



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

Department for Planning
and Operations

lutheranworld.org



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
27 April 2021**

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION AND THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

**Urgent climate action, increased climate ambition are
needed.**

27 April 2021

GENEVA, Switzerland

*O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them
all; the earth is full of your creatures." (Psalm 104:24)*

The Leaders Summit on Climate was initiated by the President of the United States of America, Joe Biden, and convened online from 22-23 April. It featured national, business, and labor speakers, sounding alarm bells to raise awareness of the devastating impact of climate change. Convening the summit was a step in the right direction, which The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) affirm and support. The commitments made at the summit need to be followed up with a clear plan to bring leaders and nations together in action, not only pledges.

As human beings, we are called to care for creation; we recall the good Earth and our call to be stewards of creation with the view-through equity and justice lenses, sharpened by hope and faith. The Earth Day theme of "Restore Our Earth" is fitting in 2021. According to the World Meteorological Organization, the year 2020 was one of the three warmest years on record. The current trajectory indicates that this year we could see the most significant increase in greenhouse gas emissions ever. The situation will only get worse from 2022 unless governments around the world act quickly to cut emissions.

The impact of climate change can be seen in varied climate events, including more frequent and more severe weather patterns, temperature extremes, and rising sea levels. This has led to floods, droughts, wildfires, coastline erosion, saltwater intrusion to land that was once arable land, and ocean acidification. All of this affects vulnerable communities disproportionately harder, impacting their livelihoods, increasing displacement and conflicts.

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Until now, Nationally Determined Contributions submitted by Parties were not ambitious enough to limit temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius and meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

We have seen the world come together to address the COVID-19 pandemic. Like climate change, it has disproportionately affected people and communities that are already vulnerable. Addressing both crises will require a multilateral approach, with all countries committing and contributing to solutions. It is imperative that the measures to address the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the economic recovery packages, are in line with ambitious climate policy and action, resetting economies on paths that are more climate-friendly.

Envisioning a sustainable and just Earth for a resilient world, we urgently call on the international community to utilize necessary efforts to protect and support the most vulnerable people and communities from the impacts of climate change.

LWF and ELCA call on the international community to:

- Set emissions reduction targets that are ambitious enough and in line with the science to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius;
- Recognize the interconnectivity of health and climate change, ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, and ensure that economic recovery packages include measures to address climate change;
- Recognize protecting the environment and biodiversity as a way to protect human health, including from pandemics;
- Advocate for strong climate finance to address climate impacts and to support innovative solutions by encouraging investment in research and development;
- Advocate for well-financed disaster recovery programs ensuring that post-disaster resources reach everyone impacted — especially those with lower incomes;
- Develop tools to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of food systems;
- Continue to affirm effective initiatives that do not deplete the Earth but sustain us all and seek new ways to reduce the injustices of hunger and poverty.

The Lutheran World Federation is a global communion of 148 churches in the Lutheran tradition, representing over 75 million Christians in 99 countries. The LWF acts on behalf of its member churches in areas of ecumenical and interfaith relations, theology, humanitarian assistance, human rights, communication and the various aspects of mission and development.

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