

FAITH FOR EARTH



Interfaith Response to COVID-19

Faith for Earth
April 2, 2020



Dear Brothers and Sisters;

[Interfaith Response to COVID-19](#)

Allow me to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation for your overwhelming support to my previous message on Faith and Science. It is an elating joy to see faith-based organizations and faith leaders stepping up to face the crisis by sharing knowledge, suggesting actions and being at the forefront of extending the needed hand of support. We have collated all the resources you provided us on [This Page](#). If you have further resources, kindly share, especially on the ground work stories of effective support.

[Coronavirus: 'Nature is sending us a message', says UN environment chief](#)

As the world focuses on addressing the coronavirus pandemic, global efforts continue to address the causes of zoonotic diseases like COVID-19, to protect biodiversity, to put an end to the illegal trade in wildlife, to safeguard the handling of chemicals and waste and to promote economic recovery plans that take nature and the climate emergency into account. Read on for some recent online highlights from the United Nations Environment Programme. Executive Director Inger Anderson [emphasizes the urgency in preventing the spread of COVID-19 and in tackling biodiversity loss](#) going forward.

[Coronavirus, faith Leaders and sustainable development](#)

Together with organizers and 200 participants, the “People and Planet—Faith in the 2030 Agenda” digital conference took place on 16-18 March with participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, South Africa and Sweden. Across the world, hundreds of millions of people are in lockdown. Many are isolated from their families, anxious and wondering where their next meal will come from. At the same time, thousands of churches, mosques and other places of worship are closed, with religious ceremonies and prayers switching to digital platforms. Organized by the Swedish Development Agency [Sida](#) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) [Faith for Earth Initiative](#), in close collaborations with the [Stockholm International Water Institute](#) and the [Swedish Environmental Protection Agency](#) (Naturvårdsverket), discussions focused on the coronavirus pandemic, climate change and biodiversity loss, and the role of moral

duty bearers such as faith actors and indigenous groups. It took place without a flight being taken. [See the Article Here.](#)

[Learning Exchange Workshop of Faith for Earth Initiative](#)

On 17-19 December, 2019, Faith for Earth Initiative held a learning exchange workshop on the topic of faith and environment, where 43 representatives from faith-based organizations, other NGOs, governments and UN entities have participated. The systemic process of the conference aimed to enable participants to build a community with capacity for transforming sustainable development goals into sustainable actions with outcomes meaningful for local contexts and global agendas supported by the Faith for Earth Coalition. [Click Here](#) to access all the resources and documents.

[Honoring Tradition Keepers and Change Agents as Earth Day Turns 50](#)

Faith for Earth will be speaking at the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation and Earth Day Network virtual dialogue, “Honoring Tradition Keepers and Change Agents as Earth Day Turns 50.” The dialogue will explore how people of faith and faith-based organizations are addressing climate change by safeguarding traditions and striving to meet the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The virtual dialogue will be held on Monday April 6, 2020 at 08:30 am EST (15:30 pm GMT =3). Panelists include: Rev. Dr. Grace Ji-Sun Kim with the World Council of Churches; Rachel Freed, Vice President and Chief Program Officer of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee; Dr. Iyad Abu Moghli, Director of the Faith for Earth Initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme; and Marshall Siao, Director of R&D of Jing Si Pureland Co., Ltd. from the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation. To register and [join the event please Click HERE.](#)

[50th Earth Day Observance with Global Religious and Indigenous Leaders](#)

On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, Faith for Earth is partnering with the Parliament of World’s Religions and will be making the opening remarks at a webinar on 21st April, 2020 at 10:30 am CDT. Many leaders on the front lines can be found in religious and indigenous communities. Kindly join us in the discussions with Gopal Patel - Director of the Bhumi Project; Hellen Mugo – representative of the Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa; Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim - Environmental activist working on behalf of her people, the Mbororo in Chad; Lauren Van Ham - Interfaith minister and Climate Action Coordinator at United Religions Initiative; Lyla June - Native American environmental scientist, doctoral student, from the Diné (Navajo) community; and Mirele Goldsmith – Founder of the Jewish Earth Alliance. If you wish to take part in this activity, kindly register [here](#). Meanwhile you can [view a map](#) of Earth Day blessings from leaders around the world.

[Waste management an essential public service in the fight to beat COVID19](#)

With the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic continuing to spread and its impacts upon human health and the economy intensifying day-by-day, governments are urged to treat waste management, including of medical, household and other hazardous waste, as an urgent and essential public service in order to minimize possible secondary impacts upon health and the environment. Parties to the Basel Convention are currently working on a guidance document for soundly managing household waste and whilst not yet finalized, an [Initial Draft](#) may be consulted for provisional guidance. See the [Article HERE](#).

[World Environment Day Celebrations in 2020 is on Biodiversity.](#)

Please keep watching this space. We are preparing, with our distinguished partners, specific pages for religions and biodiversity and designing some guidelines for celebrating and appreciating biodiversity at all times, but particularly on World Environment Day. Last year, on the World Environment Day, [460 faith-based Organizations](#) took part in the celebrations by conducting a wide range of activities.

[Accreditation to UN Environment Assembly](#)

If your organization is not yet accredited to UN Environment Assembly and if you are interested to be accredited and gain a consultative status within the [rules of procedure](#) of the [UN Environment Assembly](#), please refer to the criteria for accreditation as derived from Rule 70 of the Rules of Procedure and submit your request accordingly. [Guidelines here.](#)

Warm wishes,
Iyad

[Faith4Earth Website](#)
Social Media Hashtag [#Faith4Earth](#)

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