



Greater Bendigo Faith Statement in support of the Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap

As representatives from different faith and religious traditions in Greater Bendigo, we stand together to express deep concern for the consequences of climate change on the earth and its people, all entrusted, as our faiths reveal, to our common care. Climate change is indeed a threat to life, a precious gift we have received and that we need to care for.

We acknowledge the overwhelming scientific evidence that climate change is human-induced and that, without global and inclusive action towards mitigation and unless fully addressing its fundamental causes, its impacts will continue to grow in intensity and frequency. At the same time, we are ready to dialogue with those who remain sceptical.

In our communities and thanks to the media, we see the manifestations of climate change everywhere. From our brothers and sisters around the world, we hear about its effects on people and nature. We recognize that these effects disproportionately affect the lives, livelihoods and rights of poorer, marginalized and therefore most vulnerable populations, including First Nations peoples. When those who have done the least to cause climate change are the ones hardest hit, it becomes an issue of injustice. Equitable solutions are urgently needed.

As faith communities, we are committed to standing beside the poor and vulnerable. We recognize that climate change stands today as a major obstacle to the eradication of poverty. Severe weather events exacerbate hunger, cause economic insecurity, force displacement, and prevent sustainable development. The climate crisis is about the survival of humanity on planet earth, and action must reflect these facts with urgency.

As communities in Bendigo, we are only too aware that these impacts of climate exist not just overseas, but here in Greater Bendigo. We have seen the impacts of flooding and bushfires on our communities, and we share concerns about the projected future impacts of climate change on Greater Bendigo, including reductions in rainfall, hotter days and maximum temperatures, longer periods of extreme heat in summer and longer fire seasons along with more frequent extreme events. These events will also impact our ability to support those experiencing poverty in our region, and to improve equity and wellbeing in our community.

Therefore, as faith leaders, we commit ourselves to the promotion of disaster risk reduction, adaptation, low carbon development, climate change education, curbing our own consumption patterns and reducing our use of fossil fuels. Based on our spiritual beliefs and

our hope for the future, we commit to stimulating consciences and encouraging our peers and communities to consider such measures with urgency.

We are encouraged by the work of the Greater Bendigo Climate Collaboration to help all sectors of our community to come together towards achieving zero emissions by 2030. We acknowledge both the challenges and opportunities this challenge represents, and we are excited by the collaboration's vision for Greater Bendigo as a zero emissions city, and for the benefits a renewable energy powered economy will bring our community, including jobs, improved health and strengthening our communities, local business innovation and competitiveness. We know that alone climate change can feel overwhelming and scary but together we can make real change. Bendigo is blessed to be in the position to provide a leadership role in climate action as a large regional city that is smart, collaborative, and has a track record of innovation. We are proud to be part of this community and excited to see what we can achieve together.

And so, in the spirit of hope and prayer, and as religious representatives and citizens in our community, we commend the Greater Bendigo Zero Emissions Roadmap to our community, and commit to supporting and implementing it, and encouraging our faith communities to do the same.

Based on the statement produced and signed at the Interfaith Summit on Climate Change 2014, hosted by the WCC and Religions for Peace in New York. [View here.](#)

STATEMENT SIGNATORIES

Name

Organisation/Position