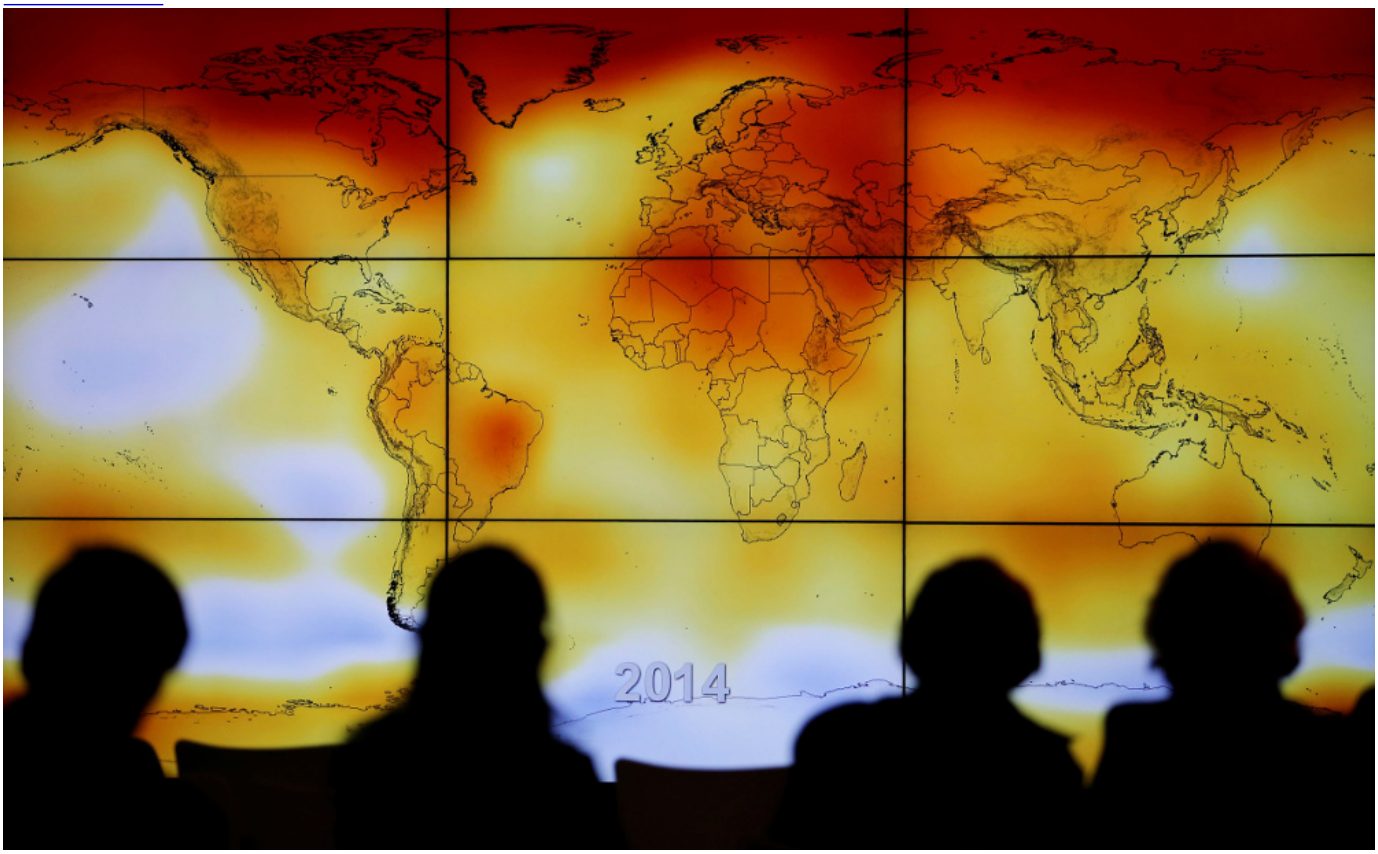
News
EarthBeat



Participants look at a screen showing a world map with climate anomalies during the World Climate Change Conference at Le Bourge, France, in this Dec. 8, 2015, file photo (CNS/Stephane Mahe, Reuters)

by Catholic News Service

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Two bishops have called on the House of Representatives to provide $10 million to fund the United Nations' work on climate change.

Support for the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change is essential to protecting the "God-given gift" of the environment "for the good of all," wrote Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, New Mexico, and Bishop Frank Dewane of Venice, Florida. They respectively chair the U.S. bishop's Committee on International Justice and Peace and Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

The U.N. framework guides international climate policy. Among the programs it supports is the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, or IPCC, a scientific body that includes scientists from around the world whose work is used by policymakers dealing with climate change.

The bishops' Nov. 10 letter was addressed to Rep. Hal Rogers, R-Kentucky, as chairman of the House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs, and Rep. Nita Lowey, D-New York, ranking member of the subcommittee. The bishops called on the lawmakers to follow the action of the U.S. Senate when it included $10 million in the state and foreign operations appropriations bill for the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Citing the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' statement earlier in 2017 that the federal budget is a moral document that has "profound implications for the common good of our nation and the world," the bishops said funding the U.N. agency would serve humanity as it deals with how to respond to climate change.

They reminded the representatives that climate science can be misused to further various economic, social, political and ideological agendas and that it is important to support credible scientific research as carried out by the IPCC and other agencies supported by the U.N. agency.

"Restricting funding to the UNFCCC will only weaken the ability of the United States to dialogue in the international arena using a common language based on the best science available. Catholic teaching affirms the importance of placing science at the service of the human person," the letter said.

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The U.N. framework also assists in encouraging the development of policies to help poor communities around the world adapt to climate change, the bishops said. "By supporting the UNFCCC, the United States can direct attention and resources toward adaptation measures that help all people, especially the poor, adapt to the effects of climate change globally," they wrote.

The letter concludes by asking that the U.S. upholds its long-standing commitment to international collaboration and diplomacy on climate issues by allocating $10 million to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change as deliberations continue in the committee.

"By doing so, our nation can better pursue the national interest, support credible climate research and promote the common good within and beyond our borders," the two bishops said.