

Confluence of Conscience: Uniting for Planetary Resurgence

Abu Dhabi Interfaith Statement for COP28

Introduction

In the spirit of unity, shared responsibility, and Human Fraternity and at this pivotal moment of the global climate crisis that demands transformative action to keep 1.5 degrees within reach and serve affected and vulnerable communities, we, representatives of diverse faith and indigenous traditions, through dialogue with scientists, religious scholars, academics, women's organizations, youth, civil society, business leaders, and environmental policy makers, convened in Abu Dhabi in the lead-up to COP28 to express our shared concern for the escalating climate impacts that imperil our cherished planet, as well as our common commitment to jointly address this global crisis, building upon our previous efforts, including the interfaith appeal for COP26. Our faith instills in us a sacred duty to cherish not only our human family, but also the fragile ecosystem that cradles us.

Preamble

- We recognize the sorrow that many experience at this time and will respond effectively.
- We welcome the contributions of science, traditional, religious, and indigenous knowledge.
- We advocate for Human Rights in a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment, a declaration adopted by the General Assembly in 2022. This recognizes the intrinsic rights of ecosystems, encompassing water, oceans, and seas, to exist, thrive, and rejuvenate.
- We welcome all into the embrace of Social Inclusion, building bridges that transcend differences and nurture unity.
- We highlight the experience of faith groups in strengthening resilience of local communities and Indigenous Peoples to climate shocks, working on adaptation that are trusted by local communities and Indigenous Peoples.
- We welcome actions by faith actors across different backgrounds of their plans since COP 26 to redirect their investments into nature positive ones aligning with the goals of a transition to a new inclusive and just development paradigm.
- We acknowledge Faith-Compliant Finance for Sustainable Development, harnessing resources for the well-being of all sentient beings, today and in the future.
- We recognize the connections between climate change, migration and conflict and the potential role for people of faith as 'environmental peacebuilders', striving to forge pathways of compassion and mediation amid conflicts.
- We acknowledge the urgent need for a narrative of development and actions that align with values that foster well-being and sustainable development, a framework rooted in hope and courage.
- We acknowledge our profound interconnectedness with one another and with the intricate web of life that envelops us. Recognizing our limits, we humbly pledge to address these multifaceted crises through the prism of values, ethics, and spirituality.
- We stand united in acknowledging the profound convergence of the wisdom across the world's diverse faith, religious, cultural, and Indigenous traditions, each echoing with the resonant chords of our collective vision and mission.
- We embrace the mantle of Love, Stewardship and Care for Creation, recognizing our willingness and responsibility to safeguard the Earth.

- We recognize the Sacredness and Sanctity of Life and Nature, honoring the inherent value of all living beings and the landscapes they inhabit on Mother Earth.
- We stand firm for Environmental Equity and Justice, advocating for fairness and equality as cornerstones of a thriving world.

Call to Action

Transcending nations and traditions, we declare our steadfast commitment and call upon Heads of States, Governments, non-state actors, and decision makers to act on the following principles:

- Call for Urgent responses by fast tracking Energy Transitions ensuring fairness and equity, and what's morally right.
- Regard Mother Earth as a source of life that must be protected.
- Ask governments to overcome the linear growth paradigm and move to a circular model which allows us to live a balanced and dignified life in harmony with nature.
- Urge business and policymakers to adopt a rapid, just transition away from fossil fuels, embracing clean energy sources that nurture the Earth and safeguard its inhabitants unconditionally.
- Call on governments to promote sustainable agriculture and resilient food systems that respect local cultures and ecosystems while ensuring food security for all.
- Call on governments to enhance services to address the burden of climate change on human health, especially in the most vulnerable and fragile communities
- Urge governments, especially those endowed with greater resources, to lead in curbing emissions and supporting climate mitigation and adaptation efforts in less privileged nations.
- Beseech financial institutions, IFIs, private sector, companies, and governments to adopt responsible investments and business practices aligned with climate, environmental and social standards.
- Call on governments and stakeholders to recognize the inseparable link between the human-made crisis affecting the climate and biodiversity and adopt comprehensive actions that harmonize the restoration of both systems.
- Call on governments to establish accountability mechanisms for the fulfillment of global and national commitments to inclusive climate action.
- Call on policy makers to ensure inclusivity in Climate Transition: As we collaborate for a sustainable future, no one must be left behind. The needs of all people, especially including children, vulnerable communities facing disaster and conflict, young people, women and Indigenous Peoples, as well as animals and nature, must be at the center of our endeavors.
- Implore governments to commit to the operationalization of new financial mechanisms that address loss and damage, especially in the most vulnerable regions and ensure that this fund is interdisciplinary, effective, and inclusive, and directly reaches the most vulnerable or the affected communities.
- Encourage an inclusive dialogue, during and beyond COPs, with faith leaders, vulnerable groups, youth, women's organizations, and the scientific community to forge alliances that strengthen sustainable development.

Our Commitment

We, as representatives of our respective faith, Indigenous, and wisdom traditions, acknowledge our collective duty to:

- Honor the threads of Interconnectedness and Interdependence that weave us into the intricate fabric of life, reminding us of our shared destiny.
- Herald the dance of Balance and Harmony, seeking equilibrium within us and with the natural world that cradles us.
- Encourage a paradigm shift in our relationship with Earth and all its inhabitants, fostering a profound sense of reverence and responsibility.
- Champion the development of a faith-based ecological narrative, continuous learning, and the integration of ecological teachings and values within educational, religious, and cultural institutions, nurturing a holistic understanding of our interconnectedness.
- Actively participate in public discourse on environmental matters, guiding our congregations and institutions to foster resilient and just communities.
- Lead the pursuit and reimagining of sustainable lower carbon lifestyles and social progress rooted in harmony with the Earth and respect for its resources.
- We embrace Frugality, Resource Efficiency and spiritual and wisdom-oriented Lifestyles, forging pathways of minimal waste and mindful living which fosters giving back to Mother Earth what we take from it.
- Change our consumption patterns, ensuring that we are mindful that our purchases and services reflect our ethical commitment to accelerate the energy transition and achieve net zero by 2050, as called for in the Paris Agreement.
- Align financial investments with ethical standards, embracing responsible and inclusive financing that supports a thriving planet and its inhabitants.
- We commit ourselves to be attentive, intelligent, and responsible knowing that we must be the first to strive for development and justice.
- Support the Faith Pavilion at COP28, the first of its kind, and continue to convene in future COPs to commission a message of hope and action at COPs.
- We will work together with communities, governments, individuals, families, corporations and the whole of society to deliver on our commitments and inspire others to do so.
- We pledge ourselves to Justice, cause no Harm, and Peace with all Sentient Beings including Nature, fostering a harmonious coexistence that enriches both humanity and the planet.
- We raise our voices for Biodiversity and Wildlife Conservation.
- We extend our hands in Doing Good, Charity, and Returning to Nature, nurturing the cycle of benevolence and transformation that sustains all existence.
- We champion Equality, dismantling human-made barriers to ensure inclusivity, equal participation, and empowerment for all.
 - We uphold the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, defending the ancestral wisdom that is entwined with the Earth's well-being.
 - Multifaceted global challenges can only be tackled if we worked together, people of all faith communities, supporting an effective multilateralism to tackle the triple planetary crisis.

Hope for Current and Future Generations

As people of hope and faith, we unite in Divine Wisdom bestowed on us, guided by an unwavering commitment to a sustainable future for all. Attention to the suffering of many and the engagement among faith leaders in climate action will allow us to achieve these commitments and results for the good of all.

As we stand at the precipice of history, considering the gravity of the challenges we collectively face, we remain mindful of the legacy we will leave for generations to come. We ardently implore all decision makers assembled at COP28 to seize this decisive moment and to act with urgency, weaving a tapestry of shared action and profound responsibility. The urgency of the hour demands that we act swiftly, collaboratively, and resolutely to heal our wounded world and preserve the splendor of our common home. In the process, we need to bring back hope for future generations. Together, we extend our open arms to all people, inviting them to embark on this journey towards a future of resilience, harmony, and flourishing for all life on Earth.