Human Rights Council on the relationship between children's rights and environmental protection. The links had been acknowledged in the two declarations that followed the adoption of the CRC but this was the first time that a United Nations body had examined the relationship in depth. The report reviewed the effects of environmental harm on the rights of children, as well as human rights obligations related to the protection of children from environmental harm, and made a series of recommendations, most of which are directed to States, on how to ensure children's rights to a healthy environment.

Under the auspices of the Special Rapporteur, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights) and five other core partners created the Children's Environmental Rights Initiative (CERI). CERI characterised the challenge as a lack of both clear normative and practical guidance on applying child rights in the environmental context. One of the most fundamental obstacles to the effective protection of children against environmental harm is a general lack of awareness of the many links between a safe and healthy environment on the one hand, and children's rights on the other. Those concerned with children's rights and those who protect the environment often focus on one topic to the exclusion of the other. As a consequence, children's rights tend to be overlooked in decision-making on the environment, which leads to adverse outcomes in terms of their health, development, and opportunities in life.

CERI has also noted that, to date, there has been no systematic effort to enable knowledge sharing and mutual learning regarding action to promote children's rights in relation to the environment at international, regional, national, and local levels, from which all stakeholders could benefit. The imperative to protect children from environmental harm and respect their rights to a healthy environment transcends national borders and calls for attention at the regional and international levels.

The 44<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council in July 2020 included panel discussions on realising the rights of the child through a healthy environment. The Special Rapporteur participated and reported that the hundreds of children he has interacted with around the world "want adults to listen, engage, and most importantly, act". Many

States requested guidance on how to support children's rights to a healthy environment and involve children in decision-making processes, and particularly on how to do that at the regional level. The 45<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, in October 2020, adopted a resolution on realising the rights of the child through a healthy environment.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has already laid the foundation for a regional approach to children's rights to a healthy environment. All ASEAN Member States are parties to the CRC. ASEAN has adopted three declarations that have provisions pertaining to children's rights to a healthy environment: ASEAN Declaration on Human Rights; Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children; and ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration.

Against this background, UNEP's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (UNEP ROAP) and UNICEF's East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (UNICEF EAPRO) joined with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights South-East Asia Regional Office (UN Human Rights SEARO) to convene, in July 2020, a Virtual Expert Group Meeting to develop policy guidance for promoting and protecting children's rights to a healthy environment in the ASEAN region. The Special Rapporteur opened the virtual meeting in which experts nominated by the three UN agencies on the basis of their expertise in the fields of child rights and environmental issues and partners participated along with experts from governments, civil society organisations the convening UN agencies, and the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, all in their personal capacities. Children and youth participated equally with adult experts to produce a draft of 37 guiding principles for children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment in the ASEAN region. The draft principles were open for public comment during September-October 2020; the public was also asked to provide input for guidance on how to implement the principles. A webinar in October 2020, organised jointly by UNEP, UNICEF, UN Human Rights, the UN Major Group for Children and Youth, the UNEP Major Group for Children and Youth, and regional youth networks, gathered input from children and youth on both the draft principles and implementation guidance.

This document is the result of the combined contributions of the Virtual Expert Group, the public comments, and the webinar for children and youth, together with UNICEF, UNEP, and UN Human Rights.

The consultation process identified and ranked the top 10 priority issues for children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment in the ASEAN region:

1. Comprehensive coverage of environmental issues including climate change, pollution, management of chemicals, toxic and hazardous substances, and wastes, loss of biodiversity, and impact on all types of terrestrial, freshwater, and marine ecosystems.
2. Law enforcement capacity and implementation of environmental laws and regulations by the State, including government engagement and checks and balances.
3. Integrated environmental education using a whole-of-society approach – at the interpersonal level for children including their peers and family, at the community level including school and other community settings, at the organisational level including non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations, and at the policy level including advocacy and government institutions.
4. Protection of the rights of all children, especially those in vulnerable situations, to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly on environmental matters, including protection from threats, reprisals, and harassment for participating or expressing their views.
5. Access to age-appropriate, gender-sensitive, localised and contextualised information, including radio, audio-visual, online, and offline versions of all knowledge products, on environmental matters and children's rights.
6. Children's participation in decision-making processes related to environmental matters.
7. Children's access to environmental justice systems including platforms for reporting violations of their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and effective remedies for violations of those rights.
8. Private sector's role as duty bearers to uphold and respect children's environmental rights, including in formal, informal, and transboundary business activities.
9. Youth and community-led environmental initiatives, family-level environmental engagement, solution-oriented actions by authorities at all levels, and mechanisms to ensure institutionalisation and scaling-up of community-led initiatives.
10. Equity enhancement and non-discrimination, particularly focused on equity for children in both rural and urban areas and children in vulnerable situations.

These priority issues are reflected in the principles and policy guidance.



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# Guiding Principles for Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region

**Recalling** the Convention on the Rights of the Child to which all Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are Parties;

**Reiterating** the commitments in the 2019 Joint Statement on Reaffirmation of Commitment to Advancing the Rights of the Child in ASEAN to mainstream children's rights in cross-cutting areas such as environmental degradation and climate change, to strengthen children's rights legal frameworks, to safeguard the rights of children to express themselves by providing a safe space, and to create opportunities for children to participate, be responsible for and engaged in defining and designing policies that address 21<sup>st</sup> century skills;

**Recalling** ASEAN's history of commitment to children's rights as expressed in ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, the 2010 Ha Noi Declaration on the Enhancement of Welfare and Development of ASEAN Women and Children, the 2001 Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN, and the 1993 Resolution on the ASEAN Plan of Action for Children;

**Noting** that the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration affirmed the general principle that the rights of children are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

**Noting further** that the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration affirmed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance;

**Cognisant** of the need to ensure special care and assistance for children in vulnerable situations, particularly but not limited to: children of traditional, indigenous, and ethnic groups; children of linguistic, racial, or religious minorities; children with disabilities; children from poor households or neighbourhoods; children whose families have climate-sensitive livelihoods; children who have entered the labour force; migrant children, including stateless and undocumented migrant children; displaced children; children in refugee communities; children on the move; girls, boys, and LGBTQIA+ children; children in street situations; children deprived of liberty; and children in institutions;

**Reaffirming** the principles in the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration which state that every person has the right to a safe, clean and sustainable environment, including the right to adequate, affordable, safe and nutritious food, and that the right to development should be fulfilled so as to meet equitably the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations;

**Reiterating** the commitment in the 2019 ASEAN Declaration on the Rights of Children in the Context of Migration to protect children's rights in the context of migration, including through providing access to a clean and safe environment;

**Recalling** that the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration affirmed ASEAN's commitment to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Charter of the United Nations, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, and other international human rights instruments to which ASEAN Member States are parties;

**Reaffirming** the principle in the 2012 ASEAN Human Rights Declaration which states that children and young people must not be employed in work harmful to their health, dangerous to life, or likely to hamper their normal development including their education;



**Recalling** the commitments in the 2013 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and Elimination of Violence Against Children in ASEAN, the 2015 ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Children, and the 2001 Declaration on the Commitments for Children in ASEAN to protect children from all forms of violence and abuse in schools and communities, and equally committing to protect those who assist children in defending their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

**Recognising** that climate change and environmental degradation can undermine the fundamental rights of every child;

**Reaffirming** commitments to meeting the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals particularly as they apply to children;

**Reaffirming** commitments to implement the obligations in the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to which all ASEAN Member States are parties, and to apply the precautionary principle and the principle of intergenerational equity in all efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, efforts to prevent and control environmental degradation, and efforts to address the particular impacts of these processes on present and future children's health and safety;

**Recalling** that the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change acknowledges that climate change is a common concern of humankind and

that parties, when taking action to address climate change, should respect, promote and consider intergenerational equity and their respective obligations on the rights of children;

**Recalling** the 2013 General comment No. 15 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, the 2013 General comment No. 16 on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights, and the 2012 Children's Rights and Business Principles;

**Acknowledging** the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the report of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment with respect to the relationship between children's rights and environmental protection, and the guidance for States in the Special Rapporteur's reports on air pollution, climate change, and biodiversity;

**Cognisant** that the culture of each ASEAN Member State has an influence on the exercise of children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment;

**Recalling** the importance of integrating children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment into existing mechanisms at the regional and national levels and to mobilising the human and financial resources required to do so;

**Affirming** the commitment of all stakeholders to operationalise these principles:



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## General principles

1. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to be born and grow up in a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
2. Children of all groups and backgrounds are agents of change and have the right to freedom of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and meaningful participation in decision-making on all issues related to their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
3. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to age-appropriate information, in inclusive and accessible formats and languages, related to their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
4. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to environmental education.
5. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to play in a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
6. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to be protected from the physical, psychological, and social impacts of climate change, pollution, biodiversity loss, and other forms of environmental degradation and have the right to benefit from the sustainable use of natural resources in their surrounding environment.
7. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to be protected from adverse impacts of formal and informal business activities and investments, including those that are transboundary in nature.
8. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to access effective remedies for violations of their rights arising from environmental harm from all actors that cause such harm, including but not limited to those from government, private sector, academia, and civil society organisations that cause such harm, taking into account both economic and non-economic harm suffered.
9. Children of all groups and backgrounds have the right to be protected from threats, harassment, intimidation, secondary victimisation, violence, arbitrary and inappropriate prosecution, criminalisation, and any other reprisals from any source when they exercise their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and when they seek access to justice for any breach of those rights.



**Realizing the general principles requires commitment to:**

## Participation in decision-making and access to information

10. Implementing measures to protect, empower and facilitate children of all groups and backgrounds to participate in decision-making at all levels of public governance safely, freely, and meaningfully and to advocate for and defend their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
11. Ensuring effective, appropriate, transparent, inclusive, and age- and language-appropriate platforms, with appropriate budgetary resources, for children of all groups and backgrounds to participate in regional, national, and local-level decision-making processes related to climate change and the environment, and ensuring that the concerns of children of all groups and backgrounds are reflected in the outputs of such processes.
12. Respecting, supporting, and encouraging environmental initiatives led by children of all groups and backgrounds and their communities; supporting parents, carers, teachers, and community elders to understand, respect, and raise awareness of the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; and developing and disseminating appropriate materials to support this role.
13. Recognising supporting, protecting, and expanding the role of children of all groups and backgrounds, civil society, community groups, schools, and other actors in the production, promotion, and dissemination of information on children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
14. Enhancing the gathering of data; creating transparent mechanisms for the continuous dissemination of information related to children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; and providing access to such data and information in child-friendly, disability-inclusive, and age-appropriate formats and languages through all available media.

15. Supporting and collaborating with children of all groups and backgrounds to enhance public access to and use of information that is critical for the realisation of children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, including information on climate change and environmental degradation as well as on approaches and measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to prevent, halt, and reverse environmental degradation.

## Environmental education and children's rights to play and recreation

16. Developing and ensuring the use of an inclusive, flexible, responsive, and compulsory environmental education curriculum and accompanying out-of-school programmes at all levels, including the early childhood level and home schooling, informed by the latest scientific and local knowledge to mitigate, adapt, and become resilient to climate change and prevent, halt, and reverse environmental degradation.
17. Ensuring that environmental education is accessible for children of all groups and backgrounds, using all available information, communication, and education technologies, and that children of all groups and backgrounds can be involved in inclusive measures to integrate environmental best practices into their day-to-day activities at home, at school, and in other community settings, with child-friendly and disability-inclusive technical support that is available in age-appropriate formats and languages.
18. Developing educational and engaging media productions, promoting environmental education extracurricular activities that include access to nature and relevant skills-based training in both urban and rural settings, and providing community-based environmental programmes for children of all groups and backgrounds, with special attention to children in vulnerable situations.
19. Ensuring that all levels of government, including in remote and disadvantaged areas, provide for equitably accessible, safe, sustainable, diverse, and healthy green spaces for children of all groups and backgrounds to exercise their right to play and recreation, including in humanitarian situations.

## Pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity, and children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment

20. Ensuring a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment for children of all groups and backgrounds by adopting, improving, enforcing, and monitoring compliance with laws, regulations and policies that integrate recognised science-based minimum core social and environmental standards.
21. Adopting and implementing measures to build national and regional capacity to effectively regulate and to ensure the accountability of regulators and enforcement authorities to uphold children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
22. Ensuring that children of all groups and backgrounds are protected from the effects of environmental pollution by providing their families, schools, and healthcare centres with access to affordable, reliable, timely, and clean technology and services.
23. Ensuring that the best interests of children of all groups and backgrounds are at the centre of strategies, development plans, response plans, and all other types of plans and processes for mitigating and adapting to climate change, preventing and reducing environmental pollution, and preventing the loss of biodiversity.
24. Taking all appropriate measures and allocating resources to protect children of all groups and backgrounds from physical, psychosocial, and economic harm resulting from conflicts, displacement, and loss and damage linked to climate-related hazards, environmental pollution, and unsustainable land management practices, and to provide appropriate support services for children who are victims of environmental harm.
25. Cooperating with civil society, governments, and national and transnational businesses to develop, implement, and enforce accountability mechanisms to ensure that children of all groups and backgrounds are protected from the impacts of transboundary environmental harm on the ASEAN region's shared ecosystems, including the effects of climate change and environmental degradation.



## Business and children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment

26. Ensuring that all businesses have a legally binding responsibility to respect the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment throughout the entire cycle of business activities.
27. Ensuring that all businesses invest in, and implement measures of, social and financial responsibility, integrity, accountability, and transparency related to children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, in accordance with internationally recognised standards for due diligence, disclosure, and environmental and social safeguards.
28. Ensuring that all businesses, particularly State-owned enterprises, and government agencies conduct participatory, inclusive, comprehensive, independent, and validated child-rights due diligence, as part of or in addition to environmental and social impact assessments for development projects and other ongoing and proposed development actions, whether public or private.
29. Ensuring protection for children of all groups and backgrounds who are involved in the informal sector, and particularly for children who are exposed to chemicals, toxic substances and wastes, and processes that cause or have the potential to cause environmental harm or harm to children's health.
30. Establishing and implementing incentives and other mechanisms to raise awareness among businesses of children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment and encourage, empower, and appropriately acknowledge businesses and business stakeholders that respect and promote those rights.



## Enforcement and access to justice

31. Ensuring strict and effective enforcement action against public and private actors, including via criminal, civil, and administrative proceedings, for any breach of children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
32. Adopting and implementing appropriate measures that empower and enable children of all groups and backgrounds to effectively and promptly access effective remedies for environmental harm arising within their home countries and from transboundary activities, including through child-friendly, inclusive, and age-appropriate grievance mechanisms, independent tribunals, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and other international human rights mechanisms; enabling children





and their representatives to file complaints to protect their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment; broadly disseminating information on the existence and scope of such measures; and providing children with adequate and pro bono support to access the services as necessary.

## Non-discrimination

- 33.** Adopting and implementing appropriate measures to prohibit discrimination of any kind against children of all groups and backgrounds, and ensuring equal and effective protection of children of all groups and backgrounds against discrimination that prevents children from exercising and fully enjoying their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.

## Allocation of resources

- 34.** Prioritising the allocation of appropriate human, technical, and financial resources to enable effective and participatory implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of laws, regulations, and all other legal instruments pertaining to the environment that are critical for the realisation of children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, and ensuring that these resources are utilised effectively, efficiently, equitably, transparently, and sustainably.

## Monitoring

- 35.** Developing and applying a range of parameters and indicators appropriate to assessing the status of protecting children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment, with periodic participatory monitoring, evaluation, and public reporting of the findings.

## Regional and international cooperation

- 36.** Enhancing cooperation among the ASEAN Secretariat and all stakeholders, including children of all groups and backgrounds and civil society, in all ASEAN Member States to protect children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment by, among other things, generating and sharing data and other information, monitoring results, providing technical and financial assistance, sharing and transferring appropriate technologies, and promptly taking action in the case of transboundary or shared environmental emergencies.
- 37.** Fully implementing the obligations in multilateral environmental agreements and human rights treaties to which ASEAN Member States are parties; ratifying or acceding to such agreements to which they are not yet parties; and cooperating, individually and collectively, with the secretariats of these agreements, United Nations agencies, and other international and regional organisations and mechanisms to ensure the full enjoyment of children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.





# Policy Guidance for Implementing the Principles for Children's Rights to a Safe, Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment in the ASEAN Region

The following guidance for translating the Principles into actions is derived from input from child, youth, and adult experts and organisations working in the fields of environmental issues and children's rights in ASEAN countries, with contributions from UNICEF, UNEP, and UN Human Rights. The suggested measures are not meant to be an exhaustive list and will need to be further developed and updated over time. Every country and community will have its own measures and initiatives.



# Guidance for States

## Participation – Principles 2 and 10-12.

### To implement these principles, consider:

- Instituting clear and protective protocols for the participation of children of all groups and backgrounds, creating an independent accountability mechanism for ensuring their participation, and making that mechanism known to the public in child-friendly, disability-inclusive, and age-appropriate formats and languages.
- Mandating the ministries responsible for the environment and children's rights, or other appropriate government entities, or creating an inter-ministerial working group or task force with a clear mandate to support child participation in national and sub-national environmental decision-making processes.
- Protecting the right of children of all groups and backgrounds to privacy.
- Establishing requirements and incentives for national and sub-national authorities to create and support safe online and offline spaces for children of all groups and backgrounds to express their thoughts and opinions, based on their own knowledge, skills and abilities, in decision-making processes on all matters affecting them and at all levels of public governance, providing them with disability- and age-appropriate assistance to enable them to participate, and requiring that due weight is given to their views.
- Requiring that strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and environmental impact assessment (EIA) consultations include the informed and meaningful participation of children of all groups and backgrounds, and requiring the inclusion of child rights considerations in due diligence processes within SEA and EIA.
- Establishing minimum quotas for the participation of children of all groups and backgrounds in public participation activities and consultations on climate change and the environment.
- Ensuring that children of all groups and backgrounds are never coerced into expressing their views against their wishes.

- Informing children of all groups and backgrounds, and their parents, guardians and carers, of potential risks of expressing their views, involving them in risk assessment and management processes, ensuring that they know where to go for help, if needed, and informing them that they may stop their participation at any time.
- Requiring that children of all groups and backgrounds receive clear feedback, in languages and formats that are accessible to them, on how their participation has influenced action and outcomes.
- Training and mentoring children of all groups and backgrounds to enable them to participate and enabling them to serve as trainers and facilitate the participation of other children if they choose to do so.
- Supporting children's environment-related initiatives.

## Access to information – Principles 3 and 13-15.

### To implement these principles, consider:

- Mandating the ministries responsible for the environment and children's rights, or other appropriate government entities, to:
  - Develop a centralised database and website for publishing data and resources related to children's rights to a healthy environment in child-friendly formats.
  - Engage children of all groups and backgrounds, civil society, community groups, schools, and other actors in generating data and contributing to the central database.
  - Provide children with full, accessible, and disability- and age-appropriate assistance to enable them to access information about their right to express their views and about the purpose and scope of participation opportunities.
  - Develop and disseminate child-friendly materials in accessible languages on climate change and environmental degradation as well as on approaches and measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to prevent, halt, and reverse environmental degradation.

- Amending or enacting laws and regulations that guarantee public access to information about the effects on children of pollution, climate change, and the loss of biodiversity.
- Supporting campaigns to build awareness of the legal basis for children's rights to a healthy environment.

## Rights to environmental education – Principles 4 and 16-18.

### To implement these principles, consider:

- Amending or enacting laws and regulations to make environmental and climate education compulsory for students at all levels, including the early childhood level, with particular attention to the needs of girls.
- Ensuring adequate public investment in environmental and climate education, prioritising environmental education in public finance, and attracting innovative financing for environmental education.
- Mandating the ministry responsible for education to:
  - Require that climate change, environmental management, and biodiversity conservation be incorporated into the national curriculum and revise the curriculum periodically to reflect scientific developments and traditional knowledge.
  - Incorporate outdoor activities and skills into the curriculum that help children, and in particular girls, learn about the environment and that equip them with the skills necessary to respond to the climate crisis.
  - Incorporate online as well as offline learning into the environmental education curriculum
  - Include in vocational training curricula skills that enable children, and in particular girls, to pursue careers related to green jobs.
  - Provide scholarships to enable children, and in particular girls to pursue higher education and carry out research on environmental issues that affect them.
  - Ensure that environmental education is accessible not only to children in school but also to children out of school, with particular attention to the needs of girls.

- Encouraging public/private partnerships and partnerships with civil society organisations and educational institutions on innovative environmental education for children of all groups and backgrounds and particularly girls.
- Enabling the adoption and expansion of educational technology by:
  - Prioritising internet connectivity for all households and environmental educational continuity for children of all groups and backgrounds and particularly girls.
  - Exploring public/private partnerships to provide low-cost or free devices to children from lower income households, and particularly girls, to ensure that they are not excluded from environmental educational opportunities.

## Rights to play and recreation – Principles 5 and 19.

### To implement these principles, consider:

- Legally guaranteeing children's rights to play and recreation and mandating the appropriate ministry to ensure that these rights are enforced at national and sub-national levels.
- Amending or enacting land use planning laws and regulations to require that there are safe, green, and public spaces for children of all groups and backgrounds to play in both urban and rural areas, and particularly in communities that are marginalised and poor.
- Including children of all groups and backgrounds in land use planning at all levels of government.

## Pollution, climate change, and loss of biodiversity – Principles 6 and 20-25.

### To implement these principles, consider:

- Integrating and implementing approaches and actions that are centred on the best interests of the child as an integral part of policies, strategies and plans for climate change, pollution control, waste management, biodiversity conservation, urban planning, energy, transport, industry, commerce, agriculture, forests, and land use.

- Requiring that environmental fees and taxes are invested in preventing and minimising environmental harm to children of all groups and backgrounds, restoring the environment, and addressing environmental, economic, and health effects on children of all groups and backgrounds in the communities where environmental harm occurs.
- Integrating the socio-economic costs of environmental harm to children into national accounts and public finance management.
- Monitoring climate and environmental risks to children and evaluating the effectiveness of policy measures on children's health and well-being.
- Undertaking a comprehensive and regular audit of public and private investment programs and projects to prevent, minimise and reduce their negative impact on the environment and children's rights, and subsequently implementing necessary measures based on such assessment.
- Increasing public support and public-private partnerships for expanding access by children and their families, schools, and primary healthcare centres to affordable, reliable, timely, and clean energy, water, waste management, and transport technology and services.
- Providing appropriate support services for children who are victims of environmental harm, including all sectors and professionals as well as members of child protection networks, in the development and provision of prevention, protection, and response interventions.
- Implementing transboundary accountability mechanisms to ensure that children are protected from the impacts of transboundary environmental harm.
- Developing clear standards, indicators, and criteria, based on international standards, for monitoring and collecting data on the environmental impacts of formal and informal businesses on children of all groups and backgrounds and disclosing the standards, indicators, criteria, and monitoring results to businesses and other stakeholders.
- Requiring businesses to disclose environmental and child health effects of their businesses across their supply chain.
- Mandating the appropriate government entity to conduct monitoring and oversight of the impacts of formal and informal businesses on children of all groups and backgrounds, with the authority to pursue accountability through the criminal justice system.
- Requiring businesses to prepare and implement plans to respond to environmental emergencies that include special measures to protect children of all groups and backgrounds, including by paying compensation for environmental harm to children.
- Discontinuing government contracts with suppliers that are not adhering to government environmental standards and child rights obligations.
- Requiring businesses to comply with best available international sustainability standards and practices and invest in and implement social and financial responsibility, integrity, accountability, and transparency related to children's rights to a healthy environment.
- Requiring businesses, particularly State-owned enterprises, and government agencies to conduct participatory, inclusive, comprehensive, independent, and validated child-rights due diligence, as part of or in addition to environmental and social impact assessments, and ensure that such assessments are carried out, reviewed, and approved before concessions are granted to businesses.

## **Business and children's rights to a healthy environment – Principles 7 and 26-30.**

### **To implement these principles, consider:**

- Regulating and monitoring the environmental impact of formal and informal business activities that may compromise children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment through independent, science-based, locally appropriate, and participatory mechanisms.
- Requiring participatory and inclusive licensing processes that mandate the participation of children of all groups and backgrounds.
- Improving rural livelihoods and incomes and the functioning of small family farms and enterprises to reduce child poverty and household dependence on child labour.



- Reviewing national lists of hazardous work prohibited to people under 18 years of age to ensure safe, clean, healthy and sustainable work environments for them.
- Developing systems for providing children removed from hazardous work with second chances for education, training, and securing decent work.
- Developing systems for providing children removed from child labour with necessary social services including but not limited to emergency shelter, medical care, psychosocial counselling, legal support, family tracing and assessment, and post-reintegration follow-up.
- Assisting communities to develop environmentally sustainable businesses and entrepreneurs that take all necessary measures to respect and protect the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a healthy environment.

## **Enforcement and access to justice – Principles 8, 9, 31, and 32.**

### **To implement these principles, consider:**

- Revising policies and laws governing the justice system, legal assistance, legal aid, and alternative dispute resolution to support these Principles.
- Revising laws, regulations, and judicial guidelines to mandate the determination and consideration of the best interests of children, both individually and collectively, in all cases involving their rights to a healthy environment.
- Adopting and strengthening penalties for polluters and other entities that violate the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a healthy environment.
- Disseminating all such policies and laws to judges, prosecutors, government officials, and lawyers, and to children of all groups and backgrounds in languages and formats that are accessible to them.
- Strengthening the enforcement of and monitoring of compliance with environmental laws and regulations that govern issues which contribute to the disease burden among children of all groups and backgrounds.
- Ensuring that judicial, quasi-judicial, and non-judicial mechanisms are available and functional to hold business and other economic actors to account for violations of the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a healthy environment and to provide remedies for children.
- Preventing strategic lawsuits against children’s participation in environmental assessments, consultations, and environmental decision-making processes and ensuring that children who seek to defend their rights to a healthy environment receive protection from all kinds of reprisals, including retaliatory legal action.
- Respecting customary laws that protect children’s rights to a healthy environment.
- Waiving filing fees and other administrative expenses for lawsuits, complaints, petitions, applications, or other requests filed by children to protect their rights to a healthy environment.
- Offering witness protection and support for those who legitimately testify in favour of children’s rights, especially when they testify against the government or powerful corporations.
- Establishing realistic and time-bound remedies including orders that also prevent the recurrence of violations of children’s rights to a healthy environment.
- Providing legal support to children with legitimate causes of action arising from environmental harm, whether directly through government-appointed mechanisms or through financial assistance to independent bodies including civil society organisations to enable them to provide such legal support.
- Mandating an appropriate focal person or institution to accept children’s complaints and grievances and, where a national Children’s Rights Commissioner is present, ensure they are trained and provided with adequate resources to respond to complaints and grievances related to children’s rights to a healthy environment.
- Providing children and their representatives with access to child-friendly grievance mechanisms for reporting violations of children’s rights to a healthy environment by:

- Developing and disseminating child-friendly procedures, manuals, and training tools in child-friendly, disability-inclusive, and age-appropriate formats and languages.
- Ensuring that children’s complaints can be submitted online as well as offline, through secure, tested, and technically maintained systems especially in cases of emergencies.
- Enabling anonymous reporting when appropriate and ensuring confidentiality for the children.
- Conducting follow-up monitoring to ensure that defendants, respondents, and perpetrators are complying with decisions and orders issued by competent authorities, including in judicial, quasi-judicial, and non-judicial mechanisms.

### Non-discrimination – Principle 33.

#### To implement this principle, consider:

- Enacting a new anti-discrimination law, or amending an existing one, or amending other relevant laws on the environment and child protection to clearly mandate non-discrimination and include clear penalties for non-compliance that apply to both public and private entities.
- Disseminating child-friendly information on national anti-discrimination laws and regulations.

### Allocation of resources – Principle 34.

#### To implement this principle, consider:

- Prioritising financial and human resources for protecting children’s rights to a healthy environment in public financial management and investment decision-making.
- Establishing a transparent tracking system for the allocation, use, and effectiveness of resources related to children’s environmental rights in public financial management systems across key sectors.



- Requiring all levels of government to allocate funds to protect the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a healthy environment, including by supporting children’s meaningful participation and access to justice and effective remedies and by providing financial support for legal aid and appropriate social services for children who have suffered environmental harm.
- Undertaking a regular whole of government public expenditure review to identify how public finance is realising children’s environmental rights.
- Disclosing budgets for all sectors and measures that support the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds to a healthy environment.
- Developing innovative public and private partnerships and financing mechanisms for children’s rights to a healthy environment, including community-based, child-led local environmental initiatives.



## Regional and international cooperation – Principles 36 and 37.

### To implement these principles, consider:

- Establishing an ASEAN regional mechanism for identifying, implementing and monitoring common and transboundary issues and measures related to children’s rights to a healthy environment, with participation from children and youth networks in ASEAN Member States.
- Developing common standards and guidance, based on the results of monitoring, for protecting children’s rights to a healthy environment in the ASEAN region that can be led and implemented through existing ASEAN intergovernmental mechanisms.
- Enacting new laws and regulations and amending existing ones to comply fully with international obligations and regional obligations and commitments to protect children’s rights to a healthy environment.
- Including children’s rights to a healthy environment in the agendas of ASEAN meetings, whether as a discussion item, session, or separate meeting or forum.
- Disseminating to children and the general public information about international obligations to protect children’s rights to a healthy environment, including child-friendly versions.
- Budgeting adequate funding to send child delegates to regional and international dialogues.
- Disseminating to children and the public information about regional-level and international-level interventions related to children’s rights to a healthy environment.

## Monitoring – Principle 35.

### To implement this principle, consider:

- Integrating environmental parameters with parameters for children’s health and wellbeing, ensuring that there are no overlaps or conflicts.
- Ensuring independence throughout the monitoring cycle, particularly where the government is the subject of the assessment.
- Requiring that monitoring processes include children’s informed and meaningful participation.
- Requiring cross-sectoral sharing of monitoring data related to the impacts of environmental pollution on children’s health and wellbeing.
- Disclosing to the public all budgets, monitoring reports, and follow-up actions related to the rights of children of all groups and backgrounds.
- Establishing protocols to identify and correct for any regression from these Principles.



# Guidance for Children



## LEARN

- Tell your teachers and your parents that you want to learn about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment, and help them convince the education authorities to offer environmental education.
- Take the initiative to learn on your own about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment.
- Get involved in activities that monitor the environment and things that damage it, and learn from those activities.
- Learn the skills you will need to deal with the challenges you and your community may face from climate change and other kinds of environmental harm.
- Find out who are the environmental leaders in your community and your country, and follow their social media channels to learn about the latest events and information.
- Find out about environmental initiatives that children are leading in other places in your country and the world and how you could do something similar in your community.
- Read, watch, and listen to the news to stay up to date with information on the environmental issues that affect your life and the lives of children around the world.



## TALK

- Talk with your friends and other children who may not know what you know about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment.
- Talk with your parents and other adults about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment.

- Tell your teachers and leaders in your community that you want to help them offer activities in school and in your community that raise awareness about children's rights to a healthy environment and fight climate change and other kinds of environmental harm.
- Tell your teachers and leaders in your community that you and other children need child-friendly information on environmental issues and climate change.
- Use social media to tell your friends and others what you have learned about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment, and share child-friendly information.



## ADVOCATE

- Let your parents, your teachers, and leaders in your community know that children need better laws, policies, and procedures that support children's participation in making decisions about environmental issues and how your community adapts to climate change.
- Let leaders in your community and other government officials know that they must make sure that they have plans and budgets for children's participation in making decisions about environmental issues.
- Use your groups to make complaints when your rights to a healthy environment are not respected and tell people about your experience when you make a complaint.
- Find out about working with others who make complaints on behalf of children whose rights to a healthy environment are not respected.
- Monitor and record any impacts you see to the environment around you, and identify if and how this is impacting your community.



## PLAY

- Spend time outside and explore the world around you.
- Find things to do that protect the environment and are fun too.
- Think of things you can do to have fun outdoors and bring your friends with you.
- Tell your parents and other adults that you need safe outdoor spaces to play.



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## JOIN

- Help create groups in your community that will support your participation and the participation of other children in local, national, and international meetings that make decisions about managing natural resources and fighting climate change.
- Get involved in existing networks for children and others who are promoting environmental protection and fighting climate change.
- Find out about what your community and your country are doing to plan for environmental protection and fighting climate change and how you and other children can get involved in planning those activities, carrying them out, and monitoring them to make sure they are done well.
- Find out about local and national clubs, networks, coalitions, and campaigns and how you can get involved in them and encourage other children to join as well.
- Get involved in regional and international campaigns and groups:
  - [Children's Environmental Rights Initiative \(CERI\)](#)  
A network of advocates around the world fighting for children's rights to a sustainable world and ensuring that children's voices are heard in international meetings.
  - [ASEAN Youth Organization](#)  
Get involved, build your skills, and volunteer.
  - [United Nations Major Group on Children and Youth](#)  
You can join as an individual or as an organisation to engage in various issues around the world, including the environment.
  - [Asia Pacific Regional Youth Caucus](#)  
The UN's mechanism for youth engagement in the region.
  - [UNEP Major Group on Children and Youth](#)  
Organisations can apply to be accredited to join.

# Guidance for Civil Society Actors

## Participation – Principles 2 and 10-12.

- Facilitate opportunities for children to share their experience and expertise in participating in decision-making processes on environmental issues.
- Create opportunities for children to participate in community initiatives to monitor natural resources and the human processes that impact them.
- Provide safe spaces and platforms for children and youth to build movements and support one another in exercising their right to be heard to defend their rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.
- Support children to voice their opinions by helping them build their capacity for public speaking, including how to develop talking points.
- Facilitate participatory opportunities for children to share their experience and expertise in participating in decision-making processes.
- Advocate for children's rights to be heard and to hold all levels of government accountable.



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## Access to information – Principles 3 and 13-15.

- Advocate for children's rights to access information.
- Make information about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment available to children, schools, and learning centres.

## Rights to environmental education – Principles 4 and 16-18.

- Educate adults to understand why environmental education is so important.
- Oversee the curriculum development process and ensure that environmental education is appropriately included.
- Encourage active participation of parents and other caregivers in environmental education.
- Volunteer to develop and conduct supplemental programming for environmental education in schools and communities, particularly for children who are not in school.

## Rights to play and recreation – Principles 5 and 19.

- Advocate at local and national levels to ensure that children have safe places to play.
- Volunteer to create safe spaces within your community for children to play.
- Collaborate with children and diverse stakeholders to ensure that children of all groups and backgrounds are able to exercise their rights to play and to take part in cultural and creative activities, especially in emergency situations, including pandemics.



## **Pollution, climate change, and loss of biodiversity – Principles 6 and 20-25.**

- Advocate at the local and national levels to ensure that children’s best interests are at the centre of all strategies to use natural resources.
- Advocate at the local and national levels to ensure that children’s best interests are at the centre of all climate change mitigation and adaptation plans.
- Organise at the community level to protect children from polluting activities.
- Introduce ‘reduce-reuse-recycle’ in your community and encourage children to practice it.
- Identify and publicise religious and traditional beliefs and practices that protect children’s rights to a healthy environment.

## **Business and children’s rights to a healthy environment – Principles 7 and 26-30.**

- Educate local and national businesses about environmentally sound and child-friendly business practices.
- Recognise and patronise businesses that use environmentally sound and child-friendly business practices.

## **Enforcement and access to justice – Principles 8, 9, 31, and 32.**

- Inform children about their rights to a healthy environment and possible remedies when their rights are violated.
- Support children who want to make submissions on children’s rights to a healthy environment through local, national, regional, and global processes.
- Protect children from reprisals when they try to protect their rights to a healthy environment.
- Support lawyers and other volunteers to assist children in protecting their rights to a healthy environment.

- Coordinate to give children all the different kinds of support they need throughout the process of defending their rights to a healthy environment.
- Support children in documenting cases and submitting complaints about violations of their rights to a healthy environment, including strategic litigation when appropriate, and securing remedies.
- Pursue regional or international action, individually or collectively, to protect children’s rights to a healthy environment, when necessary.

## **Non-discrimination – Principle 33.**

- Document instances of discrimination against children of all groups and backgrounds and use the information to advocate for changes in discriminatory policies, laws, and practices.

## **Allocation of resources – Principle 34.**

- Advocate for government at all levels to budget adequate funding to protect children’s rights to a healthy environment.

## **Monitoring – Principle 35.**

- Participate in environmental monitoring and ensure that it involves children and takes children’s special needs into account.
- Work with the media to ensure that monitoring reports are disclosed to the public and are made available in child-friendly formats.

## **Regional and international cooperation – Principles 36 and 37.**

- Organise and advocate for States to ratify, accede to, and implement regional and global agreements and treaties protecting the environment and children’s rights.
- Support organisations that monitor local and national implementation of regional and global agreements and publicise their findings.

## Guidance for Businesses

### Respect children's rights to a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment by:

- Following and implementing social and environmental disclosure standards, and safeguards practices and frameworks, and frameworks that are aligned with globally established standards, including the [Principles for Responsible Investment](#).
- Establishing corporate protocols, based on recognised good practices, for conducting child impact assessments and ensuring that the assessments are included in budgets for project and product development and introduction.
- Conducting child-rights due diligence on subcontractors as a regular part of supply chain management.
- Training staff at all levels on protecting children's rights to a healthy environment in all operations.
- Persuading shareholders of the importance of protecting children's rights to a healthy environment.
- Working with national, regional, and global business networks to reduce your carbon footprint and pursue transboundary environmentally sustainable activities that will reduce negative impacts on children and their rights to a healthy environment.

### Support children's rights to a clean, safe, healthy and sustainable environment by:

- Providing child-friendly information on your business and business practices in the communities where your businesses operate.
- Providing regularly scheduled spaces for children to ask questions and share their inputs on business strategies and decisions that affect their rights to a healthy environment.
- Supporting communities in your areas of operation to raise awareness of the importance of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment for children's health and development.
- Providing places for children to play that are at a safe distance from your areas of operation.
- Conducting, supporting, and sharing the results of scientific studies and research that contribute to knowledge on the impacts on children of mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency to climate change and environmental degradation in the areas where you operate.

- Providing scholarships to enable children to pursue higher education and carry out research on environmental issues that affect them.

### In addition, businesses should: Comply with the following principles -

- [UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#).
- [Children's Rights and Business Principles](#).

### Use the following tools -

- [Children's Rights and Business Atlas](#).
- [Children's Rights in Impact Assessments-A guide for integrating children's rights into impact assessments and taking action for children](#).
- [Engaging Stakeholders on Children's Rights: A tool for companies](#).
- [Children's Rights in Policies and Codes of Conduct: A tool for companies](#).
- [OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises](#).
- [OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct](#).



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## Guidance for the Media

- Actively and on a regular basis publish child-sensitive and accurate information about the environment and children's rights to a healthy environment.
- Respect children's privacy and address and mitigate the risks involved in reporting on children.
- Develop protective and ethical standards for reporting on children who have suffered environmental harm and children who are working to protect their rights to a healthy environment.
- Commit to disseminating truthful and scientifically proven information on environmental issues and the rights of children to a healthy environment and to avoiding the dissemination of false or misleading information.
- Develop and disseminate accessible, child-friendly, inclusive, and gender- and culture-sensitive information that will help children to participate in decision-making processes.
- Promote children as agents of change by positively portraying the abilities of different children in different conditions and situations.
- Popularise children's voices and their efforts to protect their rights to a healthy environment.
- Investigate and accurately report on events and issues that have violated children's rights to a healthy environment, and support advocacy to remedy the damage caused.
- Contribute to increasing awareness of children's rights to a healthy environment and of sustainable choices and alternatives, and support efforts to encourage individuals and society at large to adopt them.
- Collaborate with educators to promote science-based environmental education.
- Popularise evidence-based information and scientific knowledge on environmental degradation and its negative impacts on children.
- Hold public and private sector actors accountable for violating children's rights to a healthy environment.
- Publicise information on child-friendly grievance mechanisms and how to use them.
- Regularly cover and publish reports on governance processes that address public budgeting, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of initiatives to protect children's rights to a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment.









# Glossary

*Business stakeholders* include investors and other financiers, regulators, shareholders, workers, and their professional associations.

*Child-friendly* means age-appropriate and suitable for the capacities of children of all groups and backgrounds.

*Children* means every human being below the age of 18 years.

*Children of all groups and backgrounds* includes, and is not limited to, children of traditional, indigenous, and ethnic groups, children of linguistic, racial, or religious minorities, children with disabilities, children from poor households or neighbourhoods, children whose families have climate-sensitive livelihoods, children who have entered the labour force, stateless and undocumented migrant children, displaced children, children in refugee communities, children on the move, girls, boys, gender minority and LGBTQIA+ children, children in street situations, children deprived of liberty, and children in institutions.

*Environmental education* includes at a minimum, but is not limited to, climate science and climate mitigation and adaptation, environmental stewardship, environmental knowledge of traditional, indigenous, and ethnic groups, basic life sciences, environmental legal rights, environment and health links, and green skills, as core subjects at all levels.

*Green jobs* are positions in agriculture, manufacturing, construction, installation, and maintenance, as well as scientific and technical, administrative, and service-related activities that contribute substantially to preserving or restoring environmental quality. Specifically, but not exclusively, this includes jobs that help to protect and restore ecosystems and biodiversity; reduce energy, materials, and water consumption through high-efficiency and avoidance strategies; de-carbonise the economy; and minimise or altogether avoid generation of all forms of waste and pollution. Green jobs also need to be good jobs that meet longstanding demands and goals of the labor movement, i.e., adequate wages, safe working conditions, and worker rights, including the right to organise labour unions.

*Inclusive* incorporates gender, disability, and all other attributes that characterise children of all groups and backgrounds.

*Non-discrimination* means guaranteeing that human rights are exercised without discrimination of any kind based on race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status such as disability, age, marital and family status, sexual orientation and gender identity, health status, place of residence, economic and social situation.

*Safe, clean, healthy, and sustainable environment* includes a safe climate, clean air, clean water and adequate sanitation, healthy and sustainably produced food, non-toxic environments in which to live, work, study and play, and healthy biodiversity and ecosystems.









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