



Concept Note

2025 Sustainable Development Goals Youth Summer Camp

19 – 21 August 2025, GGGI Venue, Seoul, Republic of Korea

1. Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development([A/RES/70/1](#)) recognized children, young women and men as critical agents of change for implementation of the SDGs. Around the world, young people are actively advancing their knowledge, skills, and mindsets to ensure successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Acknowledging the vital role of youth in implementing the SDGs, the UN has introduced various initiatives- some of which began before 2015- to have their voices heard and ensure their meaningful engagement in the UN processes. These include the annual ECOSOC Youth Forum (held since 2012), the launch of “Youth 2030: The United Nations Youth Strategy” in 2018, and the appointment of Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth since 2014. The UN's commitment to youth has deepened further with the announcement of Felipe Paullier as the first Assistant Secretary-General for Youth Affairs in October 2023.

On the margins of the 79th General Assembly, world leaders convened the “Summit of Future” on 22-23 September 2024, with the aim to re-mobilize the international community around the Sustainable Development Goals. This resulted in the adoption of an action-oriented outcome document, “Pact for the Future([A/RES/79/1](#))”¹. The Pact for the Future re-affirmed the younger generation as critical agents of positive change and in the section “Youth and Future Generations” declared four key actions: investing in development of young people for them to reach their full potential, protecting their human rights and foster social inclusion and integration as well as strengthening meaningful youth participation at national and international levels.

In this context, UNOSD has been implementing a youth capacity building programme for sustainable development since the office's inception over a decade ago. Since 2017, UNOSD began organizing the “SDGs Youth Summer Camp” annually to empower youth leaders to think critically and get engaged in implementing the SDGs. Since its first summer camp, UNOSD has trained close to 300 youth.²

Globally, one million plastic bottles are purchased every minute and up to five trillion plastic bags are used worldwide every year, but of the seven billion tons of plastic waste generated, less than 10 per cent has been recycled³. Plastics are ubiquitous in the environment, and microplastics have been found in human organs and are associated with serious health issues⁴.

The international community has taken steps to resolve this issue with initiatives such as the Clean Seas campaign, the Global Partnership on Marine Litter, New Plastics Economy Global Commitment and the Global Tourism Plastics Initiative⁵. In March 2022, a resolution was adopted to develop an internationally binding instrument on plastic pollution. Five sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) have been held so far, first part of fifth session (INC-5.1) took place from

¹ <https://www.un.org/en/summit-of-the-future/pact-for-the-future>

² UNOSD has organized five Summer Camps thus far, with the following number of participants per session: 37 participants in 2017, 40 participants in 2018, 41 participants in 2019, 41 participants in 2020, 38 participants in 2021, 39 participants in 2022, and 24 participants in 2023 and 28 participants in 2024. In total, 288 youth participants have been trained.

³ <https://www.unep.org/interactives/beat-plastic-pollution/>

⁴ <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/microplastics-long-legacy-left-behind-plastic-pollution>

⁵ <https://www.unep.org/interactives/beat-plastic-pollution/>



25 November to 1 December in Busan, Republic of Korea and the second part (INC-5.2) held 5 to 14 August in Geneva, Switzerland with the aim to draft a global plastic treaty.

Reflecting on the seriousness and gravity of the plastic pollution problem, this year's Camp continues to focus on the plastic pollution crisis from last year. The Camp includes sessions where the participants are encouraged to come up with social media messages on innovative ideas and accelerated solutions to contribute to the resolution of the plastic pollution crisis.

2. Objectives

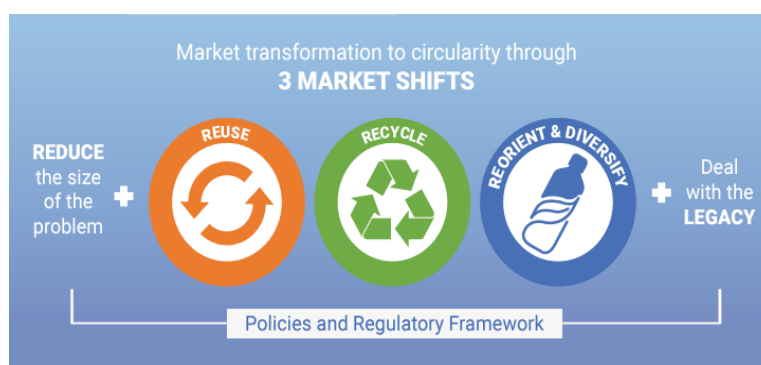
The objectives of the Camp will include, but are not limited to the following:

- Build and enhance knowledge of youth on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Foster youth leadership skills with design-thinking, critical-thinking, and engagement through dialogues and exercises on successful plastic-related SDGs implementation.
- Provide opportunities for networking among youth.
- Expand the host institution's partnership with youth leaders for the SDGs.

3. Methodologies

The "2025 SDGs Youth Summer Camp" will be held at the GGGI venue from 19 to 21 August. The programme will use the framework developed by UNEP describing the systems change required to end plastic pollution. Through this framework, participants will understand how to contribute to ending the plastic pollution crisis through reduce, reuse, recycle, reorient and diversify and managing the plastic pollution legacy. They will understand the policies and regulatory framework required for the shift, including the need to ensure a just transition. Through expert presentations, interactive sessions and group activities, participants will develop social message messages to help end the plastic pollution crisis to contribute raise general awareness on the plastic pollution problem.

Social media is one of the most effective ways for young people to share ideas and inspire action including sustainable development. By working on creating the messages, the participants are encouraged to transform their learned knowledge on plastic pollution into engaging content that can have a far outreach including peers, communities, and a global audience. This group activity not only allows participants to collaborate and express their creativity but also enhances the role of youth as advocates and communicators for the SDGs. Using social media messages ensures that the ideas and solutions developed during the camp extend beyond the event itself, amplifying youth voices in the collective effort to address the plastic pollution crisis.



Source. Turning off the Tap. How the world can end plastic pollution and create a circular economy (UNEP, 2023)⁶

⁶ https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/42277/Plastic_pollution.pdf



4. Learning Outcomes

After taking part in the “2025 SDGs Youth Summer Camp”, students will be able to:

- Communicate on the role of youth in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Gain knowledge on the importance of plastics for SDGs achievement.
- Understand how to achieve the shift away from plastic pollution through policy and personal action.
- Develop their ideas alongside sustainable development experts.

5. Participants

Those who are born between 1997 and 2007 are eligible to apply regardless of their nationality by submitting application forms and other required documents via online form. Proficiency in English is required for all participants. The participants must cover their own expenses for transportation (including airflight) to and from the venue. Accommodation in Korea and meals will be provided by organizers. The organizers will select a maximum of 30 participants based on their motivation, capacities, and English proficiency while considering gender and geographical balance and potentially countries of participants from previous years.

6. Programme and structure

The organizers will invite experts and practitioners from international organizations, academia, government sector and the private sector to share their insights on SDGs and facilitate productive dialogues with the participants. The programme will be facilitated by sustainable development experts with knowledge in the plastics pollution crisis. Their knowledge, skills, and experiences will ensure the overall quality of the summer camp and motivate the participants to be fully engaged.

The sessions will include group work to allow active interaction among the participants, including through group activities and to share creative ideas on how to develop practical approaches by creating SNS messages to addressing the plastics pollution crisis. All sessions will be conducted in English.

7. Organizers

This event will be organized by [UNOSD](#) and [GGGI](#) in collaboration with [K-eco](#), [Ministry of Environment, Republic of Korea](#).