How Climate Change impacts Hunger and Poverty

How Organic Agriculture and Agroecology impacts Climate Change

Organic and agroecological farms do not use synthetic pesticides and fertilizers, resulting in 50% less food fuel energy usage and 30% greater biodiversity than that of industrial farms.

For every two acres of organic farmland, 14,000 pounds of carbon dioxide can be removed from the air and absorbed into the soil each year, which is equivalent to removing one car from the road.

Small-scale farmers produce the majority of the world’s food, but occupy less than 25% of the world’s farmland. Giving land back to small-scale farmers, coupled with policies which support local markets and reduce chemical inputs, could reduce GHG emissions by half in a couple of decades.

How Food System impacts Climate Change

Elevated carbon dioxide levels and warmer temperatures will compromise the nutritional content of food.

44-57% of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions come from the global food system: farming, deforestation, processing and packaging, freezing and retail, transportation and waste.

How Climate Change impacts Food System

Climate change could raise the number of people at risk of hunger 10-20% and increase the number of malnourished children by 21% by 2050.

Marginalized and poor populations are particularly vulnerable to climate change due to inequalities in socio-economic status, income and exposure risks.

Wealthy governments, corporations and international financial institutions are promoting solutions to climate change that permit polluters to pollute and place the burden of good environmental practices on poor communities.

Globally modified crops are advertised as climate-resistant, but typically require more water, destroy biodiversity and increase toxins in the environment.

The UN FAO estimates that 18% of annual GHG emissions worldwide are generated from livestock production while others estimate that the contribution is much higher at as much as 51%.

The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy

1. Eat organic food.
2. Eat food that is grown close to where you live.
3. Do not waste food.
4. Grow some of your own food.
5. Support your denomination’s hunger programs.
7. Learn about Food Week of Action and more at pcusa.org/food
8. Attend a PHP webinar or reflection-action trip at pcusa.org/hunger
9. Incorporate food and climate concerns in an Earth Day Sunday worship: pcusa.org/earthday

The PC (USA) Response

The Presbyterian Church (USA) encourages Presbyterians to “be the carbon neutral forces” while simultaneously calling for a just climate solution which would mitigate the worst impacts of increased food prices for people living in poverty, and provide ample adaptation support for the poorest and most affected communities around the globe.

Additionally, many PC(USA) congregations at the national level participate in the Earth Care Congregation program, making commitments to care for God’s earth, as well as taking actions for justice for the earth and all in it.

PHP Empowers Resilient Communities

PHP is working in many countries around the world with small farmers and local organizations to address environmental degradation, land grabbing, economic dislocation, food insecurity and other factors that contribute to the vulnerability of communities in the face of the worsening impacts of climate change. Together we are learning different methods to protect the environment and natural resources, addressing climate change, and advocating for people-centered solutions and alternatives which contribute to ensuring food sovereignty and resilience.

Joining Hands Addresses Systemic Causes

The Joining Hands (JH) Initiative of PHP analyzes how climate change is affecting the most vulnerable populations, promotes community resilience, and advocates for people-centered solutions which address the root causes of climate change as well as its impacts. JH mobilizes people in focused campaigns to tackle these systemic issues both in the United States and abroad as a witness to the wholeness of God’s creation. pcusa.org/joininghands

Take Action

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