ACTION FOR CLIMATE EMPOWERMENT (ACE)

Overview

Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) is the UNFCCC framework for climate education, training, public awareness, public participation, access to information and international cooperation. At COP31, Parties will continue reviewing the Glasgow Work Programme on ACE, creating an opportunity to strengthen how people — particularly young people — participate in climate action and decision-making.

Negotiation Goal

Parties are reviewing the Glasgow Work Programme and considering how to strengthen its implementation and Action Plan. Following discussions at SB64, the review continues at SB65 and COP31.

> **Key deliverable to advocate:** An outcome that strengthens ACE implementation, including activities, support and accountability for meaningful public participation.

GCE Objectives

> GCE wants to move youth participation beyond one-off consultation towards sustained involvement in climate governance.

- **Institutionalise participation:** Establish permanent, legally mandated mechanisms for youth participation in EU climate policy making and COP negotiations, supported by accessible finance and capacity-building.
- **Strengthen the ACE Action Plan:** Embed sustained youth participation and co-creation, with stronger links to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other UNFCCC commitments.
- **Improve accountability:** Introduce transparent reporting on how youth input has influenced policies and negotiating positions.

Status Quo

- **COP26 (2021):** Parties adopted the ten-year Glasgow Work Programme on ACE.
- **COP27 (2022):** Parties agreed an ACE Action Plan to support implementation.
- **Heading into COP31:** The midterm review remains ongoing. Parties must consider how to strengthen implementation, support and accountability, including meaningful participation in practice.

Key Terms & Acronyms

ACE	Action for Climate Empowerment.
Glasgow Work Programme	The ten-year framework for implementing ACE.
NDCs	National climate action plans under the Paris Agreement.
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation, which considers the ACE negotiations.
Co-creation	Young people helping design and shape decisions, rather than simply commenting on proposals.

Key Stakeholders

- **Parties and negotiating groups:** The EU, G77 and China, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), among others.
- **Youth and civil society:** Youth-led organisations, education networks and other observer constituencies.
- **UNFCCC institutions:** The SBI and UNFCCC Secretariat, which support negotiations and implementation.

Expected Challenges & Fault Lines

- **Participation vs influence:** Will young people help shape decisions, or simply be consulted?
- **Access and finance:** Will young people have the funding, information and capacity needed to participate meaningfully?
- **Accountability:** Will Parties report how youth input influences decisions, rather than simply counting consultations?

- **Scope:** Will youth participation remain a standalone activity, or be embedded across all six ACE elements and wider climate policymaking?

What to watch out for

- **SBI Contact Group on ACE / Informal Consultations:** Where Parties negotiate the midterm review of the Glasgow Work Programme and discuss strengthening the ACE Action Plan.
- **Glasgow Work Programme Midterm Review:** Look for proposed changes to ACE activities, implementation arrangements, monitoring and reporting.
- **ACE Action Plan discussions:** Track whether proposals on meaningful youth participation, co-creation, capacity-building and access to resources are reflected in draft text.
- **National ACE Focal Points:** Watch for commitments to strengthen national coordination and integrate ACE into NDCs and domestic climate policies.
- **COP31 Presidency consultations and final decisions:** Follow whether the outcome includes concrete implementation steps and stronger support for inclusive participation.

Links to Other Streams

- **NDCs and Mitigation:** ACE supports public understanding of climate targets and enables people to participate in developing and implementing national climate commitments.
- **Just Transition:** Climate education, skills and training can prepare young people and workers for changing labour markets and support a fair transition.
- **Adaptation:** Public awareness, access to information and community participation help people understand climate risks and shape locally relevant adaptation plans.
- **Climate Finance:** Accessible funding and capacity-building are essential to implement ACE activities and enable young people and civil society to participate in climate processes.
- **Gender and Inclusion:** ACE's emphasis on inclusive participation connects with efforts to address barriers faced by women, Indigenous Peoples, young people and other underrepresented groups.