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UN Environment Strategy for Engaging with Faith-Bases Organizations

Thursday 30th November 2017



Consultation Meeting Report
9 January 2018

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Overall Objective of the Meeting:

The overall meeting objective was to discuss and endorse, with suggested changes, the UN Environment Strategy for Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations and provide key information on existing knowledge, networks and faith-based organizations.

Meeting Outcomes:

By the end of the meeting, faith leaders will have:

1. Defined the goals of the strategic involvement directing UN Environment Focus;
2. Identified top priority environmental issues of mutual focus;
3. Agreed on a common knowledge platform to share knowledge and enable networking between environmental faith-based organizations
4. Agreed on outline for a communications and outreach needed actions.
5. Mapped global, regional and local Environmental FBOs;
6. Shared existing experiences and involvement;
7. Identified faith-based investment entities; and
8. Made commitments of specific support.

Meeting Summary:

The United Nations Environment Programme has been engaging with faith-based organizations for many years, however, recognizing the prominent role that faith-based organizations play in the implementation of the 2030 agenda, as part of the engagement of different civil society organizations, UN Environment has adopted a strategic decision to step up and enhance its engagement as related to the environmental dimension of the sustainable development agenda. For such a strategic engagement, a corporate strategy was developed by UN Environment identifying its objectives, goals, principles as well as the activities it plans to launch to implement such a strategy. UN Environment believes that the development of the strategy would not be complete without proper consultation with faith-based organizations themselves, thus a consultation meeting was organized at the margins of the third UN Environment Assembly. More than 40 participants representing 8 religions from around the world took part in the consultation that was held on 30 November 2017 at the UN premises in Nairobi.

The purpose of the meeting was to agree on the Strategy goals and activities; identify top priority environmental issues of mutual focus; map global, regional and local environmental Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs); identify existing Knowledge management tools and networks; share existing experiences and involvement; identify faith-based investment entities; and make commitments of specific support. To facilitate achieving this purpose, a detailed pre-meeting questionnaire was shared with participants. Answers to the questionnaire were received prior, during and after the meeting has concluded. Participants representing the different faiths and organizations made a short presentation on the goals of their respective organizations, activities they have been engaged with and suggested their perspectives on what

and how UN Environment could enhance its role to lead the global coalition of environmental faith-based organizations.

The UN Environment Strategy for Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations aims to inspire, empower and engage with Faith-based Organizations to innovatively deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 at all levels. The strategy was designed with three major goals:

1. Strengthen Partnerships with Faith-Based Organizations' Leadership for Policy Impact.
2. Green Faith-Based organization's assets and transform financing the SDGs.
3. Provide Science-Faith-Based Evidence and knowledge.

The Strategy provided a detailed list of outputs and corresponding activities to achieve each goal and suggested some institutional setup for the implementation of the strategy.

The consultation meeting started with an introductory part where the Executive Director of UN Environment Mr. Erik Solheim gave his opening remarks followed by Dr. Iyad Abumoghli, Principal Advisor on Strategic Engagement with Faith-Based Organizations, who gave a presentation on proposed strategy. Dr. Azza Karam, Chair of the UN Task Force on Religion and Development provided UN insights via Skype from New York followed by Mr. Alexander Juras, Chief of the Major Groups and Stakeholders Unit, who described the overall civil society engagement and the accreditation process. Meeting participants introduced their names, organizations they represent and their faith association.

Many of the organizations present shared their experiences on environmental stewardship, ranging from running international universities to national networks and local community activities. An open consultation with faith-based organizations took place focusing on the UN Environment Strategy, its goals, activities and looked into the questionnaire providing concrete suggestions on leadership, investment, and science, knowledge and communications.

Overall, participants have highly appreciated the key role UN Environment is playing by developing such a strategy and aiming for a strengthened partnership with faith-based organizations focusing on environmental issues. There was a unanimous approval of the three goals focusing on leadership, transforming faith-based investments and providing the needed knowledge. Different iterations of the third goal were suggested, some focusing on education, others on communications and outreach. It was agreed that the science part of this goal needs to focus on the provision of the knowledge that UN Environment provides as part of its science-policy interface work, while focus this goal on networking, communications and knowledge sharing.

Participants endorsed the creation of a forum or platform to exchange experiences, and share knowledge through provision of a dedicated page on the UN Environment Website or building on already existing faith-based run platforms. There needs to be a network of networks to assemble existing resources and best practices. It could also include reports on faith-environment events; annual events and a calendar of future events could be listed. For materials in other languages, it would be helpful to have a title or summary in English. Many activities are

being conducted by faith-based organizations, however, with little outreach. It should become a community of practice for knowledge sharing.

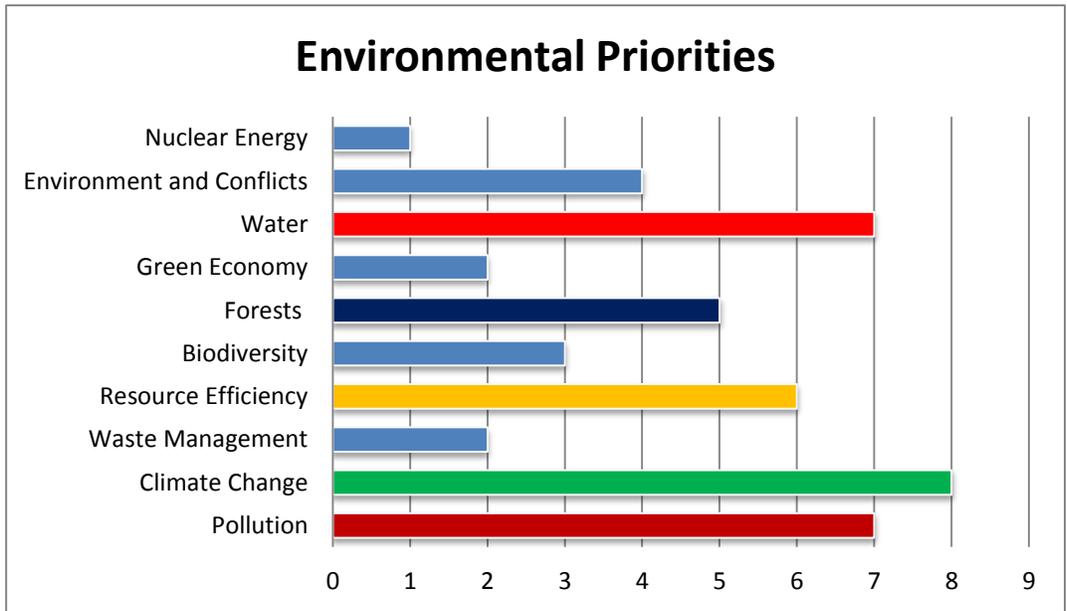
Meeting's Key Messages:

- 1- FBOs are well placed to explore the root causes of environmental problems, and to express the values that speak to the heart.
- 2- The FBOs could help to move to transformational impacts, with an impact at the global level.
- 3- Faith communities have a long-term perspective, such as the First Nations in North America considering 7 generations. This will be an important contribution to UN Environment.
- 4- It is important to include youth in faith dialogues, and to build on their use of technologies.
- 5- Education to be subsumed in knowledge
- 6- Ethics and Values to be introduced – promote eco lifestyle based on this; “make humans human”
- 7- Need transformation – people are disconnected from Nature. Solution starts with awareness, personal responsibility, long term perspective
- 8- Advocacy is an important dimension
- 9- Leadership from the top
- 10- Investment goal to be expanded – to include accounting for ecological impact
- 11- Include traditional knowledge
- 12- Use 2030 SDG Agenda and let local community prioritize – all items are important, all related, all global and local
- 13- Waste management too limited – emphasis too on reduction of waste through change in lifestyle – link to “Sustainable Production and Consumption” – already a UN Environment global initiative
- 14- **Everything today is expressed and valued in economic terms, and this is driving the world in unsustainable directions. Faith-based groups should advocate for alternatives.**
- 15- Pollution and food waste were proposed as specific areas of focus for global impact. Faith-based organizations could support implementation of its outcomes. The theme of the next UN Environment Assembly has not yet been decided, but could become an area of focus. The UN Environment Assembly should have resolutions including the ethical dimension.
- 16- There was agreement that the initial focus could be on three priority environmental issues: pollution, water, and waste reduction and management. Water has an important symbolism in many religions that could be built on.
- 17- Identify scriptures that would reinforce the messages of UN Environment Assembly. Organizations could reflect on their work from a pollution perspective, and rephrase the issues in their own language, making them relevant to work at the local level.
- 18- Sustainable consumption and production could be a more cross-cutting alternative, beyond just resource efficiency. It already is a UN Environment global programme. Faith-based organizations could contribute to the 10-year Framework of Programmes on SCP.
- 19- On the goal to Strengthen Partnerships with Faith-Based Organizations’ Leadership for Policy Impact, it was noted that the Pope’s encyclical *Laudato Si’* came from the top. A

global movement needs direction from the top so that the faithful will follow it. It would be good to reach the highest levels of leadership. An alternative view was to go from the local to the global, starting with letting local communities determine their own priorities, and building from there. **The strategy should not only target the poor but also the rich who are over-consuming and producing most environmental impacts. There is a rising middle class even in developing countries being drawn into the consumer society that needs to be reached.**

- 20- The present goal to green Faith-Based organization’s assets and transform financing need not to be focused on finance, but should include a wider greening of Faith-Based organization’s consumption, assets, buildings and lands.
- 21- For the goal on Science-Faith-Based Evidence, there was a feeling that the concept of science in this goal should be refined. Science should include traditional knowledge, which is often less organized. We need more than just knowledge and science. A holistic view is needed to transform people, and to help them reconnect with nature. An alternative would be to use the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs - and look for ways they embody faith beliefs. It is important to avoid the conflicts of science and religion, and to recognize their complementarity.
- 22- Faith-Based organizations made concrete commitments, for example the use of their networks to share messages more widely, the availability of knowledge resources, and training of trainers to reach the grassroots of communities. One suggestion for the future would be for the UN to consider creating a Forum of Faith-Based Organizations comparable to the Forum of Indigenous Peoples, to formalize the dialogue between governments and Faith-Based organization in the UN framework.

The following diagram represents the selection of key environmental priorities and their weight.



Faith and Spiritual Congregations Attending:

Islam
Christianity
Buddhism
Bahá'í
Judaism
Hinduism
Brahma Kumaris
Spirituality and interfaith organizations
Global, national and local civil society representatives.

Meeting Minutes

Facilitator: Iyad Abumoghli
Invited guests: Erik Solheim, Azza Karam, and Alexander Juras
Venue & Technology: Sylvia Adams
Rapporteur: Giada Congiu

Minutes	Action Points
<p>1. Erik Solheim opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Happy to see the leaders of faith-based organizations reunited at the table and acknowledged that there is still a lot of work to be done in engaging with them.• Two reasons why UN and UN Environment has to engage with faith-based organizations:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ For many people, engagement with environment comes from religious beliefs. A large portion of the population is really engaged with the environment because they want to protect their one planet given by God.○ In many parts of the world, the real civil society is faith-based organizations. In some parts of the world, European-style civil societies have relatively limited outreach as it is the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where there are very few European-style civil societies but many churches. Faith-based organizations provide a very practical instrument to resolve daily life problems.• Historically, religion has been very important for political power. Fukuyama, for instance, linked political power to two issues: religion and wars. Fukuyama also makes a comparison between four different cultural areas (China, India, Middle East and Islam, and Europe and Christianity) that have completely different approaches to religion.<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ China is the least religious part of the planet, where no religious leader has ever had more power than a political leader	

- India, conversely, is the most religious part of the planet, where religion is more than or as equally important as the state
- Islam and the Middle East, where religious leaders are the political leaders and vice versa
- Europe where religion and political power have been in competition for thousands of years
- Emphasized the importance of a partnership with faith-based organizations for leadership as in the case of an interfaith conference to protect the rainforest which may take place in Brazil in 2019.
- Religious societies are key investors for religious purposes (for instance, Islamic Development Bank and the Church of England) that are starting to mobilize funds and issue divesting principles to tackle environmental issues.
- Leadership is a key factor. Actions are taking place all around the world but we need to do more to have the impact that we are aiming for.

Erik encouraged all participants to provide new and effective ideas on how to achieve a long-lasting partnership between UN and faith-based organizations

1.1 Round of introductions

Participants have introduced themselves, their institutions and religion they represent. A list of participants is attached to the report.

1.2 Iyad Abumoghli presented the UN Environment Strategy

- The SDGs were designed by people and the implementation of these goals should also be by the people and all stakeholders, including faith-based organizations. Innovative ways to **engage with people and stakeholders** are needed.
- 8 out of 10 people believe in and follow a faith.
- UN has been working with faith-based organizations for many years and has engaged with them at the community level. However, UN has not been very engaged with faith-based organizations on environmental issues.
- We found that there are, **at least, 150 Faith-based organizations dedicated to environmental issues** all around the world
- Faiths call for a better lifestyle and a better management of the environment. However, there is a need to back up the messages coming from faith-based organizations with scientific and traditional knowledge.
- UN Environment wants to engage with Faith-based organizations to contribute to achieving the Global 2030 Agenda
- Communication is key

Need to capitalize on the already existing faith-based organizations working on environmental issues

Need to identify leaders who can reach billions of

- UN Environment strategy is based on 2 overarching goals: leadership and investment
 - **Leadership and strengthening the partnership with Faith-based organizations** through creating a coalition for creation on how to reach out to as many people as possible.
 - It is important we **identify environmental priorities** related to the daily practices of people and partner with organizations that are working on such issues. Some examples of environmental issues are water scarcity, pollution, waste management, forests, etc.
 - UN Environment supports an **integrated approach**, which is based on the achievement of environmental sustainability while sustaining economic development. Therefore, it is important to integrate the work of Faith-based organizations into the integrated approach of UN Environment and ensure that UN Environment’s activities reach out to Faith-based organizations and support them in achieving their goals.
 - It is important we communicate with **youth groups** as they represent 70% of the population and channel their hopes and frustrations into working towards a common goal
 - **Green Investments.** 50% of schools in the world are faith-based owned. In addition, faiths own lands, assets and financial institutions worth trillions of dollars. The Islamic Development Bank has recently started investing in renewable energy; the Church of England has started divesting from projects that release CO2.
 - It is important we make **green investments become a common practice**
 - It is important we ensure that **green investments go into sustainable practices**
 - The third goal is cross-cutting and aims to **build and collect/share existing knowledge.**
 - It is important we use social platforms to engage with people of different faiths
 - It is important to **talk to people in their own language.** It is not recommendable to use books and reports to engage with them, but rather short videos and direct messages.

1.3 Azza Karam’s presentation

- Congratulations to UN Environment on this very important initiative and on being able to have a strategic document on the engagement with Faith-based organizations.
- UN Task Force on engaging faith-based actors is a UN

people

Need to develop a monitoring and evaluation system

Need to work with faith financial institutions and integrating environmental stewardship in their principles

Create networks and platforms

mechanism that came together in 2007 and formalized in 2010.

- The reason behind its formation lays on the realization that many people across the UN system were working in different ways with several Faith-based organizations. Therefore, it made sense to create a space where UN and Faith-based organizations could think collectively and reflect in an educational manner on **why they were engaging and how these engagements took place.**
- UN Environment needs better engagement with Faith-based organizations
- On average, 30% of all basic social services are being delivered by and through Faith-based organizations.
- Development is essentially about social services, and if more than a quarter of social services providers are Faith-based organizations, those who work in the development sectors have to be better informed on the work of these actors
- Today, religion plays a very key political role and, in many regions of the world, politicization of religion is a big problem.
- It is important to engage with Faith-based organizations to **build resilience.** We have to work to counter inequalities and strengthen social inclusion and social cohesion. In order to do so, we have to work with everybody in the community
- Community-Based organizations are secular organizations that talk and perform in a secular way.
- There is a very strong link between human rights, culture and gender dynamics
- Lessons learnt during the years:
 - There is a big disconnect between UN HQ offices and local/national UN offices. UN colleagues in the HQ offices are not aware on how extensively the regional offices have reached out to Faith-based organizations.
 - The engagement with Faith-based organizations at the country level was taken for granted and UN colleagues did not invest much time in documenting the lessons learnt from the engagement. Faith-based organizations were considered as NGOs.
 - Faith-based organizations have their methodology when delivering social services, and this can be very instructive to UN agencies who do not have the same practical knowledge as Faith-based organizations
 - Very few UN colleagues know about religion and its role.
 - UN system is heavily engaging with Christian-based organizations because they are organized in a way that is easier to identify. Muslim, Hindus and Buddhist organizations are decentralized and identifying leaders is

harder.

- The notion of leadership needs to be investigated further. There is a need to bring to the table not only religious leaders but youth, women and people with disabilities as well.
- Faith-based organizations that work in conflict zones or with humanitarian crisis and who are partner with UN pay a certain price. UN is not automatically a well-seen entity around the world. There is the need to provide security to these Faith-based organizations.
- **There is a need to convene secular-based organization with Faith-based organizations**

1.4 Alexander Juras, Chief of Civil Society at UN Environment

- The team is in charge of facilitating the engagement of the whole range of civil societies.
- Within the 9 major groups of UN Environment, Faith-based organizations fall under the bigger category of NGOs.
- Currently, 11 Faith-based organizations are accredited to UN Environment. Some of these are quite active, some are dormant.
- How to be accredited with UN Environment:
 - Be non-governmental, not for-profit and formerly registered organization
 - Interested in and working on environmental issues and sustainable development
 - Have an international scope
 - Support UN values, such as tolerance, peace, gender equity, women reproductive rights, etc.
- **Being accredited means that Faith-based organizations can contribute to the decision-making processes.** For instance, at UNEA, Faith-based organizations would be allowed to sit at the table with Ministers of the Environment, raise their voices, provide written inputs and influence decisions. In addition, Faith-based organizations would be required to share knowledge and expertise.
- UN Environment is a small organization that faces challenges in reaching people on the ground. Therefore, expertise of Faith-based organizations on environment and in how to reach out to communities and individuals is very much welcome.
- Opportunity to work with Faith-based organizations in the project implementation phase.

1.5 Participants introduction on their work

- **Clayton Maring, Catholic Relief Services.** CRS principles: to care for God's creation and to provide options for the poor and

Encouraged all the participants to consider accreditation and to look into UN Environment website for more info

vulnerable. The intersection of these two principles is best captured in the *Laudato Si*, a letter from Pope Francis. The letter instructs us that the environment is a common responsibility intertwined with humanitarian affairs. In line with that, CRS engages in multi-stakeholder forums at the international, national and community levels. In addition, CRS tries to encourage environmental development efforts by working through platforms but also with host governments.

CRS is a member of “care for creation” working group, to ensure consistent messages about environmental issues, and it participates in the Evergreen Agriculture partnership and in the Africa Climate Smart Agriculture Alliance.

CRS is now exploring new collaborations among environmental organizations.

In the investment environment, CRS helped organizing campuses on the impact of investing in the Catholic Church and Vatican, and it is committed to invest 5% of its reserves in green activities and projects.

On the ground, CRS delivers Humanitarian programmes and works with local faith-based partners to restore the environment, protect biodiversity, improve water access and enhance climate resilience in the community it is serving. In addition, CRS is engaged in training faith-based partners in climate smart agriculture and climate sensitive small business development. Finally, CRS works with smallholder farmers helping them build prosperous livelihoods while ending environmental degradation and restoring habitat.

- **Prathiba Patel and Dorcal Alusala, Brahma Kumaris.** Brahma Kumaris (BK) was founded in India in 1936 and today has 9000 centers in 130 countries. Its main focus is on self-transformation and rediscovering the strengthening of human potential. Humans use only a little part of their potential and should be focusing on self, rather than on governments and communities. BK headquarters are in Rajasthan and accommodate more than 25000 people. In the complex, BK gives training and seminars to all people, regardless of nationality, gender or age. BK started the complex with 17,000 fruit trees. The emphasis of BK is on development in the form of technology, education and communication. Humans have achieved a lot on the heights of science technology but have lost a great deal in values. BK is encouraging humans to start doing things on a value-based level. BK activities are both environmental and spiritual. BK has water systems plants and one of the largest solar systems in Asia and yogi farming, which is a form of meditation with farming and nature.

- **Arthur Dahl, International Environment Forum.** The International Environment Forum is a Bahá'í inspired organization for environment and sustainability. The Bahá'í faith has been an environmental religion for 150 years and there was Bahá'í activism in the environment since the 1920s in Kenya and in Palestine.

The Bahá'í international community was accredited in the UN in 1948 and participated in the Stockholm conference that founded UN Environment in 1972. In addition, the Bahá'í community founded an International Environmental Forum more than 20 years ago and organized 4 side events at the Paris Climate Change conference.

Last year in Bolivia, through the International Environmental Forum, the Bahá'í community organized a conference on "SGDs at the community and individual levels" where UNEP participated as well.

The Bahá'í community has a very active website where they share collections of the different spiritual religions, do interfaith online courses on environment and sustainability and on climate change. They also organize annual conferences in different parts of the world, and the next one will be held in New York.

Despite not having many financial resources, the Bahá'í community continuously works to creating new things. For instance, they recently published a book on the ethical foundations of sustainable development.

Within the Bahá'í community there is an organization called "Ethical Business in Building the future" that works to bring ethical principles into the workplace.

Finally, they have research programmes on measuring values in education which are now being used by the International Red Cross and youth activities.

- **Charles Odira, Kenya Interfaith Network of Action on Environment (KINAE).** Father Charles is the chairperson of KINAE, a network that represents people of different faiths, such as Muslims, Christian and Protestants, working together on environmental issues. KINAE started in 2012, but was officially launched in 2014 and its members have been working in a very collaborative manner since then. They have even established a day to celebrate the environment from a faith perspective, which falls on October 12. KINAE's mission is to promote, facilitate and inspire environmental protection and sustainability.

Its objectives are to create awareness from grassroots to the top and synergies. All KINAE's members believe in God the creator, respect human dignity and integrity of words creation, care for collective goods, peace in the world and sustainable

development.

KINEA engages in strengthening faith-based leadership activities to be better equipped when influencing policy makers, but also in farming activities. In addition, KINEA educates young people to embrace green investments and collaborate with environmental experts in writing books and creating toolkits.

Science and religion are not contradicting but complementing each other.

- **Fachruddin Mangunjaya, Chairman - Center for Islamic Studies.**

Mr. Fachruddin is a professor at the National University of Jakarta and he is a bridge for the Islamic Center to the environment. Since 2000s, the Center has been involved with the Muslim Action Plan for Climate Change and in 2015 was a member of the drafting team for the Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change. Since 2003, the Center for Islamic Studies has facilitated the Islamic Jurisprudence on the Environment, a first of its kind document that has been used in many universities and Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia. In addition, the Center published a Fatwa (a law based on religion) on protection of endangered species and established education goals included in a preaching book on environment.

The center also engaged with communities on Islam and wildlife. Further, the Center for Islamic Studies developed a **mobile phone application called Green Hajj**, a guide for the whole Muslim world on how to turn the sacred pilgrimage into an environmentally sustainable practice. Next month, the Eco Masjid will be launched.

- **Benson Kibiti, Caritas Kenya.** Caritas Kenya represents the Catholic Church in Kenya. It has 25 bishops and it operates in more than 2000 institutions, mostly schools.

Caritas Kenya is currently looking at the issues of church leadership and clear narrative on environment stewardship. The *Laudato Si* is really the base for inspiration and a crucial reference document for the organization. In addition, Caritas Kenya is looking at a target for growth. This organization wants to invest in new energy models to sustain their business model in the long-term. Further, Caritas Kenya is looking at corporation of goals, design, governance and implementation. As per now, this organization is **very influential at the policy level**. Moreover, Caritas Kenya is trying to mobilize financial capital. Finally, this organization is looking into public private partnerships and setting the agenda on how best they can invest to go green.

- **Isaiah Toroitich, Global Policy and Advocacy Coordinator at Act Alliance.** Act Alliance is a network of 146 organizations working

in 125 countries. Arguably, it is the biggest protestant network that works on humanitarian response, development and advocacy. Environment is critically important for Act Alliance because it is a key driver of poverty, humanitarian crisis, etc. The Alliance identified Climate Change and the environment as its primary issues for international advocacy. Its memberships are very much rooted in communities and to mainstream environment and climate change they use various methodologies, such as raising awareness, capacity building and others. Much of the Alliance's work is based on policy intervention, not only from faith-based perspective but also from community-based perspective and from human rights-based perspective. In fact, Act Alliance has engaged quite significantly with UNFCCC, has had communities participate in some of UNEP initiatives on the SGDs process.

In addition, Act Alliance plays a key role in convening various stakeholders, an example of which is the meeting around the concept of equity.

Act Alliance uses its faith bases as a means to create confidence, so that the conversations around justice, morality, ethics and solidarity make more sense.

Act Alliance's work related to capacity building revolves around its capacity to bring to the table different ideas from different parts of the world and different political approaches to conversation. The Alliance has been able to run meetings on environmental advocacy, teaching online forums on how to do advocacy or how do go about with the implementation of SGDs.

- **Borg Hermann, Director, Mother Earth Network.** The Network started planting trees in a semi-deserted area, 30 years ago. Mother Earth foundation was invited at the Niger meeting in August and chosen to plant hundreds of millions of trees in Africa.
- **Jayshree Balachander, Green Pilgrimage Network, India Hinduism.** Hindus are very religious people and pilgrimage tourism is enormous in India. Thousands of people travel to places and many of the temples are in ecological fragile areas. The green Pilgrimage Network wanted to help people internalize what their religion said about Mother Earth. **Their model is about getting on the ground, improve pilgrims' knowledge, having the media to disseminate and share that knowledge, and involve governments. The first initiative has been starting a Green Temples Guide which covered issues such as waste management, green landscapes, etc.**
- **Peter Denton, United Church of Canada.** The Church of Canada

is a protestant Church, formed out of the union of the Presbyterian Methodist and congregational churches in 1925, part of the World Council Churches and Canadian Churches, Act Alliance and many others. This Church values interfaith dialogue and places a strong emphasis on the necessity of diversity and inclusion. The Church partners with people on the ground and focuses on living with respect and creation and on the responsibility of individuals to do things. In Kenya, the Church of Canada supported a development project of a well that helped 450 women and their communities survive summer droughts. The Church believes in “practice of the ground”, in building relationships and partnerships.

- **Allen Ottaro, Executive Director at Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESA).** The network was founded in 2012 with the idea of bringing together young Catholics to have a common response to the issues of climate change and environmental degradation in Africa. CYNESA work was initially inspired by the words of Saint John Paul II in 1990, when he called for a new ecological awareness and lately reinvigorated by the *Laudato Si* of Pope Francis. At the moment, CYNESA has charters in 8 countries, mainly in East and Southern Africa but also in Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi. CYNESA’s ambition is to have a presence in 20 countries by 2020.
Its activities are based on Catholic social teaching but the basis is rooted in scripture. CYNESA does awareness creation, capacity building for young people, networking and advocacy training, development of local/community action plans.
In 2013, CYNESA was working in creating a climate change toolkit and tree growing in the Democratic Republic of Congo. CYNESA strategy on how to engage young people: start where you are, use what you have and do what you can.
- **Abdalla Kaman, Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims (SUPKEN).** SUPKEN is the umbrella body of all Muslims in Kenya and it consists of CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, mosques and madrasas. It was formed in 1973 and it works on 3 levels; national level, regional level and county level.
SUPKEN has developed and operationalized a CBO and CSO policy building under what is called CBO/CSO capacity overview. SUPKEN capacity building and development is a process through which Muslims, individuals, CSOs, CBOs and communities are deliberately supported to obtain, strengthen and maintain their capacities to achieve their own development objective over time. In addition, SUPKEN plans workshops in environment, peace building, human rights, governance, climate smart agriculture and

education for sustainable development. Moreover, SUPKEN organizes capacity assessments, training activities, mentoring, coaching and consultancy services, internships, networking as well as scenario building.

Regarding the concept of Investment, SUPKEN is an active member of Alliance of Regions and Conservation. It has fully accepted the faith consistent investment, FCI, and has gone beyond its commitment by developing FCI guidelines for its partners. SUPKEN is in the process of developing a concept note for organic food production which will be shared with its partners. In addition, SUPKEN through its programs has focused on human investments.

SUPKEN has also developed a guide on agriculture farming that has created knowledge on how Muslims can engage in conservation agriculture, as well as numerous books on interfaith development. Moreover, SUPKEN has implemented the Islamic Farming model, a type of social farming that has been implemented in various part of Kenya. SUPKEN is proud to report that their methods have effectively worked in the northern part of Kenya where they had a great impact on the pastoralists' communities living there.

- **Judah Mandelbaum, Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development.** The clergy has an asset, land. How can the clergy be proactive in properly valuing this key asset and making clear demand for investment in their land? The clergy should come together and mobilize that asset for a good purpose diverting the technology that it is already using (solar panels) and finance into creating energy surplus countries instead of energy-deficit countries.
How do we nurture spirit? And how do we nurse those who are nursing us? How do we nurse the clergy so that they have answers to all those who are skeptic?
In Israel, the Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development is doing these practical things on the ground, as well as seminaries. The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development hosts conferences all around the world, including North America and gathers Catholics, Evangelicals and Jews and teaches them to be leaders. How do we support those who are leaders?
- **Junghee Min, Secretary General of Inter-Religious Climate and Ecology Network (ICE Network).** ICE Network aims to respond to climate change by mobilizing faith leaders and CSOs. The network organizes regional-based interfaith conferences every 3 years.

Iyad encouraged sharing all the materials

Send all the knowledge materials to Iyad

1.6 Comments on UN Environment Strategy

- Participants have agreed on the 3 goals
- 1 or 2 suggestions to add a 4th goal: education
- two questions were raised?
 - are participants onboard with engaging the science community and scientists?
 - What are the participant's thoughts on the contradictions between science and religion?
- UN Environment is a science-based organization and science evidence is included in all its activities.
- Need to use the lens of the 2030 Agenda to focus Faith-based organizations and UN Environment efforts on the practical things they could do together.
- UN Environment and Faith-based organizations need to work together on very specific projects that allow each religious group to see the embodiment of their beliefs.
- It is important to involve less institutionally organized spiritual traditions, in particular indigenous people. They bring to the table a different set of values that are not attached to science, but nevertheless essential for sustainability.
- Add "ethics" to the goals and if not possible, to mention ethics somewhere in the strategy.
- Add "advocacy" to the goals
- Faith-based organizations to look at "real cost accounting"
- Creation of a platform or a forum or a space of exchange
- A forum for Indigenous People in the UN as a long-term goal.
- Faith-based organizations to look at their strengths. Scientists will speak from their brain, but Faith-based organizations will speak from their hearts.
- Focus on issues like, for instance, pollution and food waste. This group should use their network and reach out to achieve concrete change on 1 or 2 issues.
- PachaMama (is a goddess revered by the indigenous people of the Andes. She is also known as the earth/time mother) is not in UNEA 3. It is not in the resolutions, not in the language, not in the side events. By UNEA 4, Faith-based organizations should be given the chance to present Member States with resolutions that relate to the values of indigenous people.
- UNEP has to own the global movement.
- All the priorities listed in the strategy fit under the SDGs
- Change does not happen from global to local, but vice versa, change happens from local to global. We must focus

Include education in the "Knowledge" goals

We need to come up with indicators

<p>on and support local communities and we will see a global change from the grassroots.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Faith-based organizations in this room organized some kind of activities that revolved around the priority environmental issues listed in the UN Environment strategy. The issues that Faith-based organizations are facing today have to be global issues too, if they want to be presented at UNEA 4. • Faith-based organizations to focus on how to package their spiritual message around these environmental priorities. <p>1.7 Faith- based Entities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Environment has collected information on 150 Faith-based organizations working with the environment. • Suggested that UN Environment has an online platform where links can be posted and shared. • Suggested that UN Environment to pull together a network. • Some information on faith-based environmental organizations was given and participants will come back in writing on more. <p>1.8 What do Faith-based organizations have to offer?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faith-based organizations are good at establishing concrete partnerships • Faith-based organizations could offer to change their minds and be flexible. Faith-based organizations continue doing what we used to do but they can always do better when they understand each other. What Faith-based organizations could offer is letting go something. “The what” has to be decided by each Faith-based organization. • Faith-based organizations create awareness. • The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development is happy to host a global meeting. • UN Environment and Faith-based organizations have to have real impact. Therefore, what will bring transformational impact? Are we really managing to tackle what will bring real change? How can it be a win-win where countries’ economy can grow healthy but at the same time not harm earth? How can Faith-based organizations bring impact? • One of the things Faith-based organizations bring to the table is timeline. Faith-based organizations make every decision keeping 7 generations in mind. Faith-based organizations bring a perspective that is longer than a business plan, and this viewpoint is also understood by Indigenous people. • During Hajj, 3 million people sacrifice 3 million animals and use 	<p>Organizations are encouraged to select 5 priority environmental issues that can be taken global.</p> <p>UN Environment will share this research with the participants and urged others to do the same</p> <p>UN Environment will open a page on UN Environment website for the participants</p> <p>UN Environment encouraged participants to share any environment events that they know of, and also share their green practices.</p>
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<p>trillion plastic water bottles. How can we green that? UN Environment and Faith-based organizations together have to bring a transformational impact and changing the behaviour of the people is transformational.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The society is moving, and many things happening that we are not even aware of. There is great chance and great hope for change. • The voices of religious leaders need to be made heard and should be strengthened. UN Environment to help Faith-based organizations partner into something that would make them more visible. • Faith-based organizations need more than science and knowledge, they need a holistic approach. A holistic approach should be integrated to facilitate the transformation of people’s mindsets. • The role of youth is monumental. • Suggested Faith-based organizations go back to the core thing that they are conveying: making humans human again. That is Faith-based organizations’ scope and it starts with raising awareness and going back to soul searching. • Faith-based organizations to look at what they can do together. There are certain resources that Faith-based organizations bring to the table as political entities, and they should work together in the future. Conversation between Faith-based organizations has to continue because it is important to do things together. <p>1.9 Things to do next</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send contributions to UN Environment in the next 10 days. Deadline is December 10th. • Ensure that all the issues that arose in the meeting are heard in UN Environment. That is why it is important that participants share their comments. • Communications between UN Environment and the Faith-based organizations in the room to be kept alive and continuous. • Use the created a hashtag #faith4earth and all are encouraged to contribute with their publications and messages. The summary of the #faith4earth tweets will be made available in a common language. 	<p>UN Environment will share all the contributions with the participants</p> <p>Iyad will send back the report of this meeting Iyad encouraged participants to share documents, as well as all activities and projects they have been working on. Deadline on December 10th.</p>
<p>3. Closing Remarks</p>	

Iyad thanked everyone present for their inputs and contributions and asked for a volunteer for an interfaith prayer.

Annex 1: List of Participants

	Name	Affiliation
1	Azza Karam	Chair of UN Task Force on Religion
2	Fachruddin M. Mangunjaya	Chairman Center for Islamic Studies
3	Judah Michael Mandelbaum	Interfaith center for sustainable development
4	Clayton Maring	Manager, Program Quality and Growth Catholic Relief Services Manager, Program Quality and Growth
5	Jayshree Balachander,	Green Pilgrimage Network, India Hinduism
6	Ganesan Balachander	Executive Director Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE) Bangalore, India
7	Arthur Lyon Dahl	International Environment Forum A Bahá'í inspired organization for environment and sustainability
8	Junghee Min,	Secretary General of Inter-Religious Climate and Ecology Network (ICE Network)
9	Isaiah Toroitich	Global Policy and Advocacy Coordinator Act Alliance, including the World Council of Churches 150 Route de Ferney 1211 Geneva 2 Switzerland
10	Peter Denton.	United Church of Canada
11	Benson KIBITI	Caritas Kenya National Communication & Advocacy Coordinator - (Climate Change and SDGs)
12	Ms. Pratibha Patel	Brahma Kumaris
13	Dr. Dorcas Alusala	Brahma Kumaris
14	Gezahegn Gebrehana	Regional Representative for Africa ACT Alliance regional representative for Africa, Nairobi, Kenya
15	Mr. Abdalla Kaman	Supreme Council of Kenyan Muslims
16	Ganesan Balachander	Ex- Executive Director of Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment (ATREE),
17	Fr. Charles Odira Kwanya	Chairperson Kenya Interfaith Network of Action on Environment (KINAE)
18	Emmanuel Mulu	Holy See Advisor to the United Nations
19	Borg Hermann	Director, Mother Earth Network
20	Erick Ogallo	Coordinator, Mother Earth Network
21	Allen Ottaro	Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESAs)
22	Hellen Mugo	Catholic Youth Network for Environmental Sustainability in Africa (CYNESAs)

23	Musabyimana Benoit	(CYNESA)
24	Peter Mboye	(CYNESA)
25	Norbert Sangura	Anglican Church of Kenya
26	Hilal Orhan	Brahma Kumaris
27	Asha Bentur	Brahma Kumaris
	OTHER MAJOR GROUPS AND STAKEHOLDERS	
28	Marie Therese Merhej Seif	Major Groups Representative of West Asia
	UN ENVIRONMENT	
29	Alexandar Juras	Chief, Civil Society Unit
30	Jose Dallo	Sub-regional office
31	Sheila Aggarwal-Khan	Acting Director, Policy and Programme Division, UN Environment

Annex 2: Agenda

UN Environment Consultation meeting on Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations

Nairobi-Kenya

30 November 2017

Time	Subject	Expert
09:00 – 09:05	Welcoming Remarks	UN Environment Executive Director Mr. Erik Solheim
09:05 – 09:30	Introduction of Participants	All
09:30 – 09:50	UN Environment Strategy for Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations	Dr. Iyad Abumoghli
09:50 – 10:10	UN Task Force on Religion and Development – Lessons learnt and services	Dr. Azza Karam
10:10 – 10:20	Major Groups and Stakeholders Engagement at UN Environment - Synergies	Mr. Alexander Juras
10:20 – 11:00	Experiences on Environmental Stewardship by Faith-Based Organizations – 7-10 min each	Representatives of Faith-Based Organizations
11:00 – 12:45	Reflections by Faith-Based Organizations on UN Environment Strategy – Concrete suggestions on Leadership, investment and science, knowledge and communications.	Representatives of Faith-Based Organizations
12:45 – 13:45	Recommendations for approaches and priorities Open discussion	Representatives of Faith-Based Organizations
13:45 – 14:00	Closing Remarks and Next Steps	Dr. Iyad Abumoghli

Annex 3: UN Environment Questionnaire

**UN Environment Consultation Meeting on Engaging with Faith-Based Organizations
30 November 2017
Nairobi – Kenya
Forms**

(Please use track changes)

Name of Organization:
Name of Representative:
eMail address:

Goals

Goal 1			Goal 2			Goal 3			Additional/ Alternative?		
Leadership			Investment			Science and Knowledge					
Agree	NA	Do not Agree	Agree	NA	Do not Agree	Agree	NA	Do not Agree	Agree	NA	Do not Agree

Activities: Please consider practicality of proposed activities and add additional priority ones

Priority Environmental Issues?

Select top 5 or Propose new priority ones

Pollution	Climate Change	Waste Management
Resource Efficiency	Biodiversity	Forests
Green Economy	Water	Environment and Conflicts

**Environmental FBOs or environment-faith leaders/ Faith-Investment entities
Please list those you know of**

Name of Organization	Name of Leader	Address/ email	Website

Knowledge Networks
Please list those you know of

Name of Network	Name of Host	Address/ email	Website

Faith-Environment Events
Please list those you know of

Event	Date	Organizer	Contact

Within Existing Resources What Can Your Organization offer to do?

Activity	Organizer	When	Contact

Annex 4: List of Environmental Faith-Based Organizations and Resources

(Attached)

Annex 5: List of Knowledge Networks as provided by participants

Name of Network	Name of Host	Address/ email	Website
Green Pilgrimage Network, India	Jayshree Balachander	greenpilgrimindia@gmail.com	Under construction
Green Faith	Rev. Fletcher Harper	info@greenfaith.org	www.greenfaith.org
Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment	Soubadra Devy	soubadra@atree.org	www.atree.org
CPR Environmental Education Centre	Nanditha Krishna	Cpreec.org/contactus.html	www.cpreec.org
2bin1bag	Ramakanth	Vedarama_kanth@yahoo.com	2bin1bag.in
Alliance for Religion and Conservation	Martin Palmer	martinp@arcworld.org	www.arcworld.org
The International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD)	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)	info@partner-religion-development.org	http://www.partner-religion-development.org/about/mission-statement/
Faith ecology	Columban Mission Institute Centre for Peace, Ecology and Justice	pej.cmi@columban.org.au	www.faithecolony.net.au/catholics_on_climate_change
Earth Day Network	Earth Day Network	nfo@earthday.org	https://www.earthday.org/about/
Kenya Interfaith Network of action for environment(KINAE)	Fr.Charles Odira	Charlesodira19@gmail.com	www.kina.org
Kenya Interfaith Network on Action	Fr.Charles Odira	Charlesodira19@gmail.com	www.kinae.org

for Environment(KINAE)			
Center for Islamic Studies Universitas Nasional, INDONESIA	Dr Fachruddin Majeri Mangunjaya	Fmangunjaya2@civitas.unas.ac.id	http://ppi.unas.ac.id/
Forum Religion and Ecology at Yale	Prof Mary Evelyn Tucker, Yale USA	maryevelyn.tucker@yale.edu	http://fore.yale.edu/
Global Muslim Climate Network	Ms Nana Firman	nanafirman@gmail.com	http://muslimclimatenetwork.org/
Society for the Study of Religion Nature and Culture	Dr Bron Taylor, University of Florida		
Religion and Conservation Biology Working Group	Dr Fabrizio Frascaroli	fabrizio.frascaroli@ieu.uzh.ch	https://conbio.org/groups/working-groups/religion-and-conservation-biology/
International Environment Forum (see above)			
Forum on Religion and Ecology	John Grim and Mary Evelyn Tucker	tcmk@aya.yale.edu The Forum on Religion and Ecology Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies 195 Prospect Street New Haven, CT 06511	http://fore.yale.edu/
Anglican Communion Environmental Network	Anglican Communion Office	aco@anglicancommunion.org	http://acen.anglicancommunion.org/
Season of Creation	various	Thru ACT Alliance	https://seasonofcreation.org/

Annex 6: Faith-Environment Events

Event	Date	Organizer	Contact
Eco-temple Community Development meeting	Nov. 16~19, 2017	ICE Network (Japan Network of Engaged Buddhists)	Jonathan Watss; ogigaya@gmail.com
Religious discourse by Morari Bapu in Gujarat to save the whale shark	-	Wildlife Trust of India	vivek@wti.org.in
Rally for Rivers	3Sept-20Oct, 2017	Sadhguru Jaggi Vasudev	info@ishafoundation.org
Green Rameswaram	Periodic events	Vivekananda Kendra	vknardep@gmail.com
Hindu Environment Week	Annual	Bhumi Project	info@bhumiproject.org
Hindu Spiritual and Service Fair	Annual	Hindu Spiritual and Service Foundation	hssfhq@gmail.com
Interfaith youth forum on Environment and peace	October	Mother Earth Network, KINAE, JPICFA	ogallojunior@gmail.com
Annual Interfaith Environment Day	June	KINAE	Charlesodira19@gmail.com
Interfaith Network on environment and Peace	October	Mother Earth Network/KINAE/SUPKEM/JPIC FA	Fr. Charles Odira Charlesodira19@gmail.com
Interfaith national Environment Day	Every October	Mother Earth Network/KINAE/SUPKEM/JPIC FA	Erick Ogallo ogallojunior@gmail.com
Annual forum on Islamic Farming (Green Agriculture)	July and December	SUPKEM	Abdalla Kamwana baltawi@gmail.com
Many Heaven One Planet (Faiths Action Plan for Climate Change)	September 2009	Alliance of Religion and Conservation (ARC), UK and UNDP	Martin Palmer
Islamic Conference on Climate Change Action, Bogor	April 2010	Kehati, Conservation International, Ministry of Forestry	Fachruddin Mangunjaya
Green Pilgrimage Network in Assisi, Italy.	November 2011	ARC, WWF International	Martin Palmer
Faith in Conservation, Lambeth Palace, UK	November 2015	ARC, TNC	Martin Palmer
Faith for the Future: Bristol Commitment of	October 2015	ARC	Matin Palmer

Faith for SDGs			
International Environment Forum annual conferences https://iefworld.org/conferences.htm	July 2018 (tbc)		ief@iefworld.org
Season of Creation	Sept 1 – Oct 4	ACT, WCC, GCCM, Greenfaith, etc	

Annex 7: Within Existing Resources, commitments of participating organizations:

Name	Activity	Organizer	When	Contact
Junghee Min	Eco-temple meeting and consulting	Jonathan Watts (ICE & INEB)	Once a year	ogigaya@gmail.com
	Awakening Leadership Training	INEB Institute	Sept. 1 st , 2017~January 31 st , 2018	secretariat@inebnetwork.org
	A-Z Climate Workshop for religious leaders (contents: main causes and drivers of climate change, scientific info. and data, climate adaptation, etc)	ICE Network	Before or after ICE conference	mujin21@gmail.com
Jayshree	Develop website to share information and strengthen network	Jayshree Balachander	2018	greenpilgrimindia@gmail.com
	Compile best practices in religion and conservation			
	Build up network of entities working to improve/protect			

	pilgrim places			
	Organize technical experts and donors to support implementing groups			
	Conduct TED type activity to share knowledge and network			
	Liaise/collaborate with Swachh Bharat, Heritage and Pilgrim Cities programs of Govt of India			
Benson Kibiti	Mobilizing & convening	Caritas Kenya	TBC	Benson Kibiti
	Policy influence and Agenda setting	Bishops Conference	TBC	Stephen Kituku
	Implementation	Diocesan Caritas	TBC	Stephen Kituku
Borg Hermann	Platform for Interfaith Dialogue on Environment.	Mother Earth Network	October	hermannborg@gmail.com
Abdalla Kaman	Awareness Creation forum	SUPKEM	July-October	Abdalla Kamwana baltawi@gmail.com
	Mobilization of involvement of faith based representatives			
	Knowledge Dissemination through local newsletters, Radio Stations and workshops.			
Fachruddin	Islamic Base Biodiversity and Training for Imam and science teacher.(TOT)	Center for Islamic Studies UNAS	3 times a year	Fmangunjaya2@civitas.unas.ac.id
	Islam and Climate Change (TOT)	Center for Islamic Studies UNAS	2 times a year	Fmangunjaya2@civitas.unas.ac.id

	Islam, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (TOT)	Center for Islamic Studies UNAS	2 time a year	Fmangunjaya2@civitas.unas.ac.id
	Green Pilgrimage (Green Hajj), Workshop for Travel Agent	Fmangunjaya2@civitas.unas.ac.id	1 time a year	Fmangunjaya2@civitas.unas.ac.id
Arthur Dahl	Publicize UN Environment faith-based activities to our network, including through our monthly newsletter: https://iefworld.org/newslet		on a continuing basis	ief@iefworld.org
	Contribute a Baha'i perspective to interfaith activities on the environment and sustainability			
	Make available and adapt as necessary our on-line learning materials on sustainable development and on climate change https://iefworld.org/elcourse_sd.htm https://iefworld.org/ssdcc0.html			
	Contribute Baha'i scriptural materials to interfaith compilations on environmental themes https://iefworld.org/resource.htm			
	Collaborate in developing educational materials https://iefworld.org/elcentre.htm			

	https://iefworld.org/node/665 https://iefworld.org/rem.htm			
Isaiah	Capacity Building, training or sharing (using our web based training, the ACT Advocacy Academy)	ACT Alliance	Second half of 2018	
	Coordination of some faith engagement with COP24 (maybe hosting an event)	ACT Alliance	December 2018	