

## Africa Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN)

AEFJN - A Bridge Linking Africa and Europe

AEFJN is a faith-based International Network present in Africa and in Europe, established in 1988.

AEFJN promotes economic justice between the European Union and sub-Saharan Africa so that the people of Africa may look forward to a better future.

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AEFJN works on food sovereignty (land grabbing), exploitation of natural resources, access to quality medicines, small arms control, trade agreements, and climate change.

### AEFJN and Climate Change

\* AEFJN asks European Union (EU) governments to stop promoting of agrofuels as they encourage land grabbing in Africa.

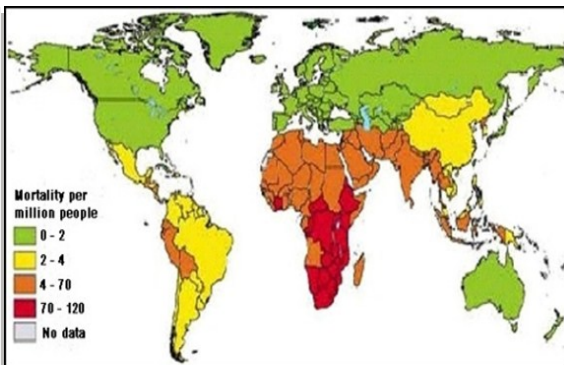
\* AEFJN promotes effective solutions such as family farming and food sovereignty.

### Our Faith Invites Us to Take Action on Climate Change

Poverty is exacerbated by climate change. Christians are invited by Jesus to show true solidarity and to protect the life and dignity of every human being. (Mt 25, 45) **'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did it for me.'** Christians should reconsider their lifestyles and adopt behaviours that protect the planet's resources, which are gifts from God.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- ◇ Find and circulate information.
- ◇ Join a group working on climate issues.
- ◇ Promote family farming.
- ◇ Reduce your energy consumption. What can you do about lighting, insulation, transport, food products, waste, and recycling?



Estimated deaths due to climate change in 2000, based on comparison with 1961-1991 climate (Source: WHO)

### FIND OUT MORE

AEFJN <http://www.aefjn.org/index.php/375.html>

JPIC [http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN Integrity of Creation](http://jpicformation.wikispaces.com/EN+Integrity+of+Creation)

CLIMATE JUSTICE NOW! <http://www.climate-justice-now.org/>

CLIMATE JUSTICE ACTION <http://www.climate-justice-action.org/>



## Climate Change

Climate is changing. Africans are already profoundly affected by rising temperatures. Global warming causes more frequent and stronger floods, droughts and storms, that change the living conditions of humans, plants and animals. This has serious consequences on agriculture, fishing and on peoples' daily life, forcing some to migrate. However, effective solutions are slow in coming while futile ones abound.

### Humans influence climate change

Changing climates are nothing new but human activity during the last two centuries has helped accelerate global warming. Industrial development, transport, deforestation and changes in agriculture have increased green-



house gas emissions. The

**Greenhouse gases (GHG)** allow sunlight to enter the atmosphere freely. They absorb part of the sun's radiation, trap the heat in the atmosphere and reflect it back to the earth, and so the planet gets hotter.

current economic system encourages excessive production and consumption as well as the trading and transport of goods around the world.

### Consequences for Africa

Africa has contributed the least to greenhouse gas emissions but will be among the regions worst affected by global warming.

Higher temperatures change the conditions for plants, animals and humans – and that results in a change in geographical distribution.

While some regions benefit from a more hospitable climate, the great majority will face more extreme living conditions and natural resources like water will become scarcer. This will lead to a reduction in agricultural production which will threaten food sovereignty and increase poverty. In turn, these are likely to increase forced migration and conflicts.

## Climate Injustice in Africa

While rich countries are responsible for most of the climate change, it is the poorest countries, which are least responsible, that have to bear most of the impact. Yet industrialized countries are unwilling to reduce their emissions quickly enough.

Africa has to adapt to climate change at a much faster rate and on a bigger scale than rich countries, but without the resources and technology needed.



The ice cover of Mount Kilimanjaro (Tanzania) in 1913 and in 2000. The ice cover has declined by 26% since 2000.

### Key facts

- ⇒ Between 75 and 250 million people across Africa could face more severe water shortages by 2020. (IPCC, 2007)
- ⇒ Lake Chad has shrunk by 75% in about 35 years. (NASA)
- ⇒ 20 to 30% of plant and animal species may disappear if the increase in temperature is maintained at + 1.5 °C - 2.5 °C above the temperature of 1990 (IPCC, 2007)

## Urgent Solutions are Needed

Only immediate implementation of effective solutions will avoid a higher level of warming, whose consequences would be difficult to combat. In Africa, where 70 to 80% of people depend on agriculture, this is particularly urgent.

**Examples of mitigating measures:** introducing drought resistant crops, improving shelter, changing farming techniques to ensure stable food supplies, planting trees and helping communities find new ways of earning a living without depending on the land.



## Real Solutions

Greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced in order to reduce global warming. This requires a **reduction in energy consumption**. For this, a change in the dominant model of production and consumption is needed, leading to changes in industry, transport and agriculture. Ultimately this will demand a change of lifestyle.

**Sustainable family farming** is an answer to climate change. It emits few GHG and absorbs part of them. It uses little water and preserves the ecosystem and the fertility of topsoil. Industrial agriculture, on the other hand, causes high levels of GHG emissions and destroys the ecosystems, contributing to global warming.



African governments are asking for **technical and financial support** to cope with the impacts of climate change.

## False Solutions

Industrialized countries, which are historically responsible for climate change, are slow to reduce their GHG emissions as this is expensive and requires life style changes. A number of false solutions have been promoted to allow the current wasteful status quo to continue.

Agrofuels (fuels made from plants, e.g. sugar cane, corn, jatropha) are often also called "biofuels". They are promoted as an answer to climate change but in fact endanger food sovereignty and biodiversity in Africa and encourage land grabbing.

**Carbon markets** are virtual markets whose aim is to reduce GHG emissions by giving producers permits to emit a certain amount of polluting gases. These permits can be bought and sold on the carbon market. Several industrial sectors received free permits from their governments. However, the market is structured in such a way that companies can continue polluting at no significant extra cost, thus rendering the policy ineffective.

Furthermore, the trade in carbon permits has led to clean air becoming a marketable commodity. The bottom line is carbon emissions need to be reduced not traded.