

TZU CHI *USA Journal*



Tzu Chi at
COP26

The Cow in the Room
#PassOnPlastic



CONTEMPLATIVE WISDOM

Thoughts for meditation, contemplation,
and reflection

Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Founder of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

We must not underestimate small efforts,
nor should we underestimate ourselves.

The lights of fireflies are faint,
but together, they can illuminate darkness.

Let us inspire one another
and spread love around the world.



03 | **Contemplative Wisdom**
By Dharma Master Cheng Yen

03 | **Editor's Note**
By Anik Ghose

04 | **DHARMA STORIES**
With Wisdom, There Is No Discrimination
By Dharma Master Cheng Yen
Translated by the Dharma as Water Team



06 | Tzu Chi at COP26

COVER STORY
Calling for Individual Action on Climate Change

By Ida Eva Zielinska

- Nature in Peril
- A Vigil to Set the Tone
- The Earth Doesn't Belong to Humanity Alone
- We Need Action and Now
- Exhibiting Tzu Chi's Compassionate Technology
- Youth Doing Their Part
- A Powerful Alliance to Spur Change
- Marching for Climate Justice
- Learning About Scotland's Renewable Energy Success
- The Role of Land
- Africa's Intensifying Food Crisis
- Faith-Based Climate Action

34 | **FEATURE STORIES**
The Cow in the Room: Protecting Animals Protects Us All
By Ida Eva Zielinska

44 | **PORTRAIT STORY**
Reflections on the Global Climate Dialogue
By Ida Eva Zielinska

50 | **FEATURE STORY**
What You Need to Know About Plastic Pollution
By Dilber Shatursun

54 | **PORTRAIT STORY**
Eleven Things You Can Do to Reduce Plastic Pollution
By Dilber Shatursun, Adriana DiBenedetto

58 | **WORDS OF WISDOM**
Illuminating Ourselves, Illuminating the World
By Dharma Master Cheng Yen
Translated and Compiled by the Dharma as Water Team

59 | **Dharma Q & A**
By Dharma Master Cheng Yen

60 | **Tzu Chi's Global Efforts**
By Sophie X. Song, Adriana DiBenedetto

64 | **Tzu Chi USA Directory**

Cover: "Stop Climate Crime" is one activist's message outside the COP26 venue. *Photo/Tzu Chi SDG Action Team*

- Publisher: Debra Boudreaux
- Publishing Director: Ting Fan
- Editor-in-Chief: Anik Ghose
- Deputy Editor: Ida Eva Zielinska
- Editors: Adriana DiBenedetto, Dilber Shatursun, Sophie X. Song
- Art Director: Ling Soo
- Senior Designer: Tom Yang
- Translation: Dharma As Water Team
- Contributors: Tzu Chi USA Volunteers

The Editorial Team sincerely thanks all contributors and invites feedback and contributions. Please contact us at journal@tzuchi.us. Read the online version at journal.tzuchi.us.

© copyright 2022 **Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation**
All rights reserved. All photos are the property of Tzu Chi unless otherwise noted. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. All articles contain the views of their authors, which do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation.

PASS ON PLASTIC

In the midst of a changing climate, and plastic pollution suffocating Earth's oceans, each of us has a duty to tackle our reliance on plastic products head-on.

Join the **#PassOnPlastic** challenge by swapping out everyday single-use plastic items with sustainable, reusable alternatives.



1. Think of one **plastic item** you rely on often

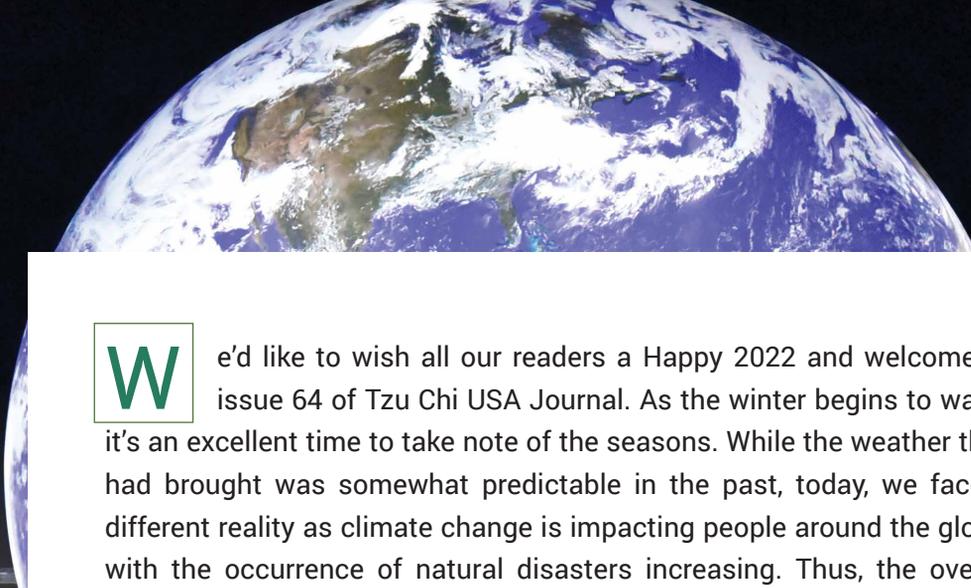


2. Video yourself **replacing it** with a sustainable alternative



3. Upload your video and tag it with **#PassOnPlastic**





We'd like to wish all our readers a Happy 2022 and welcome to issue 64 of Tzu Chi USA Journal. As the winter begins to wane, it's an excellent time to take note of the seasons. While the weather they had brought was somewhat predictable in the past, today, we face a different reality as climate change is impacting people around the globe, with the occurrence of natural disasters increasing. Thus, the overall theme of this issue is Environmental Awareness.

Recently, the 26th annual Conference of the Parties (COP26) was held in Glasgow, Scotland, and we've chronicled Tzu Chi's presence at this annual United Nations climate change summit in detail through three articles. To begin, our cover story "Tzu Chi at COP26: Calling for Individual Action on Climate Change" follows the Tzu Chi SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Action Team's press conferences and activities during their two weeks in Scotland. Tzu Chi's persistent effort to encourage good global citizenship through lifestyle changes to protect the environment emerges as a central tenet.

Delving deeper into Tzu Chi's environmental protection strategy, the feature story "Protecting Animals Protects Us All" elaborates on how the promotion of plant-based diets was central to Tzu Chi's message at COP26 and is continually part of other ongoing programs. To complete our summit coverage, "Reflections on the Global Climate Dialogue" presents insights and commentary from the Tzu Chi SDG Action Team post-COP26.

We then shift focus to the topic of plastic pollution with "What You Need to Know About Plastic Pollution," an informative piece explaining what plastic pollution is and revealing the grave environmental issues surrounding discarded plastics.

Finally, with our last portrait, "Eleven Things You Can Do to Reduce Plastic Pollution," you'll discover how anyone can create change and help battle plastic pollution with a few simple tricks that may just save the world.

by Anik Ghose

With Wisdom, There Is No Discrimination

Master Cheng Yen's Teachings

Translated by the Dharma as Water Team

A long time ago in Japan, a wise elder of high social status sought to help his nephew gain better skills as a leader. He felt that his nephew should form deep connections with his people and understand their situations. Thus, the elder dressed up as a farmer wearing straw shoes and brought a few attendants to accompany him to different places.

One day, the group reached an inn. It was a chilly winter day, and it was snowing continuously. Walking through the snow in his straw shoes, it had taken the elder much effort to finally find this inn. So, the whole group went in to rest. As the floor was covered in tatami mats past the entryway, the group needed to wash their feet before they could step onto the mats.

Usually, the servant at the inn would bring water to the guests for them to wash their feet. But this time, when the servant saw this group of people who looked like regular day laborers, he gave in to his prejudices. If they had been businesspeople or people of high status, he would respectfully bring them water and place it by their feet. However, this group of people did not look wealthy. Thus, the servant nonchalantly remarked, "Do you need water? There are a few buckets of water over there. Someone just used it to wash their feet, so it is still hot. You can take that and use it!" Hearing this made the elder's attendants very angry. Clenching their fists, they wanted to rush forward and strike the servant. However, the elder gestured to them to stop, so they relaxed their fists.



At ease, the elder said to his attendants, "One of the purposes of our trip is to tour scenic spots and enjoy ourselves." He continued, "This is not bad! The water is still warm and usable!" So, the elder took off his straw shoes and placed both of his feet into the warm water, which had already been used by others. He washed his feet until they were very clean. His feet felt warm and comfortable as he soaked them in the water.

From this story, we can see an example of wisdom. With wisdom, there is no discrimination. The man did not put in any effort to endure the situation; indeed, to "endure" things means that we still feel a sense of suffering. Instead, the elder was completely at ease. Although the water had been used by someone else, it was

still warm. The elder did not get angry, and so, naturally, there was no need to "endure" anything. Without putting effort into enduring or being angry, he could enjoy soaking his feet in the hot water.

In life, ordinary people tend to take issue over things. They know the basic workings of daily interactions and are able to discern whether people's facial expressions are mean or friendly. This kind of discernment brings suffering. Instead, we should constantly be joyful. Although forgetting the past is very difficult, if we can embrace hope and look toward the future, we will surely be joyful! 🌿



Inside the COP venue, a group unfurls a poster asking for delegates to save our future now.

COP26
TV

#TogetherForOurPlanet

COP26 TV

RACE TO RESILIENCE



United Nations
Climate Change



UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
ON 2021

TZU CHI AT COP26

Calling for Individual Action on Climate Change

by Ida Eva Zielinska

Photos by Tzu Chi SDG Action Team

DELIVER
\$100
BILLION

CUT
EMISSIONS
NOW

END
CLIMATE
BETRAYAL



PEOPLE SAY SAVE OUR FUTURE NOW

T O P I C S

- 1 Nature in Peril
- 2 A Vigil to Set the Tone
- 3 The Earth Doesn't Belong to Humanity Alone
- 4 We Need Action and Now
- 5 Exhibiting Tzu Chi's Compassionate Technology
- 6 Youth Doing Their Part
- 7 A Powerful Alliance to Spur Change
- 8 Marching for Climate Justice
- 9 Learning About Scotland's Renewable Energy Success
- 10 The Role of Land
- 11 Africa's Intensifying Food Crisis
- 12 Faith-Based Climate Action

Securing a brighter future for our children and future generations requires countries to take urgent action at home and abroad to turn the tide on climate change. It is with ambition, courage, and collaboration as we approach the crucial COP26 summit in the UK that we can seize this moment together, so we can recover cleaner, rebuild greener, and restore our planet," stated Boris Johnson, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, prior to the opening of the United Nations Annual Climate Change Conference hosted by the UK in 2021.

This 26th convening of COP, which stands for Conference of the Parties, took place in Glasgow, Scotland, from November 1 to 12. However, representatives of the Parties, signatories of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) – the 1994 treaty between 196 countries and the EU tasked with coordinating the global response to the threat of climate change – were not the only attendees. COP26, the largest summit in history, drew together a total of 38,457 delegates, from heads of state to climate experts, campaigners, representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of civil society, the global news media, and more.

The Tzu Chi SDG (Sustainable Development Goals) Action Team and other Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation representatives were among the delegates. The Foundation joined UNFCCC in 2012, beginning as a climate observer at COP18 in Doha, Qatar, and has organized a participating team since COP19 in Warsaw, Poland, in 2013. Following Dharma Master Cheng Yen's directive as Tzu Chi's founder, the goal has been to help identify problems, establish consensus, and implement action, with action being at the forefront in 2021 and with good reason.

Nature in Peril

It's no wonder that the 2021 climate conference was the largest to date, as the global climate crisis has reached a critical state and the time for drastic action is now. The Climate Action Tracker is an independent scientific analysis that follows and measures government climate action against the globally agreed 2015 Paris Agreement to hold warming well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. It has stated that current policies “are projected to result in about 2.7°C warming above pre-industrial levels.”

Such a rise is catastrophic and translates to widespread and severe impacts on people and nature. As stated on the COP26 website before the summit, even at 2°C of global warming, the situation is menacing: “A third of the world’s population would be regularly exposed to severe heat, leading to health problems and more heat-related deaths. Almost all warm-water coral reefs would be destroyed, and the Arctic sea ice would melt entirely at least one summer per decade, with devastating impacts on the wildlife and communities they support. And, we cannot rule out the possibility that irreversible loss of ice sheets in Greenland and the Antarctic could be triggered, leading to several meters of sea-level rise over centuries to come.”

With severe droughts, unheard-of storms, extreme heatwaves, flooded cities, the projected vista laid out before us is alarming. We’re already experiencing aspects of this new climate reality on top of the tremendous losses in earth’s biodiversity due to the progression of species extinctions. Moreover, according to United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees data, the number of people



The impact of climate change on the Arctic is of grave concern.

displaced by climate change-related disasters rose to 21.5 million since 2010, as populations face loss and damages, health issues, and food and water shortages.

What sets this year’s conference apart from previous ones is the level of urgency going into it. The window to act on climate change is rapidly closing, and there are many who see this conference as one of the last chances to secure a globally coordinated approach to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

Jason Bordoff

*Co-Founding Dean, Columbia Climate School
Founding Director, Center on Global Energy Policy*

Thus, COP26 set four goals, namely: Secure global net-zero by mid-century and keep 1.5°C within reach by requiring countries to come up with ambitious plans to reduce their emissions; adapt to protect communities and natural habitats; mobilize finance, as under the COP21 2015 Paris Agreement, developed countries committed to spending \$100 billion to finance climate adaptation and emissions reduction; and enhance collaboration by defining and agreeing on the detailed rules of the Paris Agreement and accelerating action against climate change.

2 A Vigil to Set the Tone

The day before the official start of COP26 meetings, on October 31, leaders from nine different faith traditions and faith-based organizations, including Buddhist Tzu Chi, gathered for a vigil. Interfaith Glasgow and Interfaith Scotland, charities that aim to facilitate engagement between people of all beliefs on matters of importance, organized the gathering.

The climate crisis, the planet is something that people of all faiths are deeply concerned about, and there was a really strong will here and around the world for people of all faiths to come together to make their voices clear that we need action, we need real action now. And we wanted to begin on this, the first day of COP, with an opportunity for prayerful reflection.

Dr. Magdalen Lambkin

*Development Director and COP26 Vigil Organizer
Interfaith Glasgow*

The participants held the world's most vulnerable populations close at heart in their prayers. Brian McGee, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, brought their plight to the fore, saying, "Our brothers and sisters, our neighbors across the world, are starving, and some of them are dying, and their lives have been ruined because of the climate emergency."

Others, such as Ravinder Kaur Nijjar, Advisor to Sikhs in Scotland, expressed the hope that the event's collective spiritual voice calling for action would reach those with decision-making power, saying, "I hope this goes to the COP26 negotiators and the political leaders and they make the right, wise decisions for all of us."

And, many called for individual commitment and action, one group of participants having walked about 500 miles from London to Glasgow to attend the vigil. "We wanted to be a witness to the communities that we pass through, so we walked about ten miles every day and then we would engage with the local community and talk to them about climate justice and what needs to be done," Barbara Wilson, one of the pilgrims shared.

Rev. Dr. Joshtrom Isaac Kureethadam, whom the Tzu Chi team met in the days ahead, came to COP26 as part of the Vatican Delegation to bring a plea from Pope Francis:

'We need to listen to the cry of the Earth and the cry of the poor, and we really need to respond to these cries.' And another cry, if I might add, is the cry of the youth and children. So, our presence here is a message from Pope Francis that, 'It is time to act, time to act together.' We really hope that we can change the world from the bottom up. Ordinary people can act.

**Rev. Dr. Joshtrom Isaac
Kureethadam**

*Coordinator, Ecology and Creation
Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human
Development*



Brian McGee, Bishop of Argyll and the Isles, came to pray for those most severely impacted by the climate crisis.

Debra Boudreaux, the CEO of Tzu Chi USA and Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Lead, equally invited individual action, saying, “Your voices count. If you don’t participate, if you’re not engaged, people won’t hear your concept, ideology, or belief. Your voices need to be heard.” Wise global citizenship, compassion in action, taking personal responsibility for one’s environmental footprint, and making an effort to raise awareness would be at the center of Tzu Chi’s message as a faith-based organization at COP26.

Climate action can be a form of daily practice. In that regard, Tzu Chi fiercely advocates adopting a plant-based diet, recycling, abandoning reliance on single-use plastic products, curbing consumption, and more. Its vision and action framework would emerge through eleven press conferences, a side event, and an exhibit featuring Tzu Chi’s “compassionate technology.” The conferences also covered Tzu Chi’s aid in regions gravely impacted by climate change and described efforts to mobilize collective action in different sectors.

I know people always argue, ‘Why are we coming over here? So many times it’s just talking.’ But in reality, while we’re talking, we also see people changing. So, every year we come back here. We continue to renew our statement. It can help if everyone contributes their effort, wisdom, and compassion in action to support Mother Earth. We have to be here.



Debra Boudreaux
Tzu Chi USA CEO
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Lead

3 The Earth Doesn’t Belong to Humanity Alone

As leaders began their meetings on November 1, at the invitation of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Debra Boudreaux represented Tzu Chi at a press conference entitled “Climate and Nature: The Role of Faith-Based Organizations in Securing a Nature Positive World for All.” Gavin Edwards, the global coordinator of the New Deal for Nature and People at WWF International, moderated the panel and began by presenting the grim facts that nearly a million species face extinction, and 68% of wildlife populations have declined since 1970.

The panel then addressed faith-based perspectives on how making adjustments to modern human life can help resolve the climate crisis and protect the environment from further degradation. To begin, Karenna Gore, Founder and Executive Director of the Center for Earth Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York, brought factors such as interconnection and balance to light. Her father, former US Vice President Albert Arnold Gore Jr., a dedicated environmentalist, was also in the audience.



Karenna Gore’s father, Al Gore, a former US vice president and avid environmentalist, attends the WWF press conference.

Karenna Gore highlighted how human beings and nature are not separate: “That is an illusion, and the climate crisis is part of waking up to that illusion.” She went on to pinpoint how “we’re living with the result of a value system in which development has come at the expense of nature and justice towards certain people, poor people, and future generations of all people.” But it doesn’t have to be this way.

Ethics – it’s the discernment of right and wrong and the implications for human behavior, individually and collectively. Faith communities have a lot to offer here – roughly over 80% of the world has some sense of religious belonging in which they find a way to perceive and discern moral obligation. As faith voices have expressed in different ways, we don’t need to fix nature as much as fix our behavior towards nature. Commercial activities that people enjoy and help them meet their needs and quality of life can also be in balance with the health of the natural world.



Karenna Gore
*Founder and Executive Director
Center for Earth Ethics*

Daniel Perell, United Nations Representative for the Baha’i International Community, then contributed three elements to the conversation of what we can draw from Baha’i teachings to address climate change and protect nature. The first was the concept of “unity in diversity,” the second, “settled consensus,” and the third,



Daniel Perell contributes advice from the highly inclusive Baha’i faith.

“a learning approach,” all fundamental to the Baha’i faith, which respects the worth of all religions and promotes the unity of all people.

In terms of diversity, Perell called on all to see it as a source of strength rather than competition. By striving to attain settled consensus, which religious belief traditions exemplify, one seeks to express the group accord through collective behavior change. And finally, a learning approach is essential:

We don’t have the answers that are the final answers. We have many approaches, we have a long menu of great ideas, and I think we require the will and the capacity to choose them, and that’s what I think we’re calling on world leaders to do. But to say that we know for sure what the solutions are would be, actually, to limit our horizons. So, if we treat this as a learning process, I think we’ll create tremendous advancements. This is what we try to do in the Baha’i community and try to bring to the international sphere to the best of our ability.



Daniel Perell
*United Nations Representative
Baha’i International Community*

Sister Jayanti Kirpalani, UN representative and European Director of the Brahma Kumaris worldwide spiritual movement, spoke of the importance of inner transformation, in that “whatever starts inside is going to reach outside,” and can help reduce the current emphasis on material consumption as the source of happiness. “There has to be a way to find that inner contentment which comes through spiritual values. Then we’re able to simplify our lifestyle [and] make the right choices in terms of not just our own physical comforts but [what’s] good for the whole of the planet and biodiversity.”

Kirpalani called on us to expand our definition and experience of love to embrace all of creation as equally valuable, a notion present in many spiritual traditions:

Spirituality offers this awareness that all life is sacred, and when we have that awareness of not just peace in my own mind, but peace with others, human beings, but also peace with all forms of nature [and] living creatures, and the very elements themselves, with this consciousness, there can be a transformation so that we come together and work together for the greater good, for not just our own survival but also something for the whole world.

Sister Jayanti Kirpalani

*UN Representative and European Director
Brahma Kumaris*

Gopal Patel, Co-Founder and Director of Bhumi Global, a non-profit organization that works to educate and mobilize Hindu communities globally for environmental action, brought the ideas of harmony and service to the table:

We live in a world that is not in harmony with itself. That’s because we’ve lost this spirit of service and giving to others in a selfless manner. In Hinduism, there’s this concept called ‘rta’ [in Sanskrit, which states] that there’s a universal order and balance in the cosmos ... created from the beginning of time. And that balance and harmony only run if we live in a spirit and mood of service. When balance and harmony are not there, that’s when you see ecological degradation, catastrophes, climate change, biodiversity loss. I think service is at heart, one of the most important things we need to revive in our communities to restore the environment.

Gopal Patel

Co-Founder and Director, Bhumi Global

Debra Boudreaux, Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Lead, then presented a Buddhist perspective on the climate crisis, which asserts that “all the things happening right now are from greed, anger, frustration, negligence, and attachment to desire.”



Debra Boudreaux calls for mindfulness in daily life.

As we share these mental and emotional attributes as human beings, we all play an individual role. And, since we contribute to climate change, we should ask ourselves, “How are we going to look into ourselves to become a good global citizen?” “From love, from sacrifice, now it’s action,” she advised, which we can implement in various ways, with far-reaching impact:

The implementation is, really, mindfulness. Be mindful. People change, behavior changes; it comes from your daily practice. The practice starts with food, clothing materials, housing, transportation. At Tzu Chi, we share the 80-20 movement. If we can eat just 80% of our food every day, we can reserve 20%. Put that 20% into your food bank. Then that 20% can help another population in need. Through the love, sacrifice that we put into action, we can create an opportunity for equal food access.

Debra Boudreaux

Tzu Chi USA CEO, Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Lead

Thus, reigning in our desires, even in terms of eating, can reduce our personal consumption of resources while helping those in need. Finally, Boudreaux shared the message of Tzu Chi’s founder about how the current world situation is a wake-up call: “Dharma Master Cheng Yen is always saying this is the best time to turn our wisdom into consciousness and practice with compassion. That will be a good lesson learned from the pandemic, from natural disasters: To protect our nature’s life.”



Sister Jayanti Kirpalani calls for inner transformation to help us shift away from excessive material consumption.



Gopal Patel brings insights from Hinduism regarding the value of selfless service that aligns with the universal order in the cosmos.

Humanity can accomplish a great deal towards protecting Earth and Mother Nature while mitigating climate change by transforming its global food systems and eating habits. Tzu Chi and several partners would present this view at three press conferences and a side event during COP26. They honed in on the negative impacts of industrial animal agriculture and consumption of animal-based products while revealing the broad range of benefits of plant-based diets and how reformed food systems could reduce carbon emissions and even help prevent a future pandemic.

Given Tzu Chi’s emphasis on advocating plant-based diets at COP26, we provide complete coverage in *“Protecting Animals Protects Us All,”* a separate feature story on page 34 in this issue.

4 We Need Action and Now

November 3 was Finance Day at COP26 as political, policy, and business leaders discussed the role of money in achieving net-zero emissions around the world. According to the UNFCCC, climate finance “seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions that will address climate change.” However, discussions on this topic often become a tug-of-war between developed and developing countries, with the latter suffering continual disappointment, as one delegate expressed:

I represent the Congo Basin, the first ecological lung of the planet with the forests, with the peatland ecosystems. And today, we hold around 30 billion tons of CO₂, the equivalent of three years of emissions of the planet. We still haven't seen the 100 billion dollars promised [in 2015 with the Paris Agreement]. And today, they're giving us other promises that they're telling us will start from 2023, so there's practically nothing at this stage.

Arlette Soudan-Nonault
Minister, Tourism and Environment
Republic of Congo

While frustrations may have been growing during official deliberations between nations, Tzu Chi's delegation held its first solo press conference in COP26's Blue Zone for those registered with the UNFCCC. “The Buddhist-Based Path to Carbon Neutrality” presentation put forward Tzu Chi's action plan while sharing its achievements in emissions reduction over the years.



The panel introduced the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation and its over 55 years of experience in humanitarian aid. During that time, volunteers have witnessed a worsening trend of climate-related disasters. In recognition of the crisis, Tzu Chi aligns its four core missions of charity, medicine, education, and humanistic culture to simultaneously tackle the climate crisis, committing to a path to zero carbon by 2050.

Debra Boudreaux, Tzu Chi USA CEO, elaborated that Tzu Chi's path to carbon neutrality is rooted in community engagement, social mobilization, health promotion, and education. The aim is to empower people by helping them understand how to participate in mitigating climate change, since “our actions today will weave the tapestry of tomorrow.”

Dharma Master Shih De Huang joined the press conference virtually, tuning in from the Jing Si Abode in Hualien, Taiwan, where Dharma Master Cheng Yen resides. She offered an overview of how Tzu Chi consistently strives to assist one and all with love and care in the spirit of one family, its ultimate aim to help the world attain peace. The charity's mission is to create and enable environments where people have fundamental human rights and feel safe, thereby finding peace, which leads to broader social harmony.

Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Lead Debra Boudreaux (middle) opens the press conference. Dr. Ming-Nan Lin (right), Vice Superintendent of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital (right), and Dr. Chi-Ming Peng (left), weather reporter at the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation's DaAi TV network (left), will present next.



Master De Huang outlined Six Safeguard Strategies embedded in Tzu Chi's disaster relief. They take into account how it's a complex and interconnected system between people's wellbeing and environmental protection efforts, thus progress sequentially:

- **RESPONSE** (answering physiological needs and offering psycho-trauma support)
- **RECOVERY** (providing livelihood assistance and helping educational systems recover)
- **RECONSTRUCTION** (supporting rebuilding and ecological restoration)

Through this holistic system, she highlighted that "when we're helping people suffering, we can't simply alleviate physical and material needs. Instead, we must also address their emotional and spiritual needs," an approach with long-lasting impact:

One day, the materialistic aid that we provide will be used up, but the love and care will always be felt.

Dharma Master Cheng Yen

Founder

Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

Master De Huang also encouraged everyone to see COVID-19 as a lesson and said that we must not revert to the pre-pandemic status quo. Instead, we should create a more equitable society that aligns with faith values such as gratitude, respect, and love. And, as part of the lesson, "we have to rethink our relationship with nature."

Dr. Ming-Nan Lin, Vice Superintendent of Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital in Taiwan, next explained that the Tzu Chi Medical Foundation's institutions are actively working to reduce their carbon footprint and create a culture of environmental sustainability. Tzu Chi runs seven "green" hospitals in Taiwan, with nearly 4,500 beds and over 9,300 staff.

"Climate change will put burdens on human health, and health care will also produce some waste, some greenhouse gas to make the climate change even worse," Dr. Lin said, "so in Tzu Chi hospitals we have many, many actions to reduce the climate impact." The institutions are energy efficient, taking advantage of natural light and vegetation. They have systemic recycling measures in place, for instance, using greywater to flush toilets, saving 90,000 tons of water each year at Dalin Hospital alone. And, they promote ethical eating, providing only plant-based food on site.

Dr. Chi-Ming Peng, a weather reporter at the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation's DaAi TV network in Taiwan and Chief Executive Officer at WeatherRisk Explore, next spoke about the importance of public education in climate action. He began his career as a meteorologist and professor, then became a TV weather presenter on the advice of Master Cheng Yen, who told him he could reach more people this way.



Joining the panel virtually, Dharma Master Shih De Huang presents Tzu Chi's philosophy and holistic approach to disaster aid.

While reporting on natural disasters, he now has the opportunity to teach the public about climate change, which can empower and enhance local adaptive capacity, mobilize and strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability. At the same time, he promotes environmental actions such as recycling, and as a vegetarian himself, the benefits of abandoning the consumption of meat and animal products.

Boudreaux closed the press conference by saying that Tzu Chi's practiced and promoted climate action path is garnering more and more interest at COP each year. People and organizations want to move towards implementation and are asking for a model and resources from Tzu Chi. The Foundation is thus preparing a framework for participation in global methane and carbon emission reduction plans, incorporating its 80/20 food security movement and advocacy of plant-based diets.

"Tzu Chi is ready to submit a proposal in that direction and start it from community education [and] implementation. This framework can become a roadmap that we can expand. Everyone, no matter if



Tzu Chi's missions are always rooted in love, care, and compassion for all in the spirit of one family and civil responsibility.

you're a private partner, civil society, a faith-based organization, a non-profit, or even an individual, we all can engage, we all can participate," she shared.

"Time goes by, but Mother Earth continues suffering. Is there a way we can find a common solution for every one of us to contribute, to participate? I'm going to throw that question to every one of you," Boudreaux added, before summing up with words of inspiration:

We're facing a continuing carbon emissions situation, but, as long as we're confident, starting from ourselves, like our founder Master `Cheng Yen is teaching us, 'Do what you say, say what you do,' we set a model for people to follow. Without your actions, this conversation, this dialogue, will not be a success, so everyone, we count on your support, your engagement, and your participation.



Debra Boudreaux
Tzu Chi USA CEO
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Lead

5

Exhibiting Tzu Chi's Compassionate Technology

During the COP26 summit, delegates and visitors could explore the latest clean energy innovations and environmental technologies on display in the Green Zone for the general public.

Among exhibitors representing local government, businesses, non-profits, and others, a collective of faith-based organizations, including Tzu Chi, showcased Multi-Faith Action for Biodiversity.

Tzu Chi volunteers shared the Foundation's environmental protection mission and "compassionate technology" that recycles plastic waste by transforming it into practical products.



Team members show a visitor a Tzu Chi eco-blankets and explain other products created by recycling plastic waste.

6

Youth Doing Their Part

On November 5, Youth and Public Empowerment Day at COP26, Tzu Chi held its third solo press conference, "Youth in Driving Climate Sustainability," with two young presenters.

Ashley Yong, Tzu Chi's Civil Society Youth Representative to the UN Department of Global Communication, kicked off the talk. She first spoke about Tzu Chi Youth volunteer activities that include recycling and street cleaning and are driven by the values of "common understanding, common consensus, and common action."

Yong then described how Tzu Chi created the virtual "30 Day Challenge: My Sustainable Plate" during the pandemic, inviting youth to form sustainable living habits and help transform the food system. Tzu Chi partnered with Cred. Global, an

organization that aims to help people live more mindfully every day, to launch the challenge whose driving philosophy is that "our actions are our future." Participants used the Cred. Mobile app to choose one to three actions from a selected six of the 17 UN SDG goals to work towards daily for 30 days, documenting their progress in the app.



Ashley Yong (left), representing Tzu Chi, and Isaac Kojo Yedonu Aboah (right), a social entrepreneur from Ghana, discuss youth climate action at Tzu Chi's press conference on November 5.

Isaac Kojo Yedonu Aboah, a social entrepreneur from Ghana, was the second presenter. His entrepreneurial journey began after his first exposure to climate change while at university. He initially focused on advocating a plant-based diet, then addressed Ghana's flawed food supply chain that destroys 70% of food in the pathway from its rural production site to the urban areas where most people live. Considering how to grow in cities where land is limited, he started a hydroponics project.

Most recently, Aboah launched a transportation initiative in response to Ghana's insufficient public transportation system and the glut of cars on the road. He co-founded and is CEO of Vielly, a shared mobility startup that "is reimagining urban mobility in Sub-Saharan Africa starting from Ghana" and "democratizing convenience for the ordinary commuter by making rides comfortable and safe without sacrificing affordability." Aboah also aims to tackle how Africa is the dumping ground for outdated and sometimes toxic appliances, equipment, and vehicles, including polluting fossil fuel cars, as electric mobility takes hold in developed nations.

"If you can see in the world what young people are doing, it's fascinating, right?" he commented. "Young people are taking the global climate agenda as an agenda for themselves. But why do you think that is happening? It's because twenty years from now, we're going to be bearing the repercussions of the actions that, unfortunately, the older generation has taken. That's why we're taking those actions now." Aboah ended his talk with a plea:



Tzu Chi strives to accelerate climate action and promote the 17 UN sustainable development goals through various educational programs.

If only the older generation could take the same actions, and from commitments move to action [and] funding projects, I think that we'd have a world that goes beyond actually net-zero and goes to negative zero. The young people are doing all they can. The onus now lies on the older generation who has the power to [give] some of the power away to young people, to fund our projects, to support our innovation so that we can make the world a better place for all of us to live.

Isaac Kojo Yedonu Aboah
Co-Founder and CEO
Vielly

Ashley Yong wrapped up the talk by seconding the call to action and support of youth initiative by the older generation, expressing appreciation for all who see the potential of young people, notably Tzu Chi. She highlighted that the Foundation invests a lot in youth empowerment from kindergarten to primary and high school through to university, providing space, accessibility, and resources for young people to grow and implement their ideas.

Yong described how Tzu Chi's educational institutions provide 100% plant-based meals and begin building environmental awareness from an early

age. As part of this, they instill recycling habits, encourage using personal utensils instead of disposable ones not to generate waste, and teach about climate change and natural disasters. All this combined is powerful:

[It teaches us] to solve the root cause that human beings are being too convenient and too comfortable with our current lifestyle, which will gradually create more waste, create more greenhouse gas emissions.

Ashley Yong

*Tzu Chi's Civil Society Youth Representative, UN DGC
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member*

The panel's parting message was one of encouragement to young and old: "Start from individual behavior. Don't stop your action. Anything helps."



The exhibition in the Green Zone is not the only opportunity at COP26 to show Tzu Chi's eco-products. Tzu Chi UK volunteer Soh Chin Ong even finds a moment to do so while traveling to the COP26 venue by bus.

7

A Powerful Alliance to Spur Change

Representatives from the business and industry sectors also participated at COP26. On that front, Tzu Chi's press conference on November 6, "Semiconductor Industry Climate Financing," introduced climate action within the global electronic supply chain by Information and Communications Technology (ICT) companies and featured Tzu Chi's DaAi TV weather reporter, Dr. Chi-Ming Peng.

Dr. Peng is a board member of the Taipei Computer Association in Taiwan. The collective is influential in the global ICT supply chain since its members produce most of the world's mobile phones, iPhones, notebooks, keyboards, computer accessories, and a significant amount of software, hardware, semiconductors, and components. Feeling increasing pressure due to the climate change issue, the members asked Peng what action they could take.

Given that leading and giant global companies like Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, and Google are committed to carbon reduction, the ICT supply chain should also be carbon zero. Thus, in 2021, eight major companies launched the Taiwan Climate Partnership (TCP), an alliance that also connects them to 4,000 supply chain companies.

TCP members' consensus is to push the government to announce a national net-zero path for 2050, demand green energy, create a sustainable supply chain, and conduct international ICT and semiconductor policy exchanges. They meet regularly online, hold round table



Dr. Chi-Ming Peng (left), representing Tzu Chi, and Nick Molho (right), Executive Director at Aldersgate Group, present climate action and efforts to shape policy in the business sector.

discussions, issue policy statements, promote sustainable responsibility, and link international organizations.

The industry applauded the joint venture, as Sam Kimmins, the Head of RE100, a global corporate renewable energy initiative bringing together hundreds of large and ambitious businesses committed to 100% renewable electricity, who joined the conference virtually, expressed:

RE100 has been growing rapidly, particularly in the Asia Pacific region, with Taiwan being one of the leading regions for growth of this movement. I'm delighted to see the progress made by the Taiwan Climate Partnership, reaching into their supply chain to drive progress towards 100% renewable electricity, not just for their own operations, but right through their supply chains.

Sam Kimmins
RE100 Head

Nick Molho, Executive Director at Aldersgate Group, was the second speaker. Aldersgate Group is a membership alliance of major businesses, civil society organizations, and academic institutions that drive policy change to build net-zero emissions and an environmentally sustainable and competitive economy in the UK and the EU.

Molho commended the TCP for its creation, goals, and activities and shared the lessons learned at Aldersgate Group, with advice on TCP's membership growth as it plans to open up to other companies in 2022. He highlighted that progressive business groups must collaborate across borders and jurisdictions to advance the environmental and climate agenda.

Yancey Hai, Chairman of TCP and Delta Electronics, a TCP member, joined the conference virtually near the conclusion. According to the Sixth Assessment Report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Hai conveyed that the world will likely surpass 1.5°C of global warming by 2040. He described this as a "Code-Red" for humanity which spurred the establishment of TCP.

The TCP aims to advocate the net-zero goal to the supply chain in actual practice while connecting with the latest climate trends through close cooperation with international organizations such as COP, the IPCC, and the foreign chambers of commerce in Taiwan. Our hope is that the TCP can spur further participation in climate actions through mutual connection and encouragement. We do believe that unity is strength and through international exchanges and initiatives we can pursue sustainable value together.

Yancey Hai
Chairman, Taiwan Climate Partnership

8 Marching for Climate Justice

In his capacity as a DaAi TV presenter, Dr. Chi-Ming Peng, alongside Tzu Chi USA's news team, also took to the streets on November 6 to join the thousands of people participating in a march to mark the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice. The COP26 Coalition organized the event, being a UK-based civil society alliance of individuals and groups mobilizing around climate justice since it's an issue of escalating global concern:

The impacts of climate change will not be borne equally or fairly, between rich and poor, women and men, and older and younger generations. Consequently, there has been a growing focus on climate justice, which looks at the climate crisis through a human rights lens and on the belief that by working together, we can create a better future for present and future generations.

"Climate Justice"

United Nations Blog, May 19, 2019

The number of participants at the march was clear evidence of how much people care about the future. Dr. Peng reported that while initially, 50,000 people were estimated to join the event, the turnout appeared to be closer to 100,000 people demanding political leaders to act now. They each had their reason to be there.

Jean Su, Energy Justice Program Director and Attorney with the Center for Biological Diversity in Washington DC, which works to secure a future for all species on the brink of extinction, was there for that cause, saying, "We're facing a really

devastating extinction crisis right now. By 2070, we're going to see one-third of all our species on the planet wiped out because of climate change, so we need to prevent that right now, and one of the main things that the US President can do is stop fossil fuel extraction."

Asked if she believed marching was worthwhile, Su said that it was, absolutely, and many obviously felt the same way.

You know, this is COP26, so we've had 26 years of demanding political change. And you see the numbers, the thousands of people on the street right now, from very, very young, to very, very old, and that means that all of the planet is desperately asking our political leaders to make a change because absolutely everything needs to change.

Jean Su

*Energy Justice Program Director and Attorney
Center for Biological Diversity*



Tzu Chi DaAi TV weather reporter Dr. Chi-Ming Peng battles the elements on his way to cover the Global Day of Action for Climate Justice march on November 6.



Fifty thousand people were estimated to join the march, while around 100,000 showed up to support the climate justice cause.

Perhaps a participant from the IONA Community in Glasgow, a dispersed Christian ecumenical community working for peace and social justice, summed the significance of expressing one's voice best:

I'm 70, so I could say it's not important to me, but I have godchildren, relatives' children, and we need to save the planet for our children, for our future.

Climate March Participant



Learning About Scotland's Renewable Energy Success

While UNFCCC members took a break from deliberations on Sunday, November 7, many delegates, including the Tzu Chi team, ventured out to Whitelee Windfarm, Scotland's primary renewable energy source, located in Glasgow's suburbs. Scotland could be taken as a source of inspiration, as it has one of the world's most ambitious climate targets, aiming to reach net-zero by 2045. By 2020, renewables had already met 97.4% of the country's electricity demand, with onshore wind delivering about 70% of capacity, followed by hydro and offshore wind.

ScottishPower decided to move into clean energy a long time ago and has been involved in renewables for over 20 years now, Denise Robertson, Head of Media Relations, explained: "A cleaner, greener future is really important to all of us now. We're in a climate emergency, and people get that probably for the first time; they understand the difference." Whitelee Windfarm, created in 2009, is the largest onshore wind farm in the UK and generates enough clean energy to power around 350,000 homes, which is more than every home in Glasgow.

Scotland has a stellar record in using renewable energy and boasts one of the world's most ambitious targets for reaching net-zero.





Denise Robertson, Head of Media Relations for ScottishPower, shares its green energy achievements with the Tzu Chi team.

However, wind farms can detrimentally impact the land and ecosystems – the mills are prone to wildlife strikes as they may interfere with bird and bat migration paths, for instance. ScottishPower has taken this into account in its operations, seeking to maintain an optimum balance between respecting the ecosystem and answering energy demands.

ScottishPower takes the responsibility as a developer really seriously, and managing and mitigating any potential environmental impact on sites like Whitelee is a huge part of the process. We've got a detailed environmental and habitat management plan that makes sure we look after the wildlife, the peatlands, and everything around this site and make sure that that's managed in the best possible way.

Denise Robertson

Head of Media Relations, ScottishPower

The Sunday excursion brought an uplifting note after the first week of COP26. Nonetheless, the onslaught of pessimistic forecasts concerning climate-related loss and damage reports would surge once more during the second week, beginning on November 8, set as Adaptation, Loss and Damage Day at the summit.

10 The Role of Land

On November 8, the Tzu Chi team held a press conference focused on climate change land-related issues, featuring aid and initiatives by Tzu Chi and two other organizations. Jan Wolf, a Tzu Chi Germany volunteer, moderated and opened the discussion by pointing out that land is a critical component in climate change:

Because of climate change, there's a lot of land degradation, and there's a lot of threat to our natural biosphere and ecosystems. Land is also a very important storage of carbon. And at the same time, because of climate change, we have a lot of problems in this world because of the degradation of ecosystems which leads to lots of further problems like food insecurity, migration, and even conflict in certain areas.

Jan Wolf

*Tzu Chi Germany Volunteer
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member*



Tzu Chi Germany volunteer Jan Wolf (middle), Faizal Parish, Director of the Global Environment Centre in Malaysia (left), and Jimmy Yan, Tzu Chi Special Project Lead (right), speak at Tzu Chi's press conference about the relationship between climate change and land.



Faizal Parish uses slides to illustrate restoration initiatives in climate-sensitive peatland regions.

That’s why Tzu Chi brought this topic to the table. “If you look at these climate conferences, a lot of discussions here are about fossil fuels, how to reduce the carbon, how to get rid of coal, oil, and gas, but what has been overlooked is the role of land,” Wolf explained. As it is, habitable land is scarce. At the same time, the world’s population keeps growing, while the increasing number of climate change-related hurricanes, flooding occurrences, droughts, fires, and rising sea levels are making certain areas unlivable.

The first speaker, Faizal Parish, Director of the Global Environment Centre in Malaysia, revealed how this degradation is playing out in the peatlands, which represent only 3% of land on earth but hold about 30% of all the carbon stored in soils, and reported on measures to restore and preserve them. The peatlands are very vulnerable to drying due to drought, which is a climate-change issue, and threatened in other ways.

“In Southeast Asia, we’ve been facing a very significant challenge of land and forest fires throughout the region, and many of these fires are in the peatland ecosystems. These fires are causing very massive greenhouse gas emissions, estimated up to two billion tons of CO2 equivalent per year, which is a very significant portion of greenhouse gas emissions globally,” Parish recounted.

The cause of the fires is related to climate change and linked to slash and burn land clearing for large-scale contract farming to supply maize for the global feedstock market. The blazes burn up to 40 million hectares of land per year and create smoke clouds and 90% of the transboundary haze that affects five countries in Southeast Asia and the health of more than 50 million people – with an estimated 100,000 premature deaths due to severe smoke haze just in 2015. And there’s more:

The degradation of peatland ecosystems through fire and other rid means also is leading to the loss of very significant and unique biodiversity, as well as disrupting food supply for local communities, and water resources for broader areas and the national level.



Faizal Parish

Director, Global Environment Centre

In response to this plethora of problems, the Global Environment Centre has worked for over 20 years with stakeholders from the government, private sector, and local communities to promote better land management. However, the strategies mapped out must be reflected

in country action plans and programs and implemented. Alas, that's where many challenges at the national and local level emerge in terms of resource availability, capacity, and conflict with other sectors actively opening peatlands for plantation, agriculture, and other purposes.

There have been steps in the right direction within the private sector, such as the framework implemented at a Roundtable on Sustainable Palm Oil, stopping member organizations from developing new plantations on peatlands from 2008 and requiring best management practices in existing ones. And, there has been some progress in restoring peatland forest in areas denuded and burned in association with plantations.

The current strategy is to empower local communities. As Parish highlighted, "very often the local communities who originally or traditionally were stewards of these landscapes, and depend on them for resources, can play a very significant role in the protection, rehabilitation, and management of these areas, provided that the government and local authorities allow that."

Such community action can help restore peatland areas, prevent fire, and restore livelihood benefits. Parish ended



Faizal Parish explains that peatlands are at risk due to climate change and other factors.



Jimmy Yan shows a video about the situation in Zimbabwe and Tzu Chi's aid there to begin his talk.

off by expressing the hope that resources to cope with loss and damage in regions affected by climate change would become available during COP26, but that would not be the case by the summit's end.

Jimmy Yang, Special Project Lead with the Tzu Chi SDG Action Team, presented next and talked about land transformation in Zimbabwe through community engagement, reaffirming the importance of local involvement that Parish touched on. He began with a DaAi TV news clip illustrating Tzu Chi's aid in a village in Zimbabwe where people are suffering from a lack of water for drinking and irrigation and such extreme food insecurity that some resort to eating ants to survive.

The situation in Zimbabwe is quite dire, with eight million people facing starvation as a result of the ongoing drought which has been happening since 2018. The land has become so arid that nothing can grow. Food needs to be purchased in large quantities from other parts of the country, and is too expensive for much of the population.

Jimmy Yang

*Special Project Lead, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member*

Tzu Chi's assistance began with finding a water source and building a well, which led to an evolving aid program addressing a glut of bananas that started during the COVID-19 pandemic. Local merchants were purchasing large amounts of bananas for sale in areas where people couldn't afford to buy them. The fruit was left to rot, the food spoilage wasteful and adding to greenhouse gas emissions while leaving the population lacking nourishment.

Tzu Chi volunteers began by helping the local community process bananas on the verge of spoilage into chips and bread. That led to working with local farmers to compost rotting bananas, teaching proper composting techniques, particularly aerobic processes, or hot composting, which rely on oxygen rather than bacteria to break down the waste. This process reduces greenhouse gas emissions and produces rich, ready-to-use soil within six weeks rather than six months.

The final result was a fertile plot of land capable of growing vegetables and five types of grains. Over the course of about six months, the composed rotten bananas supported the growth of nutritious vegetables to feed over 700 households in the village, around 3,500 people.

While this is a success story, Yang cautioned that so much more humanitarian aid is needed where food systems are fragile, and starvation on a grand scale constantly threatens. He concluded by saying, "Our policies and strategies must be anticipatory, rather than reactionary. And we must use real technical solutions, real strategies with a close working relationship with local communities."

The last speaker, Elinor Crescenzi, from the Los Angeles-based ECOFARM Initiative, joined in via a prerecorded video message about building an ecological and community-oriented land management movement in urban areas of developed countries. The Initiative strives to shift the way we engage with local lands, through attention to human integration with ecological and community systems, in ways "where we don't see ourselves as separate from nature, but as part of nature." It involves creating spaces that sustain human systems as well as the ecosystems of animals, plants, and microorganisms within them.

Essentially, utilizing vacant land and unused spaces affiliated with faith communities, schools, or parks, the venture is establishing a network of small, hyper-local composting farms that sustainably and visibly meet human needs for food, green space, and community. ECOFARMS promote new sources of organic, affordable, and accessible fresh produce while creating welcoming gathering spaces for humans and all forms of life. Concurrently, they facilitate clean and sustainable waste disposal, helping to restore soil fertility while enhancing community environmental awareness and knowledge.

We need to "reimagine the empty and barren as full and vibrant" and to "transform the industrial and destructive to productive and community-scaled," Crescenzi said. The ECOFARM Initiative is currently working in a limited capacity in California through a state-funded pilot supporting 130 small-scale composting projects embedded in green spaces and communities, yet hopes to scale the model further.



To conclude, Crescenzi, upheld the potential of increasing environmental awareness, which leads to support, and change:

The time to inform is now. The time to inspire is now. The time to act is now.

Elinor Crescenzi
ECOFARM Initiative

|| Africa's Intensifying Food Crisis

On November 10, the Tzu Chi SDG Action Team held another press conference, moderated by Tzu Chi Germany volunteer Jan Wolf, expanding on the food crisis in Africa and Tzu Chi's efforts to bring relief. "We've been active in Africa since 1993, and have organized charitable goods distributions, mobilized local volunteers, and worked with local communities and government leaders on various farming initiatives to improve disaster resilience," he said in opening the session.

However, the scope of needs is vast if we consider statistics from the latest State of Food Insecurity and Nutrition Report, a summary published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN every year.

We now have about 811 million people in the world who are facing hunger [and] about 282 million are from Africa [where] about 21% of the population is currently hungry and doesn't have enough food. And if all our planet is heating up further, this number [will probably] rise as climate change is making things even worse.

Jan Wolf
Tzu Chi Germany Volunteer
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member

The first speaker, Dr. Cristina Tirado, Senior Policy Lead for Resilience with the World Food Programme (WFP), joined virtually. The WFP is the world's largest humanitarian organization, saving lives in emergencies and using food assistance to build a pathway to peace, stability, and prosperity for people recovering from conflict, disasters, and the impact of climate change. Tirado confirmed Africa's acute food insecurity issue with more statistics, stating that needs surpass humanitarian assistance groups' capability.



Dr. Cristina Tirado brings added statistics to the table.

Tirado then spoke about the Climate Resilient Development Pathways Alliance created and introduced at the United Nations Food Systems Summit of 2021. The coalition is currently composed of most of the UN, 50 countries, and over 75 stakeholders, with all sectors invited to join. So far, interest in the Alliance has been expressed from research and think tanks, international financial institutions, farmers' organizations, civil society, the private sector, partnerships and intergovernmental organizations, indigenous peoples, youth, and women.

The main thematic action areas under the Alliance are climate adaptation, mitigation and resilience, the water-food-energy nexus, modern/clean cooking, climate risk reduction and management, and the integration of resilience in international and national policies, plans, and initiatives. The Alliance also aims to engage the most vulnerable and high-risk areas, including small island developing states, arid and semi-arid lands/deserts, and the least developed countries.

"I'd like to invite all the stakeholders that are working on building resilience to think where you are going to join forces to work together in this," Tirado said. She was also pleased to share that the framework was integrated within a Special Report of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on

Climate Change (IPCC) and will be one of the principal components in the following assessment report.

Ashley Yong, representing Tzu Chi, spoke next. As the team had already presented aid in Zimbabwe the day before, Yong focused on Sierra Leone in West Africa. Since 2015, Tzu Chi has been helping people cope with food insecurity through community development projects aiming to provide immediate aid while empowering, educating, and strengthening resilience.

Sierra Leone has faced many challenges, from a civil war between 1991 and 2002 to the Ebola outbreak in 2015 to 2016 and frequent floods and mudslides that severely impact agricultural production. "The country is also highly vulnerable to climate risks, so as global warming continues to happen, the country is expected to face more food insecurity issues," Yong reported.

Tzu Chi's aid began with an immediate short-term emergency response entailing distributions of rice and daily necessities. It is now entering a long-term assistance plan to empower the population towards agricultural production self-sufficiency to ensure food security is in its own hands. Tzu Chi has been distributing 800 tons of rice every year. However, in 2022, the plan is to produce 400 tons of rice locally in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and local partners such as Caritas Freetown,



Tzu Chi USA CEO Debra Boudreaux meets Julius Maada Wonie Bio (wearing a yellow tunic), President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and his delegation at COP26. She has the opportunity to personally share about Tzu Chi's aid in the African nation.



Tzu Chi USA CEO Debra Boudreaux discusses Tzu Chi's aid in Sierra Leone with Prof. Foday Moriba Jaward, Minister of Environment with the country's Environment Protection Agency.

Healey International Relief Foundation, and the Lanyi Foundation.

“In terms of agriculture, one of the challenges they face is low-yield production due to lack of resources, lack of support, lack of skills among the community,” Yong said, so the aid strategy takes that into account. To reduce overdependence on rice as a staple, growing a broader range of foods and encouraging the planting of cassava, which is more climate resistant, is part of the plan. Moreover, as in all its aid worldwide, Tzu Chi is focusing on those in greatest need of support:

At the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, we target small-scale and woman farmers who are the most vulnerable in agriculture production.



Ashley Yong

*Program Manager, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member*

In Africa, aside from Sierra Leone and Zimbabwe, Tzu Chi also provides aid in Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana, Zambia, Eswatini, Senegal, Malawi, Uganda, South Africa, and Mozambique. The next speaker, Lydia Wang, Deputy Director of Tzu Chi UK, presented Tzu Chi's aid in Mozambique to improve food security through farming skills training and other means.

“In 2019, Mozambique was hit by Cyclone Idai, but the disaster didn't end

there. They also suffer from droughts, floods, pests, and in January 2021, they were hit by two cyclones,” Wang conveyed. As in other countries, Tzu Chi's aid began with emergency relief, food packs containing basic staples like maize flour, rice, oil, sugar, and salt distributed to over 17,000 families. Yet thinking more long-term and seeing the agricultural potential in areas hit by Idai, Tzu Chi launched a community farming project.

The Great Love Farm began with a donation of seeds, a lease of approximately five acres of land at no charge, and the recruitment of locals interested in joining who then received farming and management skills training. During the COVID-19 pandemic, since Tzu Chi volunteers' ability to travel was reduced, “the local residents started to take up ownership of the farm and inspire more people to join,” Wang recounted. That enthusiasm helped the farm expand to nearly 47 acres.

Irrigating so much acreage can be challenging, and the water supply is also an issue in Mozambique. Yet, with the combined effort of more than 2,000 people participating in the project, they manage to do it. A youth group also produced information sheets for residents, one about the crops and another detailing harvest distribution. Such transparent management systems build confidence and trust in this being a fair system.

Finally, since the agriculture sector is highly climate-sensitive and extreme weather can drive families into poverty, children may be deprived of school because they need to help out. By alleviating an insufficient food supply, children's return to school becomes more feasible. The benefits of the farm are far-reaching, indeed.

With the successful model of Great Love Farm, the local volunteers are trying to reach out to more nearby villages and invite them to join this initiative. Alone we go faster, but together we go further.

Lydia Wang

Tzu Chi UK Deputy Director

Such a community support approach is at the heart of Tzu Chi's aid vision. In conclusion, Jan Wolf summarized, saying, "Our goal is really to change people on the ground and to empower them to self-sustain, and this is the main principle and concept of Tzu Chi which we apply worldwide."

12 Faith-Based Climate Action

On November 11, near the summit's conclusion, Tzu Chi held its final press conference, entitled "Interfaith Reflection on COP26 and the Road Forward."

Tiffany Tu opened the session on behalf of Tzu Chi:

Protecting our earth is a core value of many faiths. The stewardship arises from a deep connection with nature and all beings, a responsibility, a mission to be the voice and the caretakers of our land, people, and all living things, from the animals to the trees. Faith organizations can no longer be reactive. Instead, we have and need to continue to be proactive in this battle.

Tiffany Tu

*UN Task Force, Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation
Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member*

Valériane Bernard, a Brahma Kumaris representative to the United Nations, then shared about the Interfaith Liaison Committee (ILC), of which she is Co-Chair. The ILC was established during COP19 in 2013 as a Special Group under the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on

Voices from different faiths share their insights on November 11 at Tzu Chi's final press conference during COP26.



Climate Change) to support the informal gathering of faith-based organizations and provide a platform to facilitate dialogue and action.

The Interfaith Liaison Committee took into its hand the fact that we wanted all the different faiths to unite, come together, and be able to have a deep conversation on the challenges that are present within the climate crisis. We wanted everyone from the grass root or higher up in the hierarchy of their religion to be able to have a deep conversation on the issues we're all facing.

Valériane Bernard

*Brahma Kumaris UN Representative
Interfaith Liaison Committee Co-Chair*

On the first day of COP26, the ILC held a Talanoa Dialogue, *Talanoa* being a word used in Fiji and across the Pacific to reflect a process of inclusive, participatory, and transparent dialogue. This ILC tradition began at COP23 in 2017, and this year, 200 people participated in person or online. The ILC shared the fruits of the conversation with the UNFCCC leadership, as Henrik Grape, from the World Council of Churches and the Co-Chair of ILC, detailed next.

Grape began by illuminating that faith communities are often missing in discussions of how to come to terms with climate change and need to come together on this:

We're in a very special position when humanity is actually having a great impact on the whole global ecosystem. It never happened before, and those moral and ethical decisions we make today have a large impact on the future. So that is also why I think the faith community is an important part of this.



Henrik Grape
*World Council of Churches
Interfaith Liaison Committee Co-Chair*

He called for a value-driven approach and inquiry as to, "What are the values that drive us to actually do the things that we have to do in a very urgent situation?" "All faiths on earth are more or less dealing with the question of 'Why are we here, what is the meaning of being here, and where do we want to go?'" he elaborated. What is also essential to faiths is to "Love each other, take care of each other, but also what we could call justice, and to protect the most vulnerable."

Grape shared that this year's ILC Talanoa conversation touched on the need for advocacy based on the obligation to bring those on the frontlines of climate change, who can't be in the room, to the discussion. There must be a place for the poor, the vulnerable members of faiths, and people of less voice, like youth, and all the species without any say – Mother Earth's creation.

The group additionally highlighted that mitigation and finance must go together and address loss and damage – especially in the Pacific, Africa, Asia, Latin America, regions without the resources to cope with climate-related disasters. Issues around gender, human rights, and global governance also emerged. And, the fundamental need for spiritual voices to join the international climate dialogue was an essential part of their message:

If 82% or 83% of the world's inhabitants say they belong to a religious tradition, this crosscuts every sector. This system of UN advocacy also should have some kind of ethical reflection over what they're doing. If faith communities can contribute more to these dialogues, I think it will have greater success to actually implement what we need to do to keep the world under 1.5°C.



Henrik Grape
*World Council of Churches
Interfaith Liaison Committee Co-Chair*

Reverend Peggy Clarke, Senior Minister at Community Church of New York and representing the Unitarian Universalist Association, spoke next. She opened by talking about the role of people ordained for religious duties and their vital moral voice.

I see clergy, really, as the white blood cells of the planet. Whenever there's a wound or a hurt, clergy people move, we go where we need to be, we try to inspire and bring healing. It's our work; it's what we're called to do. And it's why we're here because there is now a wound, and we're called to inspire whatever healing we can. We're often called to remind people of their own best selves and their own highest aspirations.

Reverend Peggy Clarke
Senior Minister
Community Church of New York

Clarke also brought a note of hope. "What's interesting to me about this COP," she said, "is that it feels like the moral voice is kind of already here," as opposed to in Paris in 2015 when it seemed radical to talk about the most vulnerable, and loss and damage wasn't on the table in most discussions. "It felt like a fight there to get our captains of industry and government to consider the implications for those who are suffering most, and I have to say, that doesn't seem true here. It feels like the moral voice has been woven into the conversation."

She closed with a rallying cry for compassion, something at the heart of Tzu Chi's vision and mission as well:

Since we all understand the desperate need, and we all understand the requirement for everyone to be on board, now we need to start building capacity for compassion. We have brought everyone to this doorway, and it feels like, okay, now what's next is we have to start working this

particular muscle. Compassion is not a muscle that we collectively exercise, and so, what's next, it seems to me, is to build that.

Reverend Peggy Clarke
Senior Minister
Community Church of New York

It was a fitting lead-in to the last speaker, Dr. Kenneth Liao, the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation's Deputy Medical Director, who opened with the topic of compassion. "As a Buddhist organization, our philosophy at Tzu Chi is to build upon the foundation of loving-kindness and compassion. And we set out as our mission to relieve the suffering of all sentient beings, including creatures in the world," he explained.

Liao pointed out that, "according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization statistics from 2018, every day, every second, 2,256 animals are being slaughtered. In a day, that translates to over 220 million, and if you go to a year, it means over 80.6 billion animals are being slaughtered." Thus, exercising compassion can begin with our dietary choices since a paramount way to protect living creatures is to abandon eating meat. The impact of this simple act of kindness extends far beyond caring for animals; it encompasses protecting the environment and mitigating the ravages of climate change, too.

A plant-based diet is ingrained in our principles [and Tzu Chi has] been successful in promoting a plant-based diet by integrating faith-based compassion and other values to the scientific facts of climate change.

Dr. Kenneth Liao
Deputy Medical Director
Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation



Looking at the road ahead, Liao invited everyone to adopt Tzu Chi's all-in-one approach to ethics in practice as a way to good global citizenship:

"Ethical mind by volunteerism.

Ethical living by recycling.

Ethical eating by a vegetarian diet."

Accomplishments and Disappointments

As COP26 drew to a close, everyone looked back at what had been accomplished by world leaders after two weeks of intense negotiations and debate and what had not. Among the concrete successes of the Glasgow Climate Pact, nations reached an agreement on Article 6 establishing the rules for carbon markets, completing the Paris Rulebook defining the Paris Agreement's implementation.

There was cause to celebrate on the front of deforestation. Over 100 world leaders promised to end and reverse deforestation by 2030. More than 30 of the world's biggest financial companies promised to end investment in deforestation-related activities, and 28 countries committed to removing deforestation from the global trade of food and other agricultural products.

Another historic success was that more than 100 countries pledged to cut methane emissions by 30% by 2030. Concurrently, some countries agreed to speed up their climate planning and release new "nationally determined contributions" every five years.

Certain nations committed to cutting heat-trapping pollution more drastically, although many didn't agree to reduce emissions fast enough to avert the worst climate-driven damages. While delegates

called for increased use of clean energy sources, they didn't demand a full stop to the use of fossil fuels.

And, the unified plea by developing nations for climate justice fell on deaf ears. Although wealthier countries account for the majority of climate emissions while poorer nations suffer the most, financial compensation was not forthcoming and the \$100 billion in "climate finance" already promised didn't manifest. Instead, dubbed the "Glasgow Dialogue," discussions between nations regarding how loss and damage funding might work will commence.

In the eyes of many, the COP26 conclusions fell short of hopes and expectations. We can only look ahead to COP27 in anticipation that it might result in more ambitious pledges of change and plans for implementation and action. But for now, the ball is equally in our court as individuals.

What lifestyle adjustments and sacrifices are we willing to make? After all, isn't this precious planet that we all call home worthy of our deepest love, respect, and appreciation? And, we can no longer dodge this question: Will the requisite transformation of humanity's attitude towards nature arrive before it's too late?

PROTECTING ANIMALS PROTECTS US ALL

by *Ida Eva Zielinska*

Photos by *Tzu Chi SDG Action Team*

Looking back at COP26, the 26th United Nations Annual Climate Change Conference that took place in Glasgow, Scotland, in November 2021, one can surely applaud its principal successes: For instance, the pledges of over 100 countries to both curb methane emissions by 30% and end deforestation by 2030. One can also commend the goals set, even though their scope came short of expectations.

Furthermore, the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation and others advocating plant-based diets to combat climate change were greatly disappointed that a critical topic was missing from this and previous COP summit agendas. Raphaël Podselver, Head of UN Advocacy at ProVeg International, one of Tzu Chi's partners on this front, summed up the reasons precisely at one of the three press conferences the organizations co-hosted at COP26:





What hasn't been acknowledged despite scientific consensus on the matter is the role of animal agriculture being a main driver of both methane emissions and deforestation.

And what has not been discussed here in Glasgow, is the potential of plant-based proteins to mitigate the impact of food systems on the climate crisis. A substantial proportion of the total deforestation worldwide is caused by animal agriculture. We also know that methane from livestock accounts for 32% of global methane pollution – that is comparable with methane emission coming from the fossil fuel industry, which represents 35%. But despite those alarming numbers, a shift towards more plant-rich and less resource-intensive foods is desperately missing from the COP26 agenda.



Raphaël Podselver
Head of UN Advocacy
ProVeg International

The Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation's push for widespread adoption of plant-based diets is part of its Environmental Protection agenda, and rooted in the practice of compassion for all sentient beings. Given that advocacy for vegetarianism and veganism is an integral part of Tzu Chi's missions and work worldwide, it has brought this perspective to COP summits since 2012, when it joined the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Tzu Chi volunteers consistently promote plant-based diets when providing charity aid, disaster relief distributions, and beyond. Additionally, Tzu Chi launched the global

Ethical Eating Day movement in Paris at COP21 in 2015. The day of awareness drive invites people to pledge to be vegetarian for a day each January 11, and has inspired over 1.2 million new pledges since 2019. And in 2020, Tzu Chi USA established the Very Veggie Movement (VVM), which aims to unite people around the causes of animal rights and environmental protection. This initiative has garnered 60 partners so far.

At COP26, the Tzu Chi Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Action Team joined forces with ProVeg International, Four Paws, and the Humane Society International to host a series of press conferences to raise public awareness of the critical environmental benefits of plant-based diets. Hopefully, this would also help push animal agriculture onto the core agenda of future COP summits. Each of these partner organizations works on behalf of animals and promotes dietary transformation in their own way.

ProVeg is a leading international food awareness organization whose mission is to reduce the global consumption of animals by 50% by 2040. Four Paws, a global animal welfare organization for animals under direct human influence, strives to reveal suffering, rescue animals in need, and promote the reduction, refinement, and replacement of animal products. The Humane Society International works globally to rescue and protect dogs and cats, improve farm animal welfare, protect wildlife, promote animal-free testing and research, respond to natural disasters, and confront cruelty to animals.

As part of their joint public awareness-building efforts, Tzu Chi and the three NGOs held a first press conference on November 2: "Achieving the Paris Agreement and Preventing the Next Pandemic: The Case for Transformative, Climate-Resilient and Healthy Food-Systems," moderated

by Raphaël Podselver from ProVeg. The speakers illuminated various aspects of this broad topic, even in terms of averting future outbreaks of zoonotic diseases, meaning transmitted between animals and people, such as COVID-19.

Dr. Martina Stephany represented Four Paws, an organization highlighting that factory farming is the leading cause of animal cruelty worldwide and a major contributor to numerous global problems. She explained that on top of this, “factory farming is most likely the next breeding ground for pandemics.” The NGO recently published a study about pandemics as part of which they asked 29 scientists their views as to the best approach from now on: Symptom control, preparedness, or prevention?



All of them agreed that we should look much more towards prevention because everything else is not cost-effective and not really sustainable.

These scientists came from various fields, and they all agreed that animal welfare is significantly underestimated at the moment when it comes to pandemic prevention. And they said the first thing is, ‘we need to end factory farming,’ and the second thing is, ‘we need to drastically reduce the number of animals farmed globally.’

Dr. Martina Stephany

*International Director Farm Animals and Nutrition
Four Paws*

Claire Bass, Executive Director at Humane Society International, presented the organization’s Forward Food campaign in the UK. The venture is making progress in encouraging and enabling the catering

industry and institutions serving millions of meals daily to put more plant-based foods on plates and menus. They do this in part by training and inspiring chefs to create delicious and nutritious plant-based cuisine. Initially, it can feel like an uphill battle, she said:

Often when we start working with [chefs at] institutions, they’re quite resistant and don’t really want to cut meat from their menu. But, when our chef shows them a tool kit to expand their creativity with plant-based cooking, by the end of the training, they’re all sold, and they can’t wait to get going and to serve up new, exciting, and tasty plant-based dishes.



Claire Bass

*Executive Director
Humane Society International*

It’s also a question of where to place the plant-based options on a menu. “For too long, we’ve seen that companies were looking at plant-based options as kind of the periphery of menus. So, there will be a special extra section, you know, ‘this is only for vegans or only for vegetarians,’ and that shouldn’t be the case because plant-based food is for everyone,” she explained. Instead, Forward Food promotes an “architecture of choice” within menus, positioning plant-based options within “the normal” so meat-eaters won’t immediately assume, “well, this isn’t for me.”

Bass concluded on an encouraging note, sharing, “If we look at the shift in the UK that we’ve seen in plant-based menus over the last, even three years, it’s been phenomenal. Everywhere you go now has

got plant-based options on the menu. And that trend is only going to increase the more products that come on the market and the more appetite there is from consumers. So, we're heading in the right direction; we've just got to get there faster!"

Dr. Ming Nan Lin, Vice Superintendent of one of Tzu Chi Medical Foundation's seven hospitals in Taiwan, built on this positive tone. He revealed how Tzu Chi's institutions are at the forefront of systemic adoption of plant-based diets, a subject he also touched on at other press conferences during COP26 (presented in our cover story on page 6).

And, on November 4, Dr. Lin would introduce the health benefits of plant-based eating at a press conference co-hosted by Tzu Chi, ProVeg, and the Humane Society. "It's Time to Address the Cow in the Room: We Want Diet Change, Not Climate Change!" was its cry and as the size of the audience and round of applause at the end indicated, the public is ready for change, even though politicians may be lagging far behind.

Diet Change to Deter Climate Change

After an introduction by conference moderator Raphaël Podselver, representing ProVeg, as the first speaker, Shawn McKeeny from the Humane Society didn't mince words as he expressed dissatisfaction about the absence of animal agriculture on the COP26 agenda.

COP26 has been framed as the race to zero but in its refusal to set ambitious targets and strategies to meaningfully reduce the climate impact of animal agriculture, it's more like a gentle Sunday stroll.



Shawn McKeeny
Forward Food Manager
Humane Society International



This critique is warranted, especially if people are ready for a paradigm shift in our global food system. "Recent years have seen an exploding consumer interest in plant-based eating in multiple world markets, as the environmental, human health, and animal welfare benefits of reducing meat and dairy have become mainstream issues," McKeeny pointed out.

According to a survey by Euromonitor International, the world's leading provider of global business intelligence, market analysis, and consumer insights, "42% of consumers globally are restricting certain animal-based products and looking to diversify their diets with more plant-based options," he added. Concurrently, "leading retailers and manufacturers the world over responded to the plant-based boom, launching a variety of plant-based options, and there is increasing investment into protein alternatives."



Jasmijn de Boo, Vice President of ProVeg International, picked up the thread of why such change is much-needed, saying that the pioneers of the plant-based eating movement “have long known that eating animals is not very efficient. It takes too many resources, causes environmental damage, and global inequality.” She cited recent data indicating that “the production and consumption of animal-based products are among the main sources of emissions from the food system and account for about 20% of global emissions.” However, the demand for change is disproportionate globally:



As the Western world consumes around 80% of the world’s resources, North America and Europe, in particular, have a moral obligation to do more to curb

greenhouse gas emissions and pollution. If we want a just and fair transition to a livable planet and meet the deforestation and methane cut goals announced just a few days ago, Europe’s animal consumption should actually be reduced as follows: Meat needs to be reduced by 79%, milk and dairy by 74-83%, eggs by 68%, and fish and seafood by 65%. These are bold targets indeed. We urge leaders to take decisive action as we’re running out of time. But we can do this. Plant-based, cultured meat, precision fermentation, algae, fungi are all part of the solution. We need diet change, not climate change.



Jasmijn de Boo
Vice President
ProVeg International

Representing Tzu Chi, Dr. Ming Nan Lin, Vice Superintendent of Taiwan’s Dalin Tzu

Chi Hospital, spoke next and shed light on what such a shift in diet can mean in terms of health. He began by sharing his and other healthcare professionals’ experience, which shows that so many patients today suffer from chronic diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, chronic heart disease, strokes, etc.

These multifactorial diseases are influenced by dietary patterns and physical exercise, among the most effective factors to control them. Moreover, “In my years of research on plant-based diets and health, there is a clear link between the instance of non-communicable diseases and a poor health status with the amount of meat consumed on a daily basis,” Dr. Lin added.

While Dr. Lin said that many scientific papers show the benefits of plant-based diets on health, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital also started conducting plant-based studies in 2007, with over 6,000 subjects. The hospital has published 12 papers so far, which show that a plant-based diet will help patients become healthier. Dr. Lin also revealed that recent 2021 studies showed an association between plant-based diets and a reduction in the severity of COVID-19 diseases. Thus, “a vegetarian diet is very helpful not only for common non-communicable diseases but also in COVID-19,” he shared.

To conclude, Dr. Lin urged everyone to take up Tzu Chi’s invitation to make an Ethical Eating Day pledge and explore where even a single day of being vegetarian can lead:



A thousand-mile journey starts from the first step. If we start and become the change we want to see in the world, then we can hope that we have a better tomorrow.



Dr. Ming Nan Lin
Vice Superintendent, Dalin Tzu Chi Hospital

Bernat Añaños, the co-founder of Heura Foods, one of the leading plant-based food companies in Europe, spoke next and highlighted how choosing a meat-free diet might not be as difficult as some may believe. Companies worldwide are proving that plant-based “meat” is possible in terms of taste and texture, being much more sustainable and healthier at the same time. In the view of the industry, while other sectors have progressed, meat production has stalled, or worse:



Animal meat is obsolete. It doesn't make any sense in this century. It is one of the only sectors that didn't evolve. We're actually worse because we treat the animals worse; we put them in very small places, with

all the problems antibiotics are creating, etc. So, we're making it worse while in all the other sectors, we're making steps ahead.

Bernat Añaños Martinez

*Co-Founder and Chief Social Movement Officer
Heura Foods*

Moreover, given that “60% of emissions created by the food system come from animal agriculture while they just provide 18% of the calories worldwide and just 37% of the protein,” this is a highly inefficient model for feeding the world, he said. And yet, according to Martinez, the good news is that “you can reduce your footprint as an individual by 73% by ditching dairy and meat.” Plant-based meat is available, and we have information about the impact of animal meat consumption. So, in his view, having these two, “if we don't move forward on this, it's irresponsible.”

“We vote three times a day as humans, the ones that have the pleasure to have food on our tables, and we can decide which impact we have in the world,” Martinez said to conclude. That vote is about more than emissions, health, and sustainability, too. “We're deciding which is the future of animals, and I think we have to start changing the relationship we have with animals.” Perhaps facing the gruesome scope of what our global carnivorous habit demands can help spur change:

In a year's time, we slaughtered more than 77 billion animals and it's only for human consumption.

Ashley Yong

Tzu Chi SDG Action Team



The Way Forward

Pleas for increased awareness and behavioral change continued on November 9, when Tzu Chi co-hosted another press conference and side event with ProVeg International. The speakers touched on how systematic action by organizations, industry, and governments can support consumer diet transformation, while a grassroots movement can likewise lead the way.

As the moderator, Juliette Tronchon, Policy and Public Affairs Specialist International at Proveg, opened the press conference. Raphaël Podselver, also from ProVeg, spoke next and called for political action, saying, “Governments can create enabling environments for consumers. We need to get the price of meat and dairy up, and we need to get the price of vegetables and plant-based products down. But we need government support with concrete policies that favor the plant-based sector and plant-rich diets in general.” And, he once again expressed the hope to see plant-rich diets featured as a multiple-problem solution on the COP27 agenda.

Hsin Ling Liang, a Tzu Chi SDG Action Team member, was the following speaker and first explained that promoting and inspiring a dietary transition to plant-based eating is embedded in Tzu Chi’s aid, activities, and institutions. “At the organizational level, Tzu Chi’s premises, for example, hospitals, universities, schools, and community spaces, all supply [only] plant-based meals,” Liang shared. Plus, moving from internal institutions to public spaces, any food that Tzu Chi distributes as part of charity aid or disaster relief never contains meat, and the Foundation has created innovative plant-based instant meals to supplement those supplies.

Liang then described another ongoing Tzu Chi initiative at the societal level, a three-week health challenge: “We engage with health professionals and restaurants, eateries, to tailor 21 days of vegan food for our participants. After 21 days, most participants experience positive changes physically and mentally and become more aware of their diets. The movement actually reflects the significance of peer support in dietary transition.” Tzu Chi also has a grassroots program in the UK whereby volunteers showcase vegetarian cooking in people’s homes, allowing them to discover new tastes.

To sum up, Liang stated that in Tzu Chi’s view, every single person counts along the path to societal change:

To drive a wider dietary transition, we believe in the power of one, and one to infinity. Through the process, we believe innovation in social learning and peer support can facilitate a proactive transition.



Hsin Ling Liang

Tzu Chi SDG Action Team Member

Next on the panel, Patrick O. Brown, Founder and CEO of Impossible Foods, further championed instigating a dietary shift through innovation, especially given the lack of progress in policy:





It's I think pretty clear to everyone here at COP that the actions that are now being contemplated and negotiated by the official parties will fall far short of what's needed to meaningfully

impact the disastrous trajectory of climate change that we're on, and what we really need is much more dramatic action, and fast. It would be great if this would come from international consensus and government policies, but despite good intentions, I'm sure, it's highly unlikely to happen any time soon and not in time. So, the change is going to have to come from the private sector and innovation, not from policy, or at least most of the change.

Patrick O. Brown

CEO & Founder, Impossible Foods

In addition, to Brown, it's clear that "no countries are going to ban animal agriculture or meat consumption, there's essentially no chance." But, there's a free-market consumer-driven approach that one can apply instead, and this understanding drove him to start Impossible Foods, which develops plant-based substitutes for meat products. As their website states, the company's philosophy is that "the best way to reduce your carbon footprint, limit global warming, halt the collapse of biodiversity, save wildlife and ensure enough clean water for all of us is to ditch meat from animals."

Thus, Brown set out to invent and perfect a technology to "make the best, most delicious, healthy, affordable meat, fish, and dairy foods in the world [so] no one will ever want to buy the animal products." Furthermore, Impossible Foods intends to scale this technology to "effectively make animal agriculture obsolete by 2035." "I picked 2035 because I thought we could realistically achieve our goal... and it needed to be urgent, so that's what we set as our target," he added.

Being at the forefront of research and development of plant-based foods, Brown also introduced several encouraging factors about the impact of halting industrial meat production. He described how about a third of the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere warming our planet right now came from animal agriculture over the past several hundred years, yet unlike fossil fuel emissions, these are reversible. The reason is that the carbon dioxide emissions from the livestock industry almost entirely trace back to the destruction of biomass that existed on earth before we cleared land for livestock.

Brown then explained that the CO₂ from clearing biomass can be converted directly back into plant biomass through photosynthesis, "the most powerful carbon factor technology on earth optimized over billions of years." Based on one of his recent research studies, the amount of carbon dioxide one could capture by taking back and restoring the land currently dedicated to animal agriculture is the equivalent of about 22 years' worth of current fossil fuel emissions. The optimum path forward he proposed is two-pronged:



With over 38,000 delegates in attendance, COP26 provides a valuable opportunity to advocate a reduction in animal agriculture and transition to plant-based eating.

ACTION ROOM 1

If we can reach net-zero [fossil fuel emissions] and phase out animal agriculture over the next 15 years, the negative emissions will lower greenhouse gas levels to below what they were at the turn of the century in the year 2000. We can turn back the clock, not all the way back to pre-industrial times, but back to where we were in the year 2000 by those two actions. But that does not happen unless we drastically reduce or eliminate animal agriculture.

Patrick O. Brown

CEO & Founder, Impossible Foods

Taking a visionary approach, Brown added that this wouldn't be bad for farmers, either. They currently rely on the billions of dollars from the government spent on supporting the animal agriculture industry, which is not self-sustaining from a business point of view. So, the simplest thing the government could do is to "just stop doing what they're doing, propping up an industry that is incredibly destructive and would fade away into history of its own accord without subsidies."

Subsequently, Brown brought up the hope and expectation by many that a functional carbon market will emerge over the next few years. In response, "the vast majority of the land currently being used to raise animals for food could produce much more income by restoring the original biomass and selling the carbon from that restoration."

In fact, in Brown's estimation, if farmers recognized this potential opportunity, "they could be the heroes in rescuing the planet." "Rather than being the problem," he concluded, "they could be the solution to climate change and biodiversity collapse." Overall, Brown's far-reaching analysis brought a resounding dose of optimism

to counterbalance the dire projections everyone heard throughout COP26.

To conclude Tzu Chi's push for vegetarianism at COP26, the SDG Action Team held a final side event that afternoon: "No More Omissions: Addressing the Ambition and Scale of Change Required in Global Food Systems."



Six of the eight speakers pose for a photo: From left to right, Juliette Tronchon, Barry Gardiner, Sabrina Ahmed, Mia Macdonald, Ashley Yong, and Carina Millstone.

The eight speakers were: Juliette Tronchon, Policy and Public Affairs Specialist International, ProVeg International; Barry Gardiner, Member of Parliament for Brent North under the Labour Party; Sabrina Ahmed, Senior Campaigns and Policy Officer, Vegan Society; Mia Macdonald, Executive Director, Brighter Green; Carina Millstone, Executive Director, Feedback Global; Nick Palmer, Head of Compassion in World Farming UK; Lana Weidgenant, Deputy Partnerships Director, Zero Hour; and Ashley Yong representing Tzu Chi.

The panel upheld the impact of individual behavioral change, one person at a time:

We hope to promote deep down, individual behavioral transformation that we wish to see in everyone's daily action. Never underestimate the power of individual consumption practices and also the potential of faith-based organizations.

Ashley Yong

Tzu Chi SDG Action Team

Very Veggie Movement

As an initiative of Tzu Chi USA, the **Very Veggie Movement** aims to unite society around the causes of animal rights, environmental protection, and public health, keeping both environmental and human safety firmly in mind. Join the movement today by signing up, and you'll gain access to recipes and tips along with special deals from our Very Veggie Partners.

Or, become a partner today!



Participate in our movement for love and sustainability
by joining us at; [veryveggie.com](https://www.veryveggie.com)



The Tzu Chi delegation marks their participation at COP26 with a group photo.

REFLECTIONS on the Global Climate Dialogue

by *Ida Eva Zielinska*

Photos by *Tzu Chi SDG Action Team*

We asked the Tzu Chi Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Action Team to share its reflections after participating in COP26, the 26th Conference of the Parties in Glasgow, Scotland. The summit drew together the Parties, signatories of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and over 38 thousand delegates from around the world to address the global climate crisis.

Jimmy Yang, lead of the Tzu Chi COP26 delegation, has been on Tzu Chi's UN team the longest. His first summit was COP20 in Lima, Peru in 2014 – a “life-changing experience,” he said – and he’s attended each climate conference since then. He joined the panel at one of Tzu Chi’s press conferences at COP26 as Special Project Lead on aid in Zimbabwe.

“What drew me to the UN Team was the opportunities provided for me to be involved in addressing major global issues and work in collaboration with others to find a solution to these issues.”

– *Jimmy Yang*

Tzu Chi volunteers and married couple Jan Wolf and Mea Feng Lin have been delegates at several COP summits together as both are members of Tzu Chi’s UN SDG Action Team.

“Jan and I understand the climate emergency. If all of humanity doesn’t take immediate action, the whole world will face more disasters, casualties, and losses.”

– *Mea Feng Lin*

Everyone was in action mode at COP26, she said. “The team [was] in the spirit of mission fulfillment, working closely together, using wisdom and perseverance to make daily activities go smoothly and successfully so that Tzu Chi can exert the greatest influence in this climate meeting.”

The 2017 COP23 summit in Bonn, Germany, was Jan’s first, and he’s actively participated in subsequent years. He moderated two Tzu Chi press conferences this time, on topics gravitating around weather and land-related issues and Africa’s food crisis.

“I’ve always been concerned about environmental protection and the impact of our actions on the environment. I’m glad to be part of a team which aims to promote the good practices of Tzu Chi to a global audience of policymakers.”

– *Jan Wolf*

Ashley Yong, Tzu Chi’s Civil Society Youth Representative to the UN Department of Global Communication, became part of the team three years ago, and this was her second COP summit. She spoke at two press conferences and one side session, bringing a perspective on youth action and, as a program manager, sharing about Tzu Chi’s aid in Sierra Leone.

“Participating in COP has taught me more about the challenges and complexity of the climate change issues.”

– *Ashley Yong*

And for Tiffany Tu, this was her first COP since joining Tzu Chi’s Global Partnership Affairs Department (formally known as the United Nations Task Force) in 2020. She opened Tzu Chi’s final press conference featuring interfaith reflections on COP26 and the road forward. Overall, the summit was eye-opening:

“What left the biggest impression was the multisectoral and multilateral dimensions of the attendees from NGOs, governments, academia to corporations. This highlights the global scale and seriousness of climate change.”

– *Tiffany Tu*

● Tzu Chi’s Unique Role

As a Buddhist faith-based non-governmental organization, the team felt that Tzu Chi has a unique role to play at United Nations climate conferences.

“NGOs in the environmental and climate space tend to be engaged in advocacy, working with policy-makers, writing statements, and putting pressure on governments to make decisions which are beneficial to the constituencies represented by the NGO. These NGOs tend to be small and niche, produce well-researched technical reports, and form large coalitions to amplify their voices. On the other hand, Tzu Chi is a rather unique NGO in this space, as we prefer a less technical and political approach and push for a more action-oriented direction.”

– *Jimmy Yang*

“What we’re fighting for here is really to make people aware of the problems and not to just hope for a technology fix, or hope that some politicians at the conference will solve the problems, but to really think about what you can do in your personal life to try to reduce your own carbon footprint, and also to liaise with others and to convince others because so far there are still some people who don’t really believe in climate change, who just don’t want to consider it and who don’t want to take any action at all.”

– *Jan Wolf*



Tzu Chi volunteers Mea Feng Lin and Jan Wolf appreciate attending COP summits together, as both are deeply committed to environmental protection and vegetarianism.

Mea Feng Lin shared that “religious groups in the climate conference represent not only the religious communities in the world today, but also speak for three categories.” Namely, they must be a voice for the world’s poorest populations, living creatures who can’t speak for themselves, and the people of the future who have yet to be born, since the environment then will be the result of humanity’s way of life now.

Tzu Chi had the opportunity to team up with existing and new partners at COP26 to promote plant-based diets, jointly amplifying the necessity for a global transition to more sustainable food systems.

“As a Buddhist organization, Tzu Chi clearly expressed the compassion of the Buddha and Dharma Master Cheng Yen in caring for all living things and the environment and promoting the concept of vegetarianism. Tzu Chi clearly stated that vegetarianism is a way that everyone can easily and quickly reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To reduce carbon, everyone should start by changing their own behavioral patterns. Everyone, every family, business, community, city, and country must understand that the urgency of the current global climate change isn’t just something to talk about, but a call for us to implement the proposed methods and solutions in action.”

– Mea Feng Lin

There were some welcome signs of growing environmental awareness for those who had been to previous COP summits. For example, the organizers had prepared reusable water bottles for delegates instead of the single-use plastic bottles offered before. And, at least 50% of the meals served at the conference were plant-based this year.

Still, once all was said and done, how did the team feel about the outcomes of COP26, the Glasgow Climate Pact?

● Mixed Feelings

Mea Feng Lin recounted that “at the opening ceremony, General Assembly President Alok Sharma emphasized that the 26th Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the ‘last and best hope’ for keeping the global warming range within 1.5 degrees Celsius in accordance with the Paris Agreement’s goals.” So, did this “last and best hope” bear fruit?

Tiffany Tu and Ashley Yong, relatively new to the global dialogue on climate, were somewhat upbeat in their assessments:

“The Glasgow Climate Pact is a good start and a goal that we must strive towards, however, there needs to be a gap between the goal and having the policies and strategies to get to the goal. As global citizens, it’s vital for us to educate ourselves on these goals and implement them into our daily lives.”

– Tiffany Tu

“I think holding the agreement accountable is the most important thing. Personally, I think there is a need to talk more about the strategies rather than only making commitments. However, it’s also great to see many countries have promised to at least do something.”

– Ashley Yong

Jan Wolf, Mea Feng Lin, and Jimmy Yang, with several summits behind them, had more reservations about the outcomes:

“There is progress but it’s not enough. Unfortunately, it wasn’t possible to achieve more and time is running out. You need to understand that these negotiations can only move to the right direction if some major players are willing to work together and to take the right actions.”

– *Jan Wolf*

Lin agreed and elaborated further on the need for collaboration and consensus:

“Most member states are willing to face the disaster brought about by climate change and agree that humans need to improve the current situation of producing large amounts of greenhouse gases. Still, not every country has the same consensus. Although we’ve seen the human crisis, we haven’t been able to lay down the country’s interests. Or, we’ve felt that carbon reduction is necessary but are unwilling to implement large-scale or rapid carbon reduction measures and use carbon neutrality to pretend to be net-zero. ‘Emissions,’ a mentality like this, has also caused the meeting to end while truly clear provisions and measures have not been produced.”

– *Mea Feng Lin*

As for Jimmy Yang, while he applauded the agreements reached (summarized on page 33, at the end of this issue’s cover story), he also detailed his misgivings:

“Even with the most generous estimates and assuming all the commitments and promises made from different countries at the conference would be successfully reached, it would still not be enough to reach the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels – a necessary limit to avert global catastrophe. Another major disappointment of the Glasgow Climate Pact is that much of the language had been watered down, downplaying the urgency for action and weakening language for countries to make more ambitious commitments. [For instance] the language on coal had been watered down dramatically ... from an urge to ‘phase-out’ of coal power to a ‘phase-down.’ [A] major decision on the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage – a contentious topic at the COP for years, which puts the responsibility on developed countries to ‘pay compensation’ for irreversible damages done to developing countries due to climate change – [was also blocked]. Another disappointment is the lack of mention of food and agriculture. Lastly, the failure to mobilize the financial commitments of \$100 billion a year by 2020, though expected, is nonetheless a significant setback for progress.”

– *Jimmy Yang*



To the whole team’s delight, the Refill and Reuse water bottles provided by COP26 organizers are a welcome change.





The team assembles between press conferences and the sessions they attend.

A Commitment to Advocacy and Personal Action

Participating in the COP26 global dialogue on climate change is just one aspect of the Tzu Chi SDG Action Team's resolve to help deter climate change through personal action and advocacy. Nonetheless, they gained knowledge and drew insights and inspiration from the experience, spurring further action.

"I've picked up a lot of knowledge by attending conferences on climate change – especially on the impact of the actions of individuals in their daily life on the environment and the effects of our consumer habits on greenhouse gas emissions. This knowledge has also had a significant impact on my personal lifestyle in many ways."

– Jan Wolf

Jan's wife, Mea Feng, explained more about the couple's mindful lifestyle, which is continually evolving:

"We like the challenge of a low-carbon life. We usually walk or use bicycles as much as possible wherever we can. My husband's bicycle has been used for nearly 35 years. If you look at the furniture at home, you can see that almost all have been used for more than decades, and even have a history of hundreds of years. This kind of treasure can not only extend life. It's also a good way to

reduce garbage and not waste the earth's resources. In addition, it may also be worth thinking about the way the food is prepared, from the ingredients (plant-based vegetarian is the most carbon-efficient), the source of the food (you need to pay attention to choosing local ingredients in season), and the way of cooking. Water consumption? Cooking time? Even the cleaning at the end (how much water or detergent is used, etc.). This is all that everyone can think about and maybe find that there is still room for improvement!"

– Mea Feng Lin

For her part, Ashley Yong is making a concerted effort in her lifestyle choices, planning to do even more, and hoping to encourage others to as well:

"I've continued my effort in reducing my carbon footprint through plant-based diet adoption, avoiding waste generation, and reducing electrical consumption. Participating in COP has also inspired me to contribute more to climate change awareness-raising and education, especially in the younger generation, as I think it's very critical for future leaders to understand the climate emergency. I'll also share the usefulness and benefit of reusable and zero waste products with the people around me [and] encourage my friends and family to pay more attention to climate change issues."

– Ashley Yong

As a veteran of COP summits, this being his seventh, Jimmy Yang shared a very nuanced point of view on tackling climate change, one where individual agency as well as a broad systemic transformation must play a part:

“Before my involvement at COP, my views on environmentalism had been rather naïve. I had thought if we all did our part in recycling, cleaning up our environment, reducing our energy usage, and eating sustainably, the problem would be solved. [However] as I took the time to talk to different people, listen to their stories, experienced other cultures, and delved deeper into research, I found the issue to be quite a bit more complex. In actuality, it’s the systems in place that are the primary contributors to the climate crisis – at the heart of it all are uncontrolled growth capitalism, the constant need to consume energy, our cultures and beliefs, and even human nature itself. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions to the climate crisis – all ideas must be put on the table; even the smallest of actions make a difference. Change requires not only collective individual actions and awareness, it also requires us to think completely differently and critically about the way we live our lives, and yes, even getting political. Indeed, individual actions ... demonstrate moral character, discipline, awareness, and dedication to climate action. However, solving the crisis requires a complete reevaluation of the values in our modern lifestyle and a total restructuring of society.”

– Jimmy Yang

For COP newcomer Tiffany Tu, it boils down to being a light, and joining forces in solidarity with others to illuminate the way forward, because lasting change can start one action at a time:



Ashley Yong (left) and Tiffany Tu (right) share a relaxed moment at COP26.

“As Dharma Master Cheng Yen has recently said, ‘We must take inventory of our lives and embody the spirit of the firefly.’ We must reflect on the carbon emissions in our daily lives and make reductions. At the same time, we mustn’t think less of ourselves; we need to be the voice for nature and our Earth. Like the firefly with its small light brightening up the dark sky, our reach or strength may not be big, but we can still make an impact in our communities and beyond. The world needs many little fireflies because, together, we can shine and guide others to walk on the same path.”

– Tiffany Tu 🌱

Read more about Master Cheng Yen’s fireflies analogy in the teachings section on page 58.

What You Need to Know About

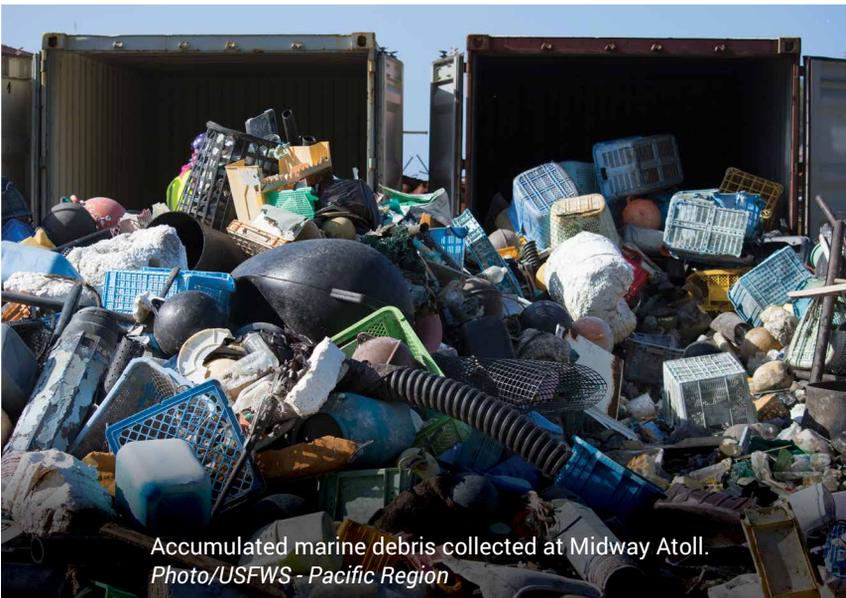
PLASTIC POLLUTION

by Dilber Shatursun

Where there is water, there is life. Over 60% of the human body is made of it and it covers roughly 70% of the Earth's surface. Yet, our reliance on plastic has quietly suffocated our oceans, rivers, seas, lakes, and more for decades. While Tzu Chi, driven by a duty to protect the Earth, has actively promoted waste reduction and recycling efforts, our planet needs much more from humanity to improve the health of our waterways – and our own.

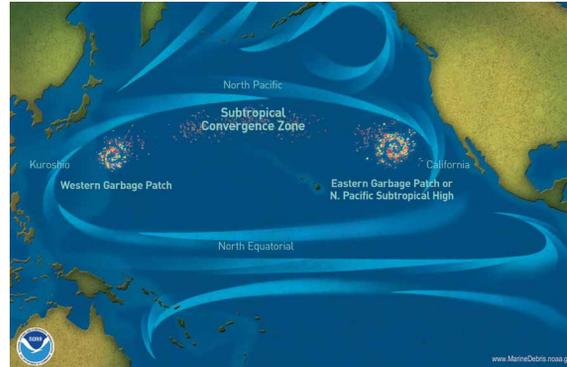
An albatross inspects a collection of lighters on the shores of the Hawaiian Archipelago. Photo/National Marine Sanctuaries





Accumulated marine debris collected at Midway Atoll.
Photo/USFWS - Pacific Region

The Great Pacific, or Eastern, Garbage Patch is estimated to be 1.6 million square km — twice the size of Texas and three times the size of France.
Photo/NOAA



What is Water Pollution and What Role Does Plastic Play?

Water pollution encompasses a variety of perpetrators. The Environmental Pollution Center defines it as the existence of toxins and biological agents in groundwater, but at levels that surpass what is naturally occurring and may threaten humans and/or the environment. Some major culprits include the disposal of household chemicals, commercial and industrial waste; accidents like oil spills; and dumping of common trash. Of course, plastic has taken a growing slice of this pie.

Researchers actually don't know how much for certain, but they have estimates. According to the New Plastics Economy, more than roughly 150 million tonnes of plastic may exist in the ocean. To put this number into perspective, imagine a garbage truck dumping into the ocean every minute. The same report suggests that, "if no action is taken, this is expected to increase to two per minute by 2030 and four per minute by

2050." Unfortunately, we're already seeing previews of this around the world.

Today, there are five major garbage patches around the world, with the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch," nearest to California, the largest among them. Pushed by currents, marine debris (including plastic) get squeezed together in clumps, and many particles in these so-called 'trash islands' can be so small they're next to impossible to see with the naked eye. In fact, the next time you enter the water, you may not even know you're wading through one.

Plastic + Oceans = Toxic Situation

Plastics are produced using a complex chemical process, often identified as a number marked within a universal recycling symbol  and correlating to different types of plastic polymers (PVC and PET for example). However, the Better Alternatives Now List 2.0 says that when in the ocean, plastic materials of any kind increase "their toxicity over time through the absorption of persistent organic

pollutants.” This means that plastic builds toxins in waterways, harming water quality and disrupting wildlife.

In fact, we see shocking images like these all the time: a marine or avian animal ensnared in a plastic bag, its neck binded by a bottle cap ring, or a drinking straw lodged in a nostril. The World Wildlife Fund reports that plastic pollution has entangled or ended up being eaten by 81 of 123 marine mammal species, and that an estimated 100,000 marine animals die annually. From corals, whales, to even birds – all members of the marine ecosystem are in danger.

Why is Plastic Making it Into the Ocean in the First Place?

Sadly, there is a long history of deliberate dumping by governments, corporations, and individuals. Prior to the US Environmental Protection Agency’s passing of the Clean Water Act in 1972, an estimated 47.5 million tons of waste was dumped into ocean waters

in 1968 alone. In fact, many believed that “the solution to pollution is dilution,” pointing to false perceptions that the ocean was humanity’s answer to waste disposal.

Moreover, scientists from the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research and the Weihenstephan–Triesdorf University of Applied Science published a report that suggests garbage dumping occurs most intensely in ten rivers around the world; eight are in Asia alone. The same report estimates that rivers across the board contribute up to four million tons a year of plastic debris, yet up to 95% of it is derived from these ten rivers.

Still, there are other ways in which plastic-based materials enter waterways. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration traced that land debris may be blown, swept, or washed out to sea via storm waterways during snowstorms or heavy rains, and especially during extreme weather events. Even items from ships, stationary platforms, and other vessels may get dumped or get swept away into the ocean; abandoned equipment and vessels are included.

Because of this, marine life can become victims of “ghost fishing.” In a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the term is defined as the ability of abandoned, lost, or otherwise discarded fishing gear to continue to fish. Picture thick nets, traps, hooks, and more, trapping sea creatures without ever being fished nor set free. Nylon ropes and metals are common perpetrators. Worse yet, predators seeing trapped prey often get



Plastic waste is a deadly threat in oceans around the world. *Photo/Nataliya Vaitkevich*



trapped themselves. Seeing the threats to marine life, what's taking us so long to find the solution to pollution?

The Challenges Ahead

Believe it or not, it can take up to centuries for plastic garbage in the ocean to degrade. National Geographic puts it like this: "If plastic had been invented when the Pilgrims sailed from Plymouth, England, to North America ... their plastic trash would likely still be around, four centuries later."

Though you may certainly find it in a different condition, it would still exist as a "microplastic," or a piece of plastic less than 5 millimeters long. But why doesn't it go away? The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association explains that plastic never fully biodegrades; it only breaks down into smaller

pieces. Everyday items, as exhibited in the graphic, can be among the worst offenders. You may be wondering: how are we supposed to fix this?

The answer is complicated. But, there are small steps we can each take. The first is awareness and understanding of the problem. The second is to examine the myriad ways we all use and rely on plastic in our daily lives. In what areas can we change our habits, switch to reusable items, or find a second life for something we might otherwise throw away? Discover our top tips on pages 54-57. 🌱



Interested in learning more about this topic? Follow the QR code for more!



ELEVEN THINGS YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE PLASTIC POLLUTION

by Dilber Shatursun & Adriana DiBenedetto

Plastic pollution is a problem that is harming our planet now and will continue to do so *for generations*. That's why we've compiled this list of fifteen things that can help you slowly, but surely, reduce your dependence on single-use plastics and even pass on plastic. While it won't eliminate *all* the plastics in your life, it may help you become more mindful about the role plastic plays on a daily basis. Let's begin!

1 Filter it up

In 2006, the average American went through about 167 bottles of water but only recycled less than a third of that amount; that's just per person! If you can, invest in a water filtration system that's hooked up to your faucet. On a budget, a water pitcher with a built-in filter is a great start. Just be sure that you periodically clean or replace your filters (with either option) to keep buildup at bay.

2 Wash synthetic fabrics wisely

Synthetic materials like polyester, rayon, acrylic, and nylon release fibers less than 5mm every time they're washed. The average fleece jacket releases up to 2g of microfibers in one load. The solution? Wash synthetics in cold water, as infrequently as possible, and *only* when the load is full. Then, if you must purchase, look for items made from natural fibers like linen, cotton, or even Tencel.

PRO TIP. Use a microfiber-catching laundry bag or invest in a laundry filter. For those with bigger budgets, switch to a front-loading washing machine (which may reduce the amount of microfibers released up to seven times!).

3 Show off your style with a reusable cup

Ever wonder why liquid never leaks through a paper cup? That's because it's lined with a thin layer of plastic, making it unfit for recycling. Around 16 billion coffee cups are thrown away every year worldwide. After one-time use, they spend up to 50 years in a landfill. Instead, use a tumbler for liquids hot and cold, and in a design that speaks to you.

4 Skip the straw

On average, Americans use over 500 million straws *per day*. That's enough to fill 127 school buses! While many businesses have removed straws as defaults, others are still catching up. So, when ordering a drink, just be sure to ask your server not to include any straws. If for health reasons you must use a straw, try a washable stainless steel one; many even come with carrying cases for portability.

*With DA.AI Technology, PET bottles get a second life as fabric.
Photo/Shuli Lo*



5 Let loose with your tea

Elevate tea time and switch to loose leaf teas. Many tea bags are made with a silky, synthetic mesh and sometimes come in individual plastic wrappers. To keep leaves out of your cup, consider purchasing a teapot with an in-pot strainer, a metal strainer ball, or get an over-the-cup strainer. The best part? You'll relish in the finer taste of loose leaf tea.

Want to try loose leaf teas? Explore Jing Si Tea, grown naturally and without pesticides in the mountains of Taiwan. Available for purchase at the www.jingsi.shop.

6 Cut down on single-use cutlery

Each day, Americans use over 100 million single-use plastic utensils. Convenient though they may be, biodegradable they are not. Instead, bring your own cutlery when you're on the go, or invest in a travel set that can be left in a bag or glove compartment for easy storage. Even if sustainability isn't actively on your mind, it will at least be of use anytime you need an extra knife, fork, spoon, or pair of chopsticks handy.



Loose leaf varieties, like those by Jing Si Tea, make tea time luxurious. *Photo/Jing Si Shop*

7 Don't get stuck to cling wrap

Though plastic wrap has been around for decades, there are many alternatives. Wrap drier goods in rewashable tea towels (and using a string or rubber band if need be). To seal moisture in, try wetting the cloth a bit. On the other hand, reusable storage containers and dishes can be great for reheating, refrigeration, and can be dishwasher safe. But, if you must, try reusable papers like parchment or those made from beeswax.

8 Bag it up

Up to a trillion plastic bags are discarded every year, and a single plastic bag can take 1,000 years to degrade. Bring your own reusable shopping and produce bags to markets, and avoid single-use plastic bags. Purchase a tote that supports a cause and shows off your style, or, if you're crafty, make your own. Just be sure to wash every now and then.

9 Party consciously

Occasions can be made festive with decorations, but they may do more harm than good if you're using the wrong materials. Fabric decorations like ribbons and bunting offer beautiful and unique ways to decorate. Avoid confetti and balloons at all costs. Pretty in photos, they can be devastating to marine life. For dinner and serveware, take advantage of your dishwasher and use real dishes and cutlery.

10 Join a cleanup

Minimize land and marine debris as a volunteer at beach cleanups and litter removals. It's a great way to connect with eco-conscious neighbors, do good, and make new friends. Check online for community cleanups near creeks and rivers to help stop waste before it reaches the ocean. Don't see one near you, though? Start your own event and spread the word to your networks on social media.

Tzu Chi volunteers host a community cleanup in Milwaukee, WI. Photo/Grace Tsai



A Tzu Chi volunteer affixes a bow for seating at the Tzu Chi USA 2021 Charity Concert. Photo/Shuli Lo

11 #PassOnPlastic

Now that you understand the problem of plastic pollution, it's time to take action. Adopt some of these changes and let us know what you stick to with photos or video posted to your social media using the hashtag, #PassOnPlastic. It's an effortless way to inspire others and join a group of like-minded individuals who care for our planet.

While all the above are best practices, we know it can be difficult to transition to a waste-free life (particularly in the single-use era of COVID-19). But, that's okay. At least you've become more mindful of how plastic exists in your daily life, and can begin to open conversations with family, friends, and even with local business owners about why it's important for them to join in. Even if you aren't great with words, what changes you decide to make may be the most convincing evidence of all. 🌱

ILLUMINATING OURSELVES, ILLUMINATING THE WORLD

Master Cheng Yen's Teachings | Translated and Compiled by the Dharma as Water Team

On December 10, six states in the Midwest of the United States were devastated by more than thirty tornadoes. One of them even traveled for more than 300 kilometers, equivalent to the length of Taiwan from North to South. The tornadoes tore up sturdy houses as if they were made of paper. Following the disasters, Tzu Chi volunteers were mobilized to provide disaster relief.

Beyond the United States, there were typhoons in the Philippines and floods in Malaysia. These disasters worldwide cause us to lament and worry. The powerful forces of climate change have led to irregularities in nature and imbalances in the four elements. We can no longer say, "Those things are far from us." Actually, they are not. The universe is vast, but there is only one planet Earth where humans can live. Tornadoes and major earthquakes are hard to predict; wildfires that destroy vast lands have become commonplace; there is also severe air pollution that clouds visibility. The world seems to be covered in clouds, fog, and darkness.

Can humans really overpower nature? Humans are so small in size, but they are also arrogant and unable to control their greed and desires. Although we may know the principles, we still do things that we know we should not. Although we may regret impulsive actions that created evil karma, when similar conditions arise, we cannot help but carelessly repeat those actions. Unconsciously, we accumulate powerful karmic forces. The mindsets and actions of humans led to this abnormal way of life.

The Buddha came to this world to teach the Dharma, explaining the principles of suffering, emptiness, and impermanence. However, people have difficulty comprehending and awakening; instead, they delight in suffering. When we lose our direction in life, we go against the principles.

All people have Buddha-nature, and as we engage in spiritual practice, we seek to eliminate habitual tendencies. We must raise our vigilance every second and every minute so that we do not act carelessly. When we stop pursuing desires, we become free and at ease. We must reflect on our nature, listen to our hearts, and awaken our conscience and enlightened nature so that we do not remain lost.

We have referred often recently to the analogy of fireflies. On dark nights, their glimmers of light shine. Though they cannot illuminate the dark land completely, they give a sense of liveliness, creating a truly beautiful scene. When we see the

liveliness in nature, we feel a sense of hopefulness, and we begin to contemplate where the hope for the world lies.

We must also have faith. We should begin by taking action ourselves, and then urge and influence even more people. We must continuously promote kind words, continuously do good deeds, and mutually encourage and praise each other. In this way, the world will certainly be filled with hope. Everyone is responsible for what happens in the world. We should ask if we have done our part; even though our strength is weak, we can provide light, like the tiny fireflies. We must not underestimate ourselves. When we have faith that we can contribute, everyone's lives can be filled with light.

I hope I can be a firefly as well. Then, my light can join with everyone's light. With collaborative efforts, we will radiate light together and illuminate the dark corners of the world, guiding everyone in the right direction. Further, we must fly forward to recruit more people.

We should also "take inventory of our life" and reflect. In this life, have we created blessings and benefited others every day, or did we let time and days pass in vain? If we have not done enough, we must work harder to advance. If we have done a lot, knowing the direction is right and how many people still need us, we should not miss the opportunity to do good. Thus, we will continue to improve ourselves and see value in ourselves.

As long as we are willing to give, it does not matter how little strength we have. For our family, we should dedicate our efforts, and for our career, we should work to benefit society and furthermore give back to society. We must not just make profits for ourselves; we must benefit society. If it is the right thing, then once we have found the right direction, we should "just do it." With wholehearted resolve, we advance courageously, seize the opportunities, and bring merits and virtues to fruition, creating blessed affinities. If we are indecisive and wavering, then time and opportunities will pass, and our aspirations will be lost as well.

If we do not do good deeds or speak kind words, then there is no principle in the world that we will be able to share. I hope that everyone can become a bodhisattva and that everyone can teach the Dharma. This is the time that we are needed, so we must put the teachings into action and carry them out with peace and a clear conscience. Everyone, please always be mindful!





Illuminations

Dharma Master Cheng Yen responds to questions and comments from visitors, volunteers, staff, and disciples.

GATHERING STRENGTH

Comment: Sometimes I feel powerless when I'm working on something.

Answer: *Everything is created by the mind. "Powerlessness" occurs when one feels alone. The more people you collaborate with, the more strength is gathered, and the more power can be exercised. Others will assist you when you are consistently content, grateful, understanding, and accommodating.*

GIVING TO ATTAIN

Question: "It is difficult to get others to join in on our work. However, we need the help of many in order to complete our tasks. How can we motivate others to join us and find joy in this work?"

Answer: *"If you wish to attain, you must first give. If you try to force people to do things, you will never achieve your desired result."*

SAVING ALL

Question: "How can I save both myself and others?"

Answer: *"You can save yourself by improving yourself, and you can save others by being a positive influence."*

Excerpts from *Still Thoughts: A Collection of Short Teachings and Jing Si Aphorisms, Volume 2 (Revised Edition)* compiled by Jing Si Editorial Group (Jing Si Publications, 2016).



Tzu Chi's Global Efforts

by Sophie X. Song, Adriana DiBenedetto



Taiwan

The United Nations Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development (IATF-Religion) appoints the Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation to serve as one of the four co-chairs on the Multi-faith Advisory Council (MFAC), with a term of two years. The MFAC was founded on September 21, 2019, in New York. *Photo/United Nations*



Chile

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Chile's economy hard. On November 7, Tzu Chi volunteers hold a relief distribution at the Liceo Carmela Carvajal, a local middle school, aiding 200 families during this difficult time. A simultaneous medical outreach event provides free vision treatment to seniors at the school. *Photo/Santiago Service Center.*



Tzu Chi in Chile has been providing long-term assistance to Casita Albergue Mi Casa es Tu Casa, a local shelter. On December 16, Tzu Chi volunteers join seniors for tea, bringing love and warmth. *Photo/Santiago Service Center.*



Dominican Republic

Tzu Chi volunteers in Taiwan donate 12,000 pairs of slippers to communities in the Dominican Republic. On November 5, Tzu Chi volunteers from the regional Service Center deliver these items to the Fundación La Merced, a non-profit that provides safety, care, and services for youths who have been exploited by child labor. *Photo/ Dominican Republic Service Center*

Brazil

Tzu Chi volunteers visit the Associação Das Mães Dos Autistas De Ferraz De Vasconcelos (AMAFV), a center designed for children with autism in Sao Paulo, Brazil, on November 12. There, volunteers provide baskets of food, household items, and more supplies to families and children to help them through the pandemic. *Photo/Brazil Service Center*



Argentina

Argentina's economy and the livelihoods of its people have been hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. On December 11, Tzu Chi volunteers travel to Lujan, Quilmes, to distribute supplies to households affected by the pandemic, hoping that they, too, can have a happy holiday. *Photo/ Guiman Zhong*

Serbia

As winter approaches, Tzu Chi volunteers visit a Serbian refugee camp from November 25 to 27 to distribute warm winter jackets, and offer their most heartfelt hopes and wishes for the holidays. *Photo/Dejan Aksentijevi*





 **Jordan**

Tzu Chi volunteers in Jordan hold a winter distribution from November 9 to December 17, distributing daily essentials such as rice, beans, and cooking oil to long-term care recipients. The volunteers also provide Vaseline to help protect their skin from extreme dry weather conditions. It is hoped that these families will have enough food to get through the winter. *Photo/Jordan Service Center*

 **Indonesia**

Mount Semeru, a volcano in East Java, Indonesia, erupted on December 4. On December 18, Tzu Chi volunteers from the Surabaya Service Center travel into the impacted area for their third distribution since the eruption, and provide 2,000 disaster relief care packages, including toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, sarongs, and large towels. *Photo/Diyang Yoga Wicaksana*



 **Thailand**

From December 8 to 10, Tzu Chi volunteers hold a relief distribution for refugees in Thailand, providing a financial subsidy and additional daily necessities. *Photo/Pinti Su*

Tzu Chi's medical outreach team in Thailand provides free rapid COVID-19 tests for refugees on December 13. *Photo/Pinti Su*



Cambodia

On December 17, the government of Battambang Province and Tzu Chi's Cambodia Service Center collaborate to provide eco-blankets to 600 families. *Photo/Shuzhen Huang*



Myanmar

When Tzu Chi volunteers discovered that an orphanage in Yangon, Myanmar, faced supply shortages, Tzu Chi's Myanmar Service Center joined hands with the Myanmar Taiwanese Business Association to donate food and stationery on November 11 and 14. *Photo/Nay Thura*



Malaysia

The west coast of Malaysia experienced severe flooding due to heavy rains, with the capital, Kuala Lumpur, and Selangor being the hardest-hit areas. In response to the disaster, Tzu Chi volunteers call upon more than 1,000 people to help with the cleanup efforts. *Photo/Guiye Lee*



Australia

Tzu Chi's Gold Coast Service Center distributes supplies to refugees living in Australia on December 2 to ensure families will have enough food amid challenges brought forth by the ongoing pandemic. *Photo/Yunhua Peng* 🌱



State	Tzu Chi USA Offices	Address	Tel / Fax	State	Tzu Chi USA Offices	Address	Tel / Fax	
AZ	Phoenix Service Center	2145 W. Elliot Rd. Chandler, AZ 85224	480-838-6556 F: 480-777-7665	KS	Kansas Office	9508 Shannon Way Circle Wichita, KS 67206	316-323-5798	
S. CA	Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation, US Headquarters Area	1100 S. Valley Center Ave. San Dimas, CA 91773	909-447-7799 F: 909-447-7948	LA	New Orleans Office	52 Driftwood Blvd. Kenner, LA 70065	504-782-5168 F: 504-832-2022	
	Jing Si Books & Café, San Dimas		909-447-7799 x 6569	MD	Montgomery County Service Center		703-707-8606 F: 301-339-8872	
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Dimas		909-447-7799 x 6551 F: 909-447-7944	MA	Boston Service Center Tzu Chi Academy, Boston	15 Summer St. Newton, MA 02464	617-762-0569 617-431-4844 F: 617-431-4484	
	Buddhist Tzu Chi Medical Foundation	1008 S. Garfield Ave. Alhambra, CA 91801	626-427-9598 F: 626-788-2321	MI	Lansing Office	3511 West Hiawatha Dr. Okemos, MI 48864	517-505-3388	
	Tzu Chi Medical Center, Alhambra		626-281-3383 F: 626-281-5303		Detroit Service Center	6825 Textile Road Ypsilanti, MI 48197	586-795-3491 F: 586-795-3491	
	Tzu Chi Community Clinic, South El Monte	10414 Vacco St. South El Monte, CA 91733	626-636-8706 F: 626-671-8778	MN	Minneapolis Office	1485 Arden View Dr. Arden Hills, MN 55112	617-939-6965	
	Buddhist Tzu Chi Education Foundation	1920 S. Brea Canyon Cutoff Rd. Walnut, CA 91789	909-895-2125 F: 909-345-7025	MO	St. Louis Service Center	8515 Olive Blvd. St. Louis, MO 63132	314-994-1999 F: 314-994-1999	
	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Walnut		909-895-2126 F: 909-927-8336	NV	Reno Office	903 West Moana Lane Reno, NV 89509	775-827-6333 F: 775-770-1148	
	Tzu Chi Elementary, Walnut		909-895-2125 x 3200 F: 909-345-7025		Las Vegas Service Center/ Academy	2590 Lindell Rd. Las Vegas, NV 89146	702-880-5552 F: 702-880-5552	
	Tzu Chi Academy, Walnut		909-895-2280	NJ	Mid-Atlantic Region/Jing Si Books & Café	150 Commerce Rd. Cedar Grove, NJ 07009	973-857-8666 F: 973-857-9555	
	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Monrovia	206 E. Palm Ave. Monrovia, CA 91016	626-305-1188 F: 626-599-8098		Tzu Chi Academy, Northern New Jersey			
	Tzu Chi Academy, Monrovia	220 E. Palm Ave. Monrovia, CA 91016	626-775-3675 F: 626-359-8199	Tzu Chi Academy, Central New Jersey	50 Woodrow Wilson Dr., Edison, NJ 08820		973-857-8666	
	West Los Angeles Service Center	11701 Wilshire Blvd. #15A Los Angeles, CA 90025	310-473-5188 F: 310-477-9518	Central New Jersey Service Center			908-420-5218	
	Torrance Service Center	1355 Broad Ave. Wilmington, CA 90744	310-684-4465 F: 310-684-4460	NY	Northeast Region/Academy	137-77 Northern Blvd. Flushing, NY 11354	718-888-0866 F: 718-460-2068 718-799-3000	
	Tzu Chi Community Clinic, Wilmington		310-684-4466 F: 855-651-1717		Jing Si Books & Café, New York			
	Orange County Service Center	22911 Mill Creek Dr. Laguna Hills, CA 92653	949-916-4488 F: 949-916-5933		Brooklyn Service Center	5721 6Th Ave. Brooklyn, NY 11220		917-909-0682
	Tzu Chi Academy, Irvine	4321 Walnut Ave. Irvine, CA 92604	714-624-3026 F: 949-916-5933		Long Island Branch/Academy	60 E Williston Ave. East Williston, NY 11596		516-873-6888 F: 516-746-0626
	Cerritos Service Center	14618&14620 Carmenita Rd. Norwalk, CA 90650	562-926-6609 F: 562-926-1603		Manhattan Service Center	101 Lafayette Street, 4/F, New York, NY 10013		212-965-1151 F: 212-965-1152
	Northridge Service Center	8963 Reseda Blvd. Northridge, CA 91324	818-727-7689 F: 818-727-9272		East Long Island Office	4 Milburn Rd. S. Setauket, NY 11720		631-964-3393
	San Gabriel Valley Service Center	9620 Flair Dr. El Monte, CA 91731	626-416-4527 Warehouse: 626-416-4529		Tzu Chi Center, New York	229 E. 60th St. New York, NY 10022		212-660-9229 F: 646-864-0086
Jing Si Books & Café, El Monte		626-448-1362	Raleigh Service Center				919-322-8389	
San Diego Service Center	5754 Pacific Center Blvd. #202 San Diego, CA 92121	858-546-0578 F: 858-546-0573	NC		Charlotte Office	4527 Dwight Evans Rd. Charlotte, NC 28217	704-281-8060 F: 704-943-1031	
N. CA	Northwest Region	2355 Oakland Rd. San Jose, CA 95131	408-457-6969 F: 408-943-8420		OH	Cincinnati Office	11228 Brookbridge Dr. Cincinnati, OH 45249	513-469-2161 F: 513-469-2161
	Tzu Chi Academy, Tri-Valley		925-785-7413	Columbus Service Center		2200 Henderson Rd. Columbus, OH 43220	614-457-9215 F: 614-457-9217	
	Jing Si Books & Café, San Jose		408-457-6981	Dayton Service Center	1459 E Dorothy Lane Dayton, OH 45429	937-701-7111		
	San Francisco Branch	2901 Irving St. San Francisco, CA 94122	415-682-0566 F: 415-682-0567	Cleveland Service Center	1076 Ford Rd. Highland Heights, OH 44143	440-646-9292 F: 440-646-9292		
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Mateo	2675 Ralston Ave., Belmont, CA 94002	650-888-1582	Portland Service Center	3800 SW Cedar Hills Blvd #194 Beaverton, OR 97005	503-643-2130 F: 503-643-2130		
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Francisco	350 Girard St. San Francisco, CA 94134	415-680-5225 F: 415-682-0567	OR	Tzu Chi Academy, Portland	12250 SW Conestoga Dr. Beaverton, OR 97008	503-841-7776	
	Modesto Service Center	1100 Carver Rd. #J Modesto, CA 95350	209-529-2625 F: 209-529-2625	PA	Philadelphia Office	107 North 9th St. Philadelphia, PA 19107	215-627-1915 F: 215-627-1916	
	Stockton Office	1212 W Robinhood Dr. #3D Stockton, CA 95207	209-957-7800 F: 209-957-7800		Pittsburgh Service Center/ Academy	1333 Banksville Rd. #201 Pittsburgh, PA 15216	412-531-8343 F: 412-531-8341	
	Tzu Chi Academy, Cupertino	1280 Johnson Ave. San Jose, CA 95129	408-823-8799	Southern Region/Academy	6200 Corporate Dr. Houston, TX 77036	713-270-9988 F: 713-981-9008		
	Santa Rosa Office	1615 Cleveland Ave. Santa Rosa, CA 95401	707-546-1945	Jing Si Books & Café, Houston		713-981-8966		
	Sacramento Service Center	1820 Tribute Rd. # J Sacramento, CA 95815	916-568-5800	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Houston		713-395-0303 F: 713-395-0305		
	Ukiah Office	527 S State St. #B Ukiah, CA 95482	707-462-2911 F: 707-462-2911	Austin Service Center	7221 Northeast Dr. Austin, TX 78723	512-491-0358 F: 512-926-1373		
	Oakland Service Center	620 International Blvd. Oakland, CA 94606	510-879-0971 F: 510-879-0971	San Antonio Office	19179 Blanco Rd. #109-2 San Antonio, TX 78258	909-576-2387 F: 210-566-3970		
	Tzu Chi Academy, San Jose	625 Educational Park Dr. San Jose, CA 95133	408-457-6970	Central Region/Academy/ Jing Si Books & Café	534 W. Belt Line Rd. Richardson, TX 75080	972-680-8869 F: 972-680-7732		
Fresno Service Center	7421 N Maple Ave. Fresno, CA 93720	559-298-4894 F: 559-298-4894	Tzu Chi Great Love Preschool & Kindergarten, Dallas		214-446-1776 F: 214-446-1772			
FL	Orlando Service Center	5401 Alhambra Dr. #A Orlando, FL 32808	407-292-1146 F: 407-292-1146	VA	Greater Washington D.C. Region/ Academy	1516 Moorings Dr. Reston, VA 20190	703-707-8606 F: 703-707-8607	
	Miami Service Center	8070 Pasadena Blvd. Pembroke Pines, FL 33024	954-538-1172 F: 317-645-9907		Richmond Service Center	1318 Tomahawk Creek Rd. Midlothian, VA 23114	804-306-6037 F: 804-378-3520	
GA	Atlanta Branch	3120 Medlock Bridge Rd, Building E Peachtree Corners, GA 30071	770-458-1000	WA	Seattle Branch/Academy	15800 SE Newport Way Bellevue WA 98006	425-643-9104	
	Tzu Chi Academy, Atlanta	2000 Clearview Ave. #100 Atlanta, GA 30340	770-986-8669	WI	Milwaukee Office	5356 W. Silverleaf Ln. Brown Deer, WI 53223	414-357-8427	
HI	Pacific Islands Region/Academy	1238 Wilhelmina Rise Honolulu, HI 96816	808-737-8885		Madison Service Center	1019 Starlight Ln. Cottage Grove, WI 53527	608-960-1962	
IL	Midwest Region/Academy/ Jing Si Books & Café	1430 Plainfield Rd. Darien, IL 60561	630-963-6601 F: 630-960-9360					
	Chicago Chinatown Service Center	215 W 23rd St. Chicago, IL 60616						
IN	Indianapolis Service Center	2929 E. 96th St. #E Indianapolis, IN 46240	317-580-0979					



COMPASSION IN ACTION

2022 TZU CHI WALKATHON

APRIL 16

SATURDAY | 9 am - 2 pm PT

Tzu Chi USA National Headquarters
1100 S. Valley Center Ave
San Dimas, CA 91773



This spring, we invite you to walk for a purpose with Tzu Chi USA! We're safely gathering for a 5K course to raise awareness and funds that support our missions of **medicine** and **education**.



Our medical mission aims to expand access to holistic healthcare across uninsured and underinsured populations, while our education mission will boost character education programs and strategies for children and adults.

Your generosity can help.



Register as an individual, join a team, or create a team of your own—and start fundraising today!
tzuchi.us/walkathon

Sponsors:



Airsoft Wholesaler Inc.

Fortune Dynamic Inc.

Sun's Global Trading Inc.

AUDREY HUANG

TIM & LUCY CHANG

Dr. GILBERT HUANG

DR. HAI-SOU CHEN & LINDA SUN

DR. WILLIAM & MARY KEH



Buddhist Tzu Chi Foundation

1100 S. Valley Center Ave.

San Dimas, CA91773

Tel: 909.447.7799

Fax: 909.447.7948

NonProfit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE

PAID

San Dimas, CA
Permit No.36



A few members of the Tzu Chi delegation take a group shot at the start of the COP26 summit in Glasgow, Scotland.
Photo/Tzu Chi SDG Action Team