



# Intercontinental Think Tank UPDATE

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## Busy Times for Climate Negotiators



Last year was the [hottest](#) on record and we are [not on track](#) to meet the United Nations' (UN) targets in the Paris agreement or the Sustainable Development Goals.

With Zonta Says NOW we advocate to governments to meet their climate-justice obligations under the UN Paris Agreement and to close the gender gaps in health, education, leadership, safety and economic opportunity.

When it comes to the climate, negotiators will be 'busy bees' until the end of the year. They will be working to slow down global heating, protect biodiversity and restore degraded land, through these events:

- **Summit of the Future and the UN General Assembly (UNGA), September 22-30, New York, USA:** The UN [adopted](#) the *Pact for the Future*, the *Global Digital Compact* and the *Declaration on Future Generations*. These documents were the result of thousands of discussions around the world and provide a baseline to accelerate climate action and strengthen gender equality, human rights and the empowerment of women.
- **Climate Week, September 22-29, New York, USA:** The Climate Group (an NGO) hosts Climate Week that consists of over 600 sessions bringing together businesses, governments and civil society to accelerate climate action. Explore the [videos](#) of key sessions - they are a goldmine of information. See the energy of the speakers in [Its Time to Unite for Mission 2025](#). Heat is the biggest threat for many places in the world and in [Heatwaves and Health](#), we learn how heat impacts vulnerable people including pregnant women, and how heat clinics are being developed to increase community resilience to climate-change, and tools such as [heat.gov](#), the USA's integrated heat health information system, help to monitor heat.
- **UN Biodiversity COP16, October 21 - 1 November, Cali, Colombia:** Climate and biodiversity are interconnected. This Convention of the Parties (COP) aims to reverse habitat loss, protect endangered species and preserve the ecosystems on which all life depends. This year the focus is on implementing the *Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework* - see this [cheat sheet](#) to see what it is all about!
- **UN Climate COP29, November 11-22, Baku, Azerbaijan:** The key [focus](#) will be on raising finance to help countries drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect lives and livelihoods from the worsening impacts of climate change. Countries will also present their updated national climate plans (which are due in early 2025), to show how they will reduce global warming and advance the Sustainable Development Goals. Use WEDO's [gender climate tracker](#) to see how many women have participated in previous climate COPs.
- **UN Environment Program, Final negotiations for the Global Plastic Treaty, November 25 - 1 December, Busan, Republic of Korea.** Plastic is causing [problems](#) for people, animals, and our land and water environments. The UN Environment Assembly agreed, that before the end of 2024, it would develop an international legally binding [instrument](#) to address the full life cycle of plastic, including its

production, design, and disposal. This meeting is the final opportunity for the UNEP members to meet the deadline. Will they do it?

- **UN Desertification COP16, December 2-13, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia:** As Antonio Guterres puts it, "We depend on land for our survival. Yet, we treat it like dirt." This [event](#) will focus on accelerating investment and action to restore land and boost drought resilience. More drought resilience, less child marriage!!

There is a lot to look forward to!

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## September Intercontinental Think Tank Meeting



Intercontinental Think Tank  
North and South America  
September 8, 2024, 6 pm UTC

Photo: iStock

This informative meeting, hosted by a team of energetic Zontians from the USA Caucus, focused on having conversations about the effects of climate change through the lens of women's health.

This meeting explored the links between climate change, weather, and social justice issues including health, safety, loss (home, financial, belongings), diseases, food and water insecurity, and poverty. For example, UN Women claims that by 2050 climate change will [cause](#) 158 million more women and girls to live in poverty and 236 million more to go hungry. The team used Carbon Brief's [map](#) to show how climate change disproportionately affects women's health around the world.

Using videos, polls and discussion, Zontians were guided into how to talk effectively about climate change and avoid going down 'rabbit holes' in conversations. Take home tips? Listen to understand, chat instead of debate, stick to the facts you know, and be curious by asking questions.

The video and slides from the September Intercontinental Think Tank are now available online.

[View the video of the September Think Tank meeting](#)

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## Climate change, girls, and marriage



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On Friday 11 October, we celebrate the Day of the Girl and this is a good opportunity to raise awareness of the links between climate change and child marriage. The [Global Girlhood Report 2023](#), by Save the Children, describes how the climate crisis is making girls' lives harder.

In some countries, when there are more droughts and floods, families may lose their lands and livelihoods. Often, the only remaining assets are their daughters, who are 'sold' into marriage, to raise funds so the rest of the family can survive.

[UNICEF](#) reports that extreme weather events driven by climate change increase a girl's risk of child marriage, with **every 10 per cent deviation in rainfall connected to around a 1 per cent increase in the prevalence of child marriage**. This means that if there is a 30 per cent decrease (or increase) in rainfall, there could be a 3 per cent increase in child marriage.

Zonta International's Signature [Project](#) to End Child Marriage began in 2016 and is entering its third phase. In the 2024-2026 biennium, Zonta International has allocated US\$1,500,000 to programs in the 12 countries that account for almost half of the world's child marriages. These countries are: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

Through projects such as this, your contributions to the Zonta Foundation for Women give hope to so many women and girls. Please consider donating on this Day of the Girl.

[Donate to the  
Zonta Foundation for Women](#)

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## Climate Change - Fiction and Reality



The Zonta e-Club of Germany is holding a fascinating online event on **Thursday 10 October at 8 pm CEST (6pm UTC)**. This event will explore the fiction and reality of climate change.

The event will feature two social scientists from the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands:

- **Dr Schuyler Laparle** will present on *Tackling, fighting, and racing against climate change: how metaphor shapes our response to crisis.*
- **Professor Martijn Goudbeek** will present on *Hope or Fear? Children's Responses to Climate Change Fiction.*

If you would like to attend, please email [zonta.eclub.germany@gmail.com](mailto:zonta.eclub.germany@gmail.com)

The event will support the [Women's Earth Alliance](#) which fights climate change by supporting more than 12,000 women in 31 countries in their climate leadership efforts.

*If your club has some news that it would like to share with the Intercontinental Think Tank, please email [info@zontasaysnow.org.au](mailto:info@zontasaysnow.org.au) .*

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# November Intercontinental Think Tank



This meeting will be hosted by Zontians from Europe and Africa and will explore economic themes around women, ownership, leadership, and resilience in a warming climate.

As soon as the speakers from Africa and Sweden have confirmed their availability, we will provide more details.

The event will be held on **Sunday 10 November at 10 am UTC**.

## Why do we advertise our meetings in UTC?

Coordinated Universal Time (UTC), is a time standard, not a time zone - so it does not change for daylight saving. Check out this [article](#) for the full story.

The abbreviation UTC was a [compromise](#) between English and French speakers as they could not agree on whether to use Coordinated Universal Time (CUT) or Temps Universel Coordonné (TUC).

[Register for the 10 November Intercontinental Think Tank](#)

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**Virtual Art Gallery - Entries Open for 2025**



How do you feel about climate change and climate justice? Are you happy with the progress that is being made or do you feel frustrated?

The Zonta Says NOW Virtual Art Gallery is a place where we can explore how we feel about the world. It is free to enter and is not a competition.

This painting in the 2024 Zonta Says NOW Virtual Art Gallery was painted by Marta Lindrose from the Zonta Foothills Club of Boulder County, District 12 in Colorado, USA. Marta calls this work ' *Talking Heads: people are talking about change but are stuck between a glass block wall and our Earth. This painting represents the frustration from the inaction by our governments to protect our world, especially for women and girls.*

We all have artistic talent - it may be with words, photography, knitting, sculpture, gardening, music, dance or something else! So why not challenge yourself to create something to express your feelings.

Entries for the 2025 Virtual Art Gallery are now open. Take inspiration from the [2024 entries](#) and download the submission form today!

[Virtual Art Gallery Submission Form](#)

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**Zonta Says NOW**  
to Gender-Equal Climate Action  
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Zonta Says NOW Intercontinental Think Tank meeting.

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