



IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

Letter to Pope Francis concerning the planned ecological encyclical

His Holiness Pope Francis
Apostolic Palace
00120 Vatican City

Your Holiness,

We are writing to Your Holiness on behalf of a substantial number of people and faith based organizations who seek to improve human attitudes towards animals and nature for the benefit of all life on Earth.

We eagerly await the follow-up to the excellent Encyclical *Laudato Si'* which already teaches us about the intrinsic value of all God's creatures. We hope that Your Holiness expands further in this document to explore how our interaction with animals and nature is at the root cause of the climate and ecological emergencies facing our world. We know that Your Holiness cares deeply about the climate crisis and has called for a new vision of the environment and Earth. As Your Holiness will be aware, even if we ended fossil fuel extraction today, greenhouse gas emissions from the food system alone would see global temperatures rise above 1.5C warming.

Plant-based diets, which result in 75% less climate-heating food emissions, water pollution, and land use than diets which contain 100g of meat per day, must form part of this new vision. Plant-based diets can cut the destruction of wildlife by 66% and water use by 54%. Therefore, there cannot be integral ecology without repairing our relationship with animals and nature.

To ensure interspecies, intergenerational and intragenerational justice, we must transform our style of life and food systems so that we all can live safely within our planetary boundaries. Human pressures have put the Earth system on a trajectory which is rapidly undermining critical life-support systems, with significant societal impacts already being felt such as extreme weather events, climate refugees, drought, species extinction, biodiversity loss, ocean acidification, poverty, food insecurity, pandemics and violent conflicts.

The dehumanized, exclusively profit-oriented mechanisms of animal-derived food production cause food waste in some areas of the globe and devastating hunger in other areas while contributing to diseases of civilization everywhere. The commercial treatment of animals is the cause of interspecies disease transmission and ever-new epidemics. Evil, heartless treatment of God's creation is also the evidence of humanity's moral degradation, and finally causes the cry of the poor, the screams of the animals, and desecration of the whole Earth.

We risk triggering irreversible tipping points which will destabilize the Earth. All these phenomena call for firm, unequivocal words from Your Holiness and swift decisive corrective action on the part of people of all faiths and none. In this time of huge ecological crisis, clear

and open talking about distorted anthropocentrism, greed, and lack of mercy is of key importance, since they have disastrous consequences for all.

We must end our violence to animals and stop killing them for food everywhere plant based options are readily available. We must not cause animals to suffer and die for our entertainment, scientific experiments, sports such as hunting and fishing, or any other way. We are called to show mercy, compassion and life-giving care to all God's creation.

We need to take an unusually significant step in the evolution of our morality and start to see animals and nature as their Creator sees them. This is the only way we can fulfill the responsibility ordered from us, humans' duty of stewardship to ensure that all life flourishes. Farmed animals make up 62% of the world's mammal biomass; humans account for 34%; and wild mammals are just 4%. We need to address this imbalance and reconnect the faith with concern for God's creatures. Like the early saints who lived in friendship with animals and all nature, we also need to live at peace with it. Only then can we realistically implement papal teachings on care for our Common Home.

Your Holiness can have a profound impact in changing the thinking and feelings of billions of people on this issue. We are waiting patiently for this new encyclical to boldly initiate changes necessary to halt the imminent ecological collapse and bring closer the ideals of the Kingdom of God: goodness, love, and peace in creation.

With deepest respect and hope,

Interfaith Vegan Coalition and Plant Based Treaty



Interfaith Vegan Coalition Member Organizations & Signatories

- A Prayer for Compassion Film
- All-Creatures.org
- American Vegan Society
- Animals' Prayer Flag Project

- Bhakti Marga
- Catholic Action for Animals
- Christian Animal Rights Association
- Christian Vegetarian Association
- Christians for Animals (Poland)
- Circle of Compassion
- Climate Healers
- Committee of Consciousness
- Compassion Consortium
- Compassionate Living
- Compassionate Spirit
- Concern for Helping Animals in Israel
- Creation Care Church
- Dharma Voices for Animals
- Green Islam
- Faith Action for Animals
- Fraternité pour le Respect Animal (France)
- God's Creatures Ministry
- In Defense of Animals
- Interfaith Vegan Alliance
- Jewish Veg
- Karuna Music and Art
- Main Street Vegan Academy
- Million Vegan Grandmothers
- One Love Animal Connection Ministry
- PETA Lambs
- Quaker Animal Kinship
- SARX
- Seeds to Inspire Foundation
- Shamayim: Jewish Animal Advocacy
- St. Francis Alliance
- The Black Vegan Experience
- The Spiritual Forum
- The Vegan Museum
- Together in Creation

- United Poultry Concerns
- Vegan Spirituality
- Vegan World 2026
- World Vegan Assembly

Partner Organization

- Animal Interfaith Alliance

Allies

- CreatureKind
- Episcopal Network for Animal Welfare
- the Wellbeing
- Unitarian Universalist Animal Ministry

Affiliations

- Compassion for All Animals Partner with the Charter for Compassion