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EarthBeat
Community members plant sisal plants on sand dunes to stabilize them and keep them from

Community members plant sisal plants on sand dunes to stabilize them and keep them from blowing and moving. Sand dunes can be devastating when they blow and move onto farmland, erasing farmers' main way of earning their family income. (CNS/Catholic Relief Services/Jim Stipe)



by Catholic News Service

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Vatican City — July 8, 2022
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The Vatican is now a formal party to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change and has declared it intends also to formally join the 2015 Paris Agreement.

"The Holy See, in the name and on behalf of Vatican City State, intends to contribute and to give its moral support to the efforts of all states to cooperate ... in an effective and appropriate response to the challenges posed by climate change to humanity and to our common home," said a statement released by the Vatican press office July 8.

Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, the Holy See's permanent observer to the United Nations, submitted the papers for formal "accession" to the convention July 6, the Vatican said. "Accession" has the same legal effect as ratification and is used to join a treaty that already has been negotiated and entered into force.

"At the earliest possible date, considering the legal requirements of the Paris Agreement," the statement said, "the Holy See, in the name and on behalf of

Vatican City State, will deposit the instrument of accession" to that agreement as well.

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The framework convention followed the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and was updated in 1997 with the Kyoto Protocol and later with the Paris Agreement. Countries signing the original convention pledged to work to prevent dangerous human interference with the climate system, particularly by stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions. With the Kyoto agreement, countries pledged to reduce those emissions and the Paris Agreement set specific goals for limiting global warming.

The Vatican's formal adhesion to the agreements, the statement said, is a sign of its commitment to work with nations to keep alive what Pope Francis has described as "a remarkable convergence on the urgent need for a change of direction, a decisive resolve to pass from the 'throwaway culture' prevalent in our societies to a 'culture of care' for our common home and its inhabitants, now and in the future."

Solidarity with the poor, who are most impacted by climate change, and with future generations as well as responsibility for individual actions and national policies "are two core-values that must be at the basis of the implementation of both the convention and the Paris Agreement, and which will continue to guide the efforts of the Holy See in this process," the Vatican statement said.