

# Laudato Si in Action

## A Time to Restore

We are in the midst of the Season of Creation, where Christians all over the world celebrate creation, God's gift to us all.

This week I'd like to share another section of Pope Francis' Season of Creation message:

*A Jubilee is a time to restore the original harmony of creation and to heal strained human relationships.*

*It invites us to re-establish equitable societal relationships, restoring their freedom and goods to all and forgiving one another's debts. We should not forget the historic exploitation of the global South that has created an enormous ecological debt, due mainly to resource plundering and excessive use of common environmental space for waste disposal. It is a time for restorative justice. In this context, I repeat my call for the cancellation of the debt of the most vulnerable countries, in recognition of the severe impacts of the medical, social and economic crises they face as a result of Covid-19. We also need to ensure that the recovery packages being developed and deployed at global, regional and national levels must be regeneration packages. Policy, legislation and investment must be focused on the common good and guarantee that global social and environmental goals are met.*

*We also need to restore the land. Climate restoration is of utmost importance, since we are in the midst of a climate emergency. We are running out of time, as our children and young people have reminded us. We need to do everything in our capacity to limit global average temperature rise under the threshold of 1.5°C enshrined in the Paris Climate Agreement, for going beyond that will prove catastrophic, especially for poor communities around the world. We need to stand up for intra-generational and inter-generational solidarity at this critical moment. I invite all nations to adopt more ambitious national targets to reduce emissions, in preparation for the important Climate Summit (COP 26) in Glasgow in the United Kingdom.*

*Biodiversity restoration is also crucially important in the context of unprecedented loss of species and degradation of ecosystems. We need to support the U.N. call to safeguard 30% of the earth as protected habitats by 2030 in order to stem the alarming rate of biodiversity loss. I urge the international community to work together to guarantee that the Summit on Biodiversity (COP 15) in Kunming, China becomes a turning point in restoring the earth to be a home of life in abundance, as willed by the Creator.*

*We must restore with justice in mind, ensuring that those who have lived on the land for generations can regain control over its usage. Indigenous communities must be protected from companies, particularly multinational companies, that "operate in less developed countries in ways they could never do at home", through the destructive extraction of fossil fuels, minerals, timber and agroindustrial products. This corporate misconduct is a "new version of colonialism", one that shamefully exploits poorer countries and communities desperately seeking economic development. We need to strengthen national and international legislation to regulate the activities of extractive companies and ensure access to justice for those affected.*

The full text of the Holy Father's message can be found here:

<https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2020/09/01/200901a.html>

Working together, we can help take care of our common home.

Paul Litwin