

INTERFAITH RAINFOREST INITIATIVE

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Editor's Note: See below list of [Interfaith Rainforest Initiative](#) participants. For press materials and background information, visit the online pressroom:
<http://www.burness.com/pressrooms/oslo-interfaith-event-on-tropical-rainforests/?preview=true>;
Password: Oslo

Statement of Participants of the [Interfaith Rainforest Initiative](#)¹

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The Earth's rainforests are an irreplaceable gift.

They support boundless biodiversity, a balanced climate, and the cultures and communities of Indigenous Peoples who live in them. They generate cooling air and rains that water the Earth. They are spectacular, and vital to all life.

And they are at grave risk.

We, people of many faiths and spiritualities, gathered in Oslo to hear the cry of Earth's rainforests, their flora and fauna, and the people who live in them. We are Indigenous, Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Daoist, joined by scientists who share with us, and open for us, a deeper appreciation of the miracle of the forests. We are from 21 countries—from Amazonia, the forests of Indonesia, the Congo Basin, Meso-America and South and Southeast Asia and the Pacific Islands, and from the US, Canada, Europe, the Middle East, South Africa, and China. While from many places, we recognize that we are one human family, that we share one Earth.

These glorious forests make our lives possible. They provide clean air and abundant water. They store carbon and stabilize the climate, literally around the globe. They provide homes, food, medicines, and livelihoods for hundreds of millions of people. They are dependent on the health and well-being of their indigenous and forest-dwelling peoples, just as these peoples, and all the rest of us, depend on the forests. We are in this together—humanity and forests, people and planet. If forests thrive, we will thrive. Without forests, we all perish.

During our time together, **we spoke frankly**. We recognized that unrestrained consumption, lifestyles of the Global North, and irresponsible financial systems, devastate the rainforests'

¹ This statement is addressed to Leaders in Government and Business, to Leaders and Followers of our Spiritual and Religious Traditions, and to the wider Human Family.

biosphere and ethno-sphere. We listened to accounts of the persecution and murder of Indigenous Peoples and others who protect the forests. We learned about governments unwilling to pass or enforce laws needed to ensure rainforests' future and the rights and traditions of those who continue to be their guardians.

These realities are haunting. This destruction is wrong. As we formed a community, becoming one out of many, a resolve emerged among us.

We will not allow this to happen.

Together, we affirm the gift of life, our reverence for our common home and for the miraculous manifestation that rainforests embody. We affirm that we are all caretakers of Earth's rainforests, just as the forests care for us. We embrace the responsibility for ongoing action which that entails.

We commit to form an international, multi-faith rainforest alliance, devoted to the care of these forests and the people who protect and live in them.

We pledge to rally our spiritual and religious communities to act.

We will train our leaders and educate our followers about the urgent need to protect rainforests, sharing the insights of traditional knowledge and science in the service of truth, knowing that without protecting, restoring, and sustainably managing forests, we cannot save Earth from the ravages of climate change.

We will advocate for the restoration of rainforests and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, sharing with leaders in government and business that protecting forests is a moral duty and that failing to do so is an offense against life itself. We will support indigenous and forest peoples to assert and secure their rights, including their free, prior, and informed consent to development on their territories. We will advocate for increased access to finance for the ongoing protection of rainforests. We will work for an end to the criminalization of forest protectors and for their safety.

We will change our own lifestyles, including our diets and consumption patterns, learning to live in harmony with the rainforests.

Finally, we pledge to continue to work together, to strengthen our resolve, and to act boldly in the months and years to come. We invite other people of faith and of diverse spiritualities to join us.

A spirit of compassion and truth has been with us as we have met. This spirit awakens hope. It calls to us.

We have listened together and learned together. In this statement we are speaking together. Now, we will act together. For the sake of the rainforests and the peoples who live in them, and for the future of the planet, we commit to respond.

Signed by individuals who participated in the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative

Country	Name
Brazil	Mr. Antonio Donato Nobre

Brazil	Mr. Biraci Brasil Junior
Brazil	Mr. Marivelton Rodrigues Barroso Baré
Brazil	Fernando Dua Bussê
Brazil	Ms. Sônia Guajajara
Brazil	Pastor Ariovaldo Ramos dos Santos
China	Ms. Yun He
Colombia	Deacon Alirio Cáceres Aguirre
Colombia	Mr. Harol Jhonny Rincon Ipuchima
Colombia	Mr. Martín von Hildebrand
DRC	Mr. Henri Muhiya
DRC	Mr. Joseph Itongwa
DRC	Mr. Rigobert Minani S.J.
DRC	Pasteur Léon Lepamabila
Ecuador	Mr. Mauricio Lopez Oropeza
France	H.E. Metropolitan Emmanuel
France	Archimandrite Maximos Pafilis
France	The Right Reverend Bishop Pierre W. Whalon
India	Dr. Nanditha Krishna
Indonesia	Dr. Din Syamsuddin
Indonesia	Dr. Zainal Abidin Bagir
Indonesia	Mr. Abdon Nababan
Indonesia	Mr. Azis Asman
Israel	Sir Rabbi David Rosen, CBE
Myanmar	Mr. Bo Bo Lwin
Netherlands	Mr. Johannes Van de Ven
Nicaragua	Mr. Marvin Gustavo Sotelo Reyes
Norway	Bishop Emeritus Gunnar Stalsett
Norway	Mr. Håkon Grindheim
Norway	Ms. Risten Turi Aleksandersen
Norway	Reverend Einar Tjelle
Norway	Simon Rye
Norway	Lars Lovold
Peru	Monseñor Alfredo Vizcarra
Peru	Mr. Jorge Perez
Philippines	Ms. Vicky Tauli-Corpuz
South Africa	Dr. Nigel Crawhall
Sweden	Rev. Henrik Grape
Thailand	Phra Paisal Vongvoravisit
UK	Mr. Fazlun Khalid
USA	Mr. Kevin Currey
USA	Dr. Kusumita Pedersen
USA	Dr. Mary Evelyn Tucker

USA	Dr. William F. Vendley
USA	Mr. Alexander von Bismarck
USA	Mr. Dan Kammen
USA	Mr. Peter C. Goldmark, Jr.
USA	Ms. Frances Seymour
USA	Ms. Leslie Parker
USA	Rev. Douglas Satre
USA	Reverend Fletcher Harper
USA	John Ehrmann
USA	Charles McNeill
USA	Eileen de Ravin
USA	Maryka Paquette
USA	Joseph Corcoran
USA	Owen Fitzgerald
USA (from Indonesia)	Ms. Nana Firman
Vatican City	Ms. Gabriella Marino
Vatican City	S.E. Monsignor Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo

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Partners: The meeting was convened by Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in cooperation with the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University, GreenFaith, Parliament of the World's Religions, Religions for Peace, REIL Network, and the World Council of Churches.

About Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI)

Since its launch in 2007, the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI) has cooperated with international partners, governments in forest and donor countries and a broad range of non-governmental organizations to reduce tropical deforestation and forest degradation.

About Rainforest Foundation Norway

Rainforest Foundation Norway (RFN) is one of the world's leading organizations in the field of rights-based rainforest protection. We support Indigenous Peoples and traditional populations in the three main rainforest regions of the world: the Amazon, the Congo basin and Southeast Asia. We work to counter drivers of deforestation, influence political, legal and economic framework conditions for rainforest management, and support rights-based sustainable forest management by forest-dependent local communities.

About the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

UNDP works in nearly 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. UNDP focuses on helping countries build and share solutions in three main areas: Sustainable development; democratic governance and peacebuilding; and climate and disaster resilience. In all its activities, UNDP encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women, minorities and the poorest and most vulnerable.