

INTERFAITH CLIMATE AND ENERGY CONFERENCE PROJECT.

The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development (ICSD,) is organizing an Interfaith Climate and Energy Conference in March, 2012 involving world and Israel-based religious leaders speaking out on the ethical imperative and religious basis for action on climate change and use of renewable energy. The goal of the Conference is to generate tractable change regarding environmental sustainability within faith-based communities in Israel and worldwide. The two main levers for change are religious leaders and emerging religious teachers.

The Conference will be held at the Konrad Adenauer Event Center in Mishkenot Sha'ananim, Jerusalem. ICSD has extended invitations to Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem Theophilos III, Chief Rabbi Yona Metzger, and Kadi Iyad Zahalka (chief judge of the Haifa Sharia Court). The first two sit on the Council of Religious Institutions of the Holy Land, which represents the high religious authorities of the Holy Land. Each religious figure will convey the perspective of their faith tradition and call for environmental action and co-existence within their respective faith communities.

In addition to these leaders, the conference aims to include video addresses by world religious leaders. ICSD is currently in the process of securing participation of Pope Benedict the 16th, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Dalai Lama, the Patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church, and a Hindu and Muslim religious leader.

In addition to the main panel event, the following break-out workshops will be held:

- Interfaith seminary students workshop on climate change and energy
- Interfaith women's workshop on climate change and energy
- Public forum on climate change and religious perspectives
- Public forum on renewable energy and religious perspectives

The Conference will also see the launch of the Interfaith Seminary Students Sustainability Project, bringing together Israeli and Palestinian, Muslim, Christian, and Jewish seminary students and clergy from Jerusalem and nearby areas to undergo a transformative program aimed at directly impacting their respective communities promoting environmental activism based on religious teachings. Cultivating a cohort of emerging religious leaders with a shared understanding of the human and environmental challenges facing the region will help bring a voice of moderation and healing to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while tapping into religious communities to promote environmental activism.

In implementing the project, ICSD is also:

- Reaching out to elected officials and Municipality staffs to invite them to attend.
- Expanding its online social-media campaign through Facebook, Twitter, and its blog;
- Conducting an extensive media campaign to our network of 600 Israeli and foreign journalists prior to – and after – each event.

The Interfaith Center for Sustainable Development.