



EUROPEAN LAUDATO SI' ALLIANCE (ELSiA) GUIDING REFLECTIONS ON THE 27TH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (COP27) – NOVEMBER 2022

“(St.)Francis helps us to see that an integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology and take us to the heart of what it is to be human. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever he would gaze at the sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. He communed with all creation, even preaching to the flowers, inviting them “to praise the Lord, just as if they were endowed with reason”. His response to the world around him was so much more than intellectual appreciation or economic calculus, for to him each and every creature was a sister united to him by bonds of affection. That is why he felt called to care for all that exists. His disciple Saint Bonaventure tells us that, “from a reflection on the primary source of all things, filled with even more abundant piety, he would call creatures, no matter how small, by the name of ‘brother’ or ‘sister’”. Such a conviction cannot be written off as naive romanticism, for it affects the choices which determine our behaviour. If we approach nature and the environment without this openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled.”

Laudato Si’, chapter 11

Dear leaders of the European Union,

We believe that COP27 is an opportunity to bring to the attention of the whole world the prophetic message of the encyclical *Laudato Si’*, to negotiate agreements, and to analyse the issues on the agenda *with openness to awe and wonder, using the language of fraternity and beauty* when engaged in the negotiations that will take place during this conference.

Pope Francis said recently that COP27 “represents the next opportunity for all to join in promoting the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.”

Catholics around the world are mobilising to strengthen each other’s voices and, as a European network of Catholic organisations, ELSiA would like to call your attention in particular to the outcomes of the African Dialogues¹, and offer some key reflections:

#LeaveFossilFuelsInTheGround

Support *Africa’s transformation of its fossil fuel energy system to one that is powered by renewable energy sources* in order to provide energy fairly and equitably for people while promoting energy sovereignty and protecting the inherent rights of communities and ecosystems. In addition to that, following the European Parliament’s endorsement of the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative (FFNPT), we urge you to promote it within the institutions of the Union, and to use your influence to promote its endorsement at COP27. Furthermore, Cardinal Michael Czerny SJ, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, who has endorsed the FFNPT, said recently: “The planet already is 1.2°C hotter, yet new fossil fuel projects every day accelerate our race towards the

¹ Read here the full communiqué: https://www.cidse.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/EN-The-African-Climate-Dialogues-Communique_final.pdf



precipice.” It is imperative that Europe supports the creation of energy systems that are sustainable and fair, instead of new catastrophic fossil fuel initiatives **at home and abroad**.

#SustainableFoodSystems

Establish a democratic mechanism for the governance of agriculture, land and food systems under the UNFCCC. Make agroecology a prominent theme at COP27 and in any follow-up decision of the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture, as it offers clear co-benefits when addressing food insecurity and the impacts of climate change. Europe is called to reform its agriculture policy too; agroecology should become mainstream in Europe and the Common Agriculture Policy should reflect that by designing a subsidies’ scheme that promotes it at home and upholds it when negotiating agreements and implementing cooperation programmes with the rest of the world.

#ClimateFinanceNow

The Global North must pay the ecological debt it owes to the Global South.

The EU should lead by example and advocate for debt relief, provide climate finance in the form of grants rather than loans, and scale up funds, doubling current provisions, to achieve a balance between mitigation and adaptation². The EU should influence the other parties to move in the same direction and lead the way from **pledge to implementation of the promised funds**.

#payup4LossAndDamage

Recognise loss and damage as the third pillar of responding to climate change alongside mitigation and adaptation.

Establish a loss and damage finance facility at COP27 funded by penalties levied against private and public sector polluters based on well-defined measurements including from public sources.

Europe can no longer avoid the implementation of the “polluters pay principle” to remedy losses and damages domestically and abroad, particularly in countries that have contributed the least to pollution yet suffer the worst consequences. These countries are entitled to compensations for loss and damage and Europe should acknowledge its responsibilities and pay its dues.

ELSiA hopes that the EU will be a leading force of transformation of the international climate change governance and that negotiations will be held with the best interest of all living beings and our Common Home at heart.

Our prayers will be with our brothers and sisters who suffer due to climate change as well as with you and with all the decision-makers at the conference to inspire the courageous outcomes that are urgently needed.

Sincerely,

The European Laudato Si’ Alliance

ELSiA is a network of Catholic organisations working together to bring the encyclical letter Laudato Si’ to life. Founded in 2019, it is currently composed by seven members: Caritas Europa, CIDSE, COMECE, Don Bosco International, JESC, Justice and Peace Europe and the Laudato Si’ Movement.

² https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021_10_add1_adv.pdf