

Climate Change and Faith Perspectives

*We must be
the change
we want to
see in the
world*

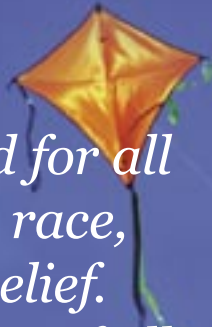
*(Mahatma Gandhi
1869 - 1948)*

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Introduction

The earth is sacred for all regardless of your race, creed, culture or belief. Nature is the source of all living beings, a balance between all organisms, plants and creatures.

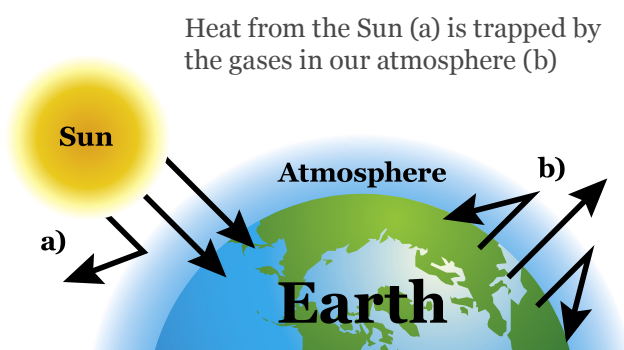


Recent global natural disasters such as the Tsunami, earthquakes, extreme weather conditions such as hurricane Katrina and local floods have left much humanitarian loss, disrupted habitats and may drive many plants and animal species to extinction.

This project is a joint venture with Preston Mela Trust and Faiths4Change to raise our awareness of the dangers of climate change and what actions we need to take as individuals, communities and society, through our beliefs, social and cultural value systems, to protect the planet now and for future generations.

What Causes Climate Change?

Climate change or global warming is caused by **increased levels of carbon dioxide** (CO₂) and other polluting gases in our atmosphere.



The **gases trap heat** by forming a blanket around the Earth - like the glass of a greenhouse.

Once released the greenhouse gases **stay in the atmosphere** for many years. As they build up, the planet's temperature rises.

Faiths and the Environment

Overall faith communities in the Northwest generate between **£90.7 million** and **£94.9 million** per annum to civil society in the Northwest.¹

Worldwide, **85%**² of the population professes a religious alliance, **76.8%**³ within Great Britain. Their presence within local communities is a key tool to tackling climate change and must not be under estimated.

The Religions of the World



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Major_religious_groups

Faith Perspective

Whether particular faiths share beliefs in one creator God or many, the correlation between faiths and the environment is apparent throughout religious scripts, verses and laws. Our focus will be on the following key religions within Lancashire: Bahá'í, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism.



Bahá'í

For every part of the universe is connected with every other part by ties that are very powerful and admit of no imbalance, nor any slackening whatever.

Abdu'l Bahá



Buddhism

As people alive today, we must consider future generations: a clean environment is a human right like any other. It is therefore part of our responsibility towards others to ensure that the world we pass on is as healthy, if not healthier, than we found it.

The Fourteenth Dalai Lama



Christianity

Not only has God given the earth to man, who must use it with respect for the original good purpose for which it was given to him, but man too is God's gift to man. He must therefore respect the natural and moral structure with which he has been endowed.

Pope John Paul I



Hinduism

The air is his breath, the trees are the hairs of his body,
The oceans his waist, the hills and mountains are his bones,
The rivers are the veins of the Cosmic Person,
His movements are the passing of ages.

Srimad Bhagavatam



Islam

The earth has been created for me as a mosque, and as a means of purification

Sahih al-Bukhari



Judaism

Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

King James Version



Sikhism

Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth is the Great Mother of all. Day and night are the two nurses, in whose lap all the world is at play.

Shri Guru Granth Saheb Ji

The Lord is totally pervading the water, the land, and all space. He is contained in the forests as well. (Think) those who do not remember God-how much pain must they suffer!

Shri Guru Granth Saheb Ji





Faith Group Examples of Good Practice Nationally and Locally in the UK: ***How Can You Contribute? 10 Easy Step Guide:***

Finchley Reform Synagogue: Implementation of a recycling initiative: collection and safe disposal of batteries. The Synagogue has seen battery collection rise from 500 to 2000 batteries collected in 2008.

Cheetham Al Hilal Community Project, Manchester: This project has brought together the whole Muslim community to transform a small plot from a waste ground, into a natural environment for outdoor activities, in a way which reflects the cultural diversity of the area.

Khalsa Wood, Nottingham: Khalsa Wood was planted by British Sikhs in 1999 to mark the 300th anniversary of Vaisakhi. This woodland is now used for walks, picnics, ceremonies and meditation by many communities. The Sikh community envisaged that the oak saplings which were planted would enable future generations to visit this woodland.

St Michael and All Angels, Ashton-on-Ribble with St Mark Preston: 'Spiritual' activities aimed towards increased understanding that environmental care is part of the Christian responsibility to care for God's world. With activities including Fairtrade Fortnight, Harvest Festival, One World Week, highlighting environmental issues in Junior Church sessions.
<http://ew.ecocongregation.org/node/747>

If your group would like to get involved in environmental projects:

The Climate Change Fund can be accessed through Lancashire County Council by calling 01772 531257.

Faiths4Change offers faith communities in the Northwest free support to develop and deliver environmental projects in partnership with their local communities. This includes training in Sustainability Audits of faith owned buildings, individual advice from experienced Project Officers and access to Development Fund grants. *To find out more please contact Tom Fyson on 01772 521014 or tom@faiths4change.org.uk*

The following websites also provide advice guidance on saving energy, reducing your carbon footprint, recycling and water saving:

- 1. Consume local, seasonal, organic food**
Keeps money in your local area, creating jobs and businesses locally.
- 2. Use tap water rather than bottled water**
Cut down wasted packaging and product miles.
- 3. Save energy and water**
Buy energy and water efficient appliances.
- 4. Conserving energy**
Make it a part of your daily routine.
- 5. Fit energy-efficient light bulbs**
These use a quarter of the electricity, helping to cut down on greenhouse gases.
- 6. Improve your home insulation**
- 7. Buy recycled and keep recycling**
Save energy and resource costs of getting raw materials from nature and help support and develop the markets for recycled materials.
- 8. Environmental volunteering**
Find your local voluntary, community or faith sector organisation and find out how you can make an invaluable contribution to the community.
- 9. Take up walking, cycling and public transport**
Cuts carbon emissions and reduces air/noise pollution.
- 10. Consider your speed and make your fuel go further**
Driving over 55mph uses considerably more fuel.