

## **WILDOCEANS submission to Durban Youth Climate Council**

WILDOCEANS, as an emerging ocean conservation NGO, is proud to add its support to the upcoming Durban Youth Climate Council. WILDOCEANS recognize the major role climate change is having on all our planets life support systems, especially the aquatic environment and the ocean.

Major threats such as ocean warming, acidification and sea level rise threaten all spheres of sustainability, with massive social impacts, destructive environmental consequences and ever-increasing economic burdens being felt by the worlds most vulnerable.

Africa in particular is especially vulnerable to the devastating impacts of climate change, as many of our nations are only now experiencing true independence while still carving out a space in the global economic arena. Within this framework of vulnerability and expectation, Africa finds itself home to an immensely youthful population, who for all argument's sake will be the most adversely impacted by climate change.

South Africa, being a country, which is also characterized by climate vulnerability and a large youthful population has a duty to take an active role in confronting the negative consequences of climate change. Our city of Durban has already been visited by an assortment of climate disasters such as the rouge tides of 2007, the massive storm surges of 2017 which resulted in the nurdle spill as well as the rain bomb of 2019 which left at least 80 individuals dead and many more displaced.

WILDOCEANS are committed to developing climate conscious youth as we are on the forefront of marine waste management, marine protected areas and eco-sensitive conservation. This is why WILDOCEANS is proud to endorse the Durban Youth Climate Council and have one of our own members represented on the panel and ultimately, we think it's a good idea.

We hope to support the council by linking activities and engagements where possible through the youth we interact with and hopefully grow the council membership. Our various departments are actively engaging with youth across the socioeconomic spectrum, from masters students at university to school going youth, WILDOCEANS are part of the conversation.

The council can in turn support our initiatives by serving as a bridge between youth who are interested in the ocean space, waste management, marine sciences, climate change and even whales, basically anything ocean related! Through collaboration and communication, we can empower each other and build an appreciation for the ocean and understand how this massive component of Earth interacts with and is affected by the climate.

Forward Durban Youth Climate Council, Forward!

Khalid Mather

WILDOCEANS