



## Considerations on “Laudato Si’” and the Path to COP22 in Marrakech

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In its first year, Pope Francis' Encyclical *Laudato Si'* has had a huge role in connecting religions, countries, and people on the need of understanding and addressing together environmental and social problems.

The Encyclical has been a really powerful message to humanity which has deeply impressed and moved many people. Pope Francis speaks to all people of good will: of course, to Catholic believers first of all; moreover, the ecumenical aspect was particularly stressed, as well as the search for dialogue and alliance with all people of good will. As if to say to all of us that concern for the fate of our “Common Home” must unite all humanity. The Encyclical has called us also to seize the profound link between the environment and the social aspects: this aspect has been already in every true work for nature conservation, but the Pope has turned it in a real moral challenge.

The power of moral inspiration of the Encyclical helped also in making the “Care for Our Common Home” an integral part of good politics, because you cannot aim for a more equitable development without securing the basis of life on Earth, ensuring that Planet and ecosystems are not disrupted by effects of human activities, ensure fair distribution of resources among people, countries and generations.

Pope Francis' pastoral letter arrived in a crucial year, encouraging the meeting of peoples and countries on the perspective of sustainable development and in addressing the dramatic climate challenge: having helped in building this common ground, in years in which emergencies, crisis and competitions are digging deep rifts between countries and within countries, it has been a terrific result. It helped in building bridges and trust among nations in the very difficult situation the world is experiencing, helping to achieve the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Much more remains to do if the Paris Agreement is to live up to its potential to galvanize global climate action and to usher the deep socio-economic transformation necessary to align development trajectories around the world with the agreed temperature limits. The current actions and pledges, including those within the INDCs (national targets) submitted under the Paris Agreement, are not setting us on a trajectory to limit warming to stay below 1.5°C, or even 2°C. The current aggregate ambition does bend the emissions curve, but will still lead to around a 3°C increase. Likewise, adaptation efforts are not yet being implemented at a scale commensurate with the global challenge that we face, and finance flows are yet to align in scale and purpose with the transformation required. It is clear that global collective ambition – in mitigation, adaptation and finance – must be ramped up by all – both state and non-state actors working in cooperation – and that this needs to happen urgently if we are to stand a chance at staying below 1.5°C.

In addition, the specific rules and modalities of the Paris Agreement to be developed within the UNFCCC will be critical for lending clarity to the broad framework for global and national climate policies and actions, and providing confidence that individual country and sectoral efforts are contributing to ambitious and fair global efforts. The so-called “rulebook” needs to be clarified quickly if it is to keep pace with the urgency for action and guide the next global moment for an ambition surge - the “facilitative dialogue” to be convened in 2018.

COP22 is critical to maintaining political focus on this crucial and urgent task at hand, to demonstrate ongoing momentum, and to consolidating and strengthening the existing global, rules-based climate regime by progressing on work mandated from Paris.

As the Pope already did in the message for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, it is really important to recall the governments to the duty to respect the commitments they have undertaken and businesses to do their part responsibly. But also ask citizens to mobilize to demand that this happens and “indeed to advocate for even more ambitious goals”.

Multilateral institutions and other informal fora should also consider parallel policy and economical levers in order to help in the consumption pattern change and the phase out of fossil fuels. In this sense, SDGs can become an essential tool for addressing equity and environmental challenges together. The current spiral of

consumption and growth has now reached the limit beyond which there are incalculable harm to regenerative capacity of ecosystems. This puts at risk the very existence of human civilization, but in the immediate leads to marked inequalities in the distribution of resources and therefore to social conflicts and conflicts between and within Countries.

We should also be clear about the fact that the technology is not enough to limit climate change, but that technological change is necessary and essential. We need to phase out fossil fuels. However, renewables can meet the demand for energy for all only if accompanied by an efficient use and especially by maximum saving of energy and resources. It is an epochal change in attitude, not only in technological tools, what we need.

Time, both in terms of urgent action and long term vision, ambition and cooperation are the keys for making the Paris Agreement a successful tool without forgetting that the real objective is limiting global warming, the sufferings of the people, the disruption of the Planet