



**Edmund Rice Centre**  
Awareness. Advocacy. Action

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## **ERC JUSTICE UPDATES**

### **January 2023 No.83**

Dear Friends,

This 83rd Edition of ERC Justice Updates, our regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on matters relating to human rights, first nations and environmental justice.

As we begin this year of 2023 may we never forget those in this broken world for whom we strive to make things better. One must never lose hope and continue to hold dear to Blessed Edmund Rice's three main tenets:  
**COMPASSION LIBERATION & PRESENCE**

**May I live this day, compassionate of heart, clear in word, gracious in awareness, courageous in thought, generous in love. John O'Donohue**

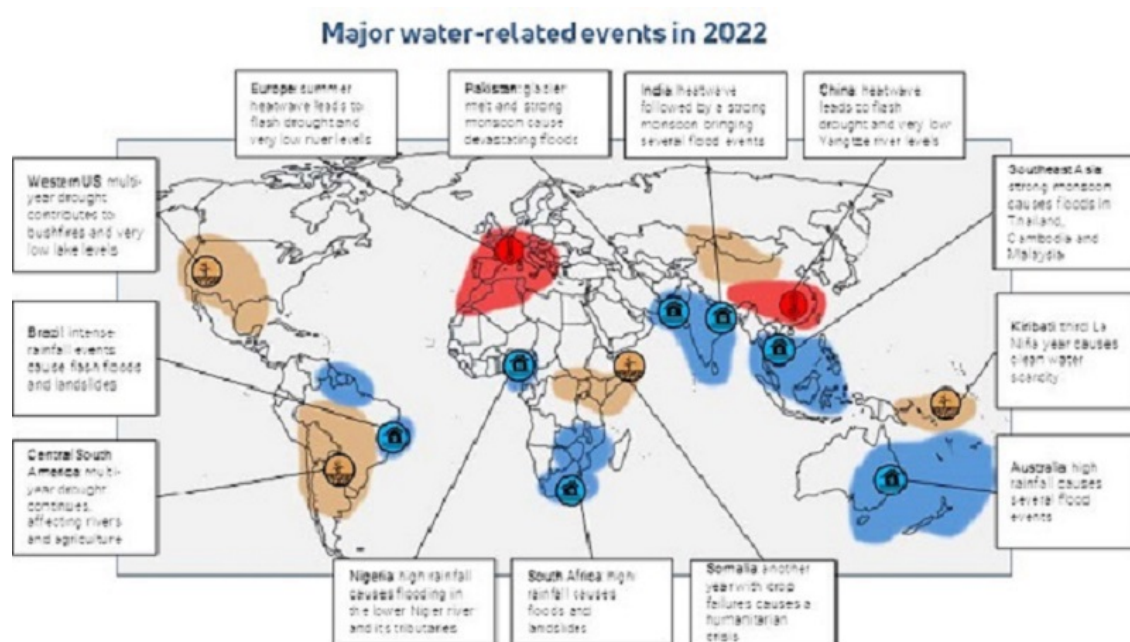
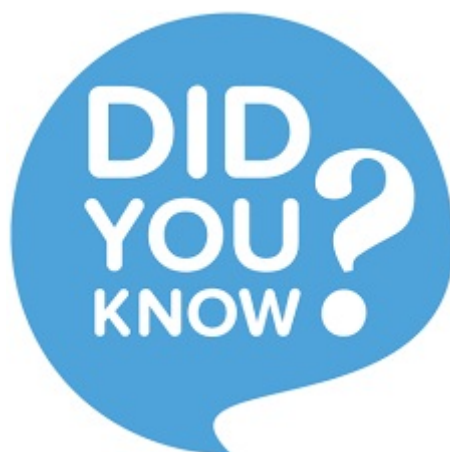
Please note that if you come up against a paywall in any of the articles below - please contact me at: [mmcinerney@edmundrice.org](mailto:mmcinerney@edmundrice.org) and I will send you the full article.

Previous editions are available at <https://www.erc.org.au/newsletters>

**Peace & Blessings**

**Marita**  
**Communications Project Officer,**  
**Marita McInerney**

**Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that there may be articles in this publication with names and images of deceased people.**



Major water-related events in 2022. Global Water Monitor 2022 Summary Report

**The Global Water Monitor Summary Report released in January 2022 by the Australian National University and the Global Water Monitor Consortium reveals alarming changes in the entire global water cycle.**

### **The year in a nutshell**

- **In 2022, a 3rd consecutive La Nina influenced weather around the world. This is unusual but not unprecedented.**
- **in 2022 La Nina combined with warm waters in northern Indian Ocean brought widespread flooding in a band stretching from Iran to New Zealand, and much in between.**
- **Most devastating floods occurred in Pakistan, where 8 million people were driven out of their homes. Australia also experienced several severe floods - mainly in eastern states but also in**

Kimberley region in late 2022 and early 2023.

- Western USA and Central South America saw lakes fall to historic lows.
- Another year of drought saw crops decimated in the Horn of Africa and thus saw a rapidly worsening humanitarian situation.

### A change in the rains

- The monsoon regions from India to Northern Australia are getting wetter. Parts of the Americas and Africa are getting drier, including the western United States, which experienced its 23rd year of drought in 2022.
- Intense rainfall events struck communities across the globe in 2022 – from Brazil, Nigeria and South Africa to Afghanistan, India and Pakistan.
- These downpours caused flash floods and landslides, killing thousands and leaving many thousands more without a home.

### A hotter, drier world

- Average global air temperatures are rising. While La Niña years are historically relatively cool, that effect is largely lost in the upward march of global temperatures.
- Heatwaves are increasing in severity and duration and this was noticeable in 2022.
- In 2022, intense heatwaves in Europe and China led to so-called “flash droughts”.
- In 2022, many rivers in Europe ran dry, exposing artefacts hidden for centuries.
- Air is not only getting warmer but also drier, nearly everywhere. That means people, crops and ecosystems need more water to stay healthy, further increasing pressure on water resources.
- Dry air also means forests dry out faster, increasing the severity of bushfires. In 2022, the western US experienced major fires in January, in the middle of Northern Hemisphere winter.
- Warmer temperatures also melt snow and ice faster. The Pakistan floods were made worse by a preceding intense heatwave that increased glacier melt in the Himalayas. This raised river flows even before the rains hit.
- Climate change is not the only way humanity is changing the water cycle. There has been a steady increase in the volume of lakes worldwide. This is mostly due to individuals and governments constructing and enlarging dams to secure their access water,

which changes river flows downstream.

## Welcome to the future

- La Niña's influence appears to be waning, and a switch to an El Niño halfway through this year is possible.
- Hopefully, that will mean fewer flood disasters in Asia and Oceania and more rain for drought-affected regions in the Americas and East Africa.
- Australia, however, may see a return to heatwaves and bushfires. In the longer term, 2023 may mark the start of another multi-year drought.
- The seesawing between El Niño and La Niña is a natural phenomenon. But it remains to be seen whether the triple La Niña was a statistical fluke or a sign of disruption from climate change.
- Humanity's success in reducing greenhouse gas emissions will determine the planet's future several decades from now. Until then, global temperatures will continue to increase. New records will continue to be broken: for heatwaves, cloudbursts, flash droughts, bushfires and ice melt.

The key conclusion? Earth's water cycle is clearly changing. Globally, the air is getting hotter and drier, which means droughts and risky fire conditions are developing faster and more frequently.

## Article re Report

[https://theconversation.com/new-report-shows-alarming-changes-in-the-entire-global-water-cycle-197535?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2012%202023%20-%202514225225&utm\\_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2012%202023%20-%202514225225+CID\\_850933bd30542ef789eecb9d5eba54be&utm\\_source=campaign\\_monitor&utm\\_term=New%20report%20shows%20alarming%20changes%20in%20the%20entire%20global%20water%20cycle](https://theconversation.com/new-report-shows-alarming-changes-in-the-entire-global-water-cycle-197535?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2012%202023%20-%202514225225&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2012%202023%20-%202514225225+CID_850933bd30542ef789eecb9d5eba54be&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=New%20report%20shows%20alarming%20changes%20in%20the%20entire%20global%20water%20cycle)

## Full Report

<https://wenfo.org/globalwater/>

## Listening to the Voice

**Gareth Evans, *The Saturday Paper* January 21 – 27, 2023 No. 433**

Brian Kamara Willis was born somewhere in the Northern Territory in 1953 or 1954

– he never quite knew where or when – of an Aboriginal mother and a white father. He was one of the Stolen Generations, taken as a very young child to Adelaide, to a childhood of institutions and foster homes where he never settled.

A bright kid, Willis wanted to change things. He went back to the NT and won a job as a field officer for the new Alice Springs Aboriginal Legal Service. He did so well he was picked for an Aboriginal study grant, came to a Melbourne school for a transition year, and was then admitted to the Melbourne University Law School, where I was then teaching. That's how, in the early 1970s, I and my family came to know and love him. Brian, his partner and their two young boys often visited or stayed at our home.

But he felt hemmed in by the big city, with a constant sense that he just didn't belong. So, he deferred his degree and returned to the Territory, where he blossomed again – becoming, not much later, director of the Aboriginal Legal Service, and an outspoken champion of his people, speaking and writing in fierce and moving terms, above all about the plight of the Stolen Generations.

***We do need to respond – in a way that has no relevance to any other identifiable group in the community – to our past failings of recognition and commitment. We need to do that not grudgingly but with the kind of sensitivity so trenchantly articulated by Paul Keating in his Redfern address.***

Something, however, was still wrong. He just couldn't fight the pressures, shrug off the prejudices and sustain the struggle for long enough. On the night he died in 1980 – aged just 26, or maybe 27 – he went to a political gathering, drank too much, as he often did at that point, and all the passion, the rage and the misery boiled to the surface. Those there remember him bursting out at one stage: "The urban black, the part-Aboriginal, is the man in between. He has nothing."

*He went home from the meeting, picked up a shotgun and, in front of his wife and two young boys, blew out his brains.*

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Trying to compensate, I spoke in the senate a day or two later about how much Brian's life and death meant to me, and what it should mean to others. I could not hold back my tears: I think it was the only time in my long public life when I completely lost it. The memory of that brilliant young man, and his family, and what happened to them in a society that just couldn't cope with the kind of diversity he represented, that just couldn't recognise we are one common human family, haunts me still.

Four decades later, the heartbreak I witnessed and experienced in 1980 is still all too common. Too many Indigenous Australians continue to suffer, as they have since the first days of white settlement, from prejudice, discrimination, mistreatment, neglect – and well-intentioned but misguided government policy choices.

The 1967 referendum, the 1975 Racial Discrimination Act, the establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission in 1990, Paul Keating's 1992 Redfern address, the Mabo legislation and Kevin Rudd's 2008 apology to the Stolen

Generations were all national landmark acts of recognition and commitment. Each of them made a difference. But ATSIC imploded a decade later, and none of the other big symbolic steps – nor any of the umpteen Commonwealth policies and programs they spawned over the decades – succeeded by themselves in solving all the age-old problems confronting first Australians. Potentially making a real difference, on a scale greater than any of them, will be the creation of a constitutionally embedded Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice.

***At the heart of the case for the Voice is that it will mean Indigenous Australians will be recognised – for the first time in our founding national document, and for the first time in practice on anything like this scale – not just as the subjects, for better or worse, of government policy choices but as agents of policy change, contributing actively to legislative and executive decision-making.***

**NB If you would like a full copy of this article please contact  
@mmcinerney@edmundrice.org**

**Subscribers read full story:**

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2023/01/21/listening-the-voice>



### **Not a voice but a shout**

***John Coulter, Pearls & Irritations, January 9th 2023***

*Many have argued that our civilisation may collapse before the end of this century. In contrast Aboriginal people have survived in this country for at least 50,000 years.*

In the latter half of 2023, Australians will be required to vote on ‘an indigenous voice to parliament’. It’s intended this will provide indigenous Australians a direct input to the parliament on issues that parliament believes

particularly concern them, a significant step forward which should be supported. Such issues will be referred by the parliament or government to a body of aboriginal representatives selected by aboriginal people themselves from across Australia. On the surface this would seem eminently reasonable and within the prevailing bounds of existing democratic practice but as this paper argues the prevailing economic and political paradigm has no future.

*The present proposal does not go far enough:*

1. The issues referred to this representative indigenous body will be determined by government and the recommendations of the representative body will be fed back to government to consider within its own political and economic paradigm.
2. Indigenous culture does not sit comfortably within the mainstream. The emphasis that indigenous people place on important issues don't always translate into directions and actions that the mainstream white growth-economy driven society would readily endorse. And there's the rub and the main point of this essay.

Non-indigenous Australian life and pursuit is built around 'the economy' and that economy is based on the pursuit of growth. GDP growth of 1% is alright, 3% has every economist, politician, economic commentator and journalist shouting that Australia is doing very well and is 'out-performing' most other countries.

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But there are other voices in Australia and around the world: scientists and a few heterodox economists who warn that the growth path is unsustainable and headed for collapse. They remain unacknowledged by Australian politicians and most mainstream Australian journalists.

*And here is the link with 'the voice' or 'the shout'.*

There is abundant evidence that the 'growth forever' belief system permeating every aspect of the mainstream view of the future is unsustainable and cannot but unravel in coming decades.

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Very many have argued that for these reasons our civilisation may collapse well before the end of this century. In contrast Aboriginal people have survived in this country for at least 50,000 years. If Australia had avoided colonisation it's more than likely Aboriginal people would still be here 50,000 years from now. What is it in that culture that ensures its survival? What may we learn from our indigenous cousins?

Rather than continue the destruction of Aboriginal culture should we not consciously and deliberately recognise the superior value of the attitude within this culture toward Nature and a sustainable future and so build a new culture which embraces both?



**Read full story:**

<https://johnmenadue.com/not-a-voice-but-a-shout/>



A man in a file image. 'I'm still here waiting and locked up,' says a refugee isolated in a Brisbane hotel after being medically evacuated from Nauru. Photograph: Jeremy Sutton-Hibbert/Alamy

## **Refugees medically evacuated from Nauru spend weeks in Brisbane hotel awaiting treatment**

***Eden Gillespie, The Guardian, 11th January 2023***

***Syed\* and Rodan\* say they don't understand why they have been isolated since arriving last month***

***\* Names have been changed***

Two refugees who were medically evacuated from Australian offshore detention on Nauru before Christmas say they have spent weeks isolated in a



Brisbane hotel while waiting for treatment.

Bangladeshi refugee Syed\* was flown to Australia on 23 December for medical reasons. But two and a half weeks later he said he had yet to see a doctor or leave the hotel.

"The nurse gives me [painkillers] and sleeping tablet[s] and say to me: 'Sleep.' But this does not help me," he said.

"I don't know what will happen. I'm still suffering ... I'm still here waiting and locked up."

Syed requires an MRI and endoscopy for painful digestive issues that he's been struggling with since 2019. "If I eat the food, I go like six to eight times to the toilet," he said.

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Syed arrived in Nauru in 2013 after fleeing Bangladesh. His claim to refugee status was recognised in 2015 but he is still waiting for a resolution of his case.

"I've been waiting three years to get treatment here, there is no justice," he said.

Rodan\*, who arrived in Brisbane three weeks ago, is also waiting to receive further treatment.

"I spoke once with a case manager but nobody has come [since]. I don't know what's going on," he said. "It's been more than 20 days."

Rodan weighed just 55kg when he was pulled out of Nauru and flown straight to the emergency department of a Brisbane hospital on 15 December. He stayed there for five days, undergoing routine health checks before being moved into immigration detention in the hotel.

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Rodan's family were members of an ethnic minority group that were evicted from Bhutan before he was born. They lived stateless in Nepal until Rodan fled the country at age 22.

"I faced discrimination in Nepal and then the Maoist Communist party asked me to join ... that's why I feel not safe," Rodan said. "That's why I leave Nepal.

"I want to have a normal life as a normal person. But I've spent 10 years in detention. I arrived at 22, now I'm 32."

**Read full article:**

[https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/jan/11/refugees-medically-evacuated-from-nauru-spend-weeks-in-brisbane-hotel-awaiting-treatment?utm\\_term=63bdbdd78d6b7666b067c0ad3fe8aa82&utm\\_campaign=MorningMailAUS&utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&CMP=morningmailau\\_email](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/jan/11/refugees-medically-evacuated-from-nauru-spend-weeks-in-brisbane-hotel-awaiting-treatment?utm_term=63bdbdd78d6b7666b067c0ad3fe8aa82&utm_campaign=MorningMailAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=morningmailau_email)



Father Giorgio Licini (R) and a refugee stranded in Port Moresby Photo: Giorgio Licini

## **Plea in PNG for Australia PM to address refugee issue**

***RNZ.CO.NZ, 12th January 2023***

A refugee stranded in Papua New Guinea for nearly ten years is pleading for a chance to live a free life with his young family.

Mathew made the plea on the eve of Australia's Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese visit to Port Moresby.

About 90 refugees remain in the PNG capital - victims of Australia's harsh programme to deter boat people.

Mathew said he'd happily accept moving to a third country, though that is dependent on approval from Canberra.

But he said Australia and PNG are not options for him.

"I just want to leave this country and go on and start my life, especially now I am with my family. I have a daughter, one year and nine-months old and I am worried about her now. Before it was me, now I have a family here. I just want to be leaving here and start my life again."

Meanwhile, a Catholic priest in Papua New Guinea said Australia's treatment of refugees in PNG is an abuse of power and human rights.

The general secretary of the PNG Bishop's Conference Father Giorgio Licini said most of the approximately 90 refugees still stranded in PNG as a result of Australia's tough stance on people arriving illegally by boat, still have no pathway to freedom, despite their refugee status.

He said about 30 may have a route out to a third country, such as the US, Canada or New Zealand but the remainder are stuck in Port Moresby.

"For the rest, who apparently have no rights to reside in Australia, because of the laws that Australia has made, or it is not clear as well what is their basis to reside in Papua New Guinea - it is an abuse of power and an abuse of human rights."

**Read story:**

[https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/482293/plea-in-png-for-australia-pm-to-address-refugee-issue?fbclid=IwAR1GJDmKBECjpOrB1h1630wip9aw2YACdhEdkXTKBJqyKgRg\\_qSIKZmyTmA](https://www.rnz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/482293/plea-in-png-for-australia-pm-to-address-refugee-issue?fbclid=IwAR1GJDmKBECjpOrB1h1630wip9aw2YACdhEdkXTKBJqyKgRg_qSIKZmyTmA)



Protesters in Sydney in December call on the NSW government to repeal anti-protest laws and drop charges against climate activists. A new report by Human Rights Watch has raised concerns about curbs on freedom of expression in Australia.

Photograph: Richard Milnes/Rex/Shutterstock

## **Australia's credibility on human rights blighted by laws targeting climate protesters and jailing children, report says**

***Daniel Hurst, The Guardian, 12th January 2023***

### ***Human Rights Watch calls on government to address its own 'alarming deficiencies', including detention of children under 14 and treatment of asylum seekers***

The detention of children under 14 and new laws targeting climate protesters are harming Australia's credibility to stand up for human rights in the region, a leading rights body has warned.

Human Rights Watch called on Australia to address its own "alarming deficiencies" when the organisation on Thursday published its annual reports on the performance of nearly 100 countries.

It specifically raised alarm about New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania introducing "new laws targeting peaceful climate and environmental protesters with disproportionate punishments and excessive bail conditions".

The organisation took aim at the Albanese government for maintaining the previous government's policy to turn back asylum seeker boats, and also renewed concerns about the over-representation of Indigenous people in the criminal justice system.

Sophie McNeill, a senior researcher at Human Rights Watch, said Australia was a wealthy, privileged country with strong democratic institutions "and that's

why when we have these failings it's so alarming".

She said the foreign affairs minister, Penny Wong, had "made it clear that she is passionate about human rights and that she does want Australia to lead in the region".

"But our ability to do that is undermined by the alarming deficiencies that we still have regarding the treatment of First Nations people, asylum seekers and peaceful climate protesters," McNeill said in an interview.

"We must get things in order at home to really ensure we have that credibility to promote human rights and democracy in the region in response to rising authoritarianism from China."

Australia has faced increasing domestic and international pressure over the past few years to raise the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 14 years, but it is largely in the hands of state and territory governments and progress has been slow.

**Read full article:**

[https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/jan/12/australias-credibility-on-human-rights-blighted-by-laws-targeting-climate-protesters-report-says?utm\\_term=63bfa45173b10c9c318209a138ca270d&utm\\_campaign=AfternoonUpdateAUS&utm\\_source=esp&utm\\_medium=Email&CMP=afternoonupdateau\\_email](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/jan/12/australias-credibility-on-human-rights-blighted-by-laws-targeting-climate-protesters-report-says?utm_term=63bfa45173b10c9c318209a138ca270d&utm_campaign=AfternoonUpdateAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=afternoonupdateau_email)







Photo: Merawalesi Yee, Author provided

## Why Pacific Islanders are staying put even as rising seas flood their homes and crops

**Merewalesi Yee, Annah Piggott-McKellar, Celia McMichael & Karen E McNamara, *The Conversation*, 10th January 2023**

Climate change is forcing people around the world to abandon their homes. In the Pacific Islands, rising sea levels are leaving communities facing tough decisions about relocation. Some are choosing to stay in high-risk areas.

Our research investigated this phenomenon, known as “voluntary immobility”.

The government of Fiji has identified around 800 communities that may have to relocate due to climate change impacts (six have already been moved). One of these is the village on Serua Island, which was the focus of our study.

Coastal erosion and flooding have severely damaged the village over the past two decades. Homes have been submerged, seawater has spoiled food crops and the seawall has been destroyed. Despite this, almost all of Serua Island’s residents are choosing to stay.

We found their decision is based on “Vanua”, an Indigenous Fijian word that refers to the interconnectedness of the natural environment, social bonds, ways of being, spirituality and stewardship of place. Vanua binds local communities to their land.

### *Residents feel an obligation to stay*

Serua Island has historical importance. It is the traditional residence of the paramount chief of Serua province.

The island’s residents choose to remain because of their deep-rooted connections, to act as guardians and to meet their customary obligations to sustain a place of profound cultural importance. As one resident explained:

***“Our forefathers chose to live and remain on the island just so they could be close to our chief.”***

### **Read full story:**

[https://theconversation.com/why-pacific-islanders-are-staying-put-even-as-rising-seas-flood-their-homes-and-crops-195100?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%202023](https://theconversation.com/why-pacific-islanders-are-staying-put-even-as-rising-seas-flood-their-homes-and-crops-195100?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%202023)

[2010%202023%20-%20202512125202&utm\\_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2010%202023%20-%20202512125202+CID\\_c937babefcdfb7d2c1c1a336b54fabaf&utm\\_source=campaign\\_monitor&utm\\_term=Why%20Pacific%20Islanders%20are%20staying%20put%20even%20as%20rising%20seas%20flood%20their%20homes%20and%20crops](https://www.ipsnews.net/2023/01/2023-01-20-202512125202&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20January%2010%202023%20-%20202512125202+CID_c937babefcdfb7d2c1c1a336b54fabaf&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=Why%20Pacific%20Islanders%20are%20staying%20put%20even%20as%20rising%20seas%20flood%20their%20homes%20and%20crops)



## **Environment: Guterres: ‘the ecosystem meltdown is cold, hard scientific fact’**

***Peter Sainsbury, Pearls & Irritations, January 22nd 2023***

***Tell it like it is, António: ‘climate disaster, death sentence, insanity, inconsistent with human survival’. Thank goodness for chocolate and birds.***

*Was any progress made at the last COP meeting in Egypt?*

Were there game-changing, climate-action breakthroughs or was it simply more talk culminating in yet another failure (Greta Thunberg’s ‘Blah, blah, blah’)?

Tom Athanasiou, a well-respected international climate activist who was at Sharm El Sheik and able to hear the discussions and feel the mood, not just read the highly manicured official statements, has written one of the more thoughtful and informed analyses. He argues that some things really did change at last *November’s conference*:

- Equity and national ‘fair shares’ were given centre stage in the fossil fuel reduction discussions, even if it was in the teeth of fierce opposition by fossil lobbyists and wealthy countries;
- Over 80 nations, led by India and including the USA, called for a ‘phase-down’ (not ‘phase-out’ yet) of all fossil fuels (not just coal);
- There was widespread acceptance that successfully limiting global



warming to a reasonably safe level will be achieved only if it is done fairly and this depends on facing the crucial question of 'who pays?';

- Governments recognised that they can no longer expect the private sector to provide the bulk of the finance for mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage and a just transition.

Regarding ceilings for global warming, whether 1.5 is dead or alive is not the point for Athanasiou. He argues that 1.5 never had any credibility as an absolute 'scientific' limit (like, for instance, water boiling at 100oC). Yes, it would be good to keep warming under 1.5 but its real importance is as an instrument to provoke ambition and rapid action to stabilise the climate system and make the necessary social and political transformations. This purpose is not lost even if staying under 1.5 seems increasingly unlikely.

Staying positive, Stephen Singer\* provides a quick run-down on all the reasons why 1.5 is still achievable and affordable and the only things standing in the way are governments and vested corporate interests (oh, is that all? that's OK then).

**\*Stephen Singer reasons re 1.5 degrees**

[https://www.theenergymix.com/2023/01/16/1-5c-is-doable-the-barriers-are-all-political/?utm\\_source=The+Energy+Mix&utm\\_campaign=d1b79de90b-TEM\\_RSS\\_EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_dc146fb5ca-d1b79de90b-509989005](https://www.theenergymix.com/2023/01/16/1-5c-is-doable-the-barriers-are-all-political/?utm_source=The+Energy+Mix&utm_campaign=d1b79de90b-TEM_RSS_EMAIL_CAMPAIGN&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_dc146fb5ca-d1b79de90b-509989005)

**Read full article:**

<https://johnmenadue.com/environment-guterres-the-ecosystem-meltdown-is-cold-hard-scientific-fact/>



Pope Francis embraces a volunteer during a meeting with volunteers following the 2019 World Youth Day in Panama. Image:

Cristina Rodriguez/Panama2019

**Pope, in World Day of Peace message, calls for a post-Covid world based on compassion**

***Ivan Fernandes, Catholic Outlook, 20th December 2022***

*Francis puts forward blueprint to build a new world of love, justice and peace by urgently confronting challenges with fraternity*

Pope Francis in his message for the Catholic Church's World Day of Peace points out that while a vaccine has been found for COVID-19, solutions have not yet been found for the cessation of war, and calls on the international community and every individual to urgently join in seeking and promoting fraternity.

"At the very moment when we dared to hope that the darkest hours of the COVID-19 pandemic were over, a terrible new disaster befell humanity. We witnessed the onslaught of another scourge: another war, to some extent like that of COVID-19, but driven by culpable human decisions. The war in Ukraine is reaping innocent victims and spreading insecurity, not only among those directly affected, but in a widespread and indiscriminate way for everyone," wrote in his message.

"Clearly, this is not the post-Covid era we had hoped for or expected. This war, together with all the other conflicts around the globe, represents a setback for the whole of humanity and not merely for the parties directly involved," Pope Francis said. "While a vaccine has been found for COVID-19, suitable solutions have not yet been found for the war. Certainly, the virus of war is more difficult to overcome than the viruses that compromise our bodies, because it comes, not from outside of us, but from within the human heart corrupted by sin."

***Confronting the challenges of our world***

Pope Francis also highlighted how individuals and countries can confront the challenges of our world in a spirit of responsibility and compassion and that only by responding generously to these situations can we be able to build a new world of love, justice and peace. The pope said:

- We must revisit the issue of ensuring public health for all.
- We must promote actions that enhance peace and put an end to the conflicts and wars that continue to spawn poverty and death.
- We urgently need to join in caring for our common home and in implementing clear and effective measures to combat climate change.
- We need to battle the virus of inequality and to ensure food and dignified labor for all, supporting those who lack even a minimum wage and find themselves in great difficulty.
- We also need to develop suitable policies for welcoming and integrating migrants and those whom our societies discard.

*"It is my hope that in the coming New Year we can journey together, valuing the lessons that history has to teach us... To all men and women of good will I express my prayerful trust that, as artisans of peace, they may work, day by day, to make this a good year," Francis said.*

### Pope's World day of Peace Message:

<https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/20221208-messaggio-56giornatamondiale-pace2023.html>

### Read full article:

<https://catholicoutlook.org/pope-in-world-day-of-peace-message-calls-for-a-post-covid-world-based-on-compassion/>

## REFLECTIONS



***Blessings of light, peace, love and rest this day!***



## **Pace - e - Bene Nonviolence Inspirations**

***“No more apologies for a bleeding heart when the opposite is no heart at all. Danger of losing our humanity must be met with more humanity.”***

*Toni Morrison*

***“Stay gentle, stay gentle,  
The most powerful thing you can do,  
Oh, gentle, unbreakable you.”***     *Brandi Carlile*

***“Every relationship of domination, of exploitation, of oppression is by definition violent, whether or not the violence is expressed by drastic means. In such a relationship, dominator and dominated alike are reduced to things—the former dehumanized by an excess of power, the latter by a lack of it. And things cannot love.”***     *Paulo Freire*

***“Waking up this morning, I smile. Twenty-Four Brand New Hours are before me. I vow to live fully in each moment and to look at all beings with eyes of compassion.”***     *Thich Nhat Hanh*

***“Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something is worth doing no matter how it turns out.”***  
*Václav Havel*

***“Sometime in your life, hope that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives. Hope that you might have bought it or baked it or even kneaded it yourself. For that look on his face, for meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even.”***     *Daniel Berrigan*



***“There are two healings: nature’s,  
and ours and nature’s. Nature’s  
will come in spite of us, after us,  
over the graves of its wasters, as it comes  
to the forsaken fields. The healing  
that is ours and nature’s will come  
if we are willing, if we are patient,  
if we know the way, if we will do the work.”***

Wendell Berry



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

The Edmund Rice Centre wholeheartedly supports and endorses the  
ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART  
and urges all Australians to get behind this wonderful statement.

**Our mailing address is:**

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