



Climate Stories

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0. Featured Story- Fiji



Flooding in Ba Town, Fiji. [2020]

“For the past number of months [2020], the threat of floods and/or hurricanes had been talked of in the local media, and a number of false alarms came and went. However, the second half of December [2020] marked a seriousness in the government warnings, and we began to notice the signs of **extra-hot and -calm days, sea birds in places where they normally aren’t**, and then **a definite pick up in wind**. Schools were ordered closed on Friday December 11th, and we were told to prepare for a Category 5 super typhoon called Yasa. There was widespread panic in Ba, because we had been so devastated by a similar TC5 ‘Winston’ in 2016, and we were told we were in the direct path for landfall. 2021 then rang in, and we were once again warned of an impending hurricane, called Ana. She began life as a Tropical Depression and Ba was ‘in the direct line’. We closed schools, offices and suspended Masses again. This time, the big effect for us was flooding. The town is situated around the Ba River, a low lying muddy estuary, which meets the sea at our villages of Votua and Nawaqarua.

The playing fields of our St Teresa’s Primary School were inundated, and so was the Parish Flea Market, on the other side of Elevuka Creek. Votua Catholic School’s 2nd floor once again became an evacuation centre for many families. I was able to get there only yesterday (February 1st, 2021), taking long detours because of two fallen electricity poles, and walking the last half mile by foot to the village. The situation in our major hill village of Navala is worse. After 70 years, their concrete bridge was swept away, and until the government finds the money to fix it, we will have to wade, swim or sit in a tyre, guided over by the villagers, in order to say Mass there. Our parish hall has now twice hosted ‘climate evacuees’ (during Yasa, 67 people for 3 days, during Ana, 10 people for 4 days)

We feel for our fellow Columban parishioners in Labasa, Vanua Levu, who have suffered much worse than us in these last 2 weather patterns. It seems this truly is the “new normal” for mission in Fiji (at least for the 6 rainy months of every year). May God help us to face it with our people.”

-Columban priest serving from Ba, Fiji, February 2021



1. Canada

1.1 Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada

“As a coastal community, we’re concerned about a rise in sea levels, more frequent tropical storms, with higher winds and huge sea waves in our Atlantic Ocean that I have never seen before. The loss of cod fish, wild salmon, and now the reductions in crab and other fish means our dependence on the ocean for needed protein is no longer sustainable. We’re also concerned with the acidification of seas, the warming of the oceans, and the threatening collapse of the Ocean’s current.

[I hope that our negotiators] are awakened people, conscious of the pollution of air and water.[I hope] they have a sincere desire to speak truth and put in place a definite and extensive plan, with committed obligation.

We also need all the new oil and gas to stay in the ground. Put to rest, once and for all, to fossil fuels.”

- Mary (Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada)

2. Gambia

2.1 Foni Kansala, Gambia

“Climate change has had, and will continue to have, significant economic costs in the Gambia. Agriculture in the Gambia is almost entirely rain-fed cash and food crops production. The economic impact of droughts include increased food insecurity, loss of export earnings over the short-term, and increase of rural-urban migration in search of alternative livelihood.

Windstorms also have an impact, and are a common phenomena in the Gambia, particularly at the beginning and towards the end of the rainy season. The windstorms sometimes become even more severe, resulting in greater loss of life and property.

Floods and storm water are more common in urban areas. Inadequate storm water management systems have increased the frequency of flooding in urban areas and sometimes result in loss of human lives and properties.

We need COP26 negotiators to fund adaptive and mitigation capacity in the Gambia. It needs to be fast-tracked, notably in relation to development of storm water management in the greater Banjul Area and other urban growth centers. We also need to develop integrated land use plans for wetland ecosystems, and adopt low-carbon technologies.”

-Anonymous (Foni Kansala, Gambia)



3. Germany

3.1 Duisburg, Germany

"The effects of climate change create a tremendous impact, not only to my country, the Philippines, but to the whole world as well. It's devastating and alarming to see how we suffer from ecological degradation. Almost every month, we have typhoons, flash floods, and landslides. In other countries, forest fires and flash floods are also common. When this happens, a lot of people die and their properties are lost.

It's also heartbreaking to see thousands of people die suddenly and unexpectedly because of Covid. We always want to further economic development, but we forget to see the effect it has on the whole Universe. Our Earth is groaning in pain. Please, listen to what the majority of suffering people and our Mother Earth are saying.

I am hopeful that COP26 negotiators will tackle the issue of how to restore and nurture the beauty of Mother Earth. I hope that starting this year, all industrial companies will start to zero down the problem of carbon dioxide emission.

-Anonymous (Duisburg, Germany/Philippines)

4. FIJI

4.1 Fiji

"I [am] from Fiji, a small island nation in the vast Pacific Ocean. Most people don't even know that it exists because it's just a tiny drop on the world's largest ocean. My life and my community's life is greatly impacted by climate change because our livelihood and survival greatly depends on the land and sea. I was born and raised near the sea, and we were taught to appreciate and value God's gifts to all living beings.

For the last 5-10 years, I can see and experience the negative impacts of climate change in our village.

First, the flooding of about one third of our village during high tide is a problem that my parents never experienced 20 years ago.

Second, natural disasters such as cyclones and flooding are now annual occurrences, whereas 20-30 years ago those natural disasters struck every 5-10 years. These annual disasters affect our livelihood by destroying our cash crops. Lastly, crops and seafood are not abundant anymore due to the sudden changes in the weather pattern.

I want COP26 negotiators and the world to know that our small country in the Pacific Ocean matters too. We have as much right to this earth as the big and highly developed countries do. They need to slow down, think, and take responsibility for their actions.

-Paulo (Ovalau, Fiji)



4.2 FIJI

“For six months of the year, we live in fear of tropical cyclones and flooding. The plight of the Pacific Islands, and other vulnerable parts of the world, must be at the centre of all decision making. Just as the science came together to fast track the production of COVID vaccines, there is NO reason world leaders cannot do the same to protect our common home.”

-Patrick (Fiji)

5. Honduras

5.1 Yoro, Honduras

The two hurricanes that occurred in Honduras ETA and IOTA caused us an unprecedented impact, now we are more vulnerable, especially due to the lack of attention from our government, this attitude leaves us in greater poverty and our territory with less possibilities.

[I ask cop negotiators to] act with the same urgency felt by the inhabitants who experience the threat on a daily basis. That they help or free environmental leaders imprisoned for their fight in the care and protection of rivers and mountains, imprisoned for almost two years unjustly.

My hope is that, perhaps with pressure from the UN, the authorities will take seriously what many places in Honduras are suffering from climate change.

Los dos huracanes que acontecieron en Honduras ETA y IOTA nos causaron un impacto sin precedentes, ahora estamos mas vulnerables sobre todo por la falta de atencion de nuestro gobierno, esta actitud nos deja en mayor pobreza y nuestro territorio con menos posibilidades.

Que actuen con la misma urgencia que sienten los habitantes que viven la amenaza diariamente. Que ayuden o liberen a los lideres ambientalistas encarcelados por su lucha en el cuidado y proteccion de los rios y motañas, presos ya casi dos años injustamente.

Mi esperanza es que, quizas con la presión de La ONU, las autoridades tomaran en serio lo que ya dias muchos lugares en Honduras están sufriendo por causa del cambio climático.

-Rosa Maria (Yoro, Honduras)

6. India

6.1 India

“Hotter summers are a big problem here in India. One thing countries should do is stop factory farming practices, stop intensive animal farming, stop industrial livestock production. Meat production is one of the biggest causes of deforestation. We can all adopt a vegan or vegetarian diet and consume less overall.”

-Rajkamal (India)



6.2 India

“[In my country,] climate change in the rural areas [...] people suffer because of drought, untimely rains, extreme heat and cold and water scarcity.

[I hope COP26 negotiators] develop doable actions for people at all levels like saving water, using electricity and also helping the poor and disadvantaged in the remote poor areas.”

-Lifa (Delhi, India)

7. Ireland

7.1 Ireland

“Personally, I carry the anguish of the effect of climate crisis on the poorest people in our world, and also on the loss of so much of our native biodiversity.

I hope COP26 negotiators will help us make a just transition from use of fossil fuel by 2030. Implement the Paris agreement goals! Address the loss of biodiversity to ensure an end to the extinction of many species. Lead by education and vision so that people may realise the looming catastrophe and how we may avert it.”

-Margaret (Ireland)

8. Italy

8.1 Airuno, Italy

“We live in the hills, the violent rains flood our homes and gardens. The woods above the village are not protected and apart from the work of some maintenance volunteers they are cut for wood indiscriminately. Fruit plants struggle to bloom.

[We ask COP26 negotiators to:] tax on emissions and zeroing of fossil financing. Right to water as a vital good and not as a commodity. Stop public funding for agro-industry that destroys biodiversity and soil fertility and support food production for a living. Total blockage of the exploitation of native forests in the Amazon and Indonesia. I hope soon that the resources of the earth and also our lives will not be sacrificed for the accumulation of money of the few.”

“Noi viviamo in collina, le piogge violente allagano le nostre case e gli orti. I boschi sopra il paese non sono tutelati e a parte il lavoro di alcuni volontari che fanno manutenzione vengono tagliati per la legna indiscriminatamente. Le piante da frutto faticano a fiorire.

Tassa sulle emissioni e azzeramento finanziamento al fossile. Diritto all'acqua come bene vitale e non come merce. Stop ai finanziamenti pubblici all'agroindustria che distrugge la biodiversità e la fertilità del suolo e sostegno alla produzione alimentare per vivere. blocco totale dello sfruttamento delle foreste native in Amazzonia e Indonesia. Spero presto che le risorse della terra e anche le nostre vite non vengano sacrificate per l'accumulo di denaro di pochi.”

-Aurora (Airuno, Italy)



9. Kenya

9.1 Lamu, Kenya

“Climate change has resulted in a pattern change of the weather seasons. There is an experience of high heat, no rains or very little rain that does not sustain plants or farming. Animals and people are perishing due to starvation since they lack food and water. When we are blessed with rains the experience goes to the extreme too for the rains causes floods and equally many people and animals end up perishing in most parts of the country and lots of property destroyed.

I would like to see a stop on use of fossil fuels, a cease in deforestation and more practice of afforestation. The developed countries cause the biggest impact due to high industrialization that leave a lot of gas emission in the atmosphere. The gasses emitted in the air do not remain in these countries alone but moves all over the world affecting every person. We therefore call upon the leaders of these countries to control this in order to reduce negative impact to the developing countries and any other. We need to all join hands and make the earth a better place for everyone.”

-Faustina (Lamu, Kenya)

10. Lesotho

10.1 Lesotho

“Climate change disrupts the life we were used to, like the planting season. Now it snows in spring and when it rains it is much heavier.

We need to fund climate change initiatives and ensure sensitization. Climate change issues should be incorporated in the school curriculum.

I hope COP26 negotiators agree to reduce emissions into the atmosphere. The youth are ready to stand up and teach their communities about adaptation and mitigation.”

-Mabohlale (Lesotho)

11. Madagascar

11.1 Madagascar

“I am living in a rural area, 17km north east of Antananarivo, where because of the decreasing river levels, farmers can not work and produce the quantity of livestock they used to before. Some people use 'slash and burn,' which reduces the forest and is a big threat to very rare and endemic animals living in Madagascar.

I need the government to preserve what's left of our natural forests, by helping poor, rural people with social assistance and by involving them with all local environment protection programs.

I hope that the COP negotiators understand that our future is endangered if we do not act, and that they need to take adequate measures today.”

-Zanarison (Madagascar)



12. Nigeria

12.1 Nigeria

"[My community sees] heat waves, which acts on the body and in turn becomes a vicious circle [...] it is a vicious circle because when the heat is much, one resorts to cooling system which contribute to the global warming. Air pollutions are affecting the human, animals and plants. The first rains have become destructive, burning plants. The pollution of carbon is so much that things in the house, the painted walls and the floor, have been colored black. It is horrific to think of the fact that, all this dark air is being inhaled by humans and animals, and it obstructs the leaves of plants against gaseous exchange.

[I ask COP26 negotiators to] encourage tree planting and put up strict rules against deforestation. Clear up petroleum spillages quickly. Find ways of reducing pollution due to transportation. Encourage recycling and stop the use of non degradable materials for packages.

Words should be put to action as something of urgency!"

Sr Benedicta (Lagos, Nigeria)

13. Pakistan

13.1 Lahore, Pakistan

"As I work in Pakistan, I see the water table decreasing annually and the glaciers melting rapidly with the rise in temperatures. It's estimated this water, which we depend on for the fertile lands, will only last until 2050, a frightening reality for our future children. The water consumed in Pakistan is mostly not pure, so it often causes intestinal diseases.

Please act now because Pakistan is one of the countries most affected by rising temperatures. I hope COP26 negotiators will act urgently as a united body, and give aid to Pakistan to develop more alternative power through solar and to help reduce our use of fossil fuels. We need to work to reduce rising temperatures."

-Michelle (Lahore, Pakistan)

13.2 Sindh, Pakistan

"[We are seeing] increasing temperatures year on year; some severe flooding over recent years causing loss of life and enormous economic loss. The health of the poor is getting much worse, added to poor health care and the age expectancy is dropping.

Poor countries have got to be given financial assistance to help implement measures needed. Coal powered plants need to be phased out. The urgency has got to be grasped; leaders have got to be held accountable and push each other to commit to higher targets and necessary action."

-Liam (Sindh, Pakistan)



14. Peru

14.1 Lima, Peru

“Weather patterns have changed notably and are quite unpredictable. In Lima, where it previously never rained, there is now often rainy weather. The precarious “estera” (woven straw) homes that were very common in the marginalized areas are no longer viable in the rain.

Desertification in some areas of Peru, and landslides and flash floods in other areas, have affected the daily life of the people. Many homes have been destroyed. Air pollution caused by emissions from the increased number of vehicles and industries have increased respiratory problems. Water contamination caused by industrial waste and an increased amount of refuse thrown into the Rimac River, the water source for Lima, has affected the general health of the people, especially in areas with difficult access to clean water.

We need government policies that preserve the Amazon area, as well as respect indigenous lands, languages, customs, and way of life. That means putting a stop to the indiscriminate cutting of whole tropical forest areas, as well as open pit mining and polluting water systems with mercury and other damaging products.

We also need educational and employment opportunities for youth and young adults, and educational and training opportunities for girls and women in order to promote their personal self-worth and dignity.”

-M. Yvonne (Lima, Peru)

15. Philippines

15.1 Rizal, Philippines

“Climate change has made an enormous impact [in] my life, and my community. We have to make some adjustments in the structure of our house, due to the flood that we experience yearly. It also affects our usual living, like in transportation. Tricycles and motorbikes are having a hard time passing by the road due to the flood. It is one of the many scenarios that we experience every rainy season.

I hope COP26 negotiators make a concrete plan for climate mitigation in urban areas. We also need a comprehensive or universal law that will compel all countries to respond to climate change. I'm looking forward to a world where everyone uses renewable resources.”

-Paul (Rizal, Philippines)



15.2 National Capital Region, Philippines

“There has been a lot of destruction in our convents and schools because of extreme weather conditions, like storm surges, floods, typhoons, and earthquakes. Health has also been affected because of extreme heat and allergies, thus affecting work patterns and output as well.

I want COP26 negotiators to take concrete actions to control carbon emissions. Provide measures for waste management and stricter policies against the use of plastics. I don’t want other governments using the Philippines as a dumping ground for their waste.

It is my hope that in COP26, there will be discussions on how to protect the interest of the developing and poor countries who end up carrying the burden of the effects of climate change.”

-Sr. Christine (National Capital Region, Philippines)

16. Sudan

16.1 Sudan

“Here in South Sudan, one difficult reality that people live with is water. The Nile River does not receive treatment to turn it into healthy water. There is no possibility of having this resource as a public service, and so many people must buy the water through tanks that, for the most part, are managed by foreign companies.

Another serious problem is environmental sanitation. There is no environmental sanitation system. We see many places, throughout the city, full of piles of garbage. People burn garbage in their homes or dispose of it in nearby places. There is a very hot climate here and it has been getting stronger, a product of the climate change that we are experiencing.

COP26 negotiators need to commit to reducing carbon dioxide from big companies. They also need to provide social reparations to countries affected by this reality.”

-Ruth (South Sudan)

17. United Kingdom

17.1 Cumbria, UK

“We live in a mountainous area with lots of rainfall. In recent years, rainfall seems to have increased dramatically causing flooding, destroying roads and bridges and cutting off communities.

To make serious pledges to find sustainable energy sources and reduce the amount of CO2 caused by manufacturing.

We should endeavour to leave the world in a better way than we found it for the love Earth's unborn inhabitants.

-Matthew (Cumbria, UK)



18. United States

18.1 Main, USA

"My small city on the coast of Maine is now experiencing overcrowding due to climate migration. This has caused a housing [shortage] and increased poverty levels. And yet, our government is failing to meet the call of duty. As a person of faith we must realize the protection of creation is an act of love. Now is the time to realize our daily bread is at stake."

-David (Maine, USA)

18.2 Wisconsin, USA

"I live in northeast Wisconsin in the United States. It's estimated that the county seat of Brown County, Green Bay, is 3,700 housing units short to meet the needs of households currently spending over 30 percent of their income on housing. Unfortunately, the most affordable lots to build on are in the city's flood plain. At least the housing ministry WILL NOT build in the floodplain. So, floods brought about by extreme weather, brought about by a carbon emission imbalance, prevent available lots from being used to build homes and apartments for lower income people.

The United States must play its part to reduce the negative effects of climate change. Our country needs stronger regulations to support clean energy.

It is my hope that, as a result of COP26, the poorest people in the world will not have to bear the greatest sacrifice as a result of climate change."

-Steve (Wisconsin, USA)

18.3 USA

"Rain storms have gotten more intense, causing flooding in new places. Summer heat has expanded beyond usual summer dates and it's now hotter than it used to be.

As a senior citizen, I'm far more concerned about our children, grandchildren, and future generations. The earth should not be plundered! It should be nurtured and respected. If not, human life will be diminished and eventually not survive. The earth is a gift that gives back to humans only when it is respected and loved."

-Corinne (USA)



18.4 Guam, USA

“Because of climate change, the water temperature in the ocean affects the coral, which in turn affects the life of the reef fish. Fishermen are catching less and less reef fish. This reduction affects our economy and the livelihood of our people. As a result, we have to buy imported reef fish.

Our weather on Guam also shows the effect of climate change. We have two seasons, the dry and the wet. December to May used to be the dry season, and June to November the wet season. Now the wet season runs all the way from May to December. We are experiencing flooding because of these heavy rains. We’re also seeing erratic dry and wet weather.

Our government officials need to stand up regarding climate change, as it’s affecting the daily life of our community.”

-Francine (Guam, USA)

18.5 USA

“In a single week this past August [2021], four events spiked my eco-anxiety.

First was the IPCC report, which makes clear that our window to address climate change is closing. My kids are going to bear witness to catastrophic, climate-related impacts if we do not take action now.

Second is that the heat and humidity are brutal in my community. Our vegetable crops desperately need rain.

Third is that the homeless people I serve at the Free Lunch Program are suffering. I worry that a health crisis -- physical or mental -- is becoming more likely each day.

And finally, one of my colleagues died, along with her father, brother, and sister-in-law, while on vacation in Colorado. Torrential rains caused a flash flood that swept away their cabin.

Climate change is here. Please act. Please use your power to make a difference.

I dream of a future in which fossil fuels are left in the ground, industrialized agriculture is replaced by local food systems, resilient solar micro-grids power communities, rampant consumerism is curbed, and people of all races and regions have clean air, clean water, and the resources needed to thrive.

-Diane (USA)