



POTSDAM INSTITUTE FOR CLIMATE IMPACT RESEARCH

Media alert

Vatican Covid-19 Commission and its partners organize a webinar uniting faith, science and youth to call for an ambitious Climate Summit

Wednesday 9th of December at 2 pm (CET) | Register [here](#).

In occasion of the five years anniversary of the landmark Paris Agreement, adopted in Paris in December 2015 and ahead of the Climate Ambition Summit (12 December), the Vatican Covid-19 Commission (#VaticanCovidCommission) and its partners will highlight through this webinar the need to urge governments to raise ambition for tackling the climate emergency, through the points of view of:

- [H.E. Cardinal Peter K.A. Turkson](#) - Prefect of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, on how faith and Pope Francis' messages can help address the climate crisis;
- [Prof. John Schellnhuber](#) - Founding Director of the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, on what science is telling us today and what that means for world leaders, civil society and businesses;
- [Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim](#) - Coordinator of AFFPAT, on the impact of global warming on communities and the role of youth activism.

The webinar, moderated by [Sandrine Dixson-Declève, Co-President: The Club of Rome](#), will provide a platform for a high-level exchange on the climate crisis in the context of the efforts to build a just and sustainable recovery. Participants will be able to engage with the speakers through a Q&As session.

Journalists interested in interviewing one of the speakers can get in touch with: press@humandevlopment.va or: pavarotti@cidse.org

Notes to the editors:

- Participants need to register in advance at this [link](#).
- Live streaming will be arranged at: <https://www.youtube.com/VaticanIHD>
- The webinar will be held in English, no translation will be provided.
- Organizers: the webinar is organized by the Vatican Covid-19 Commission and its partners: CIDSE, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, EPICC, CAFOD, GCCM, COMECE, Istituto per lo sviluppo umano integrale/I.SV.Um.I. The Vatican Covid-19 Commission is an initiative of Pope Francis to express the Church's solicitude and care for the whole human family facing the COVID-19 pandemic, including analysis, reflection on the new socio-economic-cultural future, and the proposal of relevant approaches. See more information [here](#).

Background & Political context and momentum

Vatican Covid-19 Commission & Integral Ecology taskforce

- Since spring 2020, a group of partners – coordinated by the Dicastery for promoting integral human development – is gathered in an “integral ecology task force” aiming to provide expertise, scientific evidence, stories and experiences to the work of the Vatican Covid-19 Commission, focusing on highlighting the connection between the current pandemic and the lost harmony between humanity and nature. The aim of the task force is also to articulate a set of Integral Ecology proposals and plans that demonstrate how human systems can reorient to address social inequities, health and ecological crises in the world.



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- The Vatican Covid-19 Commission is guided and inspired in its action by the recent Encyclical [Fratelli Tutti](#). Now more than ever there is an urgent need to build universal fraternity in order to tackle the climate emergency. We are “all on the same boat” and we want to answer to Pope Francis’ call to engage in political processes to bring people, love and common good at the core of each political decision.
- [Five years after the publication of Laudato Si’](#), the work of the Commission aims to support and amplify the work done by local actors across the globe towards an ecological conversion able to heal the world, able to bring about a paradigm shift, to inspire a society tackling injustice and answering to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth.

Paris Agreement, 5th Anniversary (12 December 2020):

- The Paris Agreement’s long-term temperature goal is to keep the increase in global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels; and to pursue efforts to limit the increase to 1.5 °C.
- There are three broad and interlinked avenues of effort that were imagined to ensure the Paris goals are secured: national climate action by all countries across public and private sectors, international climate cooperation and a comprehensive shift in public and private investment to support both.
- Faith-based actors, including the Catholic Church, played a crucial role in the efforts to build such international agreement and Pope Francis’ Encyclical *Laudato Si’* - published some months before COP21 - represented a unique contribution.

Please read the Paris Agreement’s essential elements [here](#).

Climate Ambition Summit (12 December 2020):

On 12 December, the United Nations and the UK will co-host a global climate summit, which marks the fifth anniversary of the Paris Agreement. The summit will be convened to increase momentum ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 26) to be held in Glasgow in November 2021.

More than 195 Paris Agreement signatories have promised to update their 2015 commitments before the end of 2020, but no major emitting countries have formally submitted new commitments to the UNFCCC. The result of US elections can play a key role in the next weeks’ developments.

The IPCC’s special report on 1.5° warns that with an increase in global temperature of up to 2° C, the rise in average temperatures in most land and ocean areas, extreme heatwaves in most inhabited regions, heavy rainfall, and more severe droughts and precipitation deficits would all be much greater. Scientists say that much warming would have catastrophic effects, including destabilizing heat waves, severe floods, and a sharp rise in sea level.

To avoid this, governments would need an immediate response to shifting the global economy from fossil fuels. Particularly, industrialized countries must act quickly to meet their net-zero targets before 2050 to achieve the Paris targets. Adequate and consistent financial support must be delivered to vulnerable countries to adapt to the climate-related devastation that they are already experiencing.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson and the UN secretary General Guterres will co-host a global landmark event gathering together global leaders to bring much greater ambition and climate action. At the summit, national governments will be requested to present more ambitious, high-quality climate plans involving government leaders, the private sector, and civil society. More than ever, the ethical imperative of climate inaction will be accentuated. This summit should remind us of the urgent need to take concrete action to recognize our reliance on a healthy planet and to work together for transformative change.

In short:



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- The Summit will provide a platform for leaders to discuss and demonstrate their commitment to the three pillars of the Paris Agreement (mitigation, adaptation and support).
- The discussion will also focus on how recovery from Covid-19 and climate ambition are not mutually exclusive.
- National governments will be invited to present more ambitious and high-quality climate plans (NDCs - Nationally Determined Contributions - and LTS - Long-Term Strategies), as well as Covid-19 recovery plans, new financial commitments and measures to build resilience that are aligned to limiting global warming to 1.5°C and driving forward the SDGs, leaving none beyond.
- With the postponement of COP26 to November 2021, the Climate Ambition Summit represents a key momentum to avoid further delays of governments presenting their respective commitments.