

**LEAVES, A Newsletter of the
INTERNATIONAL
ENVIRONMENT FORUM
Volume 17, Number 6 15 June 2015**



International Environment Forum A Baha'i inspired organization addressing
the environment and sustainable development

Website	www.iefworld.org	Article Deadline next issue 13 July 2015
Article submission	newsletter@iefworld.org	
Secretariat Email	ief@iefworld.org	General Secretary Emily Firth
President Email	ief@iefworld.org	Arthur Lyon Dahl Ph.D.
Postal address	12B Chemin de Maisonneuve, CH-1219 Chatelaine, Geneva, Switzerland	

From the Editor, Request for information for upcoming newsletters

This newsletter is an opportunity for IEF members to share their experiences, activities, and initiatives that are taking place at the community level on environment, climate change and sustainability. All members are welcome to contribute information about related activities, upcoming conferences, news from like-minded organizations, recommended websites, book reviews, etc. Please send information to newsletter@ief.org. Please share the *Leaves* newsletter and IEF membership information with family, friends, and associates and encourage interested persons to consider becoming a member of the IEF.

Baha'i World Centre discussions on public discourse

On 14-15 June 2015, IEF President Arthur Dahl was invited to the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa, Israel, as a consultant to present a seminar for senior staff on "Developments in the Natural Sciences and their Impacts on the Life of Humanity", and to meet with the External Affairs Policy Committee, the Institute for the Study of Global Prosperity (ISGP), the Office of Public Discourse (OPD) and the Office of Social and Economic Development (OSD).

The discussions revolved around ways of contributing to public discourse linking science and spiritual principles, and of building more capacity in this field. There was great interest in the experience of Baha'i-inspired organizations like IEF and ebbf - Ethical Business Building the Future. Other issues were the challenges facing the world today as defined by science (such as climate change and other planetary boundaries), the difficulties in organizing research in the natural sciences to respond to the complex systemic problems facing the planet today, and the articulation of science and policy.

For an introduction to some of the issues, see Arthur Dahl's paper on "Natural Sciences and Society" presented at the Association for Baha'i Studies/IEF Conference in Toronto in August 2014 at <http://iefworld.org/ddahl14f>.

Nature and Spirituality

A week-long workshop on Nature and Spirituality was organized at the Chateau de La Garde in Bourg-en-Bresse, France, on 7-14 June. Participants included a Protestant theologian and two pastors from Germany, a well-known Buddhist monk and a meditation teacher from Sri Lanka, a sheikh leading one of the main branches of Sufism from Kashmir and England, two Quakers from Switzerland, and Arthur Dahl for the Baha'i Faith. There were opportunities to share both theory and practice, with a half-day devoted to the Baha'i approach.

Bahá'í Service Opportunity: Representative for Sustainable Development – US Bahá'í Office of Public Affairs

This position represents the U.S. Bahá'í community on the subject of sustainable development, fostering relationships and collaborating with national and international non-governmental organizations, U.N. Offices, faith and interfaith groups, government leaders and leaders of thought. He/she researches, writes, and speaks publicly, engaging in national discourses through conferences, publications, blogs, seminars, study sessions, etc.

Please note: U.S.-based Bahá'ís may review a more complete job description by visiting the web site <http://www.american.bahai.us/> then signing in to view the postings under the tab: Resources > Service Opportunities. U.S. citizenship or permanent residency and Bahá'í membership is required for this position.

To apply for the position by please send your resume, a writing sample, and a cover letter to jobs@usbnc.org. Any inquiries may also be directed to the Human Resources Office at the Bahá'í National Center at the same address.

Global Sustainable Development Report

An advanced, unedited copy of the 2015 edition of the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) has been posted on the UNDESA website at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/globalsdreport/2015>. The report aims to inform Member States on options to strengthen the science-policy interface in the context of the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda. It will be presented at the upcoming session of the UN High Level Political Forum from 26 June to 8 July.



Interfaith Exploration of Sustainable Lifestyles in Ohio, US Contributed by IEF Member John Krochmalny

Saturday, June 6, the Science Alliance for Valuing the Environment – SAVE sponsored **An Interfaith exploration of Sustainable Lifestyles** program at the Sylvania (Ohio) United Church of Christ. This program was the result of SAVE's commitment to an Interfaith approach to local sustainability issues affecting our communities. The program's content involved not only the why's of specific and sustainable actions but also the how's. Members of the Hindu Temple of Toledo (Ohio), Lourdes University, Sisters of St. Frances, Sylvania (Ohio) Baha'i Community, and Sylvania United Church of Christ brought together diverse presenters with expertise in local sustainable small-scale agriculture, sustainable landscaping for residential areas, and small-scale alternative energy systems for residential applications. An Interfaith Exploration of Sustainable Lifestyles had an attendance of about 50 local people. Some attendees stated individual interest in similar future programs and events.



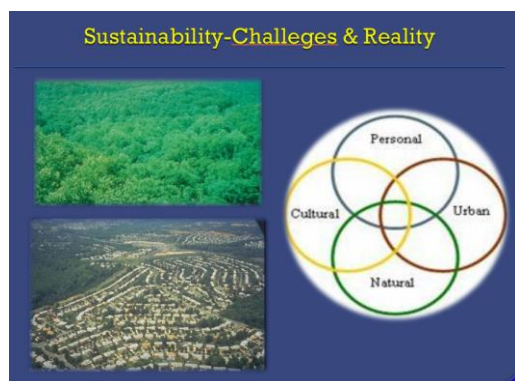
Mr. Joe Perlaky, consultant for the Maumee Valley Growers Association, gave the keynote address – “What is Sustainability”. Joe gave examples of European and local initiatives involving local and urban agricultural programs founded on sustainable systems. Maumee Valley Growers Association represents a diverse group of growers concerned with local agricultural challenges, food quality, and distribution. The newest project

involves an expanded hydroponic growing system meant to grow select crops during the winter months. Perlaky also reported on the area's successful alternative energy installations as well as the related jobs created. The best example, he said, was the recently completed Photovoltaic (Pv) panel installation at The Toledo Museum of Art. Multiple Pv panels are installed on the top of the museum car ports and provides electrical energy to the facility.

Dr. Al Compaan, retired Professor of Engineering at The University of Toledo, presented on his successes retrofitting his home with Pv panels. Not only does his residence use the electric power generated, it also charges his electric pick-up truck. Compaan spoke to the history and direct benefits of the United States using public funds to develop the nation's physical infrastructure such as the canals, railroads, the Interstate Highway System, and the national Fiber-Optic grid. Al discussed the various national and state-wide initiatives involved with converting to alternative energy. A world-wide manufacturer of Pv panels, First Solar in Toledo, is targeting a future cost of \$ 0.07 (USD) per Kw and expects to see this soon.



"Raise Chickens!" was the advice offered by Mr. Bryan Ellis, the presenter of Local and Sustainable Urban Agriculture. Bryan, whose background includes extensive experience in construction, talked about his Urban-Ag projects involving his "appropriate technology" designs and systems. Ellis talked about his experiences building an expansive Hydroponic growing system installed in the Downtown Toledo Ohio area. Using low-tech tools, equipment, and gardening methods, food surpluses could be easily achieved and the produced either shared or sold to community members.



The City of Toledo is actively promoting sustainable practices to its citizens; especially after last summer's Lake Erie water crisis affecting some 400,000 area citizens. A large algae bloom happening in the Western Basin of Lake Erie made the water toxic – much of the blame going to area farmers and their unsustainable crop treatment. Ms. Beatrice Miringu, Senior Environmental Specialist City of Toledo, presented on various methods homeowners can employ to reduce the strain on the environment. Beatrice shared information on the benefits of using native plant species to control rain water runoff. Miringu also introduced Rain Gardens to the participants and their successful installations around the city.

PowerPoints from the presenters can be downloaded and viewed by going to the [SAVE Google Sites webpage](https://sites.google.com/site/sciencealliancesave/) – (<https://sites.google.com/site/sciencealliancesave/>)

SAVE, founded by the Sisters of St. Francis and a part of Lourdes University, is celebrating its 25th year of providing environmental education, scholarships, and recognition of environmental educators in the Northwest Ohio Area. Recently, SAVE's Advisory Board authorized the establishment of the SAVE Interfaith Collaborative. The group's sub-committee serves as a focal point for the area's diverse communities of faith and issues involving community sustainability. Members of the Hindu Temple of Toledo, Sylvania United Church of Christ, Sisters of St. Francis, and the Sylvania Baha'i Community have join in this endeavor for the common good. SAVE Interfaith Collaborative works to achieve greater community sustainable working models through individual behavioral changes founded in our core diverse spiritual teachings.



For more information contact John Krochmalny at jkrochmalny@yahoo.com or visit <http://www.lourdes.edu/Home/CampusLife/Sustainability/SAVE.aspx>

Commemoration of World Environment Day in Kananga, Democratic Republic of the Congo

Contributed by IEF member Kadima Mpoyi Long'sha

On 5 June 2015 the Environment Thematic Group of civil society consultative framework in partnership with the provincial government of Environment commemorated the World Environment Day. Three highlights marked this day despite being disrupted by heavy rain in the dry season:

1. the message of the UN Secretary General was read by Rev. Crispin Tshibangu (pictured far right)
2. the thematic group message was delivered by Mr. Kadima Mpoyi Long'sha (see photo 2 middle), and
3. effects of climate change by Sir David Kasai were presented by Muanda N'seng (see picture 2 on the far right).

The event was moderated by José Musenga Mbeneshayi (see photo 2 at the far left).



Photo 1: Administration Building Photo

2: Musenga, Kadima, Mwand

Photo 3: Abbot Tshibangu

The thematic group asked the provincial government to set up a framework for dialogue between Civil Society and Government to determine the environmental policy of the province to avoid potentially conflicting outcomes such as:

- Improving the habitat with baked bricks which became the first driver of deforestation for the Western Kasai province
- Heating the tar with wood from mango trees for manual pavement
- The disappearance of forest products with a slash and burn agriculture and the production of charcoal
- The storage of flammable products in residential areas in a city without fire service
- The will to make clean cities without thinking to the public dump and waste treatment methods
- Growth of new cities that led to the indiscriminate felling of trees without any compensation
- The land subdivision without any management plan and erosion control.

In anticipation of provincial elections, the environment thematic group asked people to use their power to vote for candidates who have signed a commitment act to push the provincial government to get involved in protection of the environment and sustainable development.



<http://www.fao.org/nr/nr-home/en/>

CLIMATE-SMART AGRICULTURE SOURCEBOOK

June 2013 - The purpose of the sourcebook is to further elaborate the concept of CSA and demonstrate its potential, as well as limitations. It aims to help decision makers at a number of levels (including political administrators and natural resource managers) to understand the different options that are available for planning, policies and investments and the practices that are suitable for making different agricultural sectors, landscapes and food systems more climate-smart. This sourcebook is a reference tool for planners, practitioners and policy makers working in agriculture, forestry and

fisheries at national and subnational levels. The sourcebook indicates some of the necessary ingredients required to achieve a climate-smart approach to the agricultural sectors, including existing options and barriers.



**No such thing as a free lunch
Invest in healthy soils**

<http://www.unccd.int/en/programmes/Event-and-campaigns/WDCD/wdcd%202015/Pages/default.aspx>

No such thing as a free lunch. Invest in healthy soils

The World Day to Combat Desertification (WDCD) is observed worldwide on 17 June every year. The focus this year is “attainment of food security for all through sustainable food systems.”

With the slogan, ‘No such thing as a free lunch. Invest in healthy soil’, the 2015 observance calls for:

- (1) A change in our land use practices through smart agriculture and adaptation to changing climate, especially in the dry fragile parts of the world where food shortages are becoming more and more severe
- (2) Access to technology and land rights for small holder farmers who safeguard the environment and meet the food needs of millions of households, especially among the poorest households
- (3) A balance in the land use for ecology and consumption, drawing on the best practices
- (4) More investments in sustainable land practices so that sustainable food systems become the normal practice and
- (5) More effective action on desertification whose effects on security, peace and stability are invisible yet real for the affected countries due especially to food and water scarcity and environmentally forced migration.

Pope Francis warns of destruction of Earth's ecosystem in leaked encyclical

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/15/pope-francis-destruction-ecosystem-leaked-encyclical>

Vatican condemns early release of document in which pontiff calls on people to change their lifestyles and energy consumption or face grave consequences

Pope Francis blasts climate change deniers in the draft.

Photograph: Franco Origlia/Getty Images

STEPHANIE KIRCHGAESSNER AND JOHN HOOPER IN ROME, TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2015 05.53 EDT

Pope Francis will this week call for changes in lifestyles and energy consumption to avert the “unprecedented destruction of the ecosystem” before the end of this century, according to a leaked draft of a papal encyclical. In a document released by an Italian magazine on Monday, the pontiff will warn that failure to act would have “grave consequences for all of us”.

Francis also called for a new global political authority tasked with “tackling ... the reduction of pollution and the development of poor countries and regions”. His appeal echoed that of his predecessor, pope Benedict XVI, who in a 2009 encyclical proposed a kind of super-UN to deal with the world’s economic problems and injustices.

According to the lengthy draft, which was obtained and published by L'Espresso magazine, the Argentinean pope will align himself with the environmental movement and its objectives. While accepting that there may be some natural causes of global warming, the pope will also state that climate change is mostly a man-made problem.

"Humanity is called to take note of the need for changes in lifestyle and changes in methods of production and consumption to combat this warming, or at least the human causes that produce and accentuate it," he wrote in the draft. "Numerous scientific studies indicate that the greater part of the global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases ... given off above all because of human activity."

The pope will also single out those obstructing solutions. In an apparent reference to climate-change deniers, the draft states: "The attitudes that stand in the way of a solution, even among believers, range from negation of the problem, to indifference, to convenient resignation or blind faith in technical solutions."

The leak has frustrated the Vatican's elaborate rollout of the encyclical – a papal letter to bishops – on Thursday. Its release had been planned to come before the pope's trip to the US, where he is due to address the United Nations as well as a joint meeting of Congress.

Journalists were told they would be given an early copy on Thursday morning and that it would be released publicly at noon following a press conference. Cardinal Peter Turkson, who wrote an early draft of the encyclical, and Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, a noted climate scientist in Germany, were expected to attend the press conference. On Monday evening, the Vatican asked journalists not to publish details of the draft, emphasising that it was not the final text. A Vatican official said he believed the leak was an act of "sabotage against the pope".

The draft is not a detailed scientific analysis of the global warming crisis. Instead, it is the pope's reflection of humanity's God-given responsibility as custodians of the Earth.

At the start of the draft essay, the pope wrote, the Earth "is protesting for the wrong that we are doing to her, because of the irresponsible use and abuse of the goods that God has placed on her. We have grown up thinking that we were her owners and dominators, authorised to loot her. The violence that exists in the human heart, wounded by sin, is also manifest in the symptoms of illness that we see in the Earth, the water, the air and in living things."

He immediately makes clear, moreover, that unlike previous encyclicals, this one is directed to everyone, regardless of religion. "Faced with the global deterioration of the environment, I want to address every person who inhabits this planet," the pope wrote. "In this encyclical, I especially propose to enter into discussion with everyone regarding our common home."

According to the leaked document, the pope will praise the global ecological movement, which has "already travelled a long, rich road and has given rise to numerous groups of ordinary people that have inspired reflection".

In a surprisingly specific and unambiguous passage, the draft rejects outright "carbon credits" as a solution to the problem. It says they "could give rise to a new form of speculation and would not help to reduce the overall emission of polluting gases". On the contrary, the pope wrote, it could help "support the super-consumption of certain countries and sectors".

The document is not Francis's first foray into the climate debate. The pontiff, who was elected in 2013, has previously noted his disappointment with the failure to reach a global accord on curbing greenhouse gas emissions, chiding climate negotiators for having a "lack of courage" during the last major talks held in Lima, Peru.

Francis is likely to want to influence Republicans in Washington with his remarks. Most Republicans on Capitol Hill deny climate change is a man-made phenomenon and have staunchly opposed regulatory efforts by the Obama administration.

The encyclical will make for awkward reading among some Catholic Republicans, including John Boehner, the Republican speaker of the House. While many Republicans have praised the pope, it will not be unprecedented for them to make a public break with the pontiff on the issue of global warming.



G7 Formally Recognizes Need for Deep Emissions Cuts

June 8, 2015

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/climatechange>

This weekend, the leaders of the G7 committed to a series of actions that mark their first serious recognition of the economic transformation that is ahead of us.

Collectively, they recognized the need to decarbonize the global economy, enshrining in economic cooperation what the scientists in the IPCC told us last year in their Fifth Assessment Report. They called for ambition at the Paris climate talks this year – not new, but they recognized that they, individually and collectively, need to be in the upper part of the ambition bracket and that that means at least a “transformation of the energy sector by 2050.”

They talked about the mobilization of capital for this transformation, as well as ending the increasingly profligate use of harmful fossil fuel subsidies. Recognizing the need for an orderly transition to low-carbon growth as quickly and as smoothly as possible, they took on some degree of leadership around the pledge to provide \$100 billion in climate finance for developing countries from public and private sources before 2020. More on that in a moment.

Pricing and policies

As part of their commitments to mobilize finance, they put a finger on three areas where they need much greater policy coherence in their economic management: The need to get prices right, the need to use all instruments and levers available, and the need to attack all sources of the pollution causing dangerous warming. We are glad to see such coherence at this level.

The G7 called for “carbon-market based and regulatory instruments” as one example of effective policies and actions to reduce emissions – that is recognition of the need for carbon pricing. Pricing is an essential, if insufficient, piece of the policy package. Some G7 members have operated within carbon pricing mechanisms for several years, others have watched their states and provinces move forward unilaterally. Others are watching their neighbors moving ahead. This recognition that we all need to move forward is very important.

The G7 also acknowledged that harmful fossil fuel subsidies need to be removed and that to subsidize on the one hand and to price on the other makes no sense and, one could argue, undermines the investment and innovation that comes from clear, consistent long-term economic signals, the kind that the Business & Climate Summit called for a couple of weeks ago.

Additionally, the G7 announced a commitment to phase down HFCs – short-lived climate pollutants used in refrigeration – and called on the Montreal Protocol parties to amend the protocol this year. This Montreal-to-Paris journey is of increasing importance, and if progress were made, could buy essential time in the battle to slow warming.

Adaptation and resilience

At the same time, we were very pleased to see commitments and support for the critical adaptation and resilience agenda. We have argued strenuously that the richest cannot leave the most vulnerable unsupported

between now and 2020 (when whatever is agreed in Paris comes into force). The economic rationale for investing in the resilience of the poorest and most vulnerable as well as the avoided cost in terms of human life is substantial.

The commitment to extend catastrophe risk insurance and the extension of early warning systems, championed by German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President François Hollande are first steps in ensuring that least-developed countries and small island developing states can have the means to withstand shocks and disasters and bounce back better.

Speed and strategy

But of course their long-term economic prospects depend to a large extent on the deep cuts in emissions that the G7 signals it understands are needed and needed now.

So, how quick and orderly can this transition to low-carbon growth be? That's exactly the work we are focused on here. In our recent publication *Decarbonizing Development: 3 Steps to a Zero-Carbon Future* we talked about the steps policy makers can take.

We are pleased that the G7 leaders' commitment to a strategic dialogue on carbon pricing will boost the remarkable partnership that is ongoing among leaders, governments, and companies on how, with what effect, and with what other policy accompaniments carbon pricing can best be introduced.

Working closely with the IMF and OECD, we are close to completing a technical document that examines effective pricing, and, working with many of those who supported the Put a Price on Carbon Statement in October 2014, we are close to completing a set of principles that describe the fundamentals of effective and efficient carbon pricing. All of this will be championed by leaders through the rest of this year and into next. From the groundswell of support, we and our partners in international development, business and government are forming a Carbon Pricing Leadership Coalition committed to collective action to support the development effective carbon pricing regimes at country, state and city levels.

Stretching dollars

However, as the G7 signaled, there is a short-term litmus test of climate leadership in the politics of the UNFCCC – the mobilization of \$100 billion a year from 2020. Highly leveraged and catalytic public monies can mobilize private finance to, for example, close the energy access gap and shift to cleaner, more efficient energy at affordable prices.

We are glad that the role of MDBs is recognized in the G7 communique and that we are called on to stretch our balance sheets and to continue to use our financial innovation and engineering capacity to crowd in other sources of capital for climate action. Part of our leverage capacity will be to help the Green Climate Fund leverage itself as it comes into operation. We have been extending our capabilities, from developing innovative auctions to support methane-reduction projects, to pay-for-performance systems for avoided deforestation, to green bonds and landmark agreements with other financiers to account for our climate lending. There is more to come.

We will over the summer be reporting more on progress made in how we track our finance and on the levels of finance we are already achieving toward the \$100 billion target, and we will make commitments of what more we can do in advance of Paris.

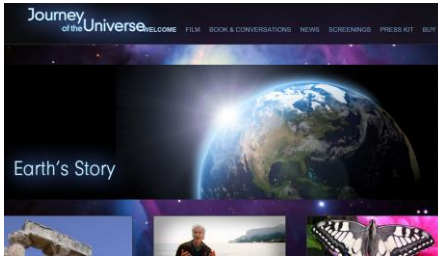
Clearly, we see that all development finance needs to build resilience and adaptive capacity, and in a year when development finance will be discussed both in Addis Ababa at the Financing for Development summit in July and at the Leaders' Summit on the Sustainable Development Goals in September, we will keep our focus on the need to boost financing for adaptation as well as mitigation.

It is important that the G7 is leading from the front now, before a busy summit series on development and climate change where financing will prove to be an essential ingredient in any agreements. Now, G7 leaders will have to follow their words with actions in their INDCs, where not already issued, in the way they conduct

their economic, trade and development agendas, and in the way they partner with their private sectors.

In the *Financial Times* over the weekend, peering out from the pink pages was an ad, calling for the Chancellor to be a “climate hero.” Maybe at a time when Hollywood still seems so reticent to make the female-lead superhero blockbuster that everyone wants, we need only to look to Berlin. With a lot on her plate, from GREXITS to BREXITS and neighborhood disputes and trade rows, she still managed to get the G7 to look up from their short-term crises and put down a much needed marker for the type of long-term economic leadership we are crying out for.

Rachel Kyte, World Bank Group Vice President & Special Envoy for Climate Change
www.worldbank.org/climate, Twitter: @rkyte365



The Journey of the Universe

<http://www.journeyoftheuniverse.org/>

An epic story of the emergence of the universe and the community of life, with a new vision for how we might bring forth a vibrant Earth Community

HD FILM, BOOK, EDUCATIONAL SERIES, AND WEBSITE

Created by Brian Thomas Swimme & Mary Evelyn Tucker

This documentary film project and companion book is a collaboration of evolutionary philosopher Brian Thomas Swimme and historian of religions Mary Evelyn Tucker. They weave a tapestry that draws together scientific discoveries in astronomy, geology, biology, ecology, and biodiversity with humanistic insights concerning the nature of the universe.

The companion book will be published by Yale University Press. The 13 part educational DVD series will be ideal for discussion in classrooms or community centers. It consists of half hour interviews of scientists and environmentalists who are inspired by the context of the Journey of the Universe. They provide further details on the story and suggest ways forward in our critical moment.

The HD film, which is 50 minutes in length, will be shown on public television through the San Francisco KQED station. Available as a DVD it is ideal for discussion and further reflection:

Using his skills as a masterful storyteller in the film, Swimme connects such big picture issues as the birth of the cosmos 14 billion years ago – to the invisible frontiers of the human genome – as well as to our current impact on Earth’s evolutionary dynamics. Through his engaging and thoughtful observations audiences everywhere will discover the profound role we play in this intricate web of life. From the Big Bang–to the epic impact humans have on the planet today–this film is designed to inspire a new and closer relationship with Earth in a period of growing environmental and social crisis.

Beautifully filmed in high-definition, our grand tour begins on the historically rich Greek island of Samos, birthplace of mathematician and philosopher Pythagoras. Disembarking on the island at dawn, Swimme expertly guides us on an exhilarating trek through time and space, sharing a wondrous view of cosmic evolution as a process based on immense creativity, connection, and interdependence. After the toll of midnight, he sets sail into the star-lit waters of the North Aegean Sea, leaving audiences with a sense of wonder at the mystery, complexity and connectivity that permeates the Earth and universe from the very beginning.

Big science, big history, big story, this one-of-a-kind JOURNEY OF THE UNIVERSE film project has been created by an acclaimed team of internationally-recognized scientists, scholars, and award-winning filmmakers. See www.journeyoftheuniverse.org