

Reykjavik Declaration on the Climate Change Crisis

Proposed by the Boards of the European Humanist Federation, Humanists International, and Young Humanists International

Human beings are part of the natural world, but have a disproportionate effect on the global environment and biodiversity. Throughout history, our species has used the natural world to increase individual and collective wellbeing, and the impact we have is no longer sustainable. Policies adopted by governments should be informed by scientific findings. Governments need to respect the overwhelming conclusions reached by the international scientific community, including that the overuse of natural resources and the increase in greenhouse gas emissions is driving catastrophic climate change, threatening the diversity of life on Earth and the sustainability of human societies. Indeed, extreme scenarios pose an existential risk to humanity. The world must act with urgency and in a globally coordinated way to reduce and prevent human contributions to climate change, to mitigate climate impacts and adapt to them.

We recognise:

- The overwhelming scientific consensus that human beings are contributing to the climate change trend of global warming;
- That climate change will adversely affect human communities, non-human animals and natural ecosystems;
- The threat to ecosystems caused by land-use and resource extraction, including commercial deforestation and unsustainable farming;
- That investment in new renewable energy technology must happen alongside a massive reduction in the use of carbon-intensive fuels, such as coal, oil and gas;
- That all countries need to work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to preserve habitats and species.
- That economic development resulting from industrialisation has historically advantaged countries as they develop, and that wealthier countries should assist developing countries in meeting environmental obligations.

We support:

- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the resulting work of the 2017 Paris Agreement, and the 2017 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP23);
- The urgent work of the scientific, engineering and activist communities to research and deploy new technologies and strategies to mitigate the risks to civilisation and biodiversity;
- The need for a global transition to new ways of using resources and new means of generating energy that will be socially and environmentally sustainable.

We call upon all humanist organizations, civil society in general, and all individuals around the world to:

1. Highlight to their governments and regional bodies the need for urgent action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make land-use and resource extraction sustainable, and to protect and conserve wild habitats;
2. Foster a social and political commitment to urgent action and long-term policymaking to mitigate and prevent climate change.

This policy supersedes the following Humanists International policy statements, and they will therefore be archived:

1. *'Ecology'*, Humanists International, Regional Congress, Australia, 2000
2. *'The extermination of birds of passage'*, Humanists International, World Humanist Congress, Amsterdam, Netherlands, 1974
3. *'Ecology'*, Humanists International, Executive Committee, 1971