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**Statement: Our Children's Trust Submits Comments on Committee
on the Rights of the Child Draft General Comment No. 26**

Amsterdam—On 15 February 2023, attorneys from Our Children's Trust [submitted comments](#) on draft General Comment No. 26, "Children's Rights and the Environment with a Special Focus on Climate Change," as prepared by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

The [CRC in 2021](#) "decided to reinforce its efforts on environmental issues and the global climate crisis and to join the millions of children and young people who have mobilized around the world demanding that governments do more." Since then, the Committee has consulted with states, experts, interested parties, and hundreds of children to produce its draft General Comment No. 26. As a part of that consultation process, Our Children's Trust submitted scientific evidence to the CRC to help it draft an accurate and urgent document. The General Comment is intended to provide authoritative guidance to the governments of the 196 countries that ratified the CRC and to serve as an impetus for global-level change and as a powerful tool for children and young people as well as their advocates to hold governments and other relevant actors accountable.

Our Children's Trust provided its comments because it strongly believes draft Comment No. 26 needs revisions to adequately reflect the immense gravity of the climate crisis and the severe harms it disproportionately imposes on children.

"United Nations institutions have repeatedly stated that the climate crisis is the defining children's rights challenge of this generation and is already having a devastating impact on the well-being of children globally," said Kelly Matheson, Deputy Director, Global Climate Litigation at Our Children's Trust. "Yet the CRC's General Comment, as currently drafted, fails to urgently call on governments and industry to aggressively stop the litany of ongoing violations of children's rights. The good news is that the CRC has a second chance to get this right and demonstrate to children across the globe that they will stand up, rather than back down, to protect young people everywhere."

The comments submitted by Our Children's Trust incorporated several priority expectations, suggesting that the draft General Comment must:

- First and foremost focus on the harms the climate crisis is causing to children's rights;
- Particularly emphasize the need to stop the climate harms already happening to children in the present;
- Include an accurate definition for best available climate science that does not reference the temperature targets set forth in the Paris Agreement;
- Include provisions and examples that empower marginalized communities and hold states accountable for providing resources to mitigate and adapt to climate change;
- Use assertive and precise language and clearly articulate the meaning and intention of every sentence;
- Incorporate thoughtful and practical recommendations calling on states to take positive steps to combat the climate crisis; and
- Consider areas in which recommendations may conflict and acknowledge when tradeoffs and prioritizations may need to be made.

Read the [full, detailed comments submitted by OCT here](#), which also include corresponding recommendations for each of the seven priority expectations. For more information on the development of General Comment No. 26, please visit the [General Comment website](#).

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Our Children's Trust is the world's only nonprofit public interest law firm that exclusively provides strategic, campaign based legal services to youth from diverse backgrounds to secure their legal rights to a safe climate. We work to protect the Earth's climate system for present and future generations by representing young people in global legal efforts to secure their binding and enforceable legal rights to a healthy atmosphere and safe climate, based on the best available science. www.ourchildrenstrust.org