



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



A BRIEFING FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES

COP 26: What is it?

The 'twenty sixth conference of the parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change' (or [COP26](#) for short) will take place *Covid restrictions permitting* at the [Scottish Event Campus](#) in [Glasgow](#) from 1 to 12 November 2021. Since the first COP in Berlin in 1995 there has painstaking progress towards international agreement. Getting every country in the world to sign up to life changing commitments is not easy but in Paris in 2015 (COP21) there was [agreement](#) to try to limit global warming to 1.5°Celsius above pre-industrial levels and not to allow it to go above 2°C.

Why is the COP important?

As [global temperatures rise](#) so do the range of risks and their severity, particularly for tropical countries which are already suffering terrible [loss and damage](#). The impacts often fall most heavily on [women](#) and [children](#) and those already living in [poverty](#). People living in [Small island states](#) and low lying countries are at risk with [rising sea levels](#) and have campaigned to limit temperature rises to 1.5 °C. *Without radical action temperature rises of over 1.5°C will very likely happen by mid-century.*

Who is involved?

Diplomatic representatives from all countries will be joined by campaigners, lobbyists, businesses, scientists, NGOs and the world's media. Faith groups campaigning for climate justice will be well represented including the [Holy See](#), [World Council of Churches](#), [Lutheran World Federation](#), development agencies through [ACT Alliance](#), [CIDSE](#) and representatives of other faith groups. The total number of participants travelling to Glasgow depends on Covid related travel restrictions and the event may take place in part online.

What is up for decision?

The Paris agreement (2015) set out a mechanism to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Each country has to prepare a plan (called [nationally determined contribution or NDC](#)) to set out how it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. NDCs have to be revised and strengthened every five years and the Glasgow COP sees the first revision. *Unless the commitments in the current NDCs are strengthened and put into effect urgently there is no hope of limiting global warming to 2 °C.*



How can you get involved?

There are opportunities for everyone across Scotland before, during and after COP26. Faith groups are working to promote **hospitality** and **transformation**; to be good hosts to those coming to COP26; to listen and to learn from them; and from this to seek to change our lives, our places of worship, the places we live, economy and action by our governments. Follow the links below for more details. *The list is not exhaustive, please be in touch with frances@interfaithscotland.org to send us more resources, actions, events and campaigns that you know of!*

Resources

- [Interfaith Climate Action Resources](#): produced and collated by Interfaith Scotland
- [Religious Leaders Statement](#): Religious Leaders call for immediate climate action
- [Faith for Earth: A Call for Action](#): a comprehensive document outlining the key beliefs of different faiths on our relationship with the environment and our role in its protection. It also includes a beautiful anthology of scripture, poetry and prayers from these faiths.
- [Spiritual Vibrations for the Earth](#): Religions for Peace UK Women of Faith Network have produced a series of videos of prayers / reflections from diverse faiths on the environment
- [Let's Talk About the Climate Emergency](#): a resource created by Eco-Congregation Scotland, a Christian environmental charity, to host awareness-raising conversations in churches (with useful activities and discussions for people of all faiths and beliefs)
- [The Climate Sunday initiative](#) is encouraging local churches to hold a climate-focused service on any Sunday before COP26. Resources for services can be found [here](#)
- [Women's Voices in Climate Action](#): a series of videos from Interfaith Scotland highlighting the disproportionate effects of climate change on women, inspiring projects undertaken by women to counteract climate change, plus information on world faiths and the environment
- [Faith and the Environment Quote Cards](#): A set of cards with one card per faith, with a short summary of what that faith has to say about protecting the environment. These quote cards could be used in an interfaith dialogue session.
- [World Faiths and the Environment](#): This document provides a brief synopsis of beliefs of world faiths on our relationship with the environment and the ethical imperative to protect it.

Practical Actions

- Take action to reduce your carbon emissions in your place of worship following the guidelines in Interfaith Scotland's [Our Sacred Earth](#) booklet
- Provide accommodation for an activist, scientist or policy maker at COP26 via [Human Hotel](#)
- Take part in the [Great Scottish Canvas](#) which aims to engage people in the climate crisis through art, craft, poetry, writing and music by creating a vision of the future they want. An exhibition will be displayed at COP26 in Glasgow. Submission are open until 30th May.
- Plant trees in the [World Interfaith Harmony Grove](#) with Trees for Life
- Host an event or activity in your place of worship or hall or offer your hall for others to host an event in it. Register your building with [Spaces for Change](#)
- Join others to pray for climate justice, for example the [Global Climate Justice Prayer Chain](#)
- Join a pilgrimage to COP26 and welcome pilgrims to Scotland. There are several pilgrimages including a [Scottish Pilgrimage](#), a [Swedish](#) pilgrimage and a [German](#) pilgrimage.



Host or Join an Event

- The Climate Fringe website [events calendar](#) has a comprehensive list of events taking place. If you are organising your own event relating to climate or sustainability, please add it [here](#)
- Interfaith Scotland is hosting a [variety of events](#) as part of its 'Year of Climate Action'
- *Beyond Climate Crisis*: Interfaith Scotland is hosting a monthly series of [Facebook Live Panel Discussions](#) with keynote speakers from different faiths discussing various aspects of the climate crisis from a multi-faith perspective
- Get involved in [Scottish Interfaith Week](#) from 31st October – 7th November, hosting or attending an event on the 2021 theme of 'Together for the Planet'
- Take part in [Climate Fringe Week](#) from 18th – 26th September
- Eco-Congregation Scotland hosts [climate action events](#) throughout the year
- SGI-UK (Soka Gakkai International) (Buddhism in Action for Peace) are hosting a [monthly series of webinars](#) looking at the climate crisis
- See [Creative Scotland's Guide](#) to planning events for COP26

Campaigns and Advocacy

- Get involved in campaigning for COP26 at www.stopclimatechaos.scot and read about their campaign for delivering [climate justice](#)
- [Hope for the Future](#) is an organisation which equips communities, schools, places of worship and individuals to communicate the urgency of climate change to local politicians
- Tell your MSP (and your MP) about your concerns and your plans. Find your MSP at: <https://www.scpo.scot/meet-your-msp>
- If you are the member of a church consider signing the [Scottish Churches COP26 Pledge](#) to support fossil divestment and a just and green recovery
- Sign the declaration at [The Time is Now](#) website, a campaign organised by the Climate Coalition
- Get involved in campaigning with [Islamic Relief](#)
- Get involved with development agency campaigns like [Christian Aid](#), [SCIAF](#) or [Tearfund](#)
- Listen to the voices of [women](#) and [children](#) to share their experiences and solutions
- Faith for the Climate has a [Making COP Count](#) campaign for faith groups with UK-wide events

List of additional climate-related groups and organisations

- The Great Green Wall: <https://www.greatgreenwall.org/about-great-green-wall>
- Skye Climate Action: <https://skyclimateaction.org/>
- Young Christian Climate Network: <https://www.yccn.uk/>
- Friends of the Earth: <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/>
- Faith for Nature: <https://faithfornature.org/declaration/>
- Climate Action Network: https://climatenetwork.org/resource_type/eco-newsletter/
- The Colour Green: <https://juliesbicycle.com/event/the-colour-green-in-conversation/>
- How bad are bananas: <https://howbadarebananas.com/>
- Crack the Crises: <https://crackthecrises.org/>



List of additional faith and interfaith resources and information

Interfaith

- greenfaith.org
- www.livingthechange.net
- www.interfaithdeclaration.org
- renewalproject.net
- www.interfaithsustain.com

Baha'i

- www.bahai.org/beliefs/god-his-creation/nature/articles-resources
- www.iefworld.org

Brahma Kumaris

eco.brahmakumaris.org

Buddhist

oneearthsangha.org/domains/wisdom/resources

Christian

www.christianaid.org.uk/get-involved/campaigns/climate-justice-every-moment-matters

Hindu

www.interfaithsustain.com/hindu-faith-statement-on-the-environment

Jewish

hazon.org

Muslim

www.whyislam.org/social-issues/environment-and-islam

Pagan

www.ecopagan.com

Sikh

www.ecosikh.org

