

Laudato Si' and the Path to COP 22: September 28, 2016

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On 28 September 2016, I attended a Joint Consultation on ‘Laudato Si’ and the Path to COP 22’ organised by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences. The meeting took place at the Casina Pio IV in the Vatican. One of the speakers was Prof. Ramanathan Veerabhadran, the Professor of Applied Ocean Sciences and director of the Center for Atmospheric Sciences at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego. In his opinion "the effect of greenhouse gases on global warming is the most important environmental issue facing the world today."¹ He spoke on “the Encyclical and the current horizons of scientific research.” Dr Hoesung Lee, the current Chair of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), spoke about the IPCC process since it was set up in 1988 and the concerns which will appear in the 6th Assessment Report which is due in 2018. In the wake of the Paris agreement in December 2015 he commented that science and economics are very clear: “we must act now” on climate change, and in doing so “we can build a better world”. In the afternoon, Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University in New York spoke about ‘The Radical Vision of *Laudato Si*’. As the meeting ended, Pope Francis dropped by Casina Pio IV and greeted each participant. Then he spoke passionately about the need to protect our environment as God’s creation.

At the end of the meeting the group released this document in preparation for the COP 22 which will take place in Marrakech from November 7 to

¹ "[Global Warming](#)" (PDF). Retrieved 10 October 2008.

18th 2016. “ The Paris Climate Agreement is historic. For the first time since the signing of the 1992 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), all countries have agreed to act in order to protect the planet. The core goals include: (1) keeping warming to “well below 2-degrees C” and “to pursue efforts to keep below 1.5-degree C”; (2) enabling countries to adapt to the adverse impacts already underway; and (3) ensuring the flow of fair and equitable financing to achieve the climate goals.

COP22 in Marrakech, Morocco, November 7-18, 2016, will be the first meeting of the Parties since the Paris Agreement. We urge all the signatories of the Paris Agreement to move forward together with determination, urgency, shared values and a common global plan. We emphasize the following opportunities and priorities.

First, the Paris Climate Agreement should be understood as a pillar of the world’s overarching commitment to integral and sustainable human development, including the universally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the words of *Laudato Si*’, the SDGs and the Paris Climate Agreement reflect the need for “one world with a common plan.”

Second, the Paris Climate Agreement should be put into force in 2016, with countries representing at least 55 percent of global emissions depositing their instruments of ratification this year;

Third, all signatory countries should insist on the universality of the agreement. The Paris Agreement is a common plan for our common home.

No individual country should absent itself from the timely ratification and implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement;

Fourth, all countries should participate in COP22 with the firm intention of adopting Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to 2030 and Long-Term Low-Greenhouse Gas Emission Development Strategies (LEDS) to 2050 that are sufficiently bold to achieve the limits on global warming in the Paris Agreement;

Fifth, technical experts from all signatory countries should participate in the Low-Emission Solutions Conference (LESC) at COP22, hosted by the Government of Morocco for the purpose of disseminating best practices and ideas on how best to achieve the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

Sixth, all signatory countries should professionally address the key roles of their national energy systems, national agriculture systems, and land use policies, in order to implement the Paris Agreement objectives;

Seventh, in implementing national land use policies, governments, business, and civil society should aim for several crucial objectives: to end deforestation; restore degraded lands; protect biodiversity and ecosystems; and crucially, to empower indigenous populations who are often the stewards of the threatened lands;

Eighth, all countries should agree in good faith to cooperate on adequate Climate Financing, with the high-income countries honoring their long-standing pledges in transparency and sincerity to provide at least \$100

billion per year by 2020 to the low-income countries to finance energy transformation, land restoration, and adaptation and resilience;

Ninth, all signatories should honor the collective commitment to implement international mechanisms for “Losses and Damages,” and notably to compensate countries that are suffering extreme weather and climate events (including heat waves, epidemic diseases, rising sea levels, droughts, floods, and extreme tropical cyclones) linked to human-induced climate change.

Tenth, all stakeholders, including governments, business, and civil society, should promote the education of today’s young people in the sciences and ethical values of integral human development and sustainable development. All educational institutions should strive to update their curricula and teaching programs to educate young people in these great challenges.”