Climate crisis: 6 million people join latest wave of global protests
Week of strikes and demonstrations is ‘only the beginning’, say organisers

Matthew Taylor, Jonathan Watts and John Bartlett
Fri 27 Sep 2019 18.34 BST
Last modified on Fri 27 Sep 2019 19.48 BST

Six million people have taken to the streets over the past week, uniting across timezones, cultures and generations to demand urgent action on the escalating ecological emergency.

A fresh wave of climate strikes swept around the globe on Friday with an estimated 2 million people walking out of schools and workplaces.

Organisers say that during the week of protests – that began with a global climate strike last week – a total of 6 million people, from trade unionists to schoolchildren, have taken part in thousands of towns and cities.

“This week was a demonstration of the power of our movement,” said a spokesperson for the FridaysForFuture group which has helped coordinate the demonstrations. “People power is more powerful than the people in power. It was the biggest ever climate mobilisation, and it’s only the beginning. The momentum is on our side and we are not going anywhere.”

On Friday there were huge protests in Italy – where more than 1 million people were reported to have taken part – Spain, the Netherlands and New Zealand, where more than 3.5% of the country’s population joined the demonstrations.

Organisers said they were expecting more people to join as the day progressed. High turnouts were expected in Canada, where Greta Thunberg – who kickstarted the school strike movement with a solo protest in Sweden 12 months ago – was due to join demonstrators in Montreal.

May Boeve from 350.org, which has helped organise the demonstrations, said: “We will keep fighting until the politicians stop ignoring the science, and the fossil fuel companies are held responsible for their crimes against our future, as they should have been decades ago.”
The day of protests began in New Zealand, where an open letter was delivered to parliament on Friday morning calling on the government to declare a climate emergency – following the lead of numerous councils around the country.

“Our representatives need to show us meaningful and immediate action that safeguards our futures on this planet,” Raven Maeder, the School Strike 4 Climate national coordinator, said. “Nothing else will matter if we cannot look after the Earth for current and future generations. This is our home.”

Strikes and demonstrations followed in scores of other countries from Ghana to Samoa, the Philippines to Indonesia, South Korea to Taiwan.

In some countries, protesters have had to go to extraordinary lengths to express their message to resistant authorities or an indifferent public.

Makichyan Arshak has been staging a solo school strike in Pushkin Square, Moscow, for 29 weeks.

“In Moscow it is almost impossible to get permission for a mass demonstration so we protest in a queue. One person holds a poster for five minutes, then hands over to the next person who is waiting nearby. That way, we don’t have any problems because it is a series of
solo strikes rather than a group gathering,” said the 25-year-old violinist, a graduate of the Moscow Conservatory.

Demonstrations also took place across South America, from Mexico City’s vast Zócalo square to the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires.

On Bogotá’s high Andean plain, the environmental movement has faced a severe crackdown. In July, protesters across Colombia pleaded for an end to the violence that has resulted in numerous activists being killed, with the peace and development thinktank Indepaz putting the figure at 734 deaths in the first seven months of 2019.

"We want to keep fracking out of our country and demand an immediate change towards decarbonisation," said the activist Susana Muhamad, who was planning to march past the offices of the country’s largest petroleum company, Ecopetrol.

In Brazil, organisers said there were climate protests in São Paulo and at least nine other cities. In Rio de Janeiro, a group of university students rallied in the city centre bearing banners urging: “System change not climate change” and chanted: “What do we want? Climate justice. When do we want it? Now!”

Nayara Almeida, a 21-year-old student at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, said the group’s demands to the government included greater protection of the Amazon rainforest. “Our future is threatened and they are insensitive to that. We need politicians to make this a priority.”

The global climate strikers say their action is a sign of the growing awareness and anger of the severity and scale of the climate crisis among people around the world.

This week Thunberg excoriated world leaders at the UN for their “betrayal” of young people after the New York summit failed to deliver ambitious new commitments to address dangerous global heating.

The climate activist told governments: “You are still not mature enough to tell it like it is. You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal.”

**Fresh wave of climate strikes takes place around the world**

**Hundreds of thousands hit streets across continents to demand action on climate**

Matthew Taylor and John Bartlett

Fri 27 Sep 2019 08.31 BST

Last modified on Fri 27 Sep 2019 09.35 BST

Hundreds of thousands of people around the world are taking place in the latest wave of climate strikes to demand urgent action on
the escalating ecological emergency.

Last week, millions walked out of schools and workplaces, uniting across timezones, cultures and generations in the biggest climate protests in history before a special UN conference in New York.

Organisers said they were expecting another huge turnout on Friday, with demonstrations planned from Canada to the Netherlands, Sweden to Morocco, Italy to India.

In New Zealand, record numbers of protesters were reported to have taken to the streets on Friday. Greta Thunberg, the teenager who inspired the school strike movement with her solo protest outside the Swedish parliament last year, said 3.5% of the country were taking part.

An open-letter signed by 11,000 New Zealanders was delivered to parliament on Friday morning calling on the government to declare a climate emergency – following the lead of numerous councils around the country.

“Our representatives need to show us meaningful and immediate action that safeguards our futures on this planet,” Raven Maeder, the School Strike 4 Climate national coordinator, said. “Nothing else will matter if we cannot look after the Earth for current and future generations. This is our home.”

New Zealand leading the way into Friday nr 2 in #WeekForFuture
Early reports speak of 170’000 people on #ClimateStrike in NZ. Or 3,5% of the population...
Good luck everyone striking around the world. Change is coming!!#FridaysForFuture
https://twitter.com/garethbfoster/status/1177390753485426688

Marched on parliament #ClimateStrikenZ
As part of the Earth Strike events, there are also expected to be big demonstrations in South America from Mexico City’s vast Zócalo square to the Plaza de Mayo in Buenos Aires.

Activists say Plaza Italia in Santiago, Chile, will be flooded with demonstrators from 6pm, while protests will be staged in cities in Brazil, Bolivia, Ecuador and Paraguay around the rim of the Amazon rainforest. On Bogotá’s high Andean plain, the environmental movement has faced a severe crackdown. In July, protesters across the country pleaded for an end to the violence that has resulted in numerous activists being killed, with peace and development thinktank Indepaz putting the figure at 734 deaths in the first seven months of 2019.

“We want to keep fracking out of our country and demand an immediate change towards decarbonisation,” said the activist Susana Muhamad, who was planning to march past the offices of the country’s largest petroleum company, Ecopetrol, at midday.

More than 30 events have been planned in Argentina, where crowds will be marching across the capital from the Plaza de Mayo to the seat of the national congress.

Among them will be Stephanie Cabovianco, a 30-year-old activist from Buenos Aires. “There are no outright leaders coordinating our movement in Latin America – and that’s a good thing,” she explains. “This is a fight led by young people, and its structure should be as horizontal as possible.”
The strikes are a sign of the growing awareness and anger of the severity and scale of the climate crisis among people around the world.

Earlier this week, Thunberg excoriated world leaders at the UN for their "betrayal" of young people after the New York summit failed to deliver ambitious new commitments to address dangerous global heating.

The climate activist told governments: "You are still not mature enough to tell it like it is. You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal."

Nothing else matters’: school climate strikes sweep New Zealand

Tens of thousands turn out for protests as activists deliver letter calling on parliament to declare climate emergency

Eleanor Ainge Roy in Dunedin

Fri 27 Sep 2019 02.06 BST
Last modified on Fri 27 Sep 2019 03.44 BST

Tens of thousands of children and adults in New Zealand have stopped work and school on Friday to take part in the country's third climate strike, billed as the biggest yet and the first display of "intergenerational" action.

More than 40 towns around the country were holding marches with 260 businesses involved, including most of the country's tertiary institutions.

New Zealand's strike was being held a week later than hundreds of thousands took to the streets in other parts of the world, including Australia, Britain and the US, because some high school students had exams last Friday.

A open-letter signed by 11,000 New Zealanders was delivered to parliament on Friday morning calling on the government to declare a climate emergency – following the lead of numerous councils around the country.
“Our representatives need to show us meaningful and immediate action that safeguards our futures on this planet,” School Strike 4 Climate national coordinator Raven Maeder said.

“Nothing else will matter if we cannot look after the Earth for current and future generations. This is our home.”

North Island organiser Sophie Handford, 18, told RNZ she hoped 50,000 people would march.

“There’s way too much at stake to let it pass by. We’ll be at the doors of parliament many more times until we see the action that is necessary.”

The prime minister, Jacinda Ardern, has taken a leading role on the global stage in the fight against the climate crisis, calling it her generation’s “nuclear-free moment”.

Dr. Lucky Tran

@luckytran

Replies to @luckytran @AucklandUni

Look at this massive wave of people in Dunedin, New Zealand! #ClimateStrike pic.twitter.com/8hFMAvRTGf
In the keynote address of the Climate Change Summit in New York, Ardern took a characteristically optimistic tone, saying pessimism led to apathy.

“You may well argue that, based on our current trajectory, now is not the time for optimism,” Ardern said.

“But if we only talk about the loss of glacier mass or sea level rises we run the risk of a society that believes all is lost and that it is simply too late ... it is not”.

Under Ardern’s leadership New Zealand has set a goal of making the country zero carbon by 2050.

Greta Thunberg

Christchurch, NZ. #FridaysForFuture #ClimateStrike
https://twitter.com/jasonpawson/status/1177403562772463617

Jason

#christchurch #ClimateStrike #strikeforclimate
In New York on Wednesday night she announced climate trade initiative that would remove tariffs on green technology and cut fossil fuel subsidies.

Greta Thunberg's 495-word UN speech points us to a future of hope – or despair

It was announced along with leaders from Fiji, Iceland, Norway and Costa Rica at the United Nations, with formal talks expected to begin next year, with the hope of eventually achieving treaty status.

“There’s an urgent and critical need for increased global action if we are to limit global warming to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels,” said Ardern.

She added: “The case for using trade rules to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies is particularly compelling.”

However, Ardern was criticised this week for failing to raise the topic of climate change in her first bilateral meeting with Donald Trump. New Zealand lags behind many other OECD countries in basic climate-friendly action such as recycling and dependence on petrol and diesel vehicles.
Global climate strike: millions protest worldwide – in pictures

People around the world have been walking out of school and work to join the latest protests against the climate crisis. The global day of action, calling for a reduction in emissions, is being held in the run-up to a UN summit in New York.

Global climate strike – live updates

Compiled by Eric Hilaire

Brisbane, Australia

London, UK
Bangkok, Thailand
Ralin ‘Lily’ Setddawan, 12, a climate activist and youth leader, protests outside the environment ministry. Hundreds of Thai students, residents and tourists joined the demonstrations in the city. (Photograph: Lauren DeCicca/Getty Images)

Kathmandu, Nepal

New Delhi, India
Berlin, Germany
Activists cycle to block traffic at Ernst-Reuter Platz
Photograph: Fabrizio Bensch/Reuters

Athens, Greece
Photograph: Angelos Tzortzinis/AFP/Getty Images

Venice, Italy
Climate and migration protesters occupy the red carpet at this 76th annual Venice international film festival
Photograph: Bjornجارفالب allergies
Rome, Italy
Students at Sapienza University of Rome protest against climate change, and in particular against a forthcoming conference on sedimentology. A globe made of paper mache has been set alight to symbolize the fires wreaking havoc in the Amazon rainforest.
Photograph: Patrizia Cortellessa/Pacific Press/Marcott Media

Paris, France

Oslo, Norway

Cambridge, UK
A protest banner adorns the window of a Ben & Jerry's store. The American ice-cream brand has a long history of participating in political protests. Last year, during the US midterm elections, it released a flavour called Pecan Resist consisting of chocolate ice-cream with white and dark fudge chunks, walnuts, pecans and fudge-covered almonds. It has also thrown its weight behind the Black Lives Matter movement with its Peppermint Fudge Float variety.