



**LEAVES, A Newsletter of the
INTERNATIONAL
ENVIRONMENT FORUM
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International Environment Forum A Baha'i inspired organization addressing
the environment and sustainable development

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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.

Thank you to our faithful readers. Last month when we asked whether you wanted to continue to receive this newsletter, more than 90% of our readers responded positively within a week, and only three unsubscribed.

IEF 22nd Conference 10-14 July, 2018 in New York City USA Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies

22nd Annual Conference of the International Environment Forum
in support of the

United Nations High Level Political Forum, New York, 9-18 July 2018

<https://iefworld.org/index.php/conf22>.

The 22nd Annual Conference of the International Environment Forum will be a series of activities in support of the UN High Level Political Forum on sustainable development (HLPF) in New York on 9-18 July 2018. The events are planned primarily to allow participation at a distance, to avoid the cost and environmental impact of many members travelling to New York. The programme of activities will be updated on the web site as more information becomes available.

The IEF has already provided inputs to the official Scientific and Technological Major Group paper for the HLPF. We are co-sponsoring and contributing to the side event that PERL is organizing at Scandinavian House on 12 July from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

PERL Workshop RESPONSIBILITY ROULETTE Education for Sustainable Lifestyles Workshop

HLPF 12 July 2018, 9am-1pm, Volvo Hall, Scandinavian House, 58 Park Avenue, New York City

This workshop is organized by The Partnership for Education and Research About Responsible Living (PERL) Join us in learning how sustainable lifestyles can become more desirable, accessible and normal.

Assuming your goal is to live a healthier, happier more sustainable life, then how do you achieve that? Whose responsibility is it to change existing unsustainable aspirations and systems into ones that promote sustainable development for all? Whether we function in governments, business, advertising, civil society, education, or simply as individuals, we all face the fundamental challenge of contributing in one way or another to the shift towards more sustainable ways of living.

This workshop is organized as an interactive game in which everyone participates including the panel of invited international experts. We will explore what sustainable lifestyles are and who has what responsibility for making sustainable lifestyles the norm and not the exception.

The game will help us examine essential ingredients of living well: family and community, time as a resource, freedom and discovery, and balancing obligations and wishes. It will assist us in reflecting on relevant strategies for achieving sustainable lifestyles—strategies such as deciphering the systemic nature of lifestyles, taking advantage of life stages and transitions, accommodating diversity in lifestyles, and engaging in collective action.

IEF members Victoria Thoresen and Arthur Dahl are among the international experts who will be participating in the workshop.

Victoria Thoresen is also contributing to an educational activity in the UN Building on 11 July.

HLPF PANEL ON YOUR SMARTPHONE

Beyond these in-site activities, some IEF members are preparing short video clips of 10 minutes or less on the themes of the 2018 HLPF from an IEF perspective. Participants will be invited to view these at their leisure during the HLPF (or after). This will be more convenient than trying to attend an event at some difficult location.

The full list with links will be provided on this web page before the HLPF and will also be publicized in other media. Initial examples are:

"Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies"

by Arthur Dahl at https://youtu.be/lox_vzhsLBo

"Responsible consumption and production" (SDG12)

by Arthur Dahl at <https://youtu.be/i8TQh-ZZovs>

The IEF Annual General Assembly will be held separately over the Internet after the HLPF. An announcement will be sent to all IEF members with instructions on how to participate. Any IEF member who would like to contribute a short statement on HLPF themes to the "HLPF Panel on Your Smartphone" is encouraged to send a written draft to the IEF secretariat: ief@iefworld.org, which will follow up individually.

New Shape Forum, Stockholm



Participants in the New Shape Forum

Two members of the International Environment Forum, Maja Groff and Arthur Dahl, together with Augusto Lopez-Claros, submitted a proposal to reform the UN Charter to the New Shape Prize competition organized in 2017 by the Global Challenges Foundation. The proposal was one of 14 finalists invited to Stockholm, Sweden, on 25-30 May 2018, for the New Shape Forum and final judging for the US\$ 1.8 million New Shape Prize, and came in first. This is the report on the New Shape Forum.

The Global Challenges Foundation (<https://globalchallenges.org/en>) was founded in 2012 by Swedish financial analyst and author Laszlo Szombatfalvy, with the aim to contribute to reducing the main global problems and risks that threaten humanity.

The Foundation is particularly concerned about a number of risks that could threaten the existence of at least a tenth of the Earth's population, referred to as global catastrophic risks. These include climate change, other large-scale environmental damage, politically motivated violence, extreme poverty and population growth. These five main challenges are interdependent and influence each other detrimentally, requiring immediate joint action by the world's states. As these risks include the greatest threats to humanity, they should be on top of the international political agenda in order to ensure safety for existing and future generations.

In November 2016, the Global Challenges Foundation launched a global prize competition, "**The Global Challenges Prize 2017: A New Shape**", which challenged thinkers all over the world to formulate proposals for new models of how the major global risks could be managed more effectively and equitably to avoid an extreme global catastrophe in coming decades. The New Shape Prize was the biggest competition of its kind, seeking improved frameworks of global governance of global catastrophic risks. During the time it was open for submissions from November 2016 to September 2017, it received 2,702 entries from 122 countries. There were proposals from people in every continent and from diverse backgrounds – from academic institutions, think tanks, researchers, and business, to university students and non-governmental organisations. Regional selection panels went through all the entries, and a global selection panel identified about a hundred semifinalists from which 14 finalists were presented to the final jury at **The New Shape Forum** in Stockholm, Sweden, on 27-29 May 2018 (<https://globalchallenges.org/en/our-work/new-shape-forum>).

Public event and presentations to the jury

The first day was a public event that addressed two questions: **How well are the greatest risks to humanity governed today? What are the latest ideas on how to fix them?** There were keynotes, panels, and short presentations by each of the finalists with questions from the jury. More than 200 participants came together with the aim of reshaping global governance to better tackle global catastrophic risks.



Michael Møller. The opening keynote was given by Michael Møller, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, on the **Global Challenges the UN is Facing**. He noted both the UN's accomplishments and progress made, and the changes in the world over the last 70 years that make the UN unfit for present challenges. The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals provide a roadmap for the way ahead, requiring a paradigm shift. The UN needs to take on climate change, the financial system, the gap between rich and poor, the trust deficit, and those walking away from values and norms. He looked forward to the proposals coming out of the Forum.

The first panel on **Global Governance: What is it, how does it affect you, and what is its current shape?** included Inge Kaul (Adjunct Professor, Hertie School of Governance, Berlin), Yang Zheyu (Opinion Editor of Caixin Global), Paul Dickinson (Executive Chair, Carbon Disclosure Project), and Malini Mehra (CEO, Globe International)

The panel described the UN as buildings for meetings of States, reflecting the power politics of States, and civil society had to fight to get in. Now there are companies bigger than most states, and through their lobbying the world is now run by business. It will be important to get corporate money out of politics. With some countries now preferring bilateral to multilateral relationships, the future depends on how countries manage their disagreements. They still look at national interests first, not the global public good. There are bits and pieces of global governance but they do not add up to systemic integrity.

Presentations by the finalists to the jury

The finalists of the New Shape Prize then presented their proposals before the jury, chaired by Maria Ivanova (Professor of Global Governance and director of the Center for Governance and Sustainability at the University of Massachusetts, Boston), with Reshma Anand (founder of the Earthy Goods Foundation, India), Susan Avery (President Emeritus of Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, USA), Jacques Marcovitch (board member of IHEID-Graduate Institute of International Relations and Development Studies, Geneva, and Professor of Environmental Management and International Affairs, University of Sao Paulo, Brazil), Julia Marton-Lefèvre (former Director General of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and former Rector of University for Peace), Wanjira Mathai (Wangari Maathai Institute, Kenya), Folke Tersman (Chair Professor of Practical Philosophy at Uppsala University, Sweden), and Anote Tong (former president of Kiribati).



Final jury: Anote Tong, former President of Kiribati; Wanjira Mathai (Kenya), Susan Avery (USA), Reshma Anand (India), Julia Marton-Lefèvre (Hungary / France / USA), Jacques Marcovitch (Brazil), Folke Tersman (Sweden), Maria Ivanova, Jury Chair (Bulgaria)

The finalists

A truly global partnership - helping the UN to do itself out of a job

Natalie Samarasinghe, Executive Director of the United Nations Association – UK.

A Global League of Sustainable Cities.

Adrian Mihălțianu, science fiction author and journalist, Romania

Evolutionary Organisation.

Morya Short, programme designer, facilitator and coach, UK



Maja Groff

Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century

(see the full proposal)

-Augusto Lopez-Claros is Senior Fellow in the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and former Director (2011-2017) of the Global Indicators Group in the World Bank. Previously he was Chief Economist and Director of the Global Competitiveness Program at the World Economic

Forum in Geneva. He was educated in England and the United States, receiving a diploma in Mathematical Statistics from Cambridge University and a PhD in Economics from Duke University. He is a much-sought-after international speaker, having lectured in the last several years at some of the world's leading universities and think tanks.

-Arthur L. Dahl is a scientist, retired senior official with UN Environment, and current President of the International Environment Forum, with 50 years' intergovernmental experience in regional and global environmental management and governance at the science-policy interface, including the Stockholm, Rio, Johannesburg and Rio+20 conferences and the Paris Climate Conference.

-Maja Groff is an international lawyer based in The Hague, assisting in the development, negotiation and servicing of international multilateral treaties. A graduate of Harvard, Oxford and McGill Universities, she is an attorney admitted to practice in the state of New York, and a member of the Advisory Boards of organisations devoted to ethical business.

Planetary Condominium: the legal framework for the Common Home of Humanity

- Paulo Miguel Ferreira Magalhães, jurist and researcher, CIJE-Center for Legal and Economic Research, University of Porto, Portugal
- Will Steffen, Earth system scientist; Councillor, Climate Council of Australia; Emeritus Professor, Australian National University (ANU), Canberra; Senior Fellow, Stockholm Resilience Centre, Sweden; Fellow, Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics, Stockholm
- Maria Alexandra de Sousa Aragão, Professor, Faculty of Law, University of Coimbra, Portugal
- Katherine Meyer, Director, Ecometrics, New Zealand
- Leena Iyengar, Director, Tune Into Earth, Geneva, Switzerland
- Alessandro Galli, International Coordinator, Common Home of Humanity Initiative, and Senior Scientist and Mediterranean-MENA Program Director, Global Footprint Network, Italy

Global Governance by Cooperative Communities

Stephan Bettzieche, Katharina Peter, PacELNoroc civil society initiative, Germany

A (Simplified) Blockchain Approach to Non-Coercive, Decentralized Global Governance

John R. Bowley, Attorney, USA

The “Sponsored Loans Program” – How to Mobilize Private Sector into Global Development

Eduardo Pascual Pouteau, Cofounder, Contrarian-View, and consultant for the World Bank, Spain/USA

Social Conditionality in Patents: Achieving a Paradigm Change in Private Sector Participation

Thomas Höhne-Sparborth, Director, Economics and Analytics, Roskill, Netherlands

Emergent Dynamic Governance Ecosystems (EDGE project)

Andrew Goldring, Chief Executive, Permaculture Association, UK

A Club-Based Model of Global Governance

Luca Rade, student at Princeton University, USA

Basic Tax Control

Aleksandar Ristevski, author and IT professional, Ukraine

Insurance-based Global Governance

Len Fisher, scientist, writer and broadcaster, and Senior Research Fellow, School of Physics, University of Bristol, UK

AI-supported global governance through bottom-up deliberation

Soushiant Zanganehpour, social scientist, entrepreneur and Founder/CEO/Architect of Swae, Canada/UK

Four panels followed:

The UN: Reforms and New Global Actors, with Maher Nasser (Director, Outreach Division, United Nations Department of Public Information), Yang Yao (Director, China Center for Economic Research, Peking University), John Mukum Mbaku (Professor of Economics, Weber State University), and Rama Mani (Convenor of the Enacting Global Transformation Collaborative Initiative, University of Oxford's Centre for International Studies, Founder of Theatre of Transformation Academy)

The panel noted that the moderate proposals of the 1995 Commission on Global Governance did not come to much, although there is more involvement

of civil society and all stakeholders. The new Secretary-General is also pushing ahead with reforms, with more women than men in the Senior Management Group, and aiming for gender parity at all levels. More reform is needed for cross-country issues like climate change and migration. The UN should become a people-driven organization, promoting the values that matter to its stakeholders, especially those that have been marginalized like indigenous peoples, women, the poor and youth. Poverty is the main problem. Students see no jobs after graduation. People need help to develop their own capacities. The UN should help countries with dysfunctional governments to maintain the rule of law and

provide basic social services. The veto power is difficult to step around, and UN resolutions are not implemented, so mechanisms are needed to enforce binding agreements. The major machinery should be reformed before 2020.

Key Risks threatening Human Existence: What is being done about them?

Janos Pasztor (Senior Fellow, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs and Executive Director, Carnegie Climate Geoengineering Governance Initiative), Ruhee Neog (Director, Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi), Mosoka Fallah (Deputy Director for Technical Services, National Public Health Institute of Liberia), and Philip Osano (Deputy Centre Director, Capacity Development and Partnership, Stockholm Environment Institute, Africa)

For the panel, the world is getting scarier, with rising risks of the use of nuclear weapons. Emerging technologies are leading to new vulnerabilities. We are facing environmental collapse and climate change, while the economic system does not signal environment impacts and growth is destroying our life support systems. There are 1300 multilateral environmental agreements, but they are voluntary with no enforcement. Pandemics are another threat, with climate change amplifying outbreaks. We need carbon removal from the atmosphere to reach climate change targets, but there is no governance for solar geoengineering proposals which may not be reversible. Governments make irrational decisions. Which is more terrifying, climate change or geoengineering solutions? There is tension between local and global governance mechanisms. The geopolitical situation is more insecure, requiring more cross-domain conversations and holistic policy perspectives. Today we are deciding for generations to come.

What is the power of visionary thinking to change institutions? A discussion between two pragmatic visionaries, Helen Goulden (CEO, The Young Foundation), and Maina Kiai (Co-director, InformAction, and Former UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association)

This dialogue highlighted the importance of visionary thinking to overcome our fear of change. There is no incentive for civil servants to make decisions if mistakes are fatal. The UN is more resistant to change because there is no benefit to doing anything right. Human rights are still a

constant struggle. There is a rebellion against the elites who think they deserve to be there, but this is leading to populism and the new serfdom of the gig economy. Change must come from both the bottom up and the top down. Desperate communities need to rise up and find their own solutions, bringing respect to the poor, marginalized and vulnerable. How do we deal with rotten corrupt societies that glorify in theft, with two thirds of young people saying it is fine to be corrupt and benefit from one's position? We must change our cultures.

Overcoming Challenges in Relating to the UN and Global Catastrophic Risks, with Anthony Banbury (formerly United Nations Assistant Secretary-General for Field Support), Hajer Sharief (Co-founder, Together We Build It, Libya), and Cristina Manzano (Editor-in-chief, Esglobal).

One key issue for this panel was the challenge of informing the public of risks when the media are changing so rapidly, and the Internet revolution is making old news outlets disappear, while we are overwhelmed by too much information. Global issues are pushed out by local and national events that attract clicks. What news is available reflects a mostly Western world view. There have been some successes like the global network against corruption and the save-the-bees campaign. The UN is essential, but it is failing, facing backwards and changing too slowly, influenced by the most important states. It is input-driven rather than looking at outcomes. It does not reflect the pressing needs of today. People feel disconnected from it. It is important to build bridges between the global and local. The UN needs to be relevant to people on the ground. If you are affected by a local issue, you are the expert. The Ebola crisis pushed the UN to create an emergency health mission, engaging with communities, using local leaders as communications channels. The challenge is to create global narratives when the global does not affect everyone the same way. There is a growing global consciousness, changing the parameters in society against injustice. Each of us can do something, for example against plastic pollution. No other organization can find solutions, so what can we do to support the UN?

Second day of the Forum

The second and third days were more interactive. Notable policy-makers in global governance and cooperation and leading academics, among others, came together in the beautiful setting of Münchenbryggeriet, Stockholm, for creative

workshops and discussions to examine what the future of global governance could look like.

Johan Rockström, Director of the Stockholm Resilience Center, a board member of the Global Challenges Foundation, and a leading researcher on planetary boundaries, provided a scientific overview of the catastrophic risks that have emerged in the last 50 years with the Anthropocene, when human impacts have reached planetary scale, causing climate change and pushing us over planetary boundaries. The world needs governance capabilities for global catastrophic risks that are operational, legitimate, viable and scalable.

Carin Ism, Executive Director of the Global Challenges Foundation, presented the challenges for the forum. We must raise the level of global governance if we are to reduce the risks. There were so many ideas in the 2,700 entries for the New Shape Prize. We need to refine these ideas and put together many more. The GCF Library has all the semi-final propositions as building blocks. The GCF is working with the Stockholm School of Economics on business risk. We need to inspire and organize individuals to work together, and form groups to take these proposals further towards acceptance and make them operational. In the next phase, the GCF will support groups on the reform of existing institutions within global decision making, new institutions within traditional global decision making, beyond traditional global decision making, and the emergence of a movement for global governance reform.

The participants were divided into work streams on:

- New models for global decision-making
- Reforming existing models for global decision-making
- Global governance beyond traditional political systems and mechanisms.

Gala Prize Awards Ceremony

The New Shape Forum concluded on the evening of 29 May with the New Shape Prize Awards Ceremony Gala, where the winners were to be announced. The dinner was entirely vegan.



They were asked how to approach operationality, legitimacy, and viability to create change.

Third day of the Forum

The third day opened with a keynote by Margot Wallstrom, Swedish Minister of Foreign Affairs. She emphasized the power of multilateralism and the 2030 Agenda as a unique framework for equitable and sustainable development, with national government implementation plus multi-stakeholder partnerships. The UN needs the capacity to deliver on the 2030 Agenda, with its targets for measuring progress. More inputs are needed from behavioural scientist if we are to change behaviour for our grandchildren's future. The top Swedish priority in their feminist government was more actors and more engagement in society to do their share, since national and global issues cannot be separated. She saw four challenges: the increasing complexity of issues, requiring a long-term planning perspective of generations; the emergence of new powers, both state and non-state actors; defending the legitimacy of democracy, western liberal values and the freedom of the press against those for whom multilateralism is no longer a given; and mastering technological innovation, artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. The international order needs to be strengthened and reformed for a multipolar and highly changeable world, with inclusive globalization to spread economic benefits more evenly, and a social dialogue on decent work. We all have a personal responsibility to be kinder and do something unselfish. We cannot give up if we are to make the world a better place to live in. She wished good luck to the winners of the New Shape Prize.

The collaborative work-streams prepared presentations to share and discuss with all the forum participants

Finalists for the New Shape Prizes

Mats Andersson, Vice Chairman, Board of the Global Challenges Foundation, announced the winners of the New Shape Prize.

The distinguished final jury, led by Professor Maria Ivanova, selected the following three proposals out of the 14 put forward by the semi-final review panel.

GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND THE EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



Augusto Lopez-Claros, Arthur Lyon Dahl, Maja Groff

GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

| LEGISLATIVE | EXECUTIVE | JUDICIAL |
|--|---|--|
| <p>UN General Assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> proportional representation popular vote <p>Function: binding global legislation</p> <p>Subsidiary bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific Advisory Bodies Office of Technology Assessment Office of Ethical Assessment | <p>UN Executive Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 members, elected by GA Standing Committee on Disarmament <p>Function: Security, conflict prevention, global environment, management of UN System</p> <p>Supported by: Independent UN Funding Mechanism- 0.1% of GNI</p> | <p>International Court of Justice</p> <p>International Criminal Court</p> <p>Special Chamber/International Anti-Corruption Court</p> <p>International Human Rights Tribunal</p> <p>Function: mandatory settlement of international disputes</p> <p>Supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UN Bill of Rights International Judicial Training Institute |
| <p>Second Chamber</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> representation of global citizenry, major groups <p>Function: advisory to GA</p> | <p>International Security Force</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Force Reserve Force <p>Function: enforcement</p> | <p>Office of the Attorney-General</p> |
| <p>Mediation and Conciliation Commission</p> <p>Function: dispute resolution</p> | <p>UN Secretariat</p> <p>UN News Service</p> | |
| <p>UN Specialized Agencies</p> <p>continuing and enhanced functions</p> <p>Convention Secretariats</p> <p>Organisation to address income inequality and equitable management of natural resources</p> | <p>World Conference on Global Institutions 2020</p> <p>General Conference on Charter Revision</p> | |

"Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century"

Augusto Lopez-Claros, Arthur Lyon Dahl, Maja P.C.E. Groff

"A truly global partnership - helping the UN to do itself out of a job"

Natalie Samarasinghe

"AI-supported global governance through bottom-up deliberation"

Soushiant Zanganehpour



Maja Groff, Arthur Dahl, Laszlo Szombatfalvy, Natalie Samarasinghe, Soushiant Zanganehpour

The Global Challenges Foundation decided to award a total of USD 1.8 million, rewarding the three submissions with USD 600,000 each. Speaking about the process, Professor Ivanova noted that “This competition has unleashed the creativity of thousands of people around the world and has launched a new community of thinkers, advocates and doers.”

An invitation was extended to participate in the Paris Peace Forum next November.

The New Shape Prize initiative had an ambitious goal: to inspire ideas and stimulate debate around new, more effective forms of global cooperation at the highest levels about how the world community manages global catastrophic risks, ranging from climate change effects to weapons of mass destruction. The New Shape Forum was a starting point in efforts to reshape global cooperation in order to better tackle global catastrophic risks based on the proposals put forward in the New Shape Prize. The best ideas from the New Shape Prize can be improved and repurposed for individual objectives and concerns in companies, cities, organizations and communities.

The New Shape Forum marked the starting point of a new phase in the Global Challenges Foundation’s efforts to find new global governance models. It will support the reworking and refinement of the best ideas toward more holistic models that emerge from this process. Working groups began to convene at the Forum and will continue to develop frameworks for global governance. As the models evolve over the next five months, these ideas will come to life, and the most promising ones will be presented in Paris in November at the Paris Peace Forum.

The proposal is at <https://globalchallenges.org/en/our-work/the-new-shape-prize/finalists/global-governance-and-the-emergence-of-global-institutions-for-the-21st-century>

For the report with more pictures, see <http://yabaha.net/dahl/travel/t2018/Stockholm/Stockholm.html>

Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century

The submission proposes a revised United Nations Charter, instituting a reformed UN General Assembly directly elected by popular vote and a second civil society-focused chamber. The representatives of the latter would serve as advocates of particular issues of global concern, and the UNGA would see its powers and jurisdiction gradually expanded over time. An Executive Council of 24 members, selected by the UNGA, would take the place of the UN Security Council. The Executive Council would provide general oversight and ensure good governance, transparency, efficiency and coherence of an effective, new UN system. The UN will have a standing armed force, with the rule of international law forming the centerpiece of the new governance system; peaceful settlements through the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or other mechanisms will be mandatory for international disputes. A new Bill of Rights is to prescribe the parameters for UN action, and the global human rights acquis will be upheld systematically by an International Human Rights Tribunal. A new funding mechanism would link members’ indirect tax revenues to the UN budget in a fixed proportion.

Read the entire submission in the New Shape Library.

Website Profiles the People behind the Paris Climate Change Agreement



A web site has recently been created with profiles of people behind the Paris Climate Change Agreement, including IEF member Halldor Thorgeirsson. You can find the profiles at <https://profilesparis.com/profiles/>.

Halldor Thorgeirsson is Senior Director for Intergovernmental Affairs at UNFCCC. In the years leading up to and during COP 21 Halldor was Director of Strategy at the UN Climate Convention and oversaw the negotiation process that led to the Paris Agreement.

Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals

IEF member Joachim Monkelbaan has just published a new book "Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals: Exploring an Integrative Framework of Theories, Tools, and Competencies" Singapore: Springer, 2019. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-0475-0>. His description of the book follows:

Good, effective and equitable governance is critical for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To achieve the SDGs, it is essential to address the fragmentation of governance along the vault lines of governance levels, sectors, interests and approaches in order to take unified action. Therefore, the main question that this book attempts to answer is: What are the essential elements and the organizing logic of an integrative frame-work that is suitable for analysing sustainability governance from a global perspective and for achieving the SDGs?

This book approaches this question from four main avenues. First, it applies a combination of innovative governance theories to improve the analysis of sustainability governance. Secondly, the book explores several case studies. Thirdly, the research draws inferences on some areas in which the study and practice of sustainability governance need to be expanded. Fourth, throughout the book several governance competencies are pointed out that will be critical for achieving the SDGs. These competencies lie mainly within the areas of power, knowledge and norms.

Other main findings are that the transformation of crisis into sustainability transitions needs to find a place in risk management; that systems deliberation can complement democracy in addressing the wicked problems that the SDGs address; and that insights from behavioural science can play a crucial role in achieving the SDGs. This book demonstrates the applicability of the findings to 'SDG Hubs' or innovative platforms for collaboration and knowledge exchange on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It wraps up by pointing out that we need paradigm and mind shifts that support a sense of 'unity in diversity' in order to achieve the SDGs by 2030.



Global Climate Action Summit, Sep 12-14, 2018 in San Francisco CA USA

<https://globalclimateactionsummit.org/> and <https://globalclimateactionsummit.org/about-the-summit/>

The Global Climate Action Summit will bring leaders and people together from around the world to “Take Ambition to the Next Level.” It will be a moment to celebrate the extraordinary achievements of states, regions, cities, companies, investors and citizens with respect to climate action.

It will also be a launch pad for deeper worldwide commitments and accelerated action from countries—supported by all sectors of society—that can put the globe on track to prevent dangerous climate change and realize the historic Paris Agreement.

The decarbonization of the global economy is in sight. Transformational changes are happening across the world and across all sectors as a result of technological innovation, new and creative policies and political will at all levels.

States and regions, cities, businesses and investors are leading the charge on pushing down global emissions by 2020, setting the stage to reach net zero emissions by midcentury.

At the heart of the Paris Climate Change Agreement is the commitment by national governments to review their progress and ratchet up the ambition of national climate action plans, known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

The Global Climate Action Summit, happening midway between Paris 2015 and 2020, is timed to provide the confidence to governments to ‘step up’ and trigger this next level of ambition sooner rather than later.

The momentum we generate this year must lead to bending the curve of emissions down by 2020—science advises us that this is gives the world the best opportunity to prevent the worst effects of climate change. 2018 therefore must be the beginning of a new phase of action and ambition on climate change.

The Summit will underscore the urgency of the threat of climate change by mobilizing the voices and experience of real people, in real communities already facing real and stark threats. It will challenge and channel the energy and idealism of people everywhere to step up and overcome it.

At the Summit, international and local leaders from states, regions, cities, businesses, investors and civil society—known as “non-party stakeholders/non-state actors”—will be joined by national government leaders, scientists, students, nonprofits and others in a new wave of mobilization.

They will be sharing what they have achieved to date and committing to doing more to usher in the era of decarbonization, greater levels of sustainability and prosperity for the many rather than the few.

These actors will also celebrate a range of new climate commitments under five key areas: Healthy Energy Systems, Inclusive Economic Growth, Sustainable Communities, Land Stewardship and Transformative Climate Investments.

The confidence, enthusiasm and support generated by this wave of action now and through 2019, will embolden national governments leaders to trigger the necessary domestic processes ahead of 2020 while also triggering more states and regions, cities, businesses and investors to ‘step up’ further action themselves.



The content of Arthur Dahl's TEDx talk described in the April 2018 Leaves has now been published in two parts on BahaTeachings.org. Part 1 on "Information: Private Property or Public Good? Can be found at <http://bahaiteachings.org/information-private-property-public-good> and the second part as "How the Information Age Affects Our Food" is at <http://bahaiteachings.org/information-age-affects-food>

U.N. Environment Foresight Brief April 2018 "Faith for Earth"

Submitted by Iyad Abu Moghli <iyad.abumoghli@un.org>

The e-brief PDF is available at: <http://environmentlive.unep.org/foresight>

The brief recognizes the spiritual dimension of the environment and the importance of utilizing the agility of faith-based organizations around the world in addressing environmental concerns for sustainable development.

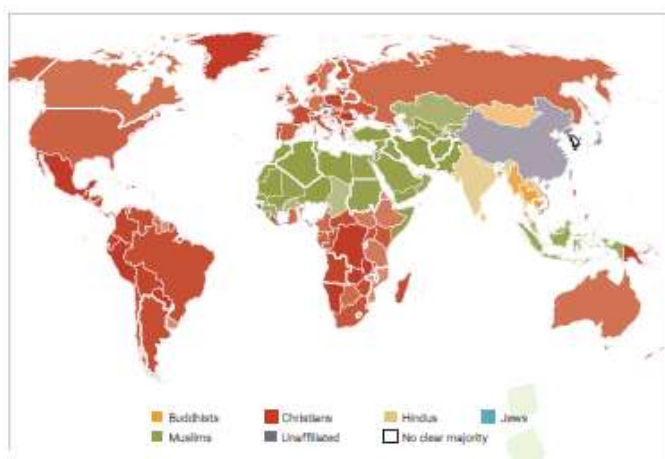
Background

The UN Environment Foresight Briefs are published by UN Environment to, among others, highlight a hotspot of environmental change, feature an emerging science topic, or discuss a contemporary environmental issue. The public is thus provided with the opportunity to find out what is happening to their changing environment and the consequences of everyday choices, and to think about future directions for policy.

Introduction

"As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling." Pope Francis Speech, Manila, Philippines, 18 January 2015

Typically discussed in the news media as a scientific, environmental or political issue, global warming is being reframed as a moral and spiritual issue by religious leaders – most notably by Pope Francis (Francis 2015). Faith leaders from many other traditions are speaking out on the issue of climate change as well, including Evangelical Christians, Muslims, Episcopalians, and Jews. Interdenominational organizations, such as Interfaith Power & Light, are serving as forums for collaborative efforts on the environment (Roser-Renoufet et al., 2016)



Majority Religion, by Country (Grim et al., 2012). Countries are coloured according to the majority religion. Darker shading represents a greater prevalence of the majority religion

When *Laudato si'* was published in 2015, it greatly heightened interest and focus on environmental concerns. Pope Francis address to "every person living on this planet" declared that "climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, and political.... and it represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day" (Francis 2015). The Pope has forcefully argued that climate change results from over-consumption, is fueled by

greed, and that its impacts fall disproportionately on the world's poor (Francis 2015).

In many societies across the world, religion provides an important lens for understanding human worldviews, attitudes and behaviour regarding major issues such as social and environmental change (Kaplan 2010). This is so because a majority of people of the world identify with one form of religious tradition or another (Hitzhusen and Tucker 2013).

At the same time, inter-faith and inter-cultural dialogue converge on a few insights, among them that of nature as sacred, and the rights of nature, both of which are shared by most organized religions and indigenous peoples, and many natural scientists (UNEP 2016).

Why is this issue important?

Religion plays a significant role in the understanding and shaping of attitudes, opinions and behaviours including for management and use of the environment and natural resources (UNEP 2016; Carlisle and Clark 2017).

Many faiths from around the world have called on believers to incorporate ecological care into their religious life for the sake of the planet (Lewis 2014).

Some commentators have even argued that religion offers a culture of care that is more sustainable than that of consumption-driven capitalism (Lewis 2014). To several religions, nature is sacred, has intrinsic value, and therefore demands reverent care (Taylor 2010).

Utilizing the agility of these beliefs in addressing climate change, energy conservation, sustainable use of biodiversity, and reforestation, among others, in collaboration with key scientific, economic, public policy, and education partners is crucial for sustainable development (UNEP 2016; Hitzhusen and Tucker 2013).

What are the findings?

“Our common home is being pillaged, laid waste and harmed with impunity. Cowardice in defending it is a grave sin.” Pope Francis Speech, Santa Cruz, Bolivia, 9 July 2015

Prior research has described evangelical Protestants (especially those from Western traditions) as hostile toward environmentalism, but this traditional stance, however deeply rooted, is being challenged (Billings and Samson 2012). Scholars in religion and ecology began important explorations of the ecological influence of the world’s religions in the 1960s, which led to the emergence in the 1990s of the disciplinary field of religion and ecology (Jenkins and Chapple 2011). More recently, environmental organizations have increasingly allied with faith communities such that faith-based environmental groups have multiplied, and ecologically oriented scientific and professional societies have begun to organize religion–ecology groups (Hitzhusen and Tucker 2013). One notable outcome has been the “vast support for environmental stewardship among key evangelical leaders” (Simmons 2009).

Members of religious communities participate in a broader alliance of scientists, policy makers, and nongovernmental organizations to influence the direction of social–ecological change (Hitzhusen and Tucker 2013). As a result, links between religion-based environmental values and scientific and public-policy disciplines continue to evolve, and religious scholars, spiritual leaders, and laity can facilitate this process (Hitzhusen and Tucker 2013).



In 2004, the National Association of Evangelicals, an umbrella association of 53 evangelical Protestant denominations in the USA with a combined membership of about 30 million produced a position statement advocating more resources to combat environmental degradation, global warming and to promote environmental sustainability (Djupe and Gwiasda 2010).

The Association justified the need to address warming due to Christians’ God-given dominion over the world and their moral responsibility as stewards of the Earth.

Lundberg (2017) reports that in 2014, the 14 bishops of the Church of Sweden published “A letter from the Bishops on the climate” where they state that “now it is time for science, politics, business, culture and religion—all of them expressions of the dignity of mankind—to cooperate. The climate challenge is existential and spiritual, since it touches upon the very basic conditions of human life: What is the role of the human in creation? What responsibility do we have for those who are far away?” There is a growing interest and awareness in the Church of Sweden concerning climate impact and sustainability. The environment is deeply taken into consideration and is becoming an integral aspect of Church life.

The **Muslim community** approach to the environment is based upon the intended role for humans in this world – and that is of “stewards of the earth.” Stewardship of the earth is supported by several verses in the Quran especially in the light of the environmental degradation that unchecked greed and thoughtless exploitation of resources have brought about (Serageldin 1989).

Muslim Faith-based Organizations (FBO) are relatively newer entrants into the scene of international development. The Kuwaiti International Islamic Charitable Organization has recently raised almost 40 million USD from Zakat for Syrian refugees (UNEP 2016). Driven by ideas of pan-Islamic solidarity, many organizations focus exclusively on Muslim countries and populations. But their religious identity arguably also gives them greater access to areas that are difficult for secular organizations to enter or influence. For example, fishermen in Zanzibar only stopped using dynamite when Islamic Relief spent time teaching about the Qur’anic precepts about stewardship of the Earth (UNEP 2016).

Hinduism, which has the third largest followers after Christianity and Islam, contains numerous references to the worship of the divine in nature in its Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas, Sutras and its other sacred texts. Millions of Hindus recite Sanskrit mantras daily to revere their rivers, mountains, trees, animals and the earth. The diverse theologies of Hinduism suggest that:

- The earth can be seen as a manifestation of the goddess and must be treated with respect.
- The five elements — space, air, fire, water and earth — are the foundation of an interconnected web of life.
- Dharma — often translated as “duty” — can be reinterpreted to include our responsibility to care for the earth.
- Simple living is a model for the development of sustainable economies.
- Our treatment of nature directly affects our karma (or the spiritual principle of cause and effect where intent and actions of an individual influence the future of that individual).

Buddhism has close tie with the earth and teaches people to overcome the forces of greed, hatred, and delusion, which induce all large-scale human destruction of our planet. In a Buddhist point of view, the control of human being’s endless demand from the earth should be a crucial aspect of pursuit for the human wellbeing in the modern world.

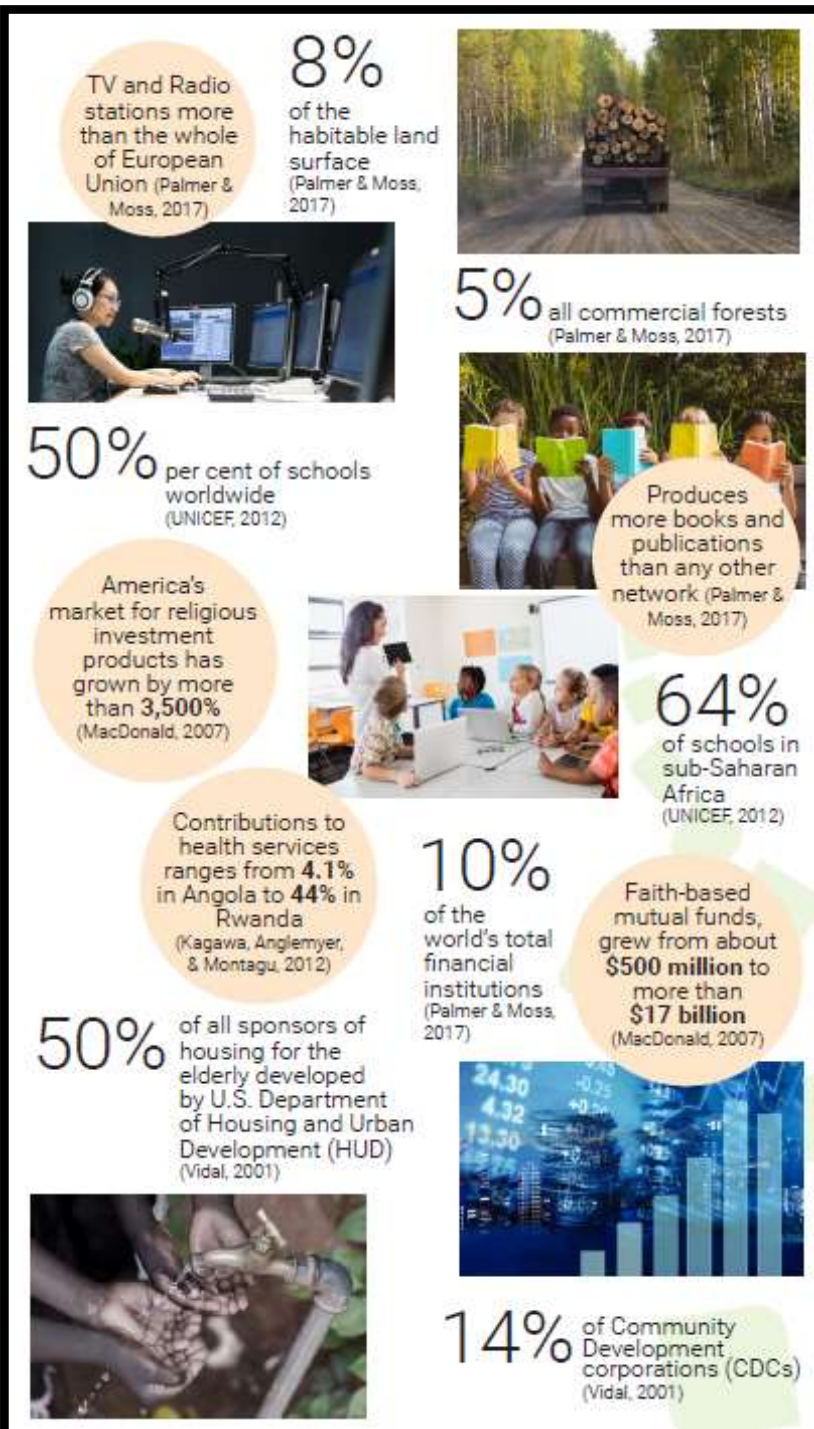
The Buddha taught five precepts for everyday life:

- i. do not harm any living creature
- ii. do not take more than you need
- iii. do not act thoughtlessly,
- iv. do not steal, be generous in giving
- v. do not lie. Buddhist teachers draw upon these precepts, particularly the first three, to explain the importance of conservation (Arc 2018b).

Daoism (or Taoism) is a native religion with almost 2000 years history in East Asia and has its unique view on the indivisible relationship and connection between human and the earth. “Dao”, which literally means the “Way”, or more precisely the way of heaven, earth and humanity, embodies the central value of Daoism. According to the fundamental Daoist scripture “Tao Te Ching”, humanity follows the earth, the earth follows the heaven, heaven follows the Dao, and the Dao follows what is natural. Daoism also teaches about harmony with nature and that insatiable human desire will lead to the over-exploitation of natural resources. The belief encourages both government and people to take good care of nature. In this sense, Daoism is regarded as a religion with an inherent nature of environmentalism (Arc 2018b).

Some **indigenous** beliefs also have their unique view on the earth. The indigenous groups deem the earth as the mother of human beings and should be treated as a fundamental and rights bearing entity. As such, the well-being of "Mother Earth" predicts physical, mental, emotional and spiritual longevity of indigenous peoples. Faith-based organizations are highly networked and are viewed as being trustworthy to achieve on-the-ground results in a timely manner and wherever needed (UNEP 2016). The importance of Faith Based Organisations (FBOs) has long been recognized at state level with some governments establishing formal partnerships with them. For instance, the American government established a dedicated office of Faith Based Activities as far back as 2001 (Vidal 2001).

FBOs are also sustainable institutions and, in recent years, policymakers have begun to look to these faith-based organizations to play a greater role in strengthening environmental conservation and natural resources management. Back in 1993, congregations, denominational organizations, and other faith-based organizations represented the third largest component of the non-profit sector in the U.S., after health and education.



Registered congregations with more than US\$5,000 in annual revenue numbered about 350,000; and collectively, their estimated yearly expenditures exceeded US\$ 47 billion (Vidal 2001, Berman 2010).

In September 2015, faith leaders, representing 24 belief traditions from around the world, including Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Shintoism, declared in Bristol, United Kingdom, their support in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (UNEP 2016).



The influence of Faith Based Organisations (FBOs)

Photo credits from rom top to bottom: Konjushenko Vladimir / Shutterstock.com; zhu difeng / Shutterstock.com; wavebreakmedia / Shutterstock.com; wavebreakmedia / Shutterstock.com; Number1411 / Shutterstock.com; Riccardo Mayer / Shutterstock.com;

What has/is being done?

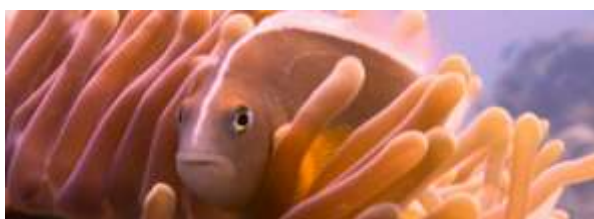
UN Environment has been engaging with faith-based organizations for many years, recognizing the prominent role that they can play in the implementation of the 2030 agenda. They are well placed to explore the root causes of environmental problems, and to express the values that speak to the heart.

The Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC)

The Alliance of Religions and Conservation was founded in 1995 and works with 12 faiths and their networks worldwide that embrace 85% of the world's population or 5 billion people (ARC, nd). Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shintoism, Sikhism and Zoroastrianism are working in countless ways to care for the environment. For instance, in Tanzania the Sacred Gift model used Islamic teachings to halt destruction of the marine ecosystem by the local fishing communities (ARC, 2011). In November 2017, a global movement aimed at shifting billions of dollars of faith-based investments into initiatives supporting sustainable development and the environment was launched in Switzerland (ARC 2018)

Interfaith Partnership for the Environment (IPE)

Founded in 1986 as part of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Interfaith Partnership for the Environment was created to initially inform North American congregations about the serious environmental problems facing life on Earth. The group deals with a range of ecological issues, including climate change and wildlife conservation. Its members are clergy, politicians, and other civic leaders.



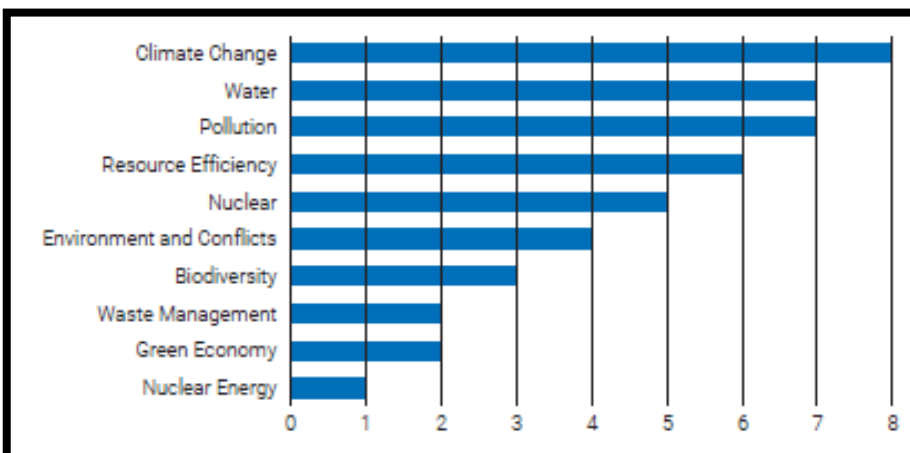
Engaging Faith-Based Organisations to the Sustainable Development Goals

In November 2017, the UN Environment launched a global initiative to strategically engage with faith based organizations, toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and fulfilling Agenda 2030. The Strategy focuses on mobilizing faith-based investments in supporting SDGs implementation

while greening their assets and providing the needed knowledge for effective messages of faith leaders with decision makers and the public. The strategy was discussed with 40 participants from 20 organizations representing eight faith congregations during the UN Environment Assembly (Dahl 2017).

Environmental Priorities

as identified by participants at the Environment Consultation with Faith based Organizations on 30 November 2017 (UNEP 2016)



Interfaith Rainforest Initiative

The Interfaith Rainforest Alliance was launched in Oslo, Norway in June 2017. The Alliance brings moral attention and spiritual commitment to ending tropical deforestation (IRI, 2017). Partners in the initiative include Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI), Rainforest Foundation Norway, GreenFaith, Parliament of the World's Religions, Religions for Peace, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Yale University's Forum on Religion

and Ecology, Parliament of the World's Religions, Religions for Peace, REIL Network and the World Council of Churches.

Benefits of a Faith for Earth Engagement

The networks of faith-based organizations and faith leaders do cross continents and political boundaries making it not only viable but also a practical means to achieve sustainable development.

Tapping into the spiritual wealth of people and their beliefs will accelerate people's engagement, and the organizational drive to contribute. Mobilizing the financial assets and practices of faith-based funding institutions responds directly to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing sustainable development.

Major challenges

UN organizations have been working with faith-based organizations and religious leaders and have come across some challenges. One of the most important challenges is building trust around the common objectives. The trust issue can be bridged by agreeing with faith based organizations on common grounds where all meet in principle on the need to protect the creation and ensure the duty of care by all. The coupling of environmental sustainability and duty of care can be the corner stone for a common vision that enhances the role of religion and culture in achieving sustainability.

- Gender issues and women's involvement might be sensitive to some of the faith-based organizations. Efforts are needed to partner with those FBOs that are open to cooperate and collaborate with other faiths based on human rights-based approach. Some basic principles for engagement should be established and made clear to all partners in a transparent manner.
- It is critical to create a momentum for interfaith collaboration on common issues and an adequate balance representing all major faiths. Such an effort will minimise a silo approach while working with faith based organizations at local, national, regional and international levels.
- It might be perceived by some that engaging with faith-based organizations is merely a mechanism for delivery of projects' objectives. Organizing global policy and collaboration dialogue fora should therefore be encouraged. This require creativity and innovation in addressing policy issues, identify environmental concerns at the local level, and creating a network of faith-based citizen scientists for monitoring environmental trends.
- An integrated approach should facilitate the integration of religious and cultural values to ensure inclusive green and transformative development informed by faith-based values and behaviours to achieve sustainable consumption and production. The integrated approach can promote innovative nature-based solutions, respect for traditional and indigenous knowledge and cultural diversity, and the exercise of environmental stewardship and duty of care.
- Some faith-based organizations are deemed to be associated with promoting violent actions towards other beliefs and have been financing terrorist activities. A careful review of such faith-based organizations should be done as part of the due diligence.



What are the implications for policy?

Involve the youth in faith dialogues

Global environmental priorities do resonate with the public to a certain extent, however, approaches need to consider what is directly relevant to them daily. The language spoken by scientists must be translated into a language understood by faith followers and with simple policy statements for local and regional authorities. Likewise, religious scriptures would need to be identified to demonstrate linkages with scientific findings on the protection of nature as well as scientific findings that reinforce scriptures.

It is important to include youth in faith dialogues, and to build on their use of technologies, creativity, drive and entrepreneurship. Mobilizing youth will provide better prospects in improved living standards as well as promote peace and tolerance, and a transformational change connecting people back with nature.

Utilize faith-based value system to improve environmental citizenship

What is increasingly clear is that current scientific, legal, technological and economic interventions have not been able by themselves to provide sustainable solutions to environmental problems. Common set of beliefs

among faith groups that drives their actions and underpins their values can be used to play a supporting role in shaping and supporting environmental citizenship (Hitzhusen 2006).

Strengthen partnerships with Faith-Based Organizations' leadership for policy impact

Religious leaders play an important part in governing community affairs. Managing cultural and religious diversity can help find long lasting solutions for the challenges we all face today. A global compact for action by religious leaders on collaborative work on care for creation would inspire and empower policy makers to address serious environmental issues common to all religions.

Greening Faith-Based Organizations' Investments, Operations and Assets

Religious organizations are arguably the fourth largest group of investors in the world (van Cranenburgh, Arenas, Louche, & Vives, 2010). Religious institutions in some parts of the world hold enormous financial assets to build schools, hospitals, infrastructure as well as distribution of humanitarian aid. Faith-based investing involves the idea of using ethics to guide monetary decisions and could pioneer modern forms of responsible investment. One focus is divesting away from environmentally unsustainable investments, to decarbonize assets and make investments more climate-friendly, promoting investments in large scale renewable energy, sustainable transport, and sustainable cities projects.

"In all religions, the environment is a fundamental good." Pope Francis address to the United Nations, New York, 25 September 2015.



Acknowledgement

Author: Authors: Iyad Abu Moghli (Policy and Programme Division, UN Environment) and Elizabeth Kironde Gowa (independent consultant). We acknowledge review by Alexandre Caldas (Chief of Country Outreach, Technology and Innovation Branch, Science Division) and Ashbindu Singh (President, Environmental Pulse Institute, USA).

World Environment Day

5 June 2018

Joint Statement by UN Environment and Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment "It's time we all recognise the human right to a healthy environment"

GENEVA (1 June 2018) – Speaking ahead of World Environment Day on 5 June, the head of UN Environment* and the Special Rapporteur on human rights and the environment** issued a statement urging the United Nations to recognise the human right to a healthy environment.

"We believe that the historic moment has arrived for the United Nations to recognise the human right to a healthy environment at the global level.

The interdependence between human rights and the environment has become undeniable. A healthy environment is necessary for the full enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food, water and development. At the same time, the

exercise of human rights such as information, participation, remedy, and freedom of expression and association, is critical for the protection of a healthy environment.

Unfortunately, the links between human rights and the environment are often most evident when environmental harm causes illness, destruction, and death. Over one million children die every year as a result of air and water pollution alone, and climate change and the loss of global biodiversity threaten present as well as future generations.

Our knowledge of new threats is growing – for example, the rising tide of plastic pollution demands greater attention and an effective response.

At the same time, those who promote and protect the environment are at an increasing risk, with an average of four environmental defenders killed every week, somewhere around the world.

To achieve sustainable development, it is necessary for us to recognise the fundamental importance of protecting the environment and of the rights that depend on it.

More than 100 States have already included the right to a healthy and sustainable environment in their national constitutions. Many more have recognised it in legislation or in regional agreements. The right is also understood to be inherent in other human rights, including rights to life, health and an adequate standard of living.

The UN Human Rights Council has adopted resolutions emphasising the interdependence of human rights and the environment, and in March of this year renewed the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for another three years. At the same time, UN Environment announced a new Environmental Rights Initiative, which will promote rights-based approaches in environmental policy.

The time has come for the United Nations to take the next step, which so many of its members have already taken individually.

Recognising the human right to a healthy and sustainable environment would not solve all environmental problems. But it would make clear that a healthy environment is on the same level of importance as other human rights and that, like other rights, it must be fulfilled in order for all people to enjoy lives of dignity, equality and freedom.

Recognition of the right could take various forms, including the adoption of a resolution by the General Assembly. The adoption of a resolution recognising the right would follow the path taken by the rights to water and sanitation, which were recognized by the General Assembly in 2010.”

John H. Knox, the UN Special Rapporteur for Human Rights and the Environment, will submit a report to the UN General Assembly on this to be

presented in October 2018.

** Erik Solheim, Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme*

*** The UN Human Rights Council appointed Mr. John H. Knox in 2012 to serve as Independent Expert, and reappointed him in 2015 as Special Rapporteur on human rights obligations related to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment. The Council requested him, a professor of international law at Wake Forest University in the United States, to clarify the application of human rights norms to environmental protection, and to identify best practices in the use of human rights obligations in environmental policy-making.*

The Special Rapporteurs are part of what is known as the Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council. Special Procedures, the largest body of independent experts in the UN Human Rights system, is the general name of the Council's independent fact-finding and monitoring mechanisms. Special Procedures mandate-holders are independent human rights experts appointed by the Human Rights Council to address either specific country situations or thematic issues in all parts of the world. They are not UN staff and are independent from any government or organization. They serve in their individual capacity and do not receive a salary for their work.

*This year, 2018, is the **70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, adopted by the UN on 10 December 1948. The Universal Declaration – translated into a world record 500 languages – is rooted in the principle that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” It remains relevant to everyone, every day. In honour of the 70th anniversary of this extraordinarily influential document, and to prevent its vital principles from being eroded, we are urging people everywhere to **Stand Up for Human Rights**: www.standup4humanrights.org.*

Link to the statement is here
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23162&LangID=E>

UN Secretariat Reform on Sustainable Development

The United Nations Secretary-General is moving ahead with his reforms within the UN Secretariat. After achieving gender balance in all his senior appointments, he has now reorganised the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, responsible for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. The following is a summary of the new divisions (edited from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/about/desa-divisions.html>).

Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development

The Office supports the work of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). It works with Member States, other UNDESA divisions, the UN system entities, NGOs and other major groups and other stakeholders of society to support the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda by UN intergovernmental bodies.

Division for Sustainable Development Goals

The Division for Sustainable Development Goals will act as the Secretariat for SDGs, focusing on providing substantive support and capacity building to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and their related thematic issues, including water, energy, climate, ocean, urbanization, transport, science and technology, the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), partnerships and SIDS. It will organize focal teams on the Sustainable Development Goals and their interlinkages, including UN-Ocean, UN-Water, UN-Energy, UN Transport and UN-climate. It will also play a key role on evaluation of system-wide implementation of the 2030 Agenda and on advocacy and outreach activities relating to Sustainable Development Goals.

Population Division

The Division produces constantly updated demographic estimates and projections for all countries, including data essential for the monitoring of the progress in achieving the SDGs, developing and disseminating new methodologies, leading the substantive preparations for the United Nations major conferences on population and development. It studies population dynamics and monitors demographic trends and policies worldwide. Population estimates and projections prepared by the Division for all countries – on fertility, mortality, international migration, urbanization, and population size and structure – are widely used.

Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government

The Division focuses on analyzing and supporting efforts to make institutions inclusive, effective, accountable and well-equipped to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as reflected in SDG 16. By focusing on building strong institutions and governance for the 2030 Agenda, the Division assists UN intergovernmental bodies in reflecting on the role of institutions as an integral part of their examination of the SDGs. The Division nurtures a multi-stakeholder dialogue on transforming institutions and building people's trust in them at the annual UN Public Service Forum. Its analysis and capacity development activities help governments reflect on how to organize, mobilize and equip all parts of national and local government and public servants for implementing the SDGs, placing a special focus on policy integration, coherence and innovation. The Division also focuses on information and communication technologies (ICTs) whose transformative role is highlighted in the 2030 Agenda.

Financing for Sustainable Development Office

The Office provides coherent and integrated support to Member States in addressing the issues related to financing for development, as well as the means of implementation for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It plays a critical role in supporting various work streams to mobilize the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to strengthen the United Nations cooperation with other international organizations in the area of fiscal affairs.

Division for Inclusive Social Development

The Division seeks to strengthen international cooperation for achieving social inclusion and the reduction of inequalities, by fostering effective policy impact and intensified global dialogue on social development issues. The Division is the main vehicle for promoting the social dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, particularly in the areas of inequality, poverty eradication, productive employment and decent work, family, cooperatives and the

social inclusion of older persons, youth, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and persons marginalized from society. It is responsible for coordinating the entire scope of social development progress and implementation. The Division takes an integrated and multidimensional approach to its work to address and analyze policy issues, working at the interlinkages and overlaps of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development, as well as at the intersections of development, rights and peace-building, to provide coherent, evidence-based policy advice.

Statistics Division

The Division is a global centre for data on all subject matters, bringing to the world statistical information compiled by the entire UN system. It is committed to the advancement of the global statistical system, by compiling and disseminating global statistical information, developing standards and norms for statistical activities, and supporting countries' efforts to strengthen their national statistical systems. It also facilitates the coordination of international statistical activities and supports the functioning of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Economic Analysis and Policy Division

The Economic Analysis and Policy Division (EAPD) provides research and policy analysis on global macroeconomic trends and prospects, frontier issues, emerging issues, and issues associated with countries in special situations, in the broad context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. EAPD manages capacity development projects in developing countries, providing assistance through research, training and workshops.

United Nations Forum on Forests

The Secretariat is the UN DESA focal point on all forest policy and forest-based sustainable development issues. It promotes sustainable forest management based on the 2030 Agenda, the Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration, Forest Principles, Global Objectives on Forests, and the UN Forest Instrument. It provides substantive support to the annual sessions of the Forum, prepares technical reports and analytical studies, and fosters dialogue to enhance cooperation and coordination on forest issues. It provides a comprehensive and integrated view of forests which encompasses economic, social and environmental aspects.

Capacity Development Office

The Office provides strategic support to the effective translation of the outcomes of intergovernmental processes in the areas of economic, social and environmental development, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, into the Department's operational programmes and capacity development work. It assists the Department in delivering integrated policy advisory services and other forms of capacity development support drawing on the expertise of UN DESA's subprogrammes, as a contribution to the formulation of national sustainable development strategies. These include the identification of policy options to balance the achievement of social, economic, and environmental goals. The Office promotes a more coherent and coordinated system-wide approach in implementing the 2030 Agenda including the SDGs.