

# Eco - Pledge





## Welcome & greetings to you from Glasgow!

In light of the UN Climate Change Conference COP26 taking place in this city in November 2021, the Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Glasgow would like to offer this eco-pledge as a tool for individuals and communities to reflect on and enable practical action towards sustainable use of the world's material resources. The compilation of environmental actions presented here aims to support the goals of COP26 as well as good ecological objectives generally.

### Why?

The implications of climate chaos caused by unsustainable lifestyles raises a moral imperative for global justice. In recognising that we are global citizens who care about every member of the human family, we feel compelled to respond with urgency. The prompt for action cannot be understated.

While governments, NGOs and large businesses consult to find solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, individual citizens can and must also take some essential actions. We could begin by educating ourselves about the impact of our purchasing habits on the pollution of the air, land and ocean; or by being more conscious of our energy-use behaviour. At present, those of us who live in the developed nations of the world are exceeding our share of resource use and living beyond the capacity of the natural world to regenerate itself. Greater personal awareness of this is a vital first step, and then we must progress to action.

## What & How?

The eco-pledge as a whole consists of 19 individual pledges as well as 32 quotations from the Bahá'í Writings.

It's up to you how you would like to use the eco-pledge, but joining and learning with others is usually most effective. It's difficult to implement all actions simultaneously. Instead, try a few new actions for a week or so, and then add in more practical changes in the weeks and months following, building up good environmental practice and making a growing difference to your impact on the planet and the climate emergency. As the Bahá'í calendar consists of 19 months, perhaps your community could pledge to focus on one of the 19 actions every month?

The quotations from the Bahá'í writings are intended for deepening and meditation to support the pledge actions and place them in a spiritual context. They revolve around the subject of humanity's vital interconnection with nature, our role as stewards of the planet's biosphere, and they highlight virtues such as moderation, justice and humility.

## Get started!

Hopefully you'll feel inspired to take this timely eco-pledge, and help to combat global warming and increasing extreme weather events. Taking various actions—as in this eco-pledge—sends a hopeful message to everyone around us. Let us remain hopeful. All of us can play a part in safeguarding the beauty and wondrous resources of our natural world for the sake of our future generations.

Please share this eco-pledge compilation with whoever you think might be interested and invite them to join in with practical actions. Feel free to share your feedback and experiences with [cop26@glasgowbahais.org.uk](mailto:cop26@glasgowbahais.org.uk)





## 2

## Plant-based foods

I will aim to eat more plant-based foods and lower my consumption of meat (especially beef and lamb) and dairy produce. I will be mindful of selecting seasonal and local produce.

Meat and dairy products use up a lot more land, water and energy resources than plant-based foods. Have you considered eating meat only once a week, as a special treat? To minimise carbon dioxide emissions for transport and storage, the best choices are locally grown produce and fruit and vegetables that are in season.



“What will be the food of the future?”

“Fruit and grains. The time will come when meat will no longer be eaten. Medical science is only in its infancy, yet it has shown that our natural diet is that which grows out of the ground. The people will gradually develop up to the condition of this natural food.”

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,  
*cited in Julia M. Grundy, Ten Days in the Light of ‘Akká*

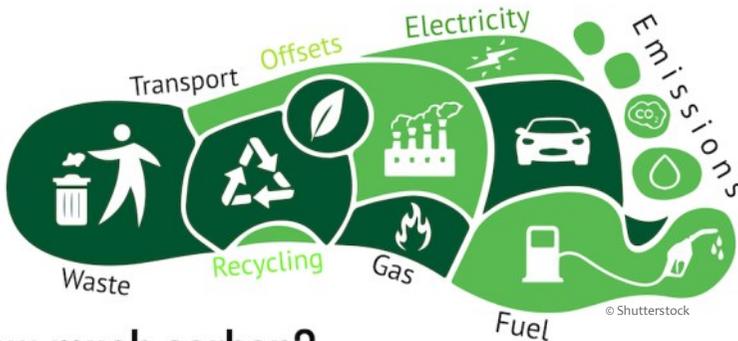


# 3

## Carbon footprint calculator

I will calculate my carbon footprint using an online calculator to help me assess how I can make my lifestyle more sustainable. I will also think about any other ways in which I can help to reduce my environmental footprint and reflect upon whether there are any blind spots that I have in terms of where I could improve towards a sustainable and healthy lifestyle.

By answering quick and simple multiple-choice questions about your current lifestyle and consumer habits on the following website you can see clearly and understand how to improve our climate change impact. It's very interesting, easy to do and highly recommended: [footprint.wwf.org.uk](http://footprint.wwf.org.uk)



### How much carbon?



We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions.

– Shoghi Effendi,  
*Letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual*

I will think about whether I can be happier with fewer possessions, and I will share what I don't need with others. I will use the resources I have already, before going to buy something I might not require.

Clothes that you won't wear again can be given to charity shops. Unused electricals (small kitchen appliances, power tools for DIY, electronic gadgets) or surplus building materials (including home decorating supplies such as leftover paint) can be given to community groups, repair cafés, tool libraries, etc.

Using resources you already have, or delaying a purchase that you don't (or don't yet) need, are very helpful actions for lowering the ecological burden on the planet. Reflect on the notion of “moderate consumerism” —how many things do you buy that are excessive and unnecessary to your needs?

Whoso cleaveth to justice, can,  
under no circumstances, transgress  
the limits of moderation. He  
discerneth the truth in all things,  
through the guidance of Him Who  
is the All-Seeing.

The civilization, so often vaunted  
by the learned exponents of arts and  
sciences, will, if allowed to  
overleap the bounds of moderation,  
bring great evil upon men. If carried  
to excess, civilization will prove as  
prolific a source of evil as it had  
been of goodness when kept within  
the restraints of moderation.

– Bahá'ú'lláh,  
*Gleanings*, No. CLXIV



[A true seeker] should be content  
with little, and be freed from all  
inordinate desire. He should treasure  
the companionship of them that have  
renounced the world...

– Bahá'ú'lláh,  
*Gleanings*, No. CXXV

## 5

## Ethical shopping

I will be a more conscious shopper and try to choose products and suppliers whose practices are not harmful for the planet. Over time, I aim to build up my awareness of various companies' ethical and environmental responsibility. I'm willing to carry out some investigation to educate myself and improve my knowledge of sustainability issues.

Cheap goods often have involved exploitation of people and the environment. We should remain wary of purchases that contribute towards inequality, and favour ethically-responsible choices. Ethical or environmental product labels can be very helpful in this regard. We must however remain vigilant towards the misleading practice of 'greenwashing' in product marketing.

As an example, in the event of buying new furniture comprising elements of wood, we should endeavour to source goods that have been crafted from sustainable materials supplied through accredited pathways such as the Forest Stewardship Scheme. Or, if purchasing paints or varnishes, make sure to choose those lowest in Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) emissions. Look for the 'MINIMAL VOC content' label.

With multi-ingredient products, such as chocolate, it is worth checking that both the cocoa and the sugar are ethical and sustainable in their production.

Refrain from buying holiday souvenirs and jewellery if you can't be certain that they were sourced ethically and sustainability; reject, for example, products made from coral, shells, exotic leather, timber, exotic foods and endangered plants, as they can easily unwittingly fall into this category.



The essence of all that We have revealed for thee is Justice, is for man to free himself from idle fancy and imitation, discern with the eye of oneness His glorious handiwork, and look into all things with a searching eye.

– Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, Asl-i-Kullu'l-Khayr

# 6

## Travel Choices

I will make the environment a central consideration in my travel choices. For journeys less than 1 mile, I'll consider walking or cycling. Wherever feasible, I will use public transport. If I must drive, I will drive efficiently and consider car-sharing. If I need to purchase or renew a private vehicle, I'll endeavour to make the most environmentally sound choice possible. I will fly less and look into offsetting the carbon expenditure of the air flights that I've taken in the past by donating funds to an environmental project.

Walking and cycling additionally have health benefits for most, and appropriate clothing will minimise the impact of weather.

If buying a car, an electric car (charged with renewable electricity), a hybrid, or a smaller car with a lower consumption / higher efficiency are worth considering from an environmental perspective. Or, instead of buying a car, have you considered joining a car club instead?



Offsetting can involve planting trees, through an expert reforestation organisation (such as *Trees for Life*, a Scottish Highlands rewilding project that has a [Bahá'í Unity Grove](#) and a [World Interfaith Harmony Grove](#)). Alongside these groves, Bahá'ís in and around Glasgow will be supporting the [Iwokrama Forest](#) conservation and social development project in Guyana for years to come, to leave a legacy from COP26. The Iwokrama project operates sustainable forestry in partnership with the indigenous population to protect the region's rich ecological inheritance.

### Reflection:

Consider how many flights you took in the last 10 years – one long-haul return flight adds a surprisingly large amount to your carbon footprint... sometimes as much as all other carbon emission-related lifestyle actions totalled over 1-3 years. The same applies with multiple short–medium length plane journeys.

O Lord! Unto Thee I repair for refuge, and toward all Thy signs I set my heart. O Lord! Whether traveling or at home, and in my occupation or in my work, I place my whole trust in Thee.

Grant me then Thy sufficing help so as to make me independent of all things, O Thou Who art unsurpassed in Thy mercy! Bestow upon me my portion, O Lord, as Thou pleasest, and cause me to be satisfied with whatsoever Thou hast ordained for me. Thine is the absolute authority to command.

– The Báb,  
*Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, Ch. 7

# 7

## Home insulation & heating

I will minimise heat loss from my home by adjusting habits. I will plan and implement any home insulation improvements which are feasible.

During the cold winter months, most of us rely upon heating our living spaces. Some governments (including in Scotland) offer financial incentives to improve thermal energy insulation for homes.

To get fresh air into your home, ventilate in short bursts by opening windows wide for brief amounts of time, rather than keeping them slightly open all the time.



Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self.

– Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Gleanings*, No. XLIII

## 8 Ethical investments, savings & pensions

I will check my bank's ethical credentials and switch to an alternative if its investment practices are harmful to the environment. I will find out whether my pension provider(s) have ethical options available and choose these, or switch providers where possible.

Do you know how your savings and retirement funds are being invested, which industry types and businesses are profiting? The more customers who express their objection to continued investment in fossil fuels the greater the momentum is maintained in bringing about change. It's usually very simple to find out by calling your pension provider or check the options available in your online account.

Transactions involving cryptocurrencies like Bitcoin are very energy intensive and best avoided.



O SON OF SPIRIT! The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behooveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes.

– Bahá' u' lláh,  
*Persian Hidden Words*, No. 2

# 9

## Food waste reduction

I will aim to reduce the food waste of my household. I will buy only what can be consumed before spoilage occurs, setting correct portion sizes and using leftovers in another meal. If because of short 'use-by' (expiration) dates it becomes evident that I will have food going to waste, I will donate it to a food bank or share it with neighbours before this occurs.

The OLIO app ([olioex.com](http://olioex.com), [Android](#), [iOS](#)) can help you find local takers for food you want to give away.



Economy is the foundation of human prosperity. The spendthrift is always in trouble. Prodigality on the part of any person is an unpardonable sin.

— ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,  
*cited in J. E. Esslemont, Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, p. 286

I am going to be more aware of my energy use at home and am happy to look at ways of reducing it: I'll look into measures such as LED lighting; thermostats and radiator thermostats; smart meters; using the most efficient ways to cook.

Using pot lids to retain the cooking heat which can reduce energy use by a quarter (25% less) saving you money too. And only boil as much water as you need.



Credit - Abbie Traylor-Smith / UK Department for International Development



Every man of discernment, while walking upon the earth, feeleth indeed abashed, inasmuch as he is fully aware that the thing which is the source of his prosperity, his wealth, his might, his exaltation, his advancement and power is, as ordained by God, the very earth which is trodden beneath the feet of all men. There can be no doubt that whoever is cognizant of this truth, is cleansed and sanctified from all pride, arrogance, and vainglory.

– Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*

I will organise a community devotional focussed on the environment with some prayers for climate justice and Indigenous peoples. I can even do this just by myself in moments of quietude.

We must give thought to and recognise the spiritual values that we need, both individually and collectively, to bring about the necessary changes in modern lifestyles to ensure long-term sustainability.

These spiritual values include: Equity and Justice, Moderation, Trustworthiness and Moral Leadership, as well as the Independent Investigation of Truth.



Wert thou to attain to but a dewdrop of the crystal waters of divine knowledge, thou wouldst readily realize that true life is not the life of the flesh but the life of the spirit...

– Bahá'u'lláh,  
cited in J. E. Esslemont,  
*Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 221

Reflect upon the inner realities of the universe, the secret wisdoms involved, the enigmas, the interrelationships, the rules that govern all. For every part of the universe is connected with every other part by ties that are very powerful and admit of no imbalance....

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,  
*Selections from the Writings of*  
*‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, No. 137



I will favour acquiring durable, higher quality products that have the potential to last longer. I will have items repaired when it is sensible and not financially prohibitive to do so.

I should also consider buying high quality refurbished goods.

Durable goods may cost more initially but usually reduce impact on the environment and often save money in the long run. Consider disposing of old goods only when they are beyond repair or are too shabby in appearance.



Bahá'u'lláh suggested a 19-year renewal period for home furniture in the Kitáb-i-Aqdas; how different is this to the present-day habits of fast fashion and annual mobile phone contracts! If a purchase can be delayed, let's consider doing so.



Material resources will always be required to sustain civilization. Humanity, observed 'Abdu'l-Bahá, will be "constantly taking out of nature's laboratory new and wonderful things." As consciousness of the oneness of humankind increases, so too does the recognition that the wealth and wonders of the earth are the common heritage of all people, who deserve just and equitable access to its resources.

– Bahá'í International Community,  
*Nature and the Advancement of Civilization*,  
bahai.org website

# 13 Respect & protect the natural environment

I will appreciate and protect all natural spaces including the land, forests, rivers, oceans and wildlife.

I'll connect with and value green spaces local to me.

Urban parks have a beneficial effect on the local climate, our health & (physical and mental) wellbeing, and wildlife also.

Through being, resting and meditating in nature, we can grow closer and quicken our connection to our spiritual self and gain a deeper sense of peace and tranquility.

In recent years it has become popular to pave over or put wooden decking within garden areas, sometimes just to reduce the maintenance of green spaces. This has a detrimental effect upon wildlife and can have an impact on local flooding also. Having a smaller area allotted to grass lawn while setting aside more space for plant species of greater wildlife value such as wildflowers, is a valuable benefit for boosting a richer biodiversity in your garden.



The country is the world of the soul, the city is the world of bodies.

– Bahá'ú'lláh, cited in J. E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 35

Say: Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. Nature is God's Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise.

– Bahá'ú'lláh,  
*Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Lawh-i-Hikmat

I will purchase organic goods wherever my budget allows.

Pesticides often kill many diverse organisms and plants and can contribute to environmental pollution, while buying organic products protects biodiversity, including vital pollinators of foods. Growing a small selection of fruit and vegetables can be a very rewarding experience and allows us to appreciate nature more!



[C]o-operation and reciprocity are essential properties which are inherent in the unified system of the world of existence, and without which the entire creation would be reduced to nothingness.

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá,

*cited in Bahá’í International Community,  
Conservation and Sustainable Development  
in the Bahá’í Faith*

I will begin to buy fewer products that are packaged in plastic and especially avoid single-use plastic items. I will avoid contributing to microplastics pollution. Also, I will take reusable bags with me when I go shopping.

Plastic litter and the rapid increase in microplastics (and microfibres) in the environment is harmful to wildlife and increasingly toxic to humans also. Avoid polystyrene/Styrofoam as it's one of the most persistent and environmentally-damaging packaging materials.

Microfibres are found in fleece clothing and blankets—they come loose when they're washed and enter the water stream and then become ingested by animals and humans. Buy products from natural materials such as cotton, wool and hemp instead.



O son of man! If thine eyes be turned towards mercy, forsake the things that profit thee and cleave unto that which will profit mankind. And if thine eyes be turned towards justice, choose thou for thy neighbour that which thou chooseth for thyself. Humility exalteth man to the heaven of glory and power, whilst pride abaseth him to the depths of wretchedness and degradation.

– Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*

I will recycle paper, plastic, tins and glass (and any other recyclables) and compost my food waste.

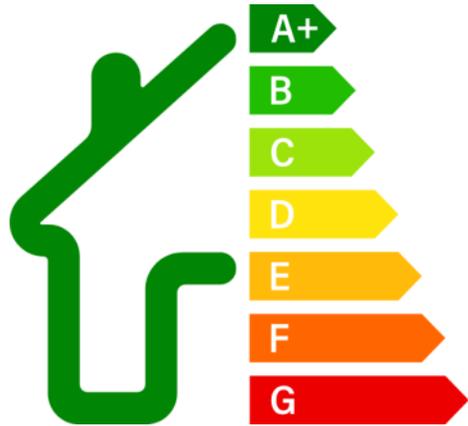
Different local authorities often have different lists of what can be accepted as recycling. Being aware of and following the rules increases the proportion of material that can actually be recycled.



The Lord of all mankind hath fashioned this human realm to be a Garden of Eden, an earthly paradise. If, as it must, it findeth the way to harmony and peace, to love and mutual trust, it will become a true abode of bliss, a place of manifold blessings and unending delights. Therein shall be revealed the excellence of humankind, therein shall the rays of the Sun of Truth shine forth on every hand.

— ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, No. 220

If purchasing an appliance (white electric goods, hot-water boiler etc.), I will prioritise my choice based upon energy efficiency ratings. Also, I'll use appliances in the most efficient way; i.e., putting in a full load of clothes / dishes / etc. and running it on the most energy-saving setting.



All men  
have been created  
to carry forward  
an ever-advancing  
civilization.

– Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Gleanings*, No. CIX

I'm going to practice conservative water usage. I'll consider installing flow reduction devices for showerheads, taps etc. and look into rainwater harvesting for garden watering. These actions are generally inexpensive but over a period of time can lower energy use and save money also.

All of the water that comes out of our taps has been treated (physically & chemically) to make it safe for drinking and often has to be pumped along the pipes to arrive at our homes. The average person in the UK uses over 140 litres of water daily, so that's in excess of 140 kilograms of water per day that needs to be pumped to supply your water pipe. Consider then that a family of 4 uses over half a ton every day!

This preparation work and pipeline delivery has an associated carbon footprint because of the energy use in bringing clean water to our tap.



The earth is  
but one country,  
and mankind  
its citizens.

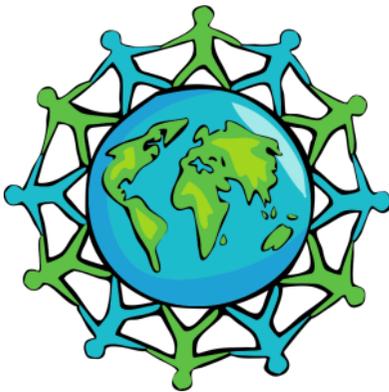
– Bahá'u'lláh,  
*Gleanings*, No. CXVII

# 19

## Connect & talk to others

I will speak to at least two people I know about the issues regarding climate change and about anything useful that I've learned from this pledge or other reading and investigations.

Perhaps you have some practical energy saving techniques that are worth sharing? Or maybe you have experienced an example of how to apply a spiritual principle to mitigate climate change? Or any other knowledge gleaned from learning about COP26 and climate change? You might even want to write to your local elected representative!



“Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and centre your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements,” [Bahá’u’lláh counselled his followers.] ...

It is with such thoughts in mind that Bahá’ís enter into collaboration, as their resources permit, with an increasing number of movements, organizations, groups and individuals, establishing partnerships that strive to transform society and further the cause of unity, promote human welfare, and contribute to world solidarity.

– The Universal House of Justice,  
*Letter dated 2 March 2013*

The Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Glasgow hopes that you feel encouraged and uplifted by participating in this eco-pledge!

Just as nature provides us with the material nourishment we require, we should gratefully accept our role as responsible stewards of the earth's resources.

As we labour together in our efforts to preserve the abundant gifts on our Earth, we are confident that all our individual actions will bear fruit and merge in cooperation with each other's efforts for the benefit of all living on this planet both today and in the future.



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## Stewardship of Nature: Readings for deepening

Consider the world of created beings, how varied and diverse they are in species, yet with one sole origin. All the differences that appear are those of outward form and colour. This diversity of type is apparent throughout the whole of nature. ...

Let us look at the beauty in diversity, the beauty of harmony, and learn a lesson...

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, 28th October 1911

By nature is meant those inherent properties and necessary relations derived from the realities of things. And these realities of things, though in the utmost diversity, are yet intimately connected one with the other... Liken the world of existence to the temple of man. All the organs of the human body assist one another, therefore life continues... Likewise among the parts of existence there is a wonderful connection and interchange of forces which is the cause of life of the world and the continuation of these countless phenomena.

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *cited in Bahá’í International Community, The Bahá’í Statement on Nature*, 1987

The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.

– Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings*, No. CXXXI

Consumer culture, today’s inheritor by default of materialism’s gospel of human betterment, is unembarrassed by the ephemeral nature of the goals that inspire it. For the small minority of people who can afford them, the benefits it offers are immediate, and the rationale unapologetic. Emboldened by the breakdown of traditional morality, the advance of the new creed is essentially no more than the triumph of animal impulse, as instinctive and blind as appetite, released at long last from the restraints of supernatural sanctions. ... Tendencies once universally castigated as moral failings mutate into necessities of social progress. Selfishness becomes a prized commercial resource; falsehood reinvents itself as public information... Under appropriate euphemisms, greed, lust, indolence, pride—even violence—acquire not merely broad acceptance but social and economic value.

– Bahá’í International Community, *One Common Faith*

Look not upon the creatures of God except with the eye of kindness and of mercy, for Our loving providence hath pervaded all created things, and Our grace encompassed the earth and the heavens.

– Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings*, No. XIV

O Thou kind Lord! Grant that these trees may become the adornment of the Abhá Paradise. Cause them to grow through Thy celestial bounty. Make them fresh and verdant and besprinkle them with heavenly dewdrops. Attire them with robes of radiant beauty and crown their heads with gorgeous blossoms. Adorn them with goodly fruit and waft over them Thy sweet savours.

Thou art the Bestower, the All-Loving, the Most Radiant, the Most Resplendent.

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Additional Prayers revealed by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*

Train your children from the earliest days to be infinitely tender and loving to animals.

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, No. 138

Only a comprehensive vision of a global society, supported by universal values and principles, can inspire individuals to take responsibility for the long-term care and protection of the natural environment. Bahá’ís find such a world-embracing vision and system of values in the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh—teachings which herald an era of planetary justice, prosperity and unity.

– Bahá’í International Community, *Conservation and Sustainable Development in the Bahá’í Faith*, 1995

The welfare of any segment of humanity is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the whole. Humanity’s collective life suffers when any one group thinks of its own well-being in isolation from that of its neighbours or pursues economic gain without regard for how the natural environment, which provides sustenance for all, is affected.

– The Universal House of Justice, *Message to the Bahá’ís of the World*, 1st March 2017

But now coming to man, we see he hath neither hooked teeth nor sharp nails or claws, nor teeth like iron sickles. From this it becometh evident and manifest that the food of man is cereals and fruit. Some of the teeth of man are like millstones to grind the grain, and some are sharp to cut the fruit. Therefore he is not in need of meat, nor is he obliged to eat it. Even without eating meat he would live with the utmost vigour and energy. For example, the community of the Brahmins in India do not eat meat; notwithstanding this they are not inferior to other nations in strength, power, vigour, outward senses or intellectual virtues. Truly, the killing of animals and the eating of their meat is somewhat contrary to pity and compassion, and if one can content oneself with cereals, fruit, oil and nuts, such as pistachios, almonds and so on, it would undoubtedly be better and more pleasing.

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Compilation of Compilations: Health, Healing, and Nutrition*, No. 17

“What will be the food of the future?” “Fruit and grains. The time will come when meat will no longer be eaten. Medical science is only in its infancy, yet it has shown that our natural diet is that which grows out of the ground. The people will gradually develop up to the condition of this natural food.” {as seen in pledge No. 2}

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *cited in Julia M. Grundy, Ten Days in the Light of ‘Akká*

We cannot segregate the human heart from the environment outside us and say that once one of these is reformed everything will be improved. Man is organic with the world. His inner life moulds the environment and is itself also deeply affected by it. The one acts upon the other and every abiding change in the life of man is the result of these mutual reactions. {3}

– Shoghi Effendi, *Letter on behalf of Shoghi Effendi to an individual believer*, 17 February 1933

Whoso cleaveth to justice, can, under no circumstances, transgress the limits of moderation. He discerneth the truth in all things, through the guidance of Him Who is the All-Seeing. The civilization, so often vaunted by the learned exponents of arts and sciences, will, if allowed to overleap the bounds of moderation, bring great evil upon men. Thus warneth you He Who is the All-Knowing. If carried to excess, civilization will prove as prolific a source of evil as it had been of goodness when kept within the restraints of moderation. {4}

– Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, No. CLXIV

[A true seeker] should be content with little, and be freed from all inordinate desire. He should treasure the companionship of them that have renounced the world... {4}

– Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, No. CXXV

Let your vision be world-embracing, rather than confined to your own self. {7}

– Bahá'u'lláh, *Gleanings*, No. XLIII

O Son of Spirit! The best beloved of all things in My sight is Justice; turn not away therefrom if thou desirest Me, and neglect it not that I may confide in thee. By its aid thou shalt see with thine own eyes and not through the eyes of others, and shalt know of thine own knowledge and not through the knowledge of thy neighbour. Ponder this in thy heart; how it behoveth thee to be. Verily justice is My gift to thee and the sign of My loving-kindness. Set it then before thine eyes. {8}

– Bahá'u'lláh, *Persian Hidden Words*, No. 2

Economy is the foundation of human prosperity. The spendthrift is always in trouble. Prodigality on the part of any person is an unpardonable sin. {9}

– 'Abdu'l-Bahá, cited in J. E. Esslemont, *Bahá'u'lláh and the New Era*, p. 286

Every man of discernment, while walking upon the earth, feeleth indeed abashed, inasmuch as he is fully aware that the thing which is the source of his prosperity, his wealth, his might, his exaltation, his advancement and power is, as ordained by God, the very earth which is trodden beneath the feet of all men. There can be no doubt that whoever is cognizant of this truth, is cleansed and sanctified from all pride, arrogance, and vainglory. {10}

– Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*

Reflect upon the inner realities of the universe, the secret wisdoms involved, the enigmas, the interrelationships, the rules that govern all. For every part of the universe is connected with every other part by ties that are very powerful and admit of no imbalance... {11}

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, No. 137

Material resources will always be required to sustain civilization. Humanity, observed ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, will be “constantly taking out of nature’s laboratory new and wonderful things.” As consciousness of the oneness of humankind increases, so too does the recognition that the wealth and wonders of the earth are the common heritage of all people, who deserve just and equitable access to its resources. {12}

– Bahá’í International Community, *Nature and the Advancement of Civilization*, bahai.org website

The country is the world of the soul, the city is the world of bodies. {13}

– Bahá’u’lláh, cited in J. E. Esslemont, *Bahá’u’lláh and the New Era*, p. 35

Nature in its essence is the embodiment of My Name, the Maker, the Creator. Its manifestations are diversified by varying causes, and in this diversity there are signs for men of discernment. Nature is God’s Will and is its expression in and through the contingent world. It is a dispensation of Providence ordained by the Ordainer, the All-Wise. {13}

– Bahá’u’lláh, *Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh revealed after the Kitáb-i-Aqdas*, Lawh-i-Hikmat

The Lord of all mankind hath fashioned this human realm to be a Garden of Eden, an earthly paradise. If, as it must, it findeth the way to harmony and peace, to love and mutual trust, it will become a true abode of bliss, a place of manifold blessings and unending delights. Therein shall be revealed the excellence of humankind, therein shall the rays of the Sun of Truth shine forth on every hand. {16}

– ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, *Selections from the Writings of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá*, No. 220

All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. {17}

– Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings*, No. CIX

The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens. {18}

– Bahá’u’lláh, *Gleanings*, No. CXVII





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