

Islamic leaders echo call for action on climate change

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([The Christian Science Monitor](#)) A group of Islamic environmental and religious leaders called on rich countries and oil-producing states to stop greenhouse gas emissions as early as possible, and no later than 2050.

Drafted on Tuesday, during the last day of the International Islamic Climate Change Symposium in Istanbul, Turkey, the Islamic Climate Declaration states that the climate change is "human-induced" and caused by "unwise and short-sighted use" of natural resources.

The Declaration asks all 1.6 billion Muslims, along with "people of all nations and their leaders," to aim to phase out greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible and commit to 100 percent renewable energy.

"People need to be told and politicians need to stop misleading their people, in telling them they can go on increasing their standards of living for ever and ever and ever," Fazlun Khalid, a long-time Islamic environmental activist involved in drafting the Declaration, told the BBC.

This declaration follows a significant appeal by Pope Francis for better care of the planet earlier this year.

Critics of the Islamic Climate Declaration say that since some of the biggest Islamic nations have not taken an active part in supporting the call, the declaration is not truly representative of Islam.

Khalid acknowledges this criticism.

"We are not set up like churches; there is no Islamic pope," he said. "The Declaration is like a trigger—to say, wake up wherever you are, wake up and take care of the Earth."

The declaration calls for developed nations and oil-producing states to limit the global average temperature rise to less than two degrees, or "preferably" less than 1.5 degrees.

The 2 degrees Celsius goal, widely known as 2C, is a cornerstone of the United Nations Paris Climate Change Conference that will be held in December. At the Paris conference, world leaders will work toward a concrete plan to limit global warming to less than 2 degrees C, most likely including an commitment to have zero carbon emissions by 2050.

However, some experts are not optimistic about the conference's goals.

Some say the 2C goal is difficult to achieve, considering the amount of greenhouse gas emissions produced over recent years.

"It's just not feasible," Oliver Geden, of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs, told Reuters in June. "Two degrees is a focal point for the climate debate, but it doesn't seem to be a focal point for political action."

Others state that the 2C goal will fail to prevent many of climate change's worst impacts. In a series of reports commissioned by the Climate Vulnerable Forum, experts said the 2C goal is "inadequate, posing serious threats for fundamental human rights, labor and migration and displacement," Reuters reported.

The Islamic Climate Declaration has urged participants of the Paris conference to reach a scientific consensus on ways "to stabilize greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate systems."