



Catholic Views on Climate Change

This statement was made by the Catholic Bishops of Australia, on the invitation of the Climate Institute, Australia. It is one of 16 statements from different faith traditions. [Link here](#) for all 16.

“Rapid climate change as the result of human activity is now recognized by the global scientific community as a reality. As pastors of more than a quarter of the Australian population, we urge Catholics as an essential part of their faith commitment to respond to the reality of climate change – with sound judgements and resolute action.

“For our part, the Catholic Bishops of Australia offer the hand of cooperation to all spiritual and secular leaders in Australia. We do so in an act of solidarity, knowing that the Earth is our common home. Religion knows the natural world has value in itself. It belongs to God and is only on loan to humans, who are called to care for it. Therefore, the world and all in it must be freed from what can be termed ‘a state of suffering’.

“Humans are part of the created world, and inextricably part of a material existence. We are indebted to the scientists, environmental activists, rural people, foresters, fisher people, writers, artists photographers, educators, business people, society leaders and all who have helped humanity become aware of the dangers of climate change, and an alternative future. Such people show that humanity elevates itself when it reaches for a heightened Earth.

Link here for the US Catholic Climate Covenant website *Who’s Under Your Carbon Footprint?*

“Our clear call as human beings is to renew the harmony between ourselves, our Creator and our world. We call on Catholics to lead by example. Care for the Earth must become our purpose, and vocation.”

The Interfaith Center
Sustainable Development

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“Future generations should not be robbed or left with extra burdens. Those who are to come, have a right to the world’s resources by this generation. We need to keep in mind the Precautionary Principle: serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation.”

“Each sector of the community has a role in imagining and building a future Australia with reduced greenhouse gas emissions.”

“Consumers send powerful signals to the market by their greenhouse-friendly choice of goods and services. A new view of humanity, greater than a mere owning of more material goods.”

“The three levels of government have duties of leadership to take decisions for the common good. Internationally, Australia must continue to support structures that help reduce global warming. Compliance and ratifying the Kyoto Protocol seem but minimal.”

“Business must appreciate that models of development, social structure and styles of technology are influenced by environmental factors if there is to be authentic development. ‘Super-development’, often for the purpose of economic growth, is a threat to the environment.”

“Profit is a limited goal and needs to be linked to socially and environmentally responsible ethical values. Unsustainable lifestyles harm the environment now and will ultimately make Australia weaker. Infrastructure, transport, manufacturing, electrical generation and related industries can all promote energy efficiency and use renewable energy sources. Farmers and foresters do well when they respect nature’s rhythms. Ultimately profit is a means to sustainable living.”

“The right to a safe ecological environment is a universal human right. As one of the world’s largest emitters of greenhouse gases, Australians have a particular duty to recognize the fact that they are directly contributing to atmospheric pollution. This is harming the many innocent peoples of the Pacific region, whose emissions are lighter than our own. Of immediate concern are environmental refugees coming from our Pacific neighbours. In addition to emergency relief they need long term structural help, debt relief, equitable trade policies and technological assistance.”

“Warfare has multiple negative environmental impacts and eats up much of the world’s financial resources. Diplomacy, dialogue and cooperation. Catholics wish to participate in a future where all sectors work together, beyond sectarian interests, secular and religious differences.”

“Our clear call as human beings is to renew the harmony between ourselves, our Creator and our world. Let us lead by example.”

“Care for the Earth must become our purpose, and vocation.”

The brief statement can be found [here](#)

For other faith’s statements on the environment, please click [here](#)

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