

Respecting Mother Earth and caring for ecological systems, the most vulnerable communities and all future generations.

Interfaith submission to Talanoa Dialogue 2018

1) Where are we?

As faith based organisations and faith communities, we have engaged with climate change policy and action for many years as a peace and justice concern, advocating for and mobilising towards just, rights-based approaches to transform our human activities feeding this crisis, while protecting those most vulnerable to the consequences. We support the Paris Agreement and its goals, particularly to pursue a global effort to limit temperature rises to 1.5C, while strengthening global resilience to its impacts. Millions of our members, constituencies, partners and communities are on the front line of the adverse impacts of climate change to humans and the ecosystems on which our lives depend. Already we face unprecedented changes that have left communities extremely vulnerable, threatening loss of life, health, human mobility, cultural heritage, and livelihoods.

Many of our faith communities have made significant contributions to climate policy and action. In addition to our advocacy, mobilisation, capacity building and education, we are building more resilient and sustainable communities. We call for accountability in ourselves and our decision makers, taking responsibility for the impact of our lifestyles on the climate system. We have divested and called for greater divestment from fossil fuels; we have contributed humanitarian aid to communities affected by extreme weather events; we have advocated for sustainable agriculture, production and consumption in our personal lives, our communities and countries; and we have raised ethical and moral arguments for climate justice. These we shall continue to do in good faith as a sign of our commitment to our religious teachings, and shared love and compassion. Love, rather than fear, can still lead humanity through this crisis.

To protect the most vulnerable communities now, and all our future generations, we must all act urgently to increase ambition of our collective action as a human society. Our economic and development models remain carbon and pollution intensive, seeking unlimited growth on a planet with limited natural resources. People in poorer countries experience greater threats to their lives and livelihoods, yet have few resources to support their resilience. We are concerned that the ambitious and positive spirit of the Paris Agreement is being lost in returned struggles over power and economic competition, while help for those most exposed and least responsible for current climate change is avoided. There are many unkept promises, shockingly low financial help, and little accountability for actions.

2) Where do we want to go?

Vision of the future for your organization and/or sector in terms of its possible role in achieving the 1.5/2 degrees' goal and a net-zero emission world by this mid-century

As faith communities, we seek a future where human activities driving rising temperatures are sufficiently transformed, and the consequences to the most vulnerable are addressed. The Paris Agreement offers

Governments worldwide a framework for national and international action on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including support to those in need. Its goal, to pursue efforts to limit temperature rises to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, is critical to avoid profound suffering. Yet our global GHG emissions remain on track to raise global temperatures above 4C, threatening human civilization as we know it. Faith communities therefore call for urgent revisions to NDCs from the main emitting countries, to help place the world on a towards a 1.5 degree limit trajectory. In addition, we call for robust and comprehensive long term strategies for all countries to achieve complete decarbonisation by mid century, noting that decarbonization benefits the health of citizens in developed and developing countries. We also call for massive investment into renewable energy worldwide, for the protection of forests and the restoration of degraded forests so they support biodiversity while also acting as carbon sinks. Land use in agriculture must also be transformed so that carbon emissions from food production will be significantly lower. Respecting the rights of indigenous people of the world must be a part of the transition to a net-zero emission world. We call for sufficient levels of climate finance, capacity and technology transfer to developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable, to enable their adaptation, resilience building, and in addressing loss and damage.

- Faith communities envisage a more just and equitable world, respecting the boundaries of Mother Earth and caring for ecological systems, the most vulnerable communities and all future generations.
- Faith communities respect the wisdom of ancestors, and strive for a sustainable and just future promoting peaceful co-existence. Long-term perspectives must overcome the short term wants for maximised economic profit and political re-election.
- Faith communities seek a new way of living together on this earth that requires a new way of thinking and a new way of understanding. Humanity must live together as one; the economy must serve the planet and redistribute the resources of the Earth instead of accumulating unhealthy riches to the few.
- Faith communities practise compassion and reflection on what it means to live together on this planet. Fasting and taking care of the most vulnerable is a virtue in all world religions. To pursue a 1.5C temperature limit, the world needs to 'carbon fast' and finance adaptation and mitigation, in our personal, community and national lives.

3) How do we get there?

Ways in which the UN Climate Change process can help you achieve your vision and goals, and how your actions can help in expediting sustainable transitions to climate neutral societies

- To pursue a 1.5C temperature rise limit, everyone needs to contribute.
- With 84% of the world's population identifying itself as belonging to a faith, and with houses of worship existing in nearly every settlement on the planet, we have great potential for leadership in transformation. It is inconceivable that faith communities would be left out of discussions on how to transform our world to a sustainable and just future.
- The narratives on how we can achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement are more important than ever. Humanity's chance to avoid global catastrophic climate change is limited - the urgency of the situation needs to be told beside hope and empowerment which lies in transformation to a sustainable and just future. Faith communities have the language of hope over fear, in seeking social, economic and political models to establish a carbon neutral world.
- To avoid global catastrophic climate change, Faith communities worldwide call for both lifestyle changes and political decisions - personal witness and national action. The most vulnerable must

be in centre of our attention be they the poor of today, coming generations or Mother Earth herself.

- Faith communities call for a spirit of solidarity, ethics and shared humanity, which will affirm the rights and dignity of all people and ecosystems, now and in the future.

Submitted to UNFCCC by World Council of Churches, ACT Alliance, Brahma Kumaris, Green Faith, Franciscan International, QUNO (Quaker United Nation Office) Islamic Relief Worldwide, Dominican for Justice and Peace, Aytzim Ecological Judaism, CIDSE, Bumi Project, CYNESA (Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa) Bishop Andrus The Episcopal Diocese of California, Inter-religious Climate and Ecology (ICE)Network, WSCF (World Student Christian Federation)