



“Industrial waste, the burning of fossil fuels, unrestricted deforestation, the use of certain types of herbicides, coolants and propellants: all of these are known to harm the atmosphere and environment,” he said. “The resulting meteorological and atmospheric changes range from damage to health to the possible future submersion of low-lying lands.”

-Pope John Paul II, 1990

“At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God’s creation and the one human family. It is about protecting both ‘the human environment’ and the natural environment. It is about our human stewardship of God’s creation and our responsibility to those who come after us.”

-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1991

“In facing climate change, what we already know requires a response; it cannot be easily dismissed. Significant levels of scientific consensus — even in a situation with less than full certainty, where the consequences of not acting are serious — justifies, indeed can obligate, our taking action intended to avert potential dangers. In other words, if enough evidence indicates that the present course of action could jeopardize humankind’s well-being, prudence dictates taking mitigating or preventative action... We especially want to focus on the needs of the poor, the weak, and the vulnerable in a debate often dominated by more powerful interests. Inaction and inadequate or misguided responses to climate change will likely place even greater burdens on already desperately poor peoples... Global climate is by its very nature a part of the planetary commons. The Earth’s atmosphere encompasses all people, creatures, and habitats. The melting of ice sheets and glaciers, the destruction of rain forests, and the pollution of water in one place can have environmental impacts elsewhere Responses to global climate change should reflect our interdependence and common responsibility for the future of our planet. Individual nations must measure their own self-interest against the greater common good and contribute equitably to global solutions... the common good requires solidarity with the poor who are often without the resources to face many problems, including the potential impacts of climate change. Our obligations to the one human family stretch across space and time. They tie us to the poor in our midst and across the globe, as well as to future generations.”

-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2001

[T]oday the great gift of [God’s Creation] is exposed to serious dangers and lifestyles which can degrade it. Environmental pollution is making particularly unsustainable the lives of the poor of the world. In dialogue with Christians of various confessions, we must pledge ourselves to take care of creation and to share its resources in solidarity.

-Pope Benedict XVI, 2006

”Environmental protection and the connection between fighting poverty and fighting climate change are important areas for the promotion of integral human development. For this reason, I hope that, pursuant to the XVII session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention on Climate Change recently concluded in Durban, the international community will prepare for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (“Rio + 20”) as an authentic ‘family of nations’ and thus with a great sense of solidarity and responsibility towards present and future generations.”

-Pope Benedict XVI, 2012

“I would like to ask all those who have positions of responsibility in economic, political and social life, and all men and women of goodwill: let us be protectors of creation, protectors of God’s plan inscribed in nature, protectors of one another and of the environment.”

- Pope Francis, 2013