

Religions for Peace

Rabbi David Rosen KSG CBE, International Director of Interreligious Affairs, American Jewish Committee and Co-President of Religions for Peace

"When the Holy One Blessed be He created the first human, He took him around all the trees of the Garden of Eden and said to him: -

See my works, how lovely and praiseworthy they are and everything I have created is for your benefit. Take heed that you do not despoil and destroy my world, for if you despoil it, there is none to fix it after you" (Ecclesiastes Rabbah 7:1)

This ancient rabbinic homily focuses on the trees of the Garden of Eden and thus identifies the forests as the critical constituent and sustainer of Creation.

Above all however, it highlights our human responsibility for our eco-system. To fail to ensure the health and strength of the forests is not only to imperil humanity's future; it is to fail the Divine charge to humanity to protect the Garden of our world (Genesis 1:15)'

Bishop Emeritus Gunnar Stålsett, Church of Norway; Honorary President, Religions for Peace, and Former Vice Chair of the Nobel Peace Prize Committee

"The climate issue unites science and religion. And no other global challenge has so widely and deeply brought together religious leaders and faith communities on a shared spiritual and scientific platform of ethical conviction and common action.

Saving the rain forest as a lifesaving lung of the entire world and protecting it as habitat for millions, is becoming an urgent survival strategy. The tree of life is a powerful religious symbol with renewed moral significance and a convincing political message in the 21st century."

Professor Din Syamsuddin, Chairman of Advisory Council of Indonesian Ulama Council; Chairman, Center for Dialogue and Cooperation Among Civilizations and Moderator of Asian Conference of Religions for Peace

"Islam teaches the principle of unity of existence that implies a triangle of harmony among God, Man and Nature. Nature is sacred; with its own soul. Man and Nature were created in analogical balance. Man must keep that balance through spiritualistic partnership with Nature. Conserving rain forest is indeed a part of keeping that balance for the wellbeing of both Nature and Mankind."

Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary General, Religions for Peace

"The world's religions, each in its own unique way, ground a moral call to action to protect tropical rainforests. Through multi-religious partnership, the wisdom of each religious tradition can be a resource to help us to cultivate the values and virtues essential for harmonious interactions with each other and our common home, earth."