

# Faith Statement on Climate Change and Our Relationship to the Earth

Tallahassee Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Approved at Business Meeting on November 11, 2018

**I**t is our experience and testimony that the Light, Life, and Love and Wisdom of God calls us to preserve and protect the holy creation of which we are a part. It is contrary to the Spirit of God to waste or exploit nature due to human greed or vanity. We are called to be good stewards of the Earth, to live simply and sustainably, and with care and reverence for all creation, preserving the Earth's abundance for the glory of God so that future generations have the opportunity to share in this testimony and experience.

**T**herefore, we call on all members of the U.S. Congress, state legislatures, local governments, and the President, governors, and mayors to uphold and enact laws, regulations, and policies that protect our natural environment from pollution, habitat loss, biodiversity disruptions, and climate change.

**W**e ask you to uphold the integrity of our environmental agencies and protect public land, water, and air. The Earth's environment is a shared responsibility; we believe that it is the responsibility of government to help us preserve it for future generations and defend it against exploitation by private economic interests and short-term political considerations.

**U**rgent action is needed now if we are to avoid the most catastrophic impacts of climate change. Climate change threatens functionally all life on Earth as increased carbon emissions rapidly change the relatively stable climate Earth has experienced for some 10,000 years. Glaciers are melting, seas are rising, and ecosystems are shifting, sometimes dying. Disruptions caused by a warming and more chaotic climate, with sometimes stronger seasonal weather changes allow for more pests and diseases

and are causing societal disruption in many parts of the world. Our extractive-carbon-based economy is threatening everything, impacting our food and water supplies, and causing flooding of coastal and inland communities. The living systems of Earth, with involved nuances and complications, are being challenged in ways seldom, if ever, experienced in the geological past. Something amazing is being destroyed by human agency.

**W**e ask our government to support society's transition to clean energy sources and redirect subsidies from fossil fuel industries to support displaced workers and communities impacted by the transition to clean energy. Basic human rights include access to clean water, adequate food sources, medical care, and a common share of energy and material resources. Climate change is affecting each negatively, and the effects will increase in the immediate future.

**R**enewable energy is the energy of the future. Countries and communities around the world are proving that alternative energy and sustainable practices are not only viable but can be a boon to economies. Clean, affordable, and sustainable sources of energy are now readily available and comparable or cheaper in cost than fossil fuels. Solar and wind power installation and maintenance efforts create more jobs than fossil fuel extraction and refining industries.

**I**t is our testimony to the world that research and planning can evolve industrial practices and transportation and distribution systems that will lead to more equitable use of resources in an environment of relative climatic stability. We pray a reverential awe for life will inform policies and practices.



*"It would go a long way to caution and direct people in their use of the world, that they were better studied and knowing in the Creation of it. For how could [they] find the confidence to abuse it, while they should see the great Creator stare them in the face, in all and every part of it?"*

—William Penn, 1693