Religion and Ecology News Articles

Dear Forum Colleagues,

Greetings! Below you will find the latest religion and ecology news articles from a number of news sources. For your convenience, I have included short introductions to each story and provide URLs for the full story. I have grouped articles together that pertain to a common topic, but a number of articles belong within multiple sections.

Within this email, you will find news related to the following topics:

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For recent news articles, visit: http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/

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Sincerely,
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1. Pope Francis, Climate Change, and the Environment

Frequently Asked Questions on the Papal Encyclical
Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale
February 2015
http://fore.research.yale.edu/files/Frequently_Asked_Questions_on_the_Papal_Encyclical.pdf

Pope Francis is preparing a new encyclical that is due to be released in June or July this year. The Pope will bring together issues of social justice and economic inequity along with the environment and climate change. This FAQ was prepared for the Forum website with the assistance of Anne Marie Dalton, a recently retired theologian at St Mary’s University in Halifax. We gratefully acknowledge her help.

A New Paradigm for Catholic Energy Ethics
By Erin Lothes Biviano
Catholic Moral Theology
January 28, 2015
http://fore.research.yale.edu/news/item/a-new-paradigm-for-catholic-energy-ethics/

2015 promises to be a watershed year for climate negotiations and Catholic environmental teaching. Pope Francis’s encyclical on the environment is already widely anticipated and an ambitious statement from global Bishops has already appeared after the Lima COP-20. All this is good news in the wake of the latest news that 2014’s global temperatures were the warmest ever.

Pope Francis: climate evangelist?
By Virginia Gewin
Flux
September 19, 2014
https://www.beaconreader.com/flux/pope-francis-climate-evangelist

Overview: Pope Francis is expected to produce the first ever encyclical - the highest level Catholic teaching document - focused solely on the environment and climate change next year. Scientists have made the case that climate change threatens the natural world. Can religious leaders now make the moral case for political action?

Pope Francis’s edict on climate change will anger deniers and US churches
By John Vidal
The Guardian
December 27, 2014

Pontiff hopes to inspire action at next year’s UN meeting in Paris in December after visits to Philippines and New York. He has been called the “superman pope”, and it would be hard to deny that Pope Francis has had a good December. Cited by President Barack Obama as a key player in the thawing relations between the US and Cuba, the Argentinian pontiff followed that by lecturing his cardinals on the need to clean up Vatican politics. But can Francis achieve a feat that has so far eluded secular powers and inspire decisive action on climate change?

Pope Francis: cultivate and preserve Mother Earth
Vatican Radio
February 2, 2015

Pope Francis on Saturday received members of Italy’s National Federation of Farmers, who are this year celebrating the 70th anniversary of their foundation.

Pope Mass: Protecting Creation a Christian responsibility
Vatican Radio
February 9, 2015

Christians are called to care for God’s creation. That was the Pope’s message at Mass this Monday morning at the Casa Santa Marta. The Holy Father also spoke about the "second creation", the one performed by Jesus that he "re-created" from what had been ruined by sin.

Pope Francis: It’s Christian to protect the environment
By David Gibson, Religion News Service
USA Today
February 9, 2015

VATICAN CITY — If you are a Christian, protecting the environment is part of your identity, not an ideological option, Pope Francis said Monday. […] "A Christian who does not protect creation, who does not let it grow, is a Christian who does not care about the work of God; that work that was born from the love of God for us," Francis continued. "And this is the first response to the first creation: protect creation, make it grow."
In taking up the important issue of climate change, Pope Francis is acting in the long tradition of the Catholic Church to decry threats to the world God has created and entrusted to us as well as injustices that endanger humanity and disproportionately affect the poor.

While many make New Year resolutions involving better exercise, improved diet, and enhanced time management, Pope Francis appears to have adopted a slightly broader New Year’s objective: to help heal human relations with all of creation.

One of the highlights of my year, perhaps my career, was being able to participate in “Sustainable Humanity, Sustainable Nature: Our Responsibility,” a four-day Vatican workshop aimed at shaping strategies for human advancement that are attuned to the planet’s limits, organized by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences and Academy of Social Sciences last May.
On Saturday, nearing the end of his visit to the Philippines, Pope Francis is scheduled to hold mass for residents of Tacloban City, which was devastated in late 2013 by Typhoon Haiyan (known as Yolanda in the Philippines). The Vatican has signaled that he will also talk about global warming.

**Pope Francis Calls for Action on Climate Change & Capitalism on a Planet "Exploited by Human Greed"**

Democracy Now
December 31, 2014
[http://www.democracynow.org/2014/12/31/pope_francis_calls_for_action_on](http://www.democracynow.org/2014/12/31/pope_francis_calls_for_action_on)

Pope Francis is set to make history by issuing the first-ever comprehensive Vatican teachings on climate change, which will urge 1.2 billion Catholics worldwide to take action. The document will be sent to the world’s 5,000 Catholic bishops and 400,000 priests who will distribute it to their parishioners.

**2015 could be the year we save the earth**

By NCR Editorial Staff
National Catholic Reporter
January 2, 2015

When it comes to our planet's health, "2015 could be a decisive year in history," Bishop Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, told a gathering in London in November. We agree with the bishop: 2015 could go down in history as the year we saved the earth. We hope Catholics around the world can muster the spiritual and political clout to help make it happen.

**Pope Francis climate change call to action makes waves in faith communities**

CBC/Radio–Canada
The Current - With Anna Maria Tremonti
January 5, 2015
The Catholic Church is about to bring the influence of the Holy See to the issue of climate change. Today, we look at the religious push to protect the environment. Download the podcast with Heather Eaton, Asma Mahdi, and Jim Wallis.

**Pope Francis plants a flag in the ground on climate change**  
By John Abraham  
The Guardian  
January 6, 2015  

Make no mistake about it, there is no longer any rationale for division between science and faith. Over the past decades, scientists and persons of faith have learned to dance in a complementary manner, a “non-overlapping magisterium” as the saying sometimes goes. But as prior conflicts were found to be more molehill than mountain, leaders among the scientific and religious communities have explored collaborative ways to answer scientific questions and provide solutions to real-world problems that reflect a universal motivation to care for our fellow humans and honor our religious traditions.

**'Rock-star pope' intends to amplify his climate message**  
By Scott Detrow, E&E reporter  
ClimateWire  
January 7, 2015  
[http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060011220](http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060011220)

Pope Francis has led the Catholic Church for less than two years. But during that short window, he has breathed new life into a religion struggling with apathy and scandal; earned the praise of social justice activists around the world for an intense focus on poverty; and even played a role in ending a half-century-old stalemate between Cuba and the United States.

**Pope Francis, the climate activist**  
By Pia Ranada  
Passig City Rappler  
January 8, 2015  

MANILA, Philippines – Many are familiar with Pope Francis' love for the poor and his commitment to a simple lifestyle, but did you know that he is also a devoted activist for climate change awareness and a passionate environmentalist?
Pope to make moral case for action on climate change
By Andy Coghlan
New Scientist
January 14, 2015
http://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22530044.500-pope-to-make-moral-case-for-action-on-climate-change.html#.VLia8nvNdWx

COULD one man succeed in spurring decisive action on global warming? Pope Francis, leader of the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, plans to release a ground-breaking appeal to combat climate change, in a major document called an encyclical.

Pope Francis Hopes World Leaders Will Make the Environment a Priority
By Ashley Curtin
Nation of Change – Bullhorn
January 16, 2015
http://bullhorn.nationofchange.org/pope_francis_environment_a_priority

In a recent interview, Pope Francis is making the environment a priority this year in hopes that his encyclical on ecology will encourage world leaders to reach an agreement during the next round of climate change talks in Paris in November.

US to Enlist Pope Francis' Help on Climate Change
Reuters
January 28, 2015

WASHINGTON—In a bid to bolster the Obama administration's "moral" case for combating climate change, the head of the Environmental Protection Agency will meet senior Vatican officials Friday to enlist papal support for its policies.

EPA chief at Vatican: Obama 'aligned' with Francis on climate change
By Joshua J. McElwee
National Catholic Reporter
January 30, 2015

Rome -- Explaining her visit Friday to the Vatican, the head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said she wanted to let Pope Francis know that President Barack Obama is "aligned with him" on the issue of climate change and is taking action.
Rediscovering the moral dimension of climate change
By Jonathon Porritt
The Ecologist
February 9, 2015
http://www.theecologist.org/ecologist_partners/2739744/rediscovering_the_moral_dimension_of_climate_change.html

Pope Francis's forthcoming statement on climate change could just revitalise progress towards significant emissions cuts, writes Jonathon Porritt. But more than that, it will open up the space for a wider spirituality to guide our thinking, and campaigning, on climate and other key global challenges.

Anticipation building for papal encyclical on environment
By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service
February 12, 2015

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The much-anticipated encyclical by Pope Francis on the environment, expected sometime this spring or early summer, is generating a lot of buzz in Washington and elsewhere.

What Can a Popular Pope Do About Climate Change?
By Nicholas St. Fleur
The Atlantic
December 30, 2014

Pope Francis has ambitious environmental plans for 2015. Come March, he will deliver a 50 to 60-page edict urging his 1.2 billion Catholic followers to take action against climate change. The Pontiff will make his announcement during his visit to the Philippine city of Tacloban, which was ravaged by typhoon Haiyan, which killed thousands in 2013.

Details of the proposal for Pope Francis' US visit revealed
By Alan Holdren and Elise Harris
Manila, Philippines - Archbishop Bernardito Auza – a member of the organizing committee for Pope Francis’ upcoming visit to the U.S. – has revealed details of the proposed schedule, which includes visits to three cities.

**Pope Francis will visit New York City, Washington, D.C. and Philadelphia during September visit to U.S.**
By Sasha Goldstein
New York Daily News
January 19, 2015

The papal visit to the Big Apple would likely include an address at the United Nations and possibly a Mass at Madison Square Garden. The first U.S. visit by a Pope since 2008 will include a White House visit and an address at Philadelphia's World Meeting of Families. A trip to Boston may be included as well, a Vatican official told the Daily News.

**Preparing for the Storm: Anticipating and Countering the Likely Attacks on Pope Francis and His Environmental Encyclical**
By Dan DiLeo
Millennial Journal
December 16, 2014

Over the past several weeks, Pope Francis has made explicit reference to the challenge of climate change with respect to nutrition, migration and the United Nations international treaty negotiations. Given that Francis’ ecological encyclical is expected to be published in the next several months, these remarks make it seem increasingly likely that the pope will explicitly address climate change in the document. […] I offer the following list of likely objections and recommended refutations.

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2. More articles on Christian Responses to Climate Change
Global group of Catholic bishops call for end to fossil fuels
By Matt McGrath
BBC News
December 10, 2014

Catholic bishops from around the world are calling for an end to fossil fuel use and increased efforts to secure a global climate treaty. Catholics, they say, should engage with the process leading to a proposed new deal to be signed in Paris next year.

Care for the Whole Creation: The World Council of Churches at COP20 in Lima
By Grace Ji-Sun Kim
Huffington Post
December 17, 2014

It felt like the world had descended upon Lima, Peru. Political leaders, scientists, activists, NGOs, world leaders and religious leaders gathered at the COP20 (20th annual Conference of the Parties, sponsored by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)) in Lima to discuss climate change and sustainability.

Whether they want it or not, Republicans get religion on climate change
By Scott Detrow, E&E reporter
ClimateWire
January 15, 2015
http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060011713

On the rare chance any Republican congressmen or senators leave the premises of the Hershey Lodge during their joint caucus retreat today, they'll be greeted by an interfaith religious service aimed at motivating the GOP lawmakers to take action on climate change.

Can a Christian Make Conservatives Care About Climate Change?
By Coco McPherson
Rolling Stone
January 1, 2015
Anna Jane Joyner is evangelical royalty: Her father, Rick Joyner, founded a South Carolina-based megachurch with 1,000 congregations in 59 countries. But Anna Jane had a political come-to-Jesus moment while at UNC, where she embraced progressive politics. Today, at 29, she's the millennial face of a growing national movement that seeks to convince America's 80 million evangelicals that biblical tenets are compatible with environmentalism.

3. Responses to Climate Change from the World’s Religious Traditions

**Religious Leaders Confronting Climate Change**
Yale Climate Connection
Podcast with Mary Evelyn Tucker
February 11, 2015

Most of the world’s religions — including Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Buddhism — have said that protecting vulnerable people and the earth are moral imperatives. These values are inspiring religious leaders to speak out on climate change. TUCKER: “Clearly this is already adversely affecting vulnerable people of lower incomes be it in the first world or the 3rd world. So there is an environmental justice issue here.”

**Interfaith panel tackles global environmental problems at Dallas event**
By Julie Ryan
Green Source DWF
February 3, 2015

Faith leaders of Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim traditions shared their views on climate change and responsibility this Martin Luther King Day, in a panel sponsors dubbed “Love, Justice, Care for Creation.” [Dallas Interfaith Power and Light](http://greensourcedfw.org/articles/interfaith-panel-tackles-global-environmental-problems-dallas-event), local affiliate of the national faith-based environmental group, hosted the panel at the Dallas Baha’i Center in Lake Highlands in Dallas.

4. Asian Traditions and Ecology

**New chapter in Daoist ecology**
Alliance of Religions and Conservation
In a visit to China last month ARC Secretary General Martin Palmer was impressed by recent progress made by Daoism in meeting the country's environmental challenges. He was attending the 3rd International Forum of the Chinese Taoist Association in November, an event which drew together Daoists from China and beyond as well as representatives of the Chinese authorities and environmentalist.

A Landscape of Lived Religion in Nepal
By Chris Crews
State of Formation
December 2, 2014

This is the first in a multi-part series discussing sacred landscapes and religion in the Himalaya. I recently returned from a month of fieldwork and research in Humla, the northwestern district of Nepal bordering Tibet and India. I was there as part of a research initiative focused on the concept of sacred landscapes in the Himalaya, with special interest in the pilgrimage routes leading to Mount Kailash (Kang Rinpoche in Tibetan) and Lake Manasarovar.

When the Anthropocene Came to Halji
By Chris Crews
State of Formation
January 8, 2015
http://www.stateofformation.org/2015/01/when-the-anthropocene-came-to-halji/

This is the second in a multi-part series discussing sacred landscapes and religion in the Himalaya. The rocky trail we had been hiking all day along the Limi River was interspersed with a mix of subalpine trees and large boulder fields, followed by a low stone wall alongside empty fields. […] We were about to enter the village of Halji, our first destination in the remote Limi Valley of far western Nepal. Although I did not realize it as we crossed the bridge, we were entering another community on the front lines of a new era of climate chaos, or what some have taken to calling the Anthropocene.

5. Islam and Ecology

Muslim Groups Give $100,000 To Help Detroiter Without Water, Say It's 'Part Of Our Faith To Help'
Two Islamic organizations are alleviating Detroit's water crisis with a generous donation that'll benefit some of the city's poorest residents. Islamic Relief USA and the Michigan Muslim Community Council (MMCC) have donated $100,000 to the Detroit Water Fund and Wayne Metropolitan Community Action Agency to help the groups assist Detroiter with making their water bill payments, the Associated Press reported.

6. Religion, Ethics, and Ecology

Religious Studies Can Help Save the Planet
By Chris Crews
State of Formation
December 29, 2014
http://www.stateofformation.org/2014/12/religious-studies-can-help-save-the-planet/

Recently UC Riverside Religious Studies professor Ivan Strenski published a piece on the Religion Dispatches blog with a provocative question: can religion professors save the planet? He was responding to the American Academy of Religion's (AAR) Annual Conference which took place last month in California, and in particular the much-discussed efforts of AAR President Laurie Zoloth to green the annual gathering of religious studies scholars.

Change is slow but worth it
By Rachel Myslivy
Global Sisters Report
January 26, 2015
http://globalsistersreport.org/environment/change-slow-worth-it-18626

Change is slow but worth it. A friend commented to me the other day that my environmental work is like a ministry. It was such a wonderful thing to hear. For me, raising awareness of our environmental crisis is a calling. That doesn’t make it any easier. Sometimes it feels like I am pushing an enormous rock uphill on ever-shifting ground. Just when it seems I’m making headway, something happens and I have to redirect my efforts. Working for social change is slow-going and often feels like you’re going backwards. It is important to take the long view.
The Rt. Rev. J. Jon Bruno has created the Bishop’s Chair for Environmental Science & Food Justice and named the Rev. Andrew K. Barnett to the new post at Campbell Hall Episcopal in North Hollywood, California.

The New Paradigm of Energy Ethics
By Erin Lothes
Global Energy Affairs
December 2014

Since 1981, when the US Catholic Bishops published a letter on energy and ethical principles, the ecological, economic, and technological landscape for assessing renewable energy has undergone shifts of seismic proportion. The IPCC’s Fifth Assessment Report states that society’s dependence on fossil fuels is driving severe disruption of ecological systems worldwide and accelerating socio-political disruption. While the realities and possibilities of renewable energy remain hotly debated, the ethical imperative to eliminate the impacts of fossil fuels is clear.

7. Articles on the work of Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim

Take 5: Forum on Religion and Ecology co-director Mary Evelyn Tucker
By Susan Gonzalez
Yale News
January 16, 2015
http://news.yale.edu/2015/01/16/take-5-forum-religion-and-ecology-co-director-mary-evelyn-tucker

Take 5 offers a brief introduction to Yale faculty members in a Q&A format. Mary Evelyn Tucker, senior lecturer and research scholar, holds appointments in the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies and the Divinity School, as well as the Department of Religious Studies. Her special area of study is Asian religions. Her concern about the growing environmental challenges led her to help shape a new interdisciplinary field linking religion and ecology. Tucker teaches in the joint M.A. program in religion and ecology and directs the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale with her husband, John Grim.
Faculty Spotlight: John Grim
Notes from the Quad
Yale University
February 3, 2015
http://notesfromthequad.yale.edu/notes/2015-02-03-131500/faculty-spotlight-john-grim

In the midst of humanity’s divisions and convulsions, John Grim is watching the world slowly wake up to the urgency and ethics of Earth care. At Yale he feels that he joins with others to help make that happen. “The question is: What values do we human communities share?” says Grim, co-director of the Forum for Religion and Ecology at Yale with his wife, Yale scholar Mary Evelyn Tucker. “Ultimately, while we can distinguish ourselves, we are not separate. We have different ways of making a similar point: We are interwoven with the natural world, and thus need an ethic of care, an ethic of respectful use. No one personality or community or denomination will trigger the ecological changes needed. I think it’s ‘a hundred flowers blooming’ across the world. Many communities, many relationships will make it happen.”

Film journeys into the cosmos’ history
By Chase Brunton
The Maine Campus - The University of Maine student newspaper
January 19, 2015
http://mainecampus.com/2015/01/19/column-documentary-theater-film-journeys-into-the-cosmos-history/?ref=opinion

Fourteen billion years ago, all of the energy in the universe was contained in a single point. Then the big bang happened, sending all of the energy in the universe scattering off in all directions.

8. Newsletters

Forum on Religion and Ecology Newsletter
http://fore.research.yale.edu/publications/newsletters/

Ceres Newsletter
http://view.exacttarget.com/?j=fe5d11737562047e7d1d&m=fe6415707461007b7613&ls=fde713777c61037575107777&l=fe891779766d0d7e77&s=fe201673766c0378701d75&jb=ffcf14&ju=fe2310757263007a741174&r=0

Creation Justice Ministries Newsletter
http://www.creationjustice.org/capsules.html
Eco-Congregation Scotland Newsletter
http://us9.campaign-archive1.com/home/?u=a37b4ff760ffcc7fd1c3611b4&id=57e0b5c50a

Environmental Defense Fund Newsletter
http://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/content/solutions_winter2015.pdf

Friends Journal - “Climate Change” issue

Green Church Newsletter
http://egliseverte-greenchurch.ca/green/index.php?option=com_acymailing&ctrl=archive&task=view&mailid=57&key=0adb4156f253d07aa655966554bc601f&subid=189-dbe0c9b642707e4c37fc810b1cf1134f

Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute (SAFCEI) Newsletter
http://us6.campaign-archive1.com/home/?u=887c3de8b0&id=e86d980456