

As the AI Boom Accelerates, Global Experts on Technology, Faith, and Sustainability Ask Whether It Can Coexist with a Livable Planet

Washington, D.C., July 6, 2026 — With one panelist calling for a moratorium on major new AI expansion, the G20 Interfaith Forum (IF20) will host “*AI and the Planet*” on July 9 — the fourth event in its eight-part *AI and Human Flourishing* webinar series — convening leading voices in environmental science, economics, and technology ethics to ask whether the global AI build-out can be reconciled with a livable Earth.

As data centers strain power grids and chip production consumes water and minerals, the panel will weigh AI’s mounting environmental toll against its promise to help societies monitor ecosystems, predict climate patterns, and manage natural resources — and ask who decides what the technology is for.

David Korten, author of the international bestseller *When Corporations Rule the World*, argues that AI is a product of humanity’s shared information commons and should be governed as one. He is calling for a pause on major new AI expansion until the world decides what the technology is actually for.

“Before investing trillions of dollars and vast environmental resources in expanding AI capacity,” Korten said, “we must first ask a more fundamental question: what purposes should AI serve, and who should own and govern it?”

Environmental scientist Arthur Dahl, President of the International Environment Forum, warns that AI’s environmental and social costs are routinely ignored when systems are built for short-term returns — and that the deeper danger is dependency.

“The commercial interests aggressively selling AI applications are leading us to a fatal technology dependency,” Dahl said, “which could then be exploited for endless profit for the few, making us passive consumers.”

Technology ethicist John C. Havens, a founding architect of global AI-ethics standards, challenges the very language of the debate, arguing the field has been shaped for decades by a narrow, GDP-driven idea of intelligence that ignores caregiving and the planet. He calls for ecological and human flourishing to become the core driver of how AI is designed and deployed.

“‘Artificial Intelligence’ originated as a marketing term in 1956,” Havens said, “and that conjecture has driven various assumptions and misinformation for decades.”

John’s views and opinions are his own and do not necessarily reflect the official policy, position, or opinions of his employer.

The discussion will be moderated by Audrey E. Kitagawa, J.D., Founder and President of the International Academy for Multicultural Cooperation and Chair of the IF20 Anti-Racism Initiative. The free webinar takes place **July 9, 2026 at 12:00 p.m. EDT**. Register at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_oSp0FMD8Rfm5GfznAWutrg#/registration.

Speakers will include:

Audrey E. Kitagawa, J.D. (Moderator) — Founder and President of the International Academy for Multicultural Cooperation (IAMC) and Chair of the G20 Interfaith Forum Anti-Racism Initiative. A former Advisor to the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, she has worked for decades at the intersection of faith, human rights, and multicultural cooperation.

Arthur Lyon Dahl — President of the International Environment Forum, a Bahá'í-inspired sustainability organization, and a retired senior official of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with more than five decades in environmental science, assessment, and governance. A biologist trained at Stanford University and UC Santa Barbara, he took part in landmark gatherings from the 1972 UN Conference on the Human Environment to the 1992 Earth Summit and is the author of *Unless and Until: A Bahá'í Focus on the Environment*.

David Korten — Author of the international bestseller *When Corporations Rule the World* and a former Harvard Business School faculty member. He is founder and president of the Living Economies Forum, co-founder and board chair of *YES!* Magazine, and a member of the Club of Rome, and a leading advocate for a transition to what he calls an “Ecological Civilization.”

John C. Havens — Founding Executive Director of the IEEE Global Initiative on Ethics of Autonomous and Intelligent Systems, whose work helped shape AI-ethics standards drawn on by the OECD, UNESCO, and in the development of the EU AI Act. He leads sustainability work at the IEEE Standards Association and is the author of *Heartificial Intelligence: Embracing Our Humanity to Maximize Machines*.

About the G20 Process

The Group of Twenty, or G20, is the premier forum for international economic cooperation, bringing together the leaders of Earth's most prosperous economies. Collectively, G20 members represent around 80 percent of the world's economic output, two-thirds of the global population and three-quarters of international trade. Throughout the year, representatives from G20 countries gather to discuss financial and socioeconomic issues as well as broader humanitarian issues targeted by the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

About the G20 Interfaith Forum

The G20 Interfaith Forum seeks global solutions by collaborating with religious thought leaders and political representatives to help shape the overall G20 agenda. It draws on the vital roles that religious institutions and beliefs play in world affairs, reflecting a rich diversity of institutions, ideas, and values. Through its extensive network of networks, it helps prioritize key global policy goals and point toward practical means of implementation at every level of society.

For more information, please visit www.g20interfaith.org.

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