

Church of England bishops have joined with counterparts from around the Anglican Communion in signing a statement warning of 'Environmental Racism.'



The Archbishop of Canterbury together with the Bishops of Salisbury, Oxford, Truro, Dover, Woolwich, Sherborne, Loughborough, Kingston, Reading and Ramsbury, and former Archbishop Rowan Williams have joined a list of eight archbishops and 38 bishops worldwide in signing an open letter stating 'that black lives are predominantly affected by the effects of climate change, as well as police brutality and the spread of COVID-19.'

Published by the Anglican Communion's Environmental Network, the letter reads (extract):

*The world is slow to respond to climate change, hanging on to an increasingly precarious and unjust economic system. It is predominantly Black lives that are being impacted by drought, flooding, storms and sea level rise. The delayed global response to climate injustice gives the impression that #blacklivesdontmatter. Without urgent action Black lives will continue to be the most impacted, being dispossessed from their lands and becoming climate refugees.*

*We stand at a Kairos moment in order to fight environmental injustice, we must also fight racial injustice.*

*We call attention in particular to the impact of environmental racism on indigenous peoples decimated by the effects of colonization. Tribes of people were enslaved, and annihilated by harsh conditions and by diseases for which they had no immunity in the first decades of colonization.*

*ACEN also witnesses the growing and alarming rise in the number of people becoming refugees due to climate change. It is estimated that there are 40 million climate refugees in the world today, and by 2050 that number could reach one billion.*

*In Central America thousands of indigenous people have been made climate refugees. Upon reaching the United States, they are often subjected to double discrimination, firstly for being refugees and then as people whose first language is a tribal language rather than Spanish.*

*Pacific islanders in places such as Tonga and Fiji face the destruction of their homes and cultures due to sea level rise.*

*Even in the midst of the wealthiest countries Black people bear the brunt of environmental racism. Dumpsites for toxic chemicals are situated near poorer Black communities. These communities become food deserts - lacking both access to nutritious food and safe water.*

*Take action for climate justice to show #blacklivesmatter.*

Â

More: [Read the full letter, together with full list of signatories.](#)

---

**Source URL:** <https://www.churchofengland.org/news-and-media/news-and-statements/bishops-warn-environmental-racism>