

# IAU Statement on Climate Change

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The International Astronomical Union (IAU) calls on our community to develop and implement specific actions to help achieve the aims of the 2016 Paris Agreement on climate change. The study of astronomy provides all citizens a unique perspective and view of the Universe that highlights the fragility of life on planet Earth. The first Kavli–IAU interdisciplinary symposium will be dedicated to climate change on planets in late 2022 or early 2023.

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) joins other astronomy institutions and scientific organisations in stressing the importance and urgency of environmental sustainability for the future of our planet. As concluded by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)<sup>1</sup> and highlighted in many scientific reports, increases in anthropogenic carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases have exacerbated climate change since the industrial revolution, and without mediation, we risk extreme and irreversible damage to life on our planet. The IAU calls on our community to develop, promote and implement specific actions to help achieve the aims of the 2016 Paris Agreement.

The study of astronomy provides all citizens a unique perspective and view of the Universe that highlights the fragility of Earth's biosphere. Additionally, through comparative studies of planetary atmospheres, astronomers can model and measure the impact of greenhouse gases and their consequences for climate and climate change on planets.

The IAU applauds and acknowledges the steps its members are already taking to help protect our climate — from individual organizations that publish their own carbon budgets, to organisations like Astronomers for Planet Earth. The IAU, through its four Offices (OAD, OAO, OYA,

OAE), strongly encourages and supports teaching and communicating about the Earth's climate and the consequences of human activity, and we urge our national and individual members to address climate change in connection with their scientific, educational, outreach, and other societal activities.

As one step towards addressing this global problem, the IAU will issue a special call for the first Kavli–IAU interdisciplinary symposium, dedicated to Climate and Climate Change on Planets, to take place in late 2022 or early 2023. The symposium will draw from members of the IAU as well as other relevant unions (such as GeoUnions). One goal of the symposium will be to produce an IAU Springboard for Climate Action, directed to the astronomy community, that will recommend mitigating actions that can be undertaken at the individual, institutional, and IAU level.

*(This article was first published as an IAU Press Release on 24 June 2021)*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> IPCC, 2014: Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp. Note that the Sixth Assessment Report will be released in 2022.



**Figure 1.** The IAU calls on our community to develop, promote and implement specific actions to help achieve the aims of the 2016 Paris Agreement on climate change. Credit: Aneta Margraf-Druc/IAU