

U.S. Bishops' Domestic Chairman Expresses Support of Executive Orders Protecting the Environment

February 3, 2021

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden signed executive orders during his first week in office addressing climate change and the care for our common home. Archbishop Paul S. Coakley of Oklahoma City, Chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, expressed support for several of the new administration's environmental priorities:

“In his encyclical *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis presented Christians and all peoples with an integral ecology oriented towards the common good, drawing on the longstanding tradition of Catholic social teaching and rooted in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He warned us of the danger of a ‘green rhetoric’ that often coexists with economic privilege and comfort, emphasizing the need to ‘hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.’

“President Biden's environmental executive orders resonate deeply with an integral ecology that listens to the ‘least of these’ (Mt 25:40). Not only do they recommit our nation to robust and integrated climate mitigation policies, but also emphasize other environmental realities that deserve greater attention:

- Climate adaptation and resilience
- Just transition and revitalization of communities reliant on the energy industry
- Environmental justice
- Clean air, clean water and the conservation of lands, ecosystems, and agriculture
- Economic growth, clean infrastructure, and opportunities for workers
- Commitment to the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and to protecting the Amazon rainforest.

“The swift action to restore regulations for which the USCCB previously advocated—including [fuel emissions standards](#), [hazardous air pollutants](#) and the integrity of [National Environmental Policy Act](#)—speak of a commitment to restoring public health and the common home.”

Previous USCCB advocacy and Catholic resources related to these environmental policies may be found at the following links:

- [Convening of Catholic Leaders with Senate Climate Solutions Caucus Co-Chairs](#), Archbishop Paul S. Coakley, October 1, 2020
- [Written Testimony in Support of The American Innovation and Manufacturing Act](#), Archbishop Paul S. Coakley and Bishop David J. Malloy, April 8, 2020
- [Querida Amazonia \(Beloved Amazon\), Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation](#), Pope Francis, February 2, 2020

- [Concern Over New Mercury Rule Expressed by Chairmen of U.S. Bishops' Domestic Justice and Pro-Life Activities Committees; Bishops Call it “Troubling”](#), Bishop Frank J. Dewane and Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann, March 22, 2019
- [Letter to Secretary of State Tillerson in Support of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol](#), Bishop Frank J. Dewane and Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, March 7, 2018
- [Letter to Secretary of State Tillerson Regarding Care for Creation](#), Bishop Oscar Cantú, Bishop Frank J. Dewane, and Mr. Sean L. Callahan, February 17, 2017