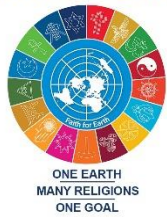


FAITH FOR EARTH



Faith for Earth Updates October 15, 2019



Dear Brothers and Sisters;

While October is still midway, some major developments have taken place.

The 8th Islamic Conference of Environment Ministers Adopts a Strategy on Engaging with Faith-based Organizations

Ministers of Environment from 57 Islamic countries have adopted a strategy on the activation of cultural and religious factors in protecting the environment to achieve sustainable development in the Islamic world during the 8th Conference of Environment Ministers held in Rabat on 2-3 October 2019, Kingdom of Morocco. The conference also adopted the guidelines on strengthening the role of youth and civil society in the protection of the environment. In a speech by the King of Morocco, sent to the ministers convening in Rabat, the King announced the establishment of the Islamic Academy for the Environment and sustainable development. While Princess Sumaya bent Alhasan, President of the Royal Scientific Society of Jordan highlighted the importance of adopting innovative approaches to tackle the complex challenges the world is facing, especially climate change and ecosystem degradation. The [Faith for Earth Initiative](#) participated in the conference, reiterated in a key note speech the importance of such strategies in enhancing the role of the Islamic Nations in contributing to the global efforts in mobilizing all sectors of the community to live sustainably according to their faith beliefs. We are honored that this strategy was inspired by the Faith for Earth strategy and made many references to it. [Article](#)

Faiths for Forests Campaign Launched at the UN Climate Summit

The [Faiths for Forests](#) campaign was officially launched as a contribution to the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, kicking off a global faith-based movement of mobilization, education and advocacy around halting and reversing tropical deforestation. The announcement was made by Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UN Environment Programme, and endorsed by Sonia Guajajara, Executive Coordinator of the Articulação dos Povos

Indígenas do Brasil (APIB). The site of the Campaign contains a [new library of the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative \(IRI\) educational materials](#) that have been developed over the last 8 months with partners. The site provides faith-based organizations, networks and places of worship around the world a space to endorse the Faiths for Forests Declaration and access educational materials for religious leaders and faith communities on forests – issue primers, country fact sheets and faith toolkits (several available in six languages).

Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), Gender Equality and the SDGs

The expert consultation meeting was held in Copenhagen on 7-8 October 2019 with the participation of faith leaders, scholars, UN organizations and academia. The interesting and challenging synergies between gender issues, climate change and health were discussed under the overall premise of Freedom of Religion or Belief. During the meeting, the participants visited the Danish Parliament and engaged in presentations and dialogue with parliamentarians, NGOs and others who were interested in the subject. Faith for Earth presented in both events on Climate Change and its Impacts on Women and Religious groups. The process is sponsored by Denmark and Norway, and organized in cooperation with the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the UNFPA, the UN Interagency Task Force on Religion and Development, Stefanus Alliance and the Danish Institute for Human Rights.

Faith and Community Engagement for SDGs in the Arctic - The Faith for Earth Workshop

Faith for Earth was at the center of discussions of the consultation meeting that was held on 8th and 9th of October 2019, in historic Skálholt Iceland. Bishops and religious leaders from the Nordic countries, U.S. and Canada convened with scholars, artists, wellbeing practitioners, environmental grassroots activists and representatives from environmental organizations. The participants discussed the role of faith, spirituality and religious belief in tackling the challenges of climate change and environmental degradation. The meeting was addressed by Guðmundur Ingi Guðbrandsson, Iceland's Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources. At the conclusion of the meeting, the participants agreed that while faith leadership and communities are engaged in protecting the environment, there is a need to strengthen their efforts in facilitating more effective communication, networking and greater alignment. The participants also discussed the potential of Iceland, the land of peace, being located by the Arctic Circle, offers an opportune venue to bring

together a coalition of faith and political leaders to engage on environmental issues. A "Faith for Earth Coalition" would allow faith leaders to set shared objectives in addressing climate change and environmental degradation. The meeting was organized by the United Nations Association in Iceland, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland (ELCI), the Soil Conservation Service of Iceland, the Institute of Religion and Reconciliation and the Theological Institute, University of Iceland. It was sponsored by the ELCI, the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources in Iceland and UNEP's Faith for Earth Initiative.

UN Environment Programme at the UN Climate Action Summit

While UNEP has so much to celebrate as a result of our contribution to the UN General Assembly and the associated summits, I would like to highlight one very relevant area where Faith-based organizations have been putting a lot of emphasis over the past couple of years. The launch of the Principles of Responsible Banking and the UN asset-owners alliance. 130 banks collectively holding US\$ 47 trillion in assets, or one-third of the global banking sector, have signed on to [the Principles as a guide for the global banking industry](#) to respond, drive and benefit from a sustainable development economy. The newly-launched [UN asset owners alliance](#), is a consortium of the world's largest pension funds and insurers, responsible for directing more than US\$ 2.4 trillion in investments, committed to carbon-neutral investment portfolios by 2050. This success is due to UNEP-FI team who have been driving the process.

Accreditation to UN Environment Assembly

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

Warm wishes
Iyad

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