



# KAIROS Week of Action

OCTOBER 17-24, 2009

## Connecting Climate Justice and Global Poverty

*Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ...And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.*

Revelation 21: 1, 5-6.

*Imagine a world in which both the scandal of global poverty and the threat of climate change were taken seriously. (Christian Aid, 2007.)*

As Christians, we are called to imagine just such a world; indeed, in Revelation we are promised a new heaven and a new earth, in which all are fed from the spring of the water of life.

But this is not the world we live in now. As the global community looks towards this December's climate change negotiations in Copenhagen, Denmark, we see a sorry record of rising greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from rich countries, and the relentless march of poverty and growing inequality in countries of the global South. And according to Christian Aid, it is the people of these countries who "are likely to be profoundly affected as global temperatures increase... [and will be] less able to afford their part in its prevention while simultaneously tackling poverty and going about the task of development."

### UN Millennium Campaign

*Beyond the traditional categorization of climate change as an environmental issue, it is clearly also a development issue; a poverty reduction, food security, economics, health, human rights, governance and equality issue. It is a Millennium Development Goal issue. (UN Millennium Campaign)*

The United Nations Millennium Campaign is an effort to hold governments accountable to the Millennium Development Goals [MDGs] to cut global poverty in half by 2015. It sees the connections between climate change and global poverty quite clearly.

#### Do we?

Check inside for more information on the links between climate change and poverty, and to see what you and your church community can do to take action between October 17 and 24!



CIDA: GREG KINCH

**October 17**

### International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

On this day, people worldwide — of all backgrounds, beliefs and social origins — show their solidarity with the poor, and renew their commitment to ending poverty. Canada and other nations pledged to end poverty during the UN Millennium Summit in 2000, and this day reminds us of that commitment.



**October 24**

### International Day of Climate Action

As the world's nations plan to meet in Copenhagen in December, citizens everywhere are uniting to send a message: we need a real climate deal, with real targets, real reductions, and real help for those most affected. Join us on October 24!

# Climate Change & Poverty — What's the Connection?

- Water shortages, desertification, increased pestilence, temperature fluctuations, and loss of distinct seasons all threaten livestock and agricultural yields in many areas of the world.
- Farmers in Southern Africa are being advised to expect a 50% drop in grain production by 2080. Water shortages and increasing temperatures particularly threaten maize, which is both a basic human foodstuff and the basis of many animal feeds.
- Intensively-grown cash crops such as coffee and tea — on which some countries are almost entirely dependent for income — will be adversely affected by temperature changes and pests. Sri Lanka's tea production is expected to decline by 20% before the end of the century.
- Warming waters threaten the viability of fisheries — an essential source of nutrition for 2.6 billion people, and of employment for 500 million. Flooding and drought also threaten the rice crops of countries like Bangladesh and the Philippines, where rice production could drop by 50 to 70% by 2020.
- Malnutrition and water shortages are expected to contribute further to the malaria and HIV and AIDS crises.
- Rising waters threaten to displace millions of people from densely populated coastal and low-lying areas in the global South; deforestation and desertification will have similar impacts elsewhere. There are already an estimated 26 million environmental refugees, and as many as 375 million may be so affected by 2015. Oxfam International estimates that "200 million people may be on the move each year by 2050 because of hunger, environmental degradation, and loss of land."



FOTORESEARCH

*"If we do not make deep cuts in emissions now, the changing climate will bring heat stress, sea level rise and more extreme drought and floods. Without a serious effort to reduce warming, and in the absence of international funds for adaptation, the food, water, health and livelihoods of millions of people will be at risk."*

Professor Diana Liverman, contributor to three IPCC Assessment Reports

## Everyone Emits — Why Can't Everyone Reduce?

- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), or Kyoto Protocol, which was agreed in 1997 and came into force in 2005, established a timeline for the countries of the global North (which first experienced and benefited from the Industrial Revolution and which consequently bear responsibility for so-called "historic" emissions) to set targets and reduce their GHG emissions.
- Developing nations, including current "big emitters" such as China, India, and Brazil are scheduled to come into the process of emissions reductions in the "post-Kyoto" framework.
- Since Kyoto was agreed and ratified, developed countries' emissions have grown, and countries like the United States have argued that they should not have to reduce emissions until developing nations do as well. In the stalemate over who should come on board, the emissions continue at a pace that continues to affect the countries of the global South — where the world's poorest people live — disproportionately.

## Can't People Just Adapt?

- Adaptation, or the process of moderating, adjusting to, or recovering from disruptions caused by climate change, is an expensive venture that already-poor countries cannot undertake. The UNFCCC Adaptation Fund, established in 2006 and 2007, is

one way in which wealthy nations can provide adaptation assistance to the global South as a kind of compensation for the damage that their industrial and economic growth has created elsewhere in the world.

- The Adaptation Fund is designed to reduce the vulnerability of developing countries to climate change by financing projects aligned with countries' needs and priorities, and is designed to provide transparent decision-making and an equitable governance structure.
- Many industrialized countries, instead of contributing to the UNFCCC Adaptation Fund, are making contributions to the World Bank's Clean Investment Fund (CIF). The CIF focuses on helping the developing world transition to clean energy economies, thereby advancing their development while at the same time controlling emissions. While this sounds good, in reality much of the CIF has been directed to questionable projects, such as "clean coal" fired electricity plants. Furthermore, the CIF is administered in the form of loans, which perpetuate the harsh conditionalities that the World Bank and other international financial institutions have imposed on developing countries over the past several decades. Is this how development assistance should be spent at a time when it seems that we cannot get a grip on either GHG emissions or reducing poverty?

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- In late 2008, Canada announced that it would provide \$100 million in adaptation funding, \$85 million of which has been directed to the World Bank's Clean Investment Fund.
- Oxfam International has estimated that the countries of the global South require \$150 billion per year to properly adapt to climate change and tackle poverty. While that sounds like a lot, consider that \$150 billion was the same amount used to bail out one corporation, AIG, in the 2008 financial crisis.

December's climate meetings in Copenhagen provide the world community with an incredible opportunity: to agree on deep and scientifically-based GHG emissions reductions, and to build a just and equitable adaptation process. **Join KAIROS in the "KyotoPlus" campaign, and help us make this the moment when the scandal of global poverty and the threat of climate change truly are taken seriously!**

## WHAT'S THE CANADIAN CONNECTION?

Farmers in Alberta and Saskatchewan experienced drought in the summer of 2009, conditions which some liken to the Dust Bowl of the 1930s and believe to be the product of climate change. Food prices for everyone will rise as a result of such conditions, whether in Canada or other parts of the global marketplace upon which we depend. The effects of climate change are one more impediment to the realization of life with dignity for all, where resources are shared and used equitably for the common good. For more information on poverty in Canada, check out the Dignity for All campaign: [www.dignityforall.ca](http://www.dignityforall.ca)



SARA STRATTON

*We have to make sure that decisions on climate change are in the interest of the most vulnerable, supporting their social protection, health, livelihood and therefore they go hand in hand with the MDGs.*

Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation, Netherlands.

# How Will You & Your Faith Community Respond?

## 1. Plan a KAIROS KyotoPlus church service on October 18.

Make Climate Change and Poverty the focus of your service on October 18 to mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty:

- Use the bulletin insert on the last page of this flyer.
- Provide opportunities after the service for members **to sign the petition** (included in this resource), which calls for a just and equitable climate deal at the Copenhagen climate meetings in December. If you have a live internet connection, you can sign online at [www.kairoscanada.org](http://www.kairoscanada.org).
- Then **commission the congregation** to take the petition "into the world" during the next week. **Challenge everyone to get at least 10 signatures.**
- Remember — given our focus on climate change, poverty, and the Millennium Development Goals, your service can also be counted as a "Stand Up Against Poverty" event! To register your event go to: [www.standagainstopoverty.org](http://www.standagainstopoverty.org)

Whatever you do, make sure you let us know: send an email to Sara Stratton at [ssratton@kairoscanada.org](mailto:ssratton@kairoscanada.org)

## 2. Organize or participate in a community action on October 24 — the International Day of Climate Action.

Events are being organized all over the world to increase the pressure as Copenhagen approaches. Check out [www.350.org](http://www.350.org) to see if there is an event in your community. If so, join it; if not, start one! Not sure what to do? **Why not start by ringing your church bells to get everyone's attention?** Make sure you have the **KAIROS KyotoPlus petition** handy, and make sure you tell us about your event: send an email to Sara Stratton at [ssratton@kairoscanada.org](mailto:ssratton@kairoscanada.org).

## 3. Follow-up on the petition signatures in your October 25 service.

Have members bring back the petitions that they took with them the previous week. This could be done as part of the offering, or as part of the prayers of the people. **Then send them back to KAIROS!**

## 4. Stay tuned for other action opportunities as Copenhagen approaches!

There will be opportunities to connect with elected officials, and most likely another round of community actions as the meetings take place! Keep checking [www.kairoscanada.org](http://www.kairoscanada.org) or contact Sara Stratton, Education and Campaigns Coordinator — Sustainability, at 416-463-5312 (tollfree 1-877-403-8933) x 241, or [ssratton@kairoscanada.org](mailto:ssratton@kairoscanada.org).



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Sources: Christian Aid, 'All Creation Groaning': A Theological Approach to Climate Change and Development (2007); Oxfam International, *Suffering the Science: Climate Change, People, and Poverty* (2009); Overseas Development Institute, *Poverty Reduction, Equity, and Climate Change: Global Governance Synergies or Contradictions?* (2003); UN Millennium Campaign, *Climate Change and the Millennium Development Goals*.

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# KAIROS Week of Action

## CONNECTING CLIMATE JUSTICE AND GLOBAL POVERTY October 17-24, 2009

KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives is a church-based social justice movement encouraging faithful ecumenical response to the call to “do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). Our members deliberate on issues of common concern, such as global poverty and climate change, advocating for social change and taking action for social transformation.



KAIROS

We believe, in the words of the World Council of Churches, “that the whole Earth community deserves to benefit from the bounties of creation. Equitable development for all is possible while maintaining the ecological integrity of the biosphere. Faith communities are addressing climate change because it is a spiritual and ethical issue of justice, equity, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability. **The situation is critical. We must all act now.** We pray that world leaders will demonstrate leadership in responding to the cry of the Earth.”

In December, world leaders will gather in Copenhagen, Denmark, to negotiate a new global climate change agreement. Through the KyotoPlus campaign, KAIROS is advocating for a new treaty

that will commit the industrialized world to deep, science-based reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, and that will establish a just and equitable program to help the world’s poorest people adapt to the devastating changes — loss of livelihood, loss of home — they are experiencing as a result of a crisis they did not create.



**OCTOBER 17**  
INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE  
ERADICATION OF POVERTY

## CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Praise the Lord!

All: **O give thanks to the Lord, for the Lord is good.**

One: Praise the Lord!

All: **God’s steadfast love endures forever.**

One: Praise the Lord!

All: **Blessed are those who always do justice and righteousness.**

One: Praise the Lord!

All: **God’s steadfast love endures forever.**

## CLOSING PRAYER

God of justice,

Your Son Jesus Christ showed solidarity with the poor, the weak and the vulnerable,

Give us the courage to do the same.

As homes are destroyed and lives and livelihoods are lost, help us to work for justice for the world’s poor.

God of power,

Time is running out.

Help us to reverse the tide of impending disaster,

And to play a part in your future.

God of hope,

In you we find abundant life.

May we work as a matter of urgency

To choose life over death and to bring that life to your world.

God of love,

Remind us that you are with us as we seek to live differently,

challenge us to see how our actions can change the world,

Be with us as we act in your name.

Amen

(from Christian Aid, United Kingdom)



**OCTOBER 24**  
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CLIMATE ACTION