

**Statement on Behalf of
Children and Youth of Plant for the Planet
UN Ocean Conference, June 9, 2017**



Distinguished Co-Chairs, Delegates, Dear representatives,

I am Sagar Aryal, born and raised in Nepal – a small landlocked country that houses the mighty Himalayas, I represent over 50,000 children and youth who are raising their voices for our future by planting trees all around the world.

We stand at crucial point in human history - facing challenges which threaten our very survival;

Ocean ... or in that sense water -- you know what is special about it?

It connects us all – from the top of the Himalayas to the great Amazon.

All of us are deeply concerned about the world's oceans, especially because of the effects of the climate crisis. Our Oceans currently absorb almost three billion tons of CO₂ or about a quarter of our emissions, every year – making them more acidic than ever.

To protect the world's oceans and our future, we must address global warming with far more urgency. The efforts agreed upon by all our governments in the Paris Agreement are important, but just not enough. The two degree temperature limit was promised – but current efforts seem far from sufficient to keep that promise.

But we still have one trick up our sleeve. Planting Trees. Aside from oceans, trees are the only machines we currently have that can easily capture carbon. But the key difference is, we can't make more oceans. But, we can plant more trees.

According to a recent study published in *Nature*, the world currently has 3 trillion trees. That is about 450 trees per person. But more importantly, the same research team also concluded that the world has sufficient degraded forest areas to plant an additional one trillion trees. That's about 150 trees for each one of us.

If we managed to plant those trees, they would capture up to half of all human made carbon emissions. That would not solve the crisis, but buy us some time to reduce our global carbon emissions and protect our oceans.

In addition to protecting the climate, the trillion tree campaign would create tens of millions of jobs in countries of the south, protect our biodiversity, produce valuable construction materials and far more.

We welcome over a thousand voluntary commitments already made at this conference.

At this time, more than ever, we call you to make bold commitments and join us to take measurable actions with compassion and empathy to implement what we all have pledged for the Paris Agreement, SDGs and the bigger goal of Climate Justice . The climate clock is ticking. But we will not fear the crisis. We will stand together, to protect our blue planet by making it green!

Dear delegates → Water is Life.

Thank You