

# 10 Climate Activists That Are Changing the World

By Breffni O'Brien

Around the world, young climate activists lead the way in terms of climate action. They're pushing the boundaries and inspiring us all to take on more drastic measures to tackle the climate crisis by making small, sustainable changes in our everyday lives. They also speak out and put pressure on world leaders and governments to up their game. Here are ten climate activists who are changing the world.

*"They push the boundaries and inspire us all."*

ten activists. ten stories. one planet.

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**01****Xiuhtezcatl Roske-Martinez**

Also known as X, Xiuhtezcatl is a young advocate for indigenous and marginalised communities and a dedicated environmental activist. From a young age, X has been particularly vocal about the detrimental effects of fossil fuels. They were one of the 21 plaintiffs in the Juliana V United States case, where a lawsuit was filed against the US government for its failure to act on climate change and its continued use of fossil fuels.

X was also one of the seven plaintiffs in the Martinez V Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission case, which sought to require the Colorado Oil and Gas Conservation Commission to deny drilling permits unless drilling activities would not adversely impact human health and the environment or contribute to climate change.

In addition to various UN speeches and TED Talks, the 22-year-old has also served as the Youth Director of Earth Guardians, an environmental activist organisation, until 2019. Since then, X has stood as Co-Youth Director.

**02****Ineza Umuhoza Grace**

As an eco-feminist, Ineza not only fights to protect the ecosystem but to empower women to lead change. Ineza is the founder and director of The Green Protector, aka The Green Fighter, a women-led non-profit organisation that strives to encourage youth activism.

Ineza is also the co-founder and coordinator of the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition, which seeks to hold governments accountable for their actions that damage the environment. In addition, Ineza is a part of the Rwandan delegation team of negotiators under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change).

**03****Licypriya Kangujam**

Since the age of 7, Kangujam has actively campaigned for better air pollution laws in India by protesting outside the Indian Parliament. In addition, she demanded that climate change literacy be made mandatory in schools. Since becoming one of the world's youngest climate activists, Kangujam has given TED Talks and spoken to World Leaders at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Madrid 2019.

Kangujam has travelled to more than 32 countries, raising awareness and encouraging others to combat climate change actively. Along with founding the "The Child Movement", a young, global climate justice organisation, she also launched a symbolic device known as SUKIFU. This "Survival Kit for the Future" was created with the support of Chandan Ghosh, a professor at the Indian Institute of Technology Jammu, and seeks to curb air pollution. Made entirely of trash, the device is designed to provide fresh air to breathe when pollution is particularly bad.

**04****Txai Surui**

Daughter of Almir Surui, one of the Indigenous Leaders most distinguished for fighting against deforestation in the Amazon rainforest, Txai follows closely in her father's footsteps. Not only was Txai the founder of the Indigenous Youth Movement of Rondonia, but she was also the only Brazilian and Indigenous person to speak at the opening of the 26th United Nations Climate Summit Conference. During her speech, she drew the world's attention to those at the forefront of the fight against climate change and urged leaders to defend the Amazon against deforestation.

**05****Xiye Bastida**

Xiye also follows in her family's footsteps as the daughter of two environmentalists who met at a climate change conference in 1992. In 2015, after bearing witness to extreme flooding in her hometown of San Pedro, Tultepec, Xiye urged governments to adopt a more aggressive approach to climate action.

Xiye is not only one of the co-founders of the Re-Earth Initiative, but she was also one of the lead organisers of the Fridays for Future in New York City. In addition, she serves on the administration committee of the People's Climate Movement. Xiye also spoke at the Leadership Summit on Climate, where she encouraged world leaders to become more involved in climate activism.

**06****Vanessa Nakate**

Vanessa Nakate is a 25-year-old climate activist from Uganda, where she founded the Rise Up Movement. This movement provides African climate activists with a platform for their voices to be heard worldwide. Nakate, Uganda's first Fridays for Future activist, is also responsible for leading a campaign to save the Congo's rainforest from deforestation and calling on governments and world leaders to take drastic, immediate action to fight climate change at COP25 and COP26.

**07****Nalleli Cobo**

Having suffered from severe headaches, asthma, nosebleeds and nausea, Nalleli has experienced firsthand the detrimental impact of oil drilling on human health. When she was just nine years old, Nalleli became quite ill, but she wasn't the only one — many of her family and neighbours also became very unwell. It was realised that the culprit was the active oil well across the street from their home. Joined by her community, Cobo protested until the site was temporarily shut down. With the help of youth activists and organisations, she sued the city and demanded the implication of stricter regulations on oil extraction. And they won.

Cobo is one of the co-founders of the campaign "People Not Wells" which aims to end oil drilling, and she was the winner of the Goldman Environmental Prize 2022.

**08**

### **Qiyun Woo**

Based in Singapore, Qiyun is an environmental activist and artist who uses unique illustrations to raise awareness of climate issues and sustainability-related causes. Using social media and a range of other channels, Woo has sought to educate new audiences about environmental policies, ecology, sustainable finance and circular economy.

In addition, Qiyun works as a sustainability consultant for various stakeholders in the public and private sectors. She also hosts book clubs on ecofeminism and alternative economic models and creates content for multiple media outlets to help explain the complexities of the climate crisis and sustainability.

**09**

### **Maytik Avirama**

Maytik is a 30-year-old climate activist from Colombia, where she co-founded an organisation that connects young environmentalists. There, she also hosts a Spanish-language podcast, Radio Savia. With her podcast, she campaigns for the rights of female land defenders like herself. She also discusses the intersectionality of gender rights and environmentalism, shining a light on the extreme violence environmentalists regularly face in her home country.

**10**

### **Ella and Amy Meek**

Ella and Amy are two sisters leading the fight against plastic pollution in the UK. Having started the campaign "Kids Against Plastic" back in 2016, when they were just 10 and 12, they are estimated to have picked up over 100,000 individual pieces of single-use plastic litter from all over the country. They have also launched initiatives in over 1000 schools and 50 cafes, festivals and businesses in the UK.

In addition to their multiple TED Talks, they have also published a book, "Be Plastic Clever", in recent years.

### **Conclusion**

Of course, no list of climate activists would be complete without mentioning Greta Thunberg, the Swedish environmental activist who inspired a whole generation. Still, we wanted to spotlight some of the lesser-known activists who deserve just as much recognition for their hard work.

If you'd like to read more about Greta's work, check out our previous magazine where we wrote a dedicated piece about her. Like the individuals mentioned above, climate activists play an essential role in protecting this planet that we all share and defending the people and ecosystems that call this Earth home.

They give the movement a voice that we can use to call out governments, decision-makers, and world leaders to bring about meaningful and drastic changes in environmental policies to fight the climate crisis.