



News Item

The faith leaders fighting for the climate: ‘we have a moral obligation’ | Climate crisis | The Guardian

By Nina Lakhani

January 17, 2024



Landon Parenteau via Unsplash

“It has been another catastrophic climate year: record-breaking wildfires across Canada scorched an area the size North Dakota, [unprecedented rainfall](#) in Libya left thousands dead and displaced, while [heat deaths surged in Arizona](#) and [severe drought in the Amazon is threatening](#) Indigenous communities and ecosystems.

The science is clear: we must phase out fossil fuels – fast. But time is running out, and as the climate crisis, biodiversity loss and environmental degradation worsen, there is mounting recognition that our political and industry leaders are failing us.

If the science isn’t enough, what role could – or should – faith leaders play in tackling the climate crisis? After all, it is also a spiritual and moral crisis that threatens God’s creation, according to many religious teachings.

Globally, 6 billion people – about 80% of the world’s population – identify with a faith or religion, while half of all schools and 40% of health facilities in some countries are owned or operated by faith groups. In addition, faith-related institutions own almost 8% of the total habitable land surface – and constitute the [world’s third largest group of financial investors](#).

How faith and religious communities resist or respond to the climate crisis is crucial, which means faith leaders and leaders with faith have great potential to educate and mobilize their members towards – or away from – sustainable living and environmental activism, according to [Mitota Omolere, a sustainability expert and author at Earth.org](#).

In the run-up to the recent UN climate talks in Dubai, faith and spiritual leaders representing Anglicans, Bohras, Buddhists, Jains, Jews, Mahikaris, Sikhs, and Sunni and Shia Muslims urged politicians, businesses and financiers to adopt a rapid, just transition away from fossil fuels. “As we stand at the precipice of history, considering the gravity of the challenges we collectively face, we remain mindful of the legacy we will leave for generations to come,” [they said](#).

Rabbi David Rosen, international president of Religions for Peace, added:

“As leaders and representatives of world religions, our role gives us a platform and a position to encourage, influence and motivate people, and thereby a responsibility to help guide our communities in how to restore, protect and live in harmony with the natural world.”

[Click here to read the full story](#)

Source: [The faith leaders fighting for the climate: 'we have a moral obligation' | Climate crisis | The Guardian](#)