

# Eco News Bulletin

MARCH 2009

## GOD NEEDS YOU TO SAVE THIS PLANET

Rt.Rev.Thomas Samuel (*Chairman of CSI SECC*)

We stand with awe and gratitude as members of God's bountiful and good creation. We rejoice in the splendor and mystery of countless species, our common creature hood, and the interdependence of all that God makes. We believe that the Earth is home for all and that it has been created intrinsically good (Genesis 1).

We lament that the human species is shattering the splendid gifts of this web of life, ignoring our responsibility for the well being of all life, while destroying species and their habitats at a rate never before known in human history.

God's creation delivers unsettling news. Earth's climate is warming to dangerous levels; In recent years, the profound danger has grown, requiring us as theologians, pastors, and religious leaders to speak out and act with new urgency.

Churches, as communities of God's people in the world, are called to exist as representatives of the loving Creator, Sustainer, and Restorer of all creation. We are called to worship God with all our being and actions, and to treat creation as sacred. We must engage our political leaders in supporting the very future of this planet. We are called to cling to the true Gospel – for "God so loved the cosmos" (John 3:16)

The theme for World Environment Day 2009 is **'Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat Climate** . The CSI Synod has already conducted one seminar and a National Consultation on Climate Change to conscientize our Church leaders. We are really proud that as a Church we have taken initiative in India in thinking Globally and acting Locally to mitigate the effect of global warming. I am happy to note that all the Dioceses of CSI Synod are actively participating in the eco-conservation programmes.

CSI Synod urges all its members to plant atleast one tree during the month of June 2009 and dig one pit to harvest rain water . Then CSI will be planting 4 million trees and joining with UN Environment programme in the tree - planting programme. The United Nations En-



vironment Programme (UNEP) has launched a major worldwide tree planting campaign. In a call to further individual and collective action, UNEP has set a new goal of planting 7 billion trees by the end of 2009. The campaign strongly encourages the planting of indigenous trees and trees that are appropriate to the local environment.

The CSI Synod Ecological Concerns Committee has been alerting all the Dioceses to recognize climate change as a moral issue, it is important for us to encourage members of our congregations to take action to limit their contributions to climate change as an expression of their faith. We are called to "encourage one another and build up each other" (1Thessalonians ). Encouraging church members to take individual actions to reduce their carbon consumption as a spiritual exercise, and equipping them to explain to others the reasons for their actions which are excellent ways for your congregation to proclaim the good news and build up the body of Christ.

Matthew 5: 14-16 tells us, "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under a bushel basket, but on the lamp

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stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." Sharing your actions and commitments to care for Creation with a friend might inspire them to do the same. Imagine how much global warming pollution we could keep out of God's Creation if the carbon reductions you have achieved, or plan to achieve, through this campaign are multiplied by the carbon reductions of just five friends!

Challenge yourself, your family, or your congregation to affirm your relationship with God and to Creation, acknowledge its brokenness, and DO SOMETHING - actually some very specific things - to mend the Creation. This is an opportunity to partner with the planet and walk in solidarity for the good of all creation. This eco-news bulletin will help you and your church community to make a difference for the earth. That is why we have taken the theme of this year God needs you to save this Planet.

## Editor's Desk

The CSI SECC has taken up the eco-conservation very seriously and SECC constituted during this biennium has been functioning tirelessly from May 2008 to activate eco-activities of all the Dioceses of CSI. The first thing we have done is SWOT analysis. The analysis really helped us in knowing our strength, weakness, opportunities, threats.

### Strength of the CSI SECC

1) We have a sound constitutional backing. The constitution of CSI clearly specifies the mission of the Church 1) Proclamation of Gospel 2) Nurturing the people of God, 3) service 4) establish justice in society 5) Stewardship of creation. Perhaps, this is the only Church in India that has specifically mentioned the ecological concerns in the constitution itself. Also we have a committee at the synod level for ecological concerns. In the constitution it is written as "The Church seeks to create awareness among all people about environmental and ecological concerns and thereby to care for God's creation. It endeavors to encourage people to refrain from excessive exploitation of nature's resources and to strive to keep the earth a habitable place for the present as well as future generations."

2) The officers of CSI Synod are encouraging the activities of SECC. In spite of fiscal shortage, the Treasurer never denied finance for any programme. Bishop Thomas Samuel, Chairman of Ecological Concerns not only gives encouragement for the activities of SECC, he participates in the programmes throughout.

3) We have land, Schools and Colleges.

### Weakness

1) Poor Eco-theological understanding of Clergy and laity. Biblical interpretation of the ecological issues facing us today is not taking place.

2) All of SECC members are depending on the Bishops for the programmes. Bishops are always busy with their diocesan programmes.

### Opportunities.

1) The only Church in India having a special wing for environmental concerns. Hence we can use the official platform of the Church to educate the Clergy and laity on eco-theology

2) The laity has a prominent role in CSI. This is a building up of an eco-fellowship at the CSI Synod level. We have opportunities and space to work for a Green Church which has a collective leadership, commitment

and concern.

### Threats

The majority of the clergy and evangelists are concerned with human salvation alone. The prosperity theology spreading all over the globe influences our concerns also. The Bible is teaching about the total redemption of the whole universe.

God keeps watch over the earth-all creation- and "all living creatures of every kind on the earth" because of this covenant of protection, surviving, and thriving. This watch is extended to the results of human creativity provided it resonates with the will of God. Our managing the facilities and grounds of the church in an environmentally responsible and friendly fashion is a part of the covenant between God and humans. God is clear about how important the creation and all the earth's creatures are to Him. We are called to be equally clear about our commitment and covenant with the earth as central to our commitment and covenant with God.

### Leadership Training

An eco-leadership training programme was held from 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2008 at CSI Centre Chennai. The training was highly effective. Mr. G. Balachandran, international management trainer gave training to the Diocesan eco-leaders. It helped to motivate the leaders. Three leaders from each diocese attended the programme.

### Resource persons Training Camp

A three day training for resource persons from different dioceses took place from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> September 2008 at Kottayam. The synod ecological committee office bearers delegated the power to Synod Eco-resource persons in organizing and educating the members of CSI.

### Eco-news Bulletin

We published an Eco-news bulletin in November 2008. Included all the materials we got from dioceses. We sent 20 copies each to SECC member and another 20 copies to the Diocesan Bishop. Around 50 copies each were distributed in Regional councils.



### Regional Councils

We are really happy to note that four Regional Councils were held in November under the leadership of Synod Eco-resource persons. Andhra- Nandyal diocese, Karnataka- Northern diocese, Tamil nadu – Coimbatore Diocese, Kerala – North Diocese hosted the councils. All the dioceses sent delegates to the Regional councils except one Diocese.

Now we have a collective leadership. There are eco-leaders in all the Dioceses. We are on the process of building up a team of eco-resource persons and eco-leaders in all the Dioceses. The CSI Synod is

ready to help you in this building up process. The theme taken for this year is God needs you to save this planet. Yes God needs us. Let us join together to work with God for the total redemption of the world.

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### Ways Congregations Can Help

1. Encourage prayers and liturgies which include God's Earth and people struggling to protect biodiversity.
2. Manage your churchyard to benefit wildlife. Plan a Nature Trail through an old part of your churchyard pointing out different trees, plants, wildlife, and stone used in the building and grave stones.
3. Urge central church authorities to nurture land under their control in ways which increase its biodiversity.
4. Play nature games with the Sunday school and coordinate walks/hikes through local nature trails, preserves and parks. Bring along some identification guides such as trees/plants and bird books to try and figure out what you are seeing.
5. Support local, national, and international conservation charities. Let us stop for a moment and hear the words of the Psalmist: "I will praise you, O Lord, among the nations; I will sing of you among the peoples. For great is your love, higher than the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies. Be exalted, O God, above the heavens, and let your glory be over all the earth" (Ps. 108:3-5, NIV).
6. Spreading and implementing a biblical message about creation by discipling and educating the church.
7. The development and distribution of biblically based educational brochures and publications on the environment.
8. Promoting the planting of indigenous trees through our indigenous forestry program.
9. Environmental education programs for schools.
10. Exploring creative ways to link efforts in environmental stewardship with efforts to spread the gospel and reach the un-reached.

### 'Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat Climate Change'

The theme for World Environment Day 2009 is 'Your Planet Needs You-UNite to Combat Climate Change' The theme of CSI Synod Ecological Concerns Committee is God needs you to save this Planet

## TWELVE WAYS TO UNITE TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE

**Whether you are an individual, an organization, a business or a government, there are a number of steps you can take to reduce your carbon emissions, the total of which is described as your carbon footprint. You may think you don't know where to begin, but by reading this, you have already begun.**

### Make a commitment

Reducing your carbon footprint is no different from any other task. Telling people you will reduce carbon emissions may seem simplistic, but even simple actions like announcing your commitment to going carbon neutral can be effective, while the simple act of asking for ideas can lead to creative and innovative solutions. Several countries have indicated in recent months that they will go carbon neutral, led by Costa Rica, New Zealand and Norway. The United Nations system itself, led by Secretary-General Ban ki-Moon, and guided by the UNEP-led Environment Management Group, is moving towards carbon neutrality. UNEP is also facilitating carbon neutrality in all sectors and all regions through its climate neutral network

### Assess where you stand

It is likely that carbon will eventually be judged as an atmospheric pollutant and regulated accordingly, with consequent costs—and opportunities—for all sectors of society. Knowing where and how you generate greenhouse gases is the first step to reducing them. For individuals and small businesses, online calculators and internal assessments can help start the process. Larger organisations may need specialised advice and tools, such as the new ISO 14064 standard for greenhouse gas accounting and verification, or the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, provided by the World Resources Institute and World Business Council for Sustainable Development, which is an accounting tool for government and business managers to understand, quantify, manage and report greenhouse gas emissions

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## Decide and plan where you want to go

Based on your assessment of climate-related risks and opportunities, a strategy and action plan can be developed. Targets help focus efforts and also provide a benchmark for measuring success. Most homes or businesses can reduce energy use by 10 per cent—which almost always results in a 10 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions—with a one year pay-back or less. A plan to reduce carbon emissions will first focus on the type of energy and the way it is used; for example electricity for buildings and fuel for transport. Reducing this energy can create instant savings. An effective tool is an energy audit. Many electric utilities and government energy offices now offer an audit as part of their efforts to reduce carbon emissions

## De-carbon your life

There is a broader way to think about carbon and climate. Everything an individual, organization, business or government does or uses embodies some form of carbon, either in products themselves or in the energy and materials it takes to make them. Buildings, fittings and equipment are all proxies for carbon; 'carbon copies' can be chosen based on the least amount of impact they will have on the climate. Integrating climate friendly criteria into decision making can trigger a ripple effect.

If consumers, manufacturers and lawmakers all think 'low carbon' and 'climate friendly' savings in carbon emissions will multiply. Take packaging as an example. US retail giant Wal-Mart worked with one of their toy suppliers to reduce packaging on just 16 items. The toy suppliers saved on packaging costs while Wal-Mart used 230 fewer shipping containers to distribute their products, saving about 356 barrels of oil and 1,300 trees. By broadening this initiative to 255 items, the company believes it can save 1,000 barrels of oil, 3,800 trees, and millions of dollars in transportation costs.

Another example: you can buy paper or wood products that adhere to internationally certified standards. The Forestry Stewardship Council ([www.fsc.org](http://www.fsc.org)), for example, is an international non-profit organisation promoting responsible management of the world's forests. The FSC trademark is increasingly recognised as an international standard for responsible forest management. More than 90 million hectares in more than 70 countries have been certified according to FSC standards while several thousand products are produced using FSC certified wood and carrying the FSC trademark. Switching to recycled or sustainably sourced paper can also lead to considerable savings, reducing both landfill use and carbon emissions. Using recycled paper can save 1.4 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> for every tonne of paper and cardboard.

Other ways of reducing your carbon footprint include wasting less time and energy on travel. Cities can improve public transport options, companies can encourage low carbon habits (by ceasing to subsidize parking or investing in hybrid technology company vehicles), and individuals can car pool or use public transport. Sometimes simple actions can produce a shift. Secure bicycle storage and changing and shower facilities, for example, are often inexpensive compared to other

parking structures but create a strong incentive for those who can commute by bicycle. In larger cities with adequate public transport, a monthly or yearly pass can be offered instead of parking facilities. Paris and Vienna, for example, offer a public bicycle system that reduces greenhouse gas emissions and traffic congestion.

## Get energy efficient

Improving the efficiency of your buildings, computers, cars and products is the fastest and most lucrative way to save money, energy and carbon emissions. This does not mean going without. Energy efficiency is about increasing productivity but doing more with less. More efficient buildings, cars and products will a direct and lasting contribution to limiting carbon emissions. Conventional buildings can account for almost 40 per cent of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. High performance, environmentally accountable, energy efficient and productive facilities are now economically possible.

Very simple measures can lead to immediate savings. Just turning off unused lights, motors, computers and heating can substantially reduce wasted energy—and money. Generally, laptop computers use less energy than desktop computers and LCD monitors use less energy than CRT screens. Also consider what to do with equipment when its useful life is finished. Some manufacturers offer take-back or recycling. Also look for energy efficiency standards. For appliances, the Energy Star rating is a way to describe efficiency. For many brands now, the highest energy efficiency rating does not cost any more than less efficient products. Originally from the United States, Energy Star is now applicable in Europe.

Think about your travel. Advanced web and video conferencing technology mean the time is rapidly approaching when the need to travel will be substantially diminished. A two-day trip to attend a meeting 1,000 km (600 miles) away can cost about US\$2,000 per person when accommodation, travel and meals are included, while a video conference may cost as little as US\$200. The savings are US\$1,800 and about half a tonne of carbon. Telecommuting is also increasingly an option for many. A study by the Telework Coalition ([www.telcoa.org](http://www.telcoa.org)) found that if 32 million Americans who could telecommute did so one day a week, they would drive 2 billion kilometres less, save 300 million litres of fuel and gain the equivalent of 32 million extra hours every week for leisure, family or work.

Lighting can account for 15-20 per cent of total electricity use. Converting coal at the power plant into incandescent light is only three per cent efficient. Compact fluorescent lights (CFLs) have evolved rapidly in the past decade. They now last between six and 15 years and reduce electricity use by a minimum of 75 per cent compared to a standard incandescent bulb. The advantages of CFLs and other high efficiency lighting have prompted legislation to ban incandescent bulbs. In 2007, Australia was the first country to mandate that no incandescent bulbs will be sold by 2012, a move that will reduce emissions by four million tonnes and cut power bills for lighting by up to 66 per cent.

## Switch to low carbon energy

If possible, switch to energy sources that emit less carbon and can reduce costs and emissions. Generally, coal produces twice the emissions of gas, six times the amount of solar, 40 times the amount of wind and 200 times the amount from hydro. In many parts of the world customers can choose to have a percentage of their electricity supplied from a renewable energy source, such as a wind farm or landfill gas project. These 'green choice' programmes are maturing and proving to be a powerful stimulus for growth in renewable energy supply. Today, more than 50 per cent of all US consumers, for example, have an option to purchase some type of green power product.

Larger users can even build their own lower emission energy systems, using solar power or lower carbon technologies such as generators powered by natural gas. A Global Environment Facility project in eastern and southern Africa is promoting small scale hydro schemes in the tea industry and cogeneration using agricultural waste from the sugar industry to generate electricity for industry use and to feed into national grids. In the United Kingdom, the body background="images/backgrd.gif" Shop bought a 25 per cent stake in a large modern wind generator to provide renewable energy for its UK operations. Other companies installing their own renewable energy plant include 3M, DuPont, General Motors, IBM, Johnson & Johnson and Staples.

At the small business or household level, tax breaks and incentives can make solar photovoltaic systems and other renewable energy technologies cost effective. Rooftop solar electric panels can provide energy over time, reduce electricity costs and provide a buffer against price fluctuations. UNEP is helping promote such schemes in southern India and North Africa.

The transport sector is responsible for 25 per cent of total energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, mainly from burning petrol and diesel. Various options exist for kicking the carbon habit. Hybrid engines that combine electricity and conventional petrol or diesel engines can offer substantial fuel savings while reducing emissions. Vehicles can also run on a range of alternative fuels that can offer both cost and environmental benefits, although they also often require an additional investment that take some time to pay back. These include compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), liquefied natural gas (LNG) and biofuels.

Biodiesel and bioethanol are biofuels made from crops, such as wheat, soy, corn and sugar cane. They are often blended with petrol or diesel, and almost all vehicles can run on blends up to 10 per cent without modification. Specially enabled biofuel cars can run on higher blends, such as a mix of 85 per cent bioethanol and 15 per cent petrol. In many parts of the world, biofuels are becoming more popular and easier to find commercially and in various blends. For companies with automotive fleets, biofuels can be a cost-effective low-carbon alternative.

## Invest in offsets and cleaner alternatives

There is a limit to how much efficiency you can squeeze from your lifestyle or your organisation's operations, or how much renewable energy you can employ. The choice for those who wish to compensate for their remaining emissions is to fund an activity by another party that reduces emissions. This is commonly called a 'carbon offset' or 'carbon credit'. The term carbon neutral includes the idea of neutralising emissions through supporting carbon savings elsewhere.

The average price for carbon offsets is US\$15 per tonne, but costs range from US\$5-50 per tonne. To purchase offsets, individuals or businesses pay an offset company to implement and manage projects that avoid, reduce or absorb greenhouse gases. Climate change is a global problem, so carbon reductions will have the same impact no matter where they are implemented. Carbon credits can be generated by emission-free energy generation, reduced demand, including energy efficiency, or sequestration in the form of underground and forestry storage.

According to one report, the highest quality offsets are generated from the flaring of methane from landfills, since methane is an even more potent greenhouse gas than CO<sub>2</sub>. Green Gas International ([www.greengas.net](http://www.greengas.net)) is a company that generates carbon credits by converting waste gas to clean energy through partnerships with mines, landfills and biogas producers. The worldwide benefits of such projects include 125 megawatts (MW) of power, saving four million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

## Get efficient

Looking at your life or business through a carbon neutral lens can help you in other ways by increasing the efficiency of resource use, avoiding and reducing waste and ultimately improving your overall performance and reputation. Economists are fond of saying that there are no banknotes lying around because someone will have already picked them up. In climate change, there are still plenty of banknotes just waiting to be picked up. After all, carbon is generally the waste product of producing energy, and reducing waste and becoming more efficient is always a good idea. Integrate the 3R approach—reduce, reuse and recycle—into your thinking.

## Offer-or buy-low carbon products and services

The market for climate friendly products and services is growing rapidly, from energy efficient products to new renewable energy systems. To offer such products, however, it's important to begin at the design stage. Actions as simple as adding energy efficient specifications into the design process, for example, can produce a design that minimises energy consumption during its use and saves customers the time and energy from making adjustments to a product after a purchase, (for example having to wrap water heaters with insulation blankets).

A more systematic approach comes from the field of 'design for sustainability', which includes life cycle design and environmentally conscious design and manufacturing. This new approach considers environ-

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mental aspects at all stages of development to create products with the lowest environmental impact throughout the product life cycle. Ecodesign is an important strategy for small and medium sized companies both in developed and developing countries to improve the environmental performance of their products, reduce waste and improve their competitive position on the market.

### Buy green, sell green

The market for green products and services is growing rapidly. In many countries consumer surveys report that growing numbers of consumers are willing to buy green products if given the choice. For businesses, innovative product design and presentation combined with responsible marketing and communications can help ensure that this consumer interest translates into purchasing. However, the market for green products remains underdeveloped because people still find it difficult to locate products or trust their environmental claims. Businesses can help consumers to be more climate friendly, from the online click for carbon offsetting on a tourism booking website to the label on a product at the local store.

### Team up

Many private sector companies are increasingly working with non-governmental organisations, cities or governments to identify and implement best practice solutions to reduce emissions. The Carbon Disclosure Project ([www.cdproject.net](http://www.cdproject.net)), for example is an independent non-profit organisation providing information for institutional investors with a combined US\$41 trillion of assets under management. On their behalf, CDP seeks information on the business risks and opportunities presented by climate change and greenhouse gas emissions data from more than 2,000 of the world's largest companies.

Similarly, local and national governments are seeking opportunities to partner with business on delivering low carbon solutions. In countries such as Canada, government institutions and power utilities supported the setting up of Energy Service Companies (ESCOs). In the United States, the federal Environmental Protection Agency started the Energy Star program ([www.energystar.gov](http://www.energystar.gov)) in 1992 as a voluntary partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through increased energy efficiency. In 2006, American businesses and consumers saved US\$14 billion on energy bills with the help of Energy Star saved and reduced greenhouse gas emissions equal to 25 million vehicles annually.

### Talk

The increasing importance of climate change means that companies and organisations will need to communicate. Transparency is critical. The internet and other new media mean that companies, organisations and governments cannot hide behind greenwash. This is where tools for verification and reporting guidelines with recognised indicators are critical. One example is the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) ([www.globalreporting.org](http://www.globalreporting.org)). Internal communications via intranets and company publications can report progress and acknowledge contributions by individual staff or teams. It's also important to let shareholders know. Reducing emissions, particularly by improving efficiency is a win-win situation that can also enhance a company's reputation. Consumers and investors alike are requesting information on a company's response to risks and opportunities related to climate change.

*(This is an abridged and adapted version of an original piece produced by UNEP for the UNEP/Sustainable Development International publication 'Climate Action' [www.climateactionprogramme.org](http://www.climateactionprogramme.org))*



## NATIONAL CONSULTATION ON GLOBAL WARMING



## Trees are the largest and longest living organisms on earth.

To make up for the loss of trees in the past decade, we would need to plant 130 million hectares (or 1.3 million km<sup>2</sup>), an area as large as Peru.

Covering the equivalent of 130 million hectares would entail planting approximately 14 billion trees every year for 10 consecutive years. This would require each person to plant and care for at least two seedlings a year.

Rehabilitating tens of millions of hectares of degraded land and reforesting the Earth is necessary to restore and maintain the productivity of soil and water resources.

Expanding tree cover on denuded lands will reduce pressures on remaining primary forests, helping to preserve habitats and to safeguard the Earth's biological diversity. It will also mitigate the build-up of atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Rainforests cover only 7 per cent of the land on earth but they contain nearly half of all the trees on earth. They generate about 40 per cent of the world's oxygen.

In one year, an average tree inhales 12 kilograms (26 pounds) of CO<sub>2</sub> and exhales enough oxygen for a family of four for a year.

One hectare of trees can absorb 6 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year.

A long haul flight will produce 3.75 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> (or one tonne of carbon)

## FORESTS

### 1. How much of the world is forested?

Forests cover 30 per cent of the planet's total land area. The total forested area in 2005 was just under 4 billion hectares, at least one third less than before the dawn of agriculture, some 10,000 years ago. (1 hectare is equal to 10,000 square metres).

### 2. Where are forests found?

Forests are unevenly distributed. The ten most forest-rich countries, which account for two-thirds of the total forested area, are the Russian Federation, Brazil, Canada, the United States, China, Australia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Peru and India.

### 3. What is a primary forest?

On a global average, more than one-third of all forests are primary forests, defined as forests where there are no clearly visible indications of human activity and where ecological processes are not significantly disturbed. Six million hectares of primary forest are lost every year due to deforestation and modification through selective logging and other human interventions.

Only 20 per cent of the world's forests remain in large intact areas. These forests consist of tropical rain forests, mangrove, coastal and swamp forests. Monsoon and deciduous forests flourish in the drier and more mountainous regions. Primary forests shelter diverse animal and plant species, and culturally diverse indigenous people, with deep connections to their habitat.

### 4. What are the protective functions of forests?

Trees quite literally form the foundations of many natural systems. They help to conserve soil and water, control avalanches, prevent desertification, protect coastal areas and stabilize sand dunes. Forests are the most important repositories of terrestrial biological biodiversity, housing up to 90 per cent of known terrestrial species.

Trees and shrubs play a vital role in the daily life of rural communities. They provide sources of timber, fuel wood, food, fodder, essential oils, gums, resins

and latex, medicines and shade. Forest animals have a vital role in forest ecology such as pollination, seed dispersal and germination.

### 5. What are the links between forests and climate change?

Trees absorb carbon dioxide and are vital carbon sinks. It is estimated that the world's forests store 283 Gigatonnes of carbon in their biomass alone, and that carbon stored in forest biomass, deadwood, litter and soil together is roughly 50 per cent more than the carbon in the atmosphere.

Carbon in forest biomass decreased in Africa, Asia and South America in the period 1990–2005. For the world as a whole, carbon stocks in forest biomass decreased annually by 1.1 Gigatonne of carbon (equivalent to 4 billion 25kg sacks of charcoal).

The loss of natural forests around the world contributes more to global emissions each year than the transport sector. Curbing deforestation is a highly cost-effective way to reduce emissions. Other solutions include increased energy efficiency, reduced energy demand, better transport and the use of green energy.

### 6. What is the deforestation rate on Earth?

World population currently stands at 6.5 billion people. It is projected to grow to 9 billion by 2042. The expansion of agricultural and industrial needs, population growth, poverty, landlessness and consumer demand are the major driving forces behind deforestation. Most deforestation is due to conversion of forests to agricultural land. Global removals of wood for timber and fuel amounted to 3.1 billion cubic metres in 2005.

Worldwide, deforestation continues at an alarming rate, about 13 million hectares per year, an area the size of Greece or Nicaragua. Africa and South America have the largest net loss of forests. In Africa it is estimated that nearly half the forest loss was due to removal of wood fuel. Forests in Europe are expanding. Asia, which had a net loss in the 1990s, reported a net gain of forests in the past five years, primarily due to large-scale

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forestation in China.

Forest planting and the natural expansion of forests help to reduce the net loss of forests. The net change in forested area in the period 2000–2005 is estimated at 7.3 million hectares a year (an area about the size of Sierra Leone or Panama), down from 8.9 million hectares a year in the period 1990–2000.

### 7. Where should trees be planted as a priority?

Favourable growing conditions give nations in the southern hemisphere an advantage over most industrial countries in the economics of wood production. Plantations in the south can produce 10–20 cubic metres of wood per hectare per year, considerably more than plantations in most northern temperate regions and 10–20 times the typical productivity of natural forests worldwide.

The *Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign* encourages the planting of trees in four key areas, namely: (i) degraded natural forests and wilderness areas; (ii) farms and rural landscapes; (iii) sustainably managed plantations; and (iv) urban environments. Trees have to be well adapted to local conditions, and mixtures of

species are preferred over monocultures. Many trees have communal benefits, especially for the poor, and ownership, access and use rights are as important as the number of trees.

### 8. Who owns forests and trees?

Forest and tree ownership and tenure are changing. Eighty per cent of the world's forests are publicly owned, but private ownership is on the rise, especially in North and Central America and in Oceania. About 11 per cent of the world's forests are designated for the conservation of biological diversity. These areas are mainly, but not exclusively, in protected areas.

### 9. Who cares for forests and trees?

Around 10 million people are employed in conventional forest management and conservation. Formal employment in forestry declined by about 10 per cent from 1990 to 2000. More than 1 billion forest adjacent people are informal custodians of forests. They rely on forest products and services for a significant part of their livelihoods. Approximately 500 million small-scale farmers in the tropics retain and manage trees on their farms for livelihood goals

## The legend and inspiration of Chico Mendes

“Chico Mendes, a Brazilian rubber worker, never intended to become an environmentalist. As he once put it, “we became ecologists without even knowing that word.” He certainly never planned to become the target of savage attacks and eventual martyrdom because of his work to save the Amazonian rain forests. For ten years he served as the leader of the National Council of Rubber Tappers, an organization representing some 150 thousand people who earn their income from the

rain forests in Acre Province in Brazil. And Chico Mendes unwittingly began to place his life in peril from the moment he started to organize his fellow rubber workers to protect the forests from which they derived their livelihood. Chico's work achieved results. Undoubtedly his greatest achievement was the negotiation of four “extractive reserves” in Acre and eight other Amazon states. These reserves will protect more than five million acres for rubber extraction, nuts, resins, and other forest projects. But this work to prevent destruction of the forests raised the ire of wealthy landowners of Brazil who profit from destroying the forests.

Three days before Christmas 1988, Chico Mendes was gunned down in his yard after having survived five previous attempts on his life. A local landowner who was benefiting by cutting down the rain forest confessed to the brutal murder and was finally tried and convicted.

This tragic assassination has . . . inspired people around the world to join in the important work Chico Mendes left behind.” \*

## Green Diocese / Parish/ College/ School Award

Dioceses, Parishes, Colleges and Schools of CSI may submit a report of their activities with photographs in soft and hard copies before 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009. Experts will analyze the report and select three entries and visit the places to select the first and the second.

*Contact*

### Dr. Mathew Koshy Punnackadu

Convener, CSI Synod Ecological  
Concerns Committee., Malayil,  
Punnackadu - 689 652,  
drmathewkoshy51@gmail.com

### CSI Synod's Call to all its members

- 1) Plant one sapling during the month of June 2009 to mitigate global warming. We anticipate the planting of 4 million plants during the month of June.
- 2) Every member to dig one pit to harvest rain water falling on the roof top. It will help to stop desertification.

## Nipa-Laivalley Eco-forestry Project

**In January 1993** Pastor Simil Hondolwa of the Good News Christian Church at Nipa, west of Mendi in the Southern Highlands of Papua New Guinea, started on a life-changing journey. He felt called by God to begin a program to replace the trees that were being cut down in his area, including many trees used by the sawmill operated by his church. He started tree nurseries, learning by trial and error because he had no formal training or experience in this technology. Gradually he learned how to grow healthy seedlings of several useful tree species, starting with collecting and germinating the seeds. Advice and help from Provincial Forestry Officer Mr. Isaac Hekele was very valuable.

Sales of seedlings were slow at first, but then the word began to spread and by the end of the first year more than 3,000 seedlings were sold. Most of the work was carried out by Pastor Simil himself, but after a while a few other people started to catch the vision. For example, Mr. Aniki Uhae, a literacy worker at Sorip village, started his own nursery, trained and advised by Pastor Simil. Following participation in the May 2003 Goroka consultation on theology of the environment Pastor Simil expanded his program. He took the message of caring for the environment to the churches and communities in the Nipa-Magarima area and the Lai Valley and beyond. He gave teaching and preaching from the Bible and made many practical recommendations. The people were hungry for this information and kept asking for more. Sixty church workers gladly spent a week at a workshop focused on the environment, and other workshops followed.

Along with “eco-forestry” (using trees to help conserve the environment) Pastor Simil raised awareness about soil erosion and suggested ways of stopping the erosion and making the soils more fertile. Before long his fame was spreading as gardens became more productive and previously dry soils remained moist and suitable for cropping. Tree planting became more popular and 4,000 trees were planted in the Lai Valley. The next plan was to start rice growing in small plots.

The success of the program in and through the churches resulted in Pastor Simil being invited to schools and community meetings to raise awareness about the environment. Video tapes were very useful for this purpose, especially the BBC series called “State of the Planet” by David Attenborough. Always there was great interest and enthusiasm to spread the message and take practical steps for conserving the environment.

*A small tree-planting program has now become a mass movement of commitment to practical care for the environment – much more than Pastor Simil ever dreamed.*

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## Vetiver – A wonderful plant, native of Tamilnadu

Vetiver grass will stabilize riverbanks and canal walls. In an experiment in Tanzania, on the road to Dodoma, a road engineer used vetiver grass to protect the wing wall of a bridge on one side of the river and constructed the usual concrete wing wall on the other side. Some thirty to forty years later, the concrete wall had already collapsed into the river, and the bank it was protecting was eroded. On the other side, the vetiver grass was still holding the bank in perfect shape.

some important applications

- reduce the movement and loss of soil from lands protected with vetiver grass hedgerows;
- significantly reduce rainfall runoff losses, with the consequent positive impact on improved soil moisture content and ground water recharge;
- recycle plant nutrients;
- under conditions of water stress has generally resulted in significant crop yield increases;
- provide for a low cost and effective means for stabilizing earth fill and cuts in relation to roads, drainage and irrigation works;
- stabilize and rehabilitate mining sites;
- stabilize river and pond banks;
- tolerate heavy metals and other toxic minerals and chemicals at higher levels than most other plants, and thus has potential in the prevention and clean up of polluted sites that might include municipal waste dumps, mine dumps etc.; and
- have important byproducts including: thatch, fodder, mulch, aromatic oil production, medicinal products, fuel, and as a material for handicrafts.

The above uses and applications have been confirmed by research and practice in Thailand and in other countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America over the past

### From the Philippines - Sloping Agricultural Land Technology\*

The mountainous island of Cebu in the Philippines is about 200 km long and 50 km wide. It was once covered with thick rainforests, but by 1980 most of the trees had disappeared as the population increased and the demand for farm land kept growing. The hillsides were bare and rocky, a result of topsoil being washed into the rivers and eventually into the sea.

The surrounding sea became brown and the rivers were full of silt. In 1983 the farmers in the village of Guba, set in the hills above Cebu City, were very poor and full of despair. But life changed for them when a field worker with World Neighbors befriended them and suggested they use SALT: Sloping Agricultural Land Technology.

Those who were willing to try it used an A-frame, a simple tool made from long sticks, to establish a series of horizontal (level) lines across their slopes. Along the lines they dug ditches with high banks on the downhill side. After the rains they planted Napier grass on the banks. The water trapped in the ditches and the nearby soil enabled the grass to keep growing right through the dry season, supplying plenty of feed for the cattle for the whole year. Soil started to build up in the ditches instead of being washed into the river. This soil became garden beds for corn, beans, and vegetables. The next year the farmers planted

*Leucena*, a fast growing small tree, on the banks, along with the Napier grass. The *Leucena* enriched the soil and strengthened the banks. It grew quickly and provided firewood and rich fertilizer (in the form of its dropped leaves).

Soon all the other farmers were copying the few pioneers, and neighbouring villages were doing the same. The word spread quickly. The Guba farmers continued to improve their hillsides, carrying out experiments to find the best crops and combinations. They sold garden products and *Leucena* sticks in Cebu city. From their new wealth they improved their houses and opened a school, a clinic and a church. They responded to requests from all over Cebu to teach SALT. But for this they charged a fee: after all they were now consultants. The name they gave to their consultancy group was PEPPER: People Educating People for Proper Environmental Rehabilitation.

The whole of Cebu island has been transformed due to SALT and PEPPER. SALT has been adopted throughout the Philippines and it is now a very important government program. It was first promoted by Dr Harold Watson, a Baptist missionary and agricultural scientist who started a training school for rural pastors on the island of Mindanao. Harold Watson was concerned about the degradation of hillsides all over the Philippines so he conducted experiments and added "rehabilitation of hillsides" to lessons on "sustainable low cost agriculture". He spread his ideas through churches, government officials and organisations such as World Neighbors. In 1983 he received one of the five annual Ramon Magsaysay awards for services to the people of Asia.

**SALT has now been introduced in many countries. Precious water and soil now stay on the hillsides. Sloping lands have been transformed. Thousands of people have benefited.**

***"We must educate our people to the truth that having more and more things is not the true measure of a good life. What makes life more meaningful and joyful are spiritual values, which help us to respect our rivers, mountains, sea, and one another. Therefore, we need a massive global theological renewal and reconstruction regarding our understanding of God, the Creator and the Sustainer, in light of the environmental crisis facing the earth. Creation protests its treatment by human beings. It groans and travails in all its parts. Christians, you are "earth keepers". Rise up to your calling." #***

\*

*Kumalau Tawali, pastor, teacher, poet, author and journalist of PNG.*

## PROGRAMMES

Green Diocesan Awards, Green Parish Award, Green School Awards, Green Home Awards, Diocesan Ecological Convention, Environmental Rally, Rain Water Harvesting, Interactive Eco-Bible Study Programme, Environmental Day Celebrations, Ecological Sunday, Resource Persons Training Camp, Avoiding Throw away Plastics, Eco training programme during VBS, Organic farming, Planting of Trees, Pilgrimage Regional Conferences, Parish level Eco Committees, District/Area level work, Eco Clubs in Schools., Eco-literature, Eco-church Architecture, Vegetable Garden, Hand book, Eco-Management in Schools and Churches

# The Uppsala Interfaith Climate Manifesto 2008

## Faith traditions addressing Global Warming

As religious leaders and teachers from the whole world, gathered in Uppsala 2008, we call for effective leadership and action in view of the global threat to the climate. From religious traditions, with different approaches to religious life, we come together at this time in human history to assure the world of what we have in common. We all share the responsibility of being conscious caretakers of our home, planet Earth. We have reflected on the concerns of scientists and political leaders regarding the alarming climate crisis. We share their concerns.

The world religions are a source of empowerment for change in lifestyles and patterns of consumption. Religious faith remains a powerful force for good among a considerable number of the human family. We undertake this mission in a spirit of responsibility and faith.

### From wonder to change

With a sense of wonder we look at life on planet Earth. It is a miracle and a gift!

Clear nights with the sky full of stars fill us with awe. It reminds us of our role in the universe. We have many reasons to be humble. Meditating on the sea shore, in the desert or in the forest allows us to feel one with the universe, yet we are so small. Faith traditions with diverse cultures and backgrounds converge to express wonder and awe at the gift of life.

In the history of the Earth, the climate has always varied. However, we are very concerned about the huge human impact on the Earth's very complex and sensitive climate system. Today humanity constitutes a major force which changes the preconditions of life and welfare for most creatures on the planet. We know enough to realize that we need to act now in the interest of future generations. The situation is critical. Glaciers and the permafrost are melting. Devastating drought and flooding strike people and ecosystems, especially in the South.

Can planet Earth be healed? We are convinced that the answer is yes. Major transformations in understanding human life, lifestyles and work modes, economy, trade and technology are needed. Ethics and values are intrinsic to the development of new institutional structures and architectures of politics and finance. In the religious realm long-sightedness has always been important. More than ever before the world now needs extraordinary, long-sighted political leadership.

### Our appeals to the copenhagen process.

For the Earth, salvation is about more than new technology and green economy. Salvation is about the inner life of human beings. Life without hope is detrimental to human existence. The peoples of this beautiful precious planet need to dialogue about what it means to live together, with global empathy in a global village. Religions can contribute to this in a decisive way.

As people from world religions, we urge governments and international organisations to prepare and agree upon a comprehensive climate strategy for the Copenhagen Agreement. This strategy must be ambitious enough to keep climate change below 2° Celsius, and to distribute the burden in an equitable way in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities. Greenhouse Development Rights offers one concrete model of such burden sharing. We urge all actors concerned to find politically acceptable tools to realize this.

The Copenhagen Agreement must counteract misuse of land, of forests, and of farmland, using creative incentives for landowners, users and indigenous communities to manage growing forests as carbon sinks.

### We ask the global political leadership for:

- Rapid and large emission cuts in the rich world. Developed countries, especially those in Europe and North America, must lead the way. In the developed countries emissions should be reduced by at least 40 per cent by 2020 and 90 per cent by 2050 against 1990 levels.
- Binding cuts for the rich world on top of their domestic obligations. According to the principles of responsibility and capability countries should pay for international cuts in addition to their own domestic initiatives. These payments should be obligatory, rather than voluntary.
- Measurable, verifiable and reportable mitigation actions by developing countries, especially countries with fast growing economies.
- Massive transfers and sharing of important technology. All countries must encourage and facilitate the sharing of technology that is intrinsically important to reducing emissions. Developing countries must have viable and technologically responsible opportunities to provide for their populations.
- Economic incentives for developing countries to foster cleaner development on a national scale.
- Adaptation to climate change. According to the same principles of responsibility and capability, countries must ensure that poor and vulnerable communities are empowered and supported. Adaptation to climate change must not fail for want of money or other resources.

### Humility, responsibility – and hope!

We urge political and religious leaders to bear responsibility for the future of our planet and the living conditions and habitat preservation of new generations, assured in this of support and cooperation from the faith traditions of the world. The climate crisis is a fundamental spiritual question for the survival of humanity on planet Earth. At the same time, we know that the world has never before been more capable of creating sustainable development. Humanity possesses the

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knowledge and technology. Popular commitment to doing what can and must be done is growing.

We are challenged to review the values, philosophies, beliefs and moral concepts which have shaped and driven our behaviours and informed our dysfunctional relationship with our natural environment.

We commit ourselves to taking and sharing responsibility for providing moral leadership within our various faith traditions and for others who so desire. We call upon all who have influence over the shaping of both intellect and spirit, to commit themselves to a profound reorientation of humanity's self-understanding and of the world, whereby we acknowledge our estrangement and henceforth strive to live in harmony with Nature and one another.

We offer the gift of our various faiths as a source of empowerment for developing sustainable lifestyles and patterns of consumption. We undertake this mission in a spirit of humility, responsibility, faith and urgency.

Now is the time to mobilise people and nations.

As people of different faiths, we make these commitments:

- To inform and inspire people in our own religious and cultural contexts to take responsibility for and to implement effective measures
- To challenge political and business leaders where we live and work to develop comprehensive strategies and action
- To focus on the struggle against global warming and draw upon our innermost religious convictions about the meaning of life. This commitment is a deeply spiritual question concerning justice, peace and hopes for a future in love and solidarity with all human beings and the whole of creation.

As religious leaders and teachers, we want to counteract a culture of fear with a culture of hope. We want to face the climate challenge with defiant optimism to highlight the core principles of all major sacred traditions of the world: justice, solidarity and compassion. We want to encourage the best science and political leadership. We commit our communities to fostering a spirit of joy and hope in relation to the greatest gift given to us all - the gift of life!

1. Ms Charanjit Ajit Singh, Sikh, Great Britain
2. Father Dr John T. Brinkman, M.M. Christian, Japan
3. The Revd Dr John Chryssavgis, Christian, USA
4. Prof. Larbi Djeradi, Muslim, Algeria
5. Dr Xiaoxin He, Daoist, China
6. The Very Revd Leonid Kishkovsky, Christian, USA
7. Prof. J. N. K. Mugambi, Christian, Kenya
8. Prof. Rosemary Radford Ruether, Christian, USA
9. The Rt Revd Thomas Samuel, Christian, India
10. The Ven. Bhikku Khy Sovanratana, Buddhist, Cambodia
11. Prof. Parichart Suwanbubba, Buddhist, Thailand
12. The Revd Sally Bingham, Christian, USA
13. The Rt Revd and Rt Hon Richard Chartres, Christian, Great Britain
14. Dr Mawil Izzie Dien, Muslim, Great Britain
15. Sheikha Amina al-Jerrahi, Muslim, Mexico
16. The Revd Tore Johnsen, Saami/Christian, Norway
17. Ms Bernie T. Keldermans, Christian, Republic of Palau
18. Prof. Oren R. Lyons, Turtle Clan, Onondaga Nation, Six Nations
19. The Rt Revd Sofie Petersen, Christian, Greenland
20. Mr M. Abdus Sabur, Muslim, Thailand
21. Rabbi Awraham Soetendorp, Jewish, The Netherlands
22. Prof. Hava Tirosh-Samuels, Jewish, USA
23. The Ven. Bhiksuni Chuehman Shih, Buddhist, Taiwan
24. Rabbi Arthur Waskow, Jewish, USA
25. Prof. Xiaogan Liu, Daoist, Hong Kong
26. The Most Revd Anders Wejryd, Christian, Sweden

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Church of South India Ecological Concerns Committee seeks to create awareness among all people about environmental and ecological concerns and thereby to care for God's creation. It endeavors to encourage people to refrain from abuse of nature's resources and to strive to keep the earth a habitable place for all. We encourage parishes to incorporate ecological concerns in their order of worship and include both advocacy and direct action for social justice and the integrity of creation in missional activities. We encourage the active participation of all people of good will through prayer, partnership, and involvement, which will help humanity to return to an eco-friendly life style.

## Report of the National Consultation on Global warming held at CSI Centre, Chennai from 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> Feb 2009 organised by CSI in partnership with NCCI and SAEPP

The National consultation on "Global warming" urged the Indian churches to create awareness among people about climate change, "which is affecting the very survival of God's creation," and to mobilize and influence public opinion on relevant policy changes.

The consultation called upon the churches to "engage proactively on climate justice" and to liaison with government and network with social movements to combat causes and practices that perpetuate global warming. The statement issued after the consultation wanted the churches, "as a responsible missiological community, to engage the challenges that would ensure the sustainable development and 'just' natural resources management, and to respond to the environmental crises with immediate concern." Promotion of "ecumenical green movements" and adoption of alternative energy sources were recommended to the churches by the consultation, which was organized by the Church of South India (CSI) Synod Ecological Concerns Committee (SECC) in partnership with the National Council of Churches in India and South Asia Ecumenical Partnership Programme. The consultation urged the churches to review their vision and mission statements from an eco-perspective and to view environmental problems from a "victims' perspective."



Bishop Thomas Samuel, the chairman of the SECC in his presidential address to the consultation said that the impact of climate change will be felt not just in years, but over generations and added that, "tackling it will require far sighted leadership."

Dr A Ramachandran, director of Centre for Climate Change and Adaptation Research of Anna University in Chennai in his keynote address noted that the average global temperature will rise to 1.4 to 5.8 degree Celsius at the end of 2100. Carbon dioxide has increased in the atmosphere by 34 per cent compared to what prevailed in the pre-industrial era, Dr Ramachandran said. He mentioned remedial measures which included reducing the industrial and automobile emissions and planting of more trees. Plants pick up carbon dioxide and reduce heat in the atmosphere, he added. Rising of sea level by 10-90 centimeters, flooding of coastal regions, increasing heat wave, floods and droughts, melting of glaciers and spreading of diseases were mentioned by Dr Ramachandran as other impact of climate change in the world.



Reverend Freddy De Alwis, executive secretary of the Christian Conference of Asia expressed the view that Asian churches have a long way to go to comprehend the challenges thrown up by the global warming.



He suggested that resource books on global warming should be made available to Sunday schools, churches and seminaries for building awareness and preparing the churches for combating the problem.

Dr Sudip Mitra, assistant professor of environment sciences at the

Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi in his presentation at the consultation defined climate as statistics of long term weather pattern over a long period of time. Dr Mitra included climate change as one of the four primary concerns along with food security, poverty alleviation, and energy security in the country.



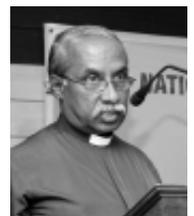
The consultation, attended by some 70 representatives from protestant and orthodox churches, intellectuals and journalists, noted that global warming affects climate related disasters, causes imbalances in sharing of natural resources, creates tensions among communities, affects socio-economic, cultural and political justice, increases the vulnerability of marginalized communities, and hits at the root of meeting the basic survival needs.



Professor Sudhir Chella Rajan of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Chennai in a presentation said that poor in the poorest countries will be worst affected by climate change. According to Professor Rajan climate change will also result in substantial reduction in the yields of wheat and maize and increase in

the incidence of diseases such as typhoid and malaria. He mentioned droughts, floods and water shortage as long term social impact of climate change. Disruption of the entire monsoon cycle will be another long term impact of the climate change, the IIT professor said. He also mentioned that South Asia could be one of the regions which will bear the brunt of climate change. He said that per capita water availability will decline by over by 30 per cent primarily as a result of melting of Himalayan glacier.

Rev. Moses Jayakumar, General Secretary of CSI, Rt. Rev. Dr. Isaac Mar Philixenos, Executive member of WCC, Rev. Freddy De Alwis, the executive secretary of CCA, Rev. Azir Ebenezer ( Secretary, NCCI), Dr. Mathew Koshy Punnackadu (Convner of SECC) offered felicitations during the inaugural function .



Rev. Moses Jayakumar

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Dr. George Zachariah

Dr. George Zachariah, Gurukul Lutheran Theological College (Politics of Global warming), Rev. Y. David, Maduari (Global Warming experiences & Reflection), Ms Sagarika Chetty Executive Secretary, Justice, Peace and Creation, NCCI (Climate Change as a determinant of Global Change: A

Futuristic Reading, Ecumenical Interventions in Global warming) Dr. Sam P. Mathew, Gurukul Lutheran Theological College (Biblical Concerns) Dr. George Chandy, Former Director, CMC Vellore, (Health and Global Warming) and Dr. Mar Atsongchanger, Executive Secretary, Communication & Relations, NCCI (Biblical Concerns) presented papers.



Rev. Y. David

Bishop Thomas Samuel, presided over the concluding meeting. He called upon the churches to plant one tree during the month of June 2009 to mitigate the effects of global warming. "Planting of trees can be seen as a Eucharist," he told the consultation. He expected planting of some 4 million plants during the month of June by CSI members. He also urged the churches to dig pits in barren lands so that rain water could be stored which will recharge the ground water and stop the process of desertification. Mr. Michael Angeliose, Vice President of NCCI and Rev. Freddy De Alwis, the executive secretary of CCA, addressed the concluding session. Dr. Mathew Koshy Punnackadu Convener of SECC proposed vote of thanks.

### Comments of the Participants

- 1) A well organized consultation. Resource persons are of high caliber.  
Rev. J Joshua Karamchander  
CSI Coimbatore
- 2) The Consultation was very informative. We will teach others  
Evang. T.R. Suresh Kumar  
Telungu Baptist Church. AP
- 3) Given good Awareness about global warming, will share the insights with local level people  
Rev. D Charles Devanesan, TELC, Coimbatore
- 4) A new beginning to understand Global warming  
Rev. C. Abraham Renold, CSI Madurai Ramba Diocese
- 5) Climate refugees are a challenge to the Church.  
Rev. J Thangadurai  
CSI Trichy-Tanjavoor Docese
- 6) I will be sharing the ideas which I got from this consultation with my fellow pastors and shall try my best to make my congregation an eco-friendly one.  
Rev. K. Thomas Prasad Rao  
CSI Rayalseema Diocese



Dr. George Chandy



Dr. Sam P. Mathew



Michael Angeliose



Sagarika Chetty



Dr. Caroline



Rt. Rev. Dr. Azariah

7) I find myself very much privileged to participate in the National Consultation on Global warming. This consultation has been eye opener for me in many ways, especially after understanding the grave situation which we all are facing. Eventhough, the Marthoma Church is aware of seriousness of the issue and have taken many steps in this regard, I believe we as a Church still have a long way to go. The Church leaders should encourage Churches to promote meaningful living styles to stop/control global warming. I hope and pray that we act and behave like responsible global citizens and rock the world instead of allowing the world to rock us down with the impression following the "trend"

Renold Raju  
Marthoma Church

8) We were able to interact with National level representatives of various churches. We had a wonderful fellowship

Dr. A. Selvin Samuel CSI Tirunelvely

9) Circulate a report of this consultation to all the heads of the Churches. Provide opportunity for more interaction

Adv. O. F. Raju, Chaldean Church

10) Net Working should be made with NGO's and Churches for effective programmes

S. J. Sibloon Secretary, NCCI-URM,  
Madhya Pradesh

11) All the sessions are interesting and fruitful. A follow up programme must also be conducted

Rev. Fr. Alex John  
Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church

12) National consultation was an eye opener. All the resource persons presented their papers in an excellent way. It is good to know that CSI and NCCI has taken the issue of Global warming and its effect on our eco-system in a more serious manner. The Churches have the potential to propagate this message and help in taking steps to conscientise the community. Appreciate CSI and NCCI for organizing this consultation.

Pawan Bhuyan



Rev. Azir Ebenezer addressing



Rt. Rev. Dr. Issac Mar Philexinos

## FROM DIOCESES

### KANYAKUMARI DIOCESE

#### ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS PROGRAMME ON GLOBAL WARMING



The Ecological Concern Committee (ECC) of CSI Kanyakumari Diocese has conducted an "Environmental Awareness Programme on Global Warming" on February 03, 2009 at CSI Community Hall, Karungal, Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu.

The students and teachers participated in the programme organized by Moderator Gnanadhasan Polytechnic College, Nagercoil aekhe Sunday School Teachers of CSI District Church, Karungal also attended this programme. About 120 participants from varied discipline like Civil (22 students), Electrical and Electronics (4), Computer Science (13), Mechanical Engineering (33) and Sunday School Teachers (30) were benefited through this environmental awareness programme.



The objective of the programme was to create the awareness about global warming to technical students and Sunday school teachers, to prevent the global warming and conserve the mother earth for the welfare of our future generation.

The programme started at 2.00 PM by a prayer by Rev. C. Sudheeban, Malanvilai CSI Church. Followed by the prayer, Dr. K. Paul Raj, Convener of ECC, CSI K.K. Diocese and Head, Department of Botany, Nesamony Memorial Christian College, Marthandam welcomed and emphasized the importance of environmental awareness programme.

The Keynote address of the programme was given by Prof. H. Deva Kumar Samuel, HoD of Physics, Nesamony Memorial Christian College, Marthandam and talked about the causes and ecological impacts of global warming.

Prof. J. Ebanesar, former HoD of Botany, Nesamony Memorial Christian College, Marthandam presented a lecture on environmental conservation with special emphasis on how anthropogenic activities cause the global warming. He presented the lecture with biblical evidences from Genesis to Revelation.

C. Banerji, Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering, Moderator Gnanadhasan Polytechnic, Nagercoil shared his views on Global Warming. The session concluded by the address of Rev. John Milton, Member ECC CSI KK Diocese

The programme came to an end with vote of thanks by Prof. Metilda Jone, Lecturer in Computer Science, Moderator Gnanadhasan Polytechnic, Nagercoil, followed by the closing prayer by Rev. Robert Bruce, Asst. Pastor, CSI District Church, Karungal.

Dr. Paul Raj

### TRICHY TANJORE DIOCESE

#### 01. World Environment Day

World Environment Day Celebration was organized in all church institutions between June 5<sup>th</sup> to June 10<sup>th</sup> 2009.

Sermons : Sermory guidelines were circulated to

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pastors on "Creation and Stewardship".

Activities : Saplings were planted in church campuses by Youth and Sunday School Children. All educational institutions organized various activities like Rally, competitions and tree planting program

02. Green Church, Green School Awards (July 5<sup>th</sup>)

Our diocesan ecological concerns committee in collaboration with Heber Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies announced Green Church, Green School Awards. One year time was given to churches and schools for Greening their campus.

A team of 5(3 from Diocesan Ecology Committee and 2 from Bishop Heber College) visited the School / Churches and chose the best Green Church and best Green School.

Green Awards

Rural School: Irungalur

Rural School: St. John's Hr. Sec. School, Irungalur

Urban Church : St. Peter's Church, Tanjore

Urban School : Bishop Heber Hr. Sec. School, Trichy

Shields were distributed to winners during "Mission Festival" on July 5<sup>th</sup> 2008.

03. Environment Special Issue : Thirusabai Malar (September 15<sup>th</sup>)

Our Diocese is publishing a monthly "Thirusabai Malar" - September 2008 issue^ was declared as Environmental Special. Articles, short stories, information on environmental issues were published.

04. raining Programme

a. Ecology for School Technology (July 10-12) : A three day Training programme including a field trip to Indra Gandhi Wild Life Sanctuary was organized for 16 school teachers (representing all our Diocesan Higher Secondary Schools) in charge of National Green Corps (NGC). They were given theoretical inputs about biodiversity, environmental issues, problems and conservation and also on stewardship.

b. Ecology for Pastors (July 23-25 2008) : 13 pastors of our diocese were taken on a field trip to Topslip.

c. Training Programme Green Ambassadors (September 11-14):

18 College teachers were trained as "Green Ambassadors" of our diocese, to take up Environment Conservation activities : Theoretical inputs and field trip were organized in their four day training programme.

05. Diocesan Ecological Concern Committee Meetings

2 meetings were organized under the Chairmanship of our Bishop to review and plan for the Ecological activities of the Diocese.

06. 100 % Ban of Plastics

Our Diocesan Ecological Concerns Committee suggested to ban the use of plastic items inside our diocesan schools / institutions and churches.

Rev. Dr. Daniel Vincent

## KARIMNAGAR DIOCESE

The Diocese of Karimnagar nominated Mr.B. Johnson, Diocesan Ecological Concerns Committee Convener, Rev. K. Edward Jaya Kumar & Miss.K. Shebah Krupamayee to represent the Diocese in the Synod Eco-Leadership Training program held at CSI Centre, Synod. Rev. D John was sent to Kottayam to attend Eco-Clergy Leadership Training Program and at the Regional level Committee in Andhra Pradesh at Nandyal Rev.V. Johnson, Mr.P.J. Jayadeep and Mrs. Susan took part.



During the Training Mr.B. Johnson, Convener of the Ecological Concern's along with those attended for the Synod Eco-Leadership Training Program prepared the Plan of Action based on the SWOT and paper by ARC-UN Programme -7 year plan. The following were planned: Eco-Competes, Eco-Awareness Programme for Youth, Women, and Children, Planting the Green Gold-Planting more trees to reduce Global Warming in every Property of CSITA, Eco-Clubs, Eco-Prayer Day, Eco-Sundayetc...



With a little drizzling, tender breeze blowing, greenery all around, in a very Eco- Friendly atmosphere in the premises of Our Bishop's House, on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2008 the Diocesan Ecological Concern Committee of Karimnagar Diocese was constituted with Our Bishopgaru The Rt. Rev. Dr.P.Surya Prakash as the Chairman and 18 members. Coming together as a Committee/ Task Force we all had a common aim to make our Diocese a Green Diocese. The Plan of Action prepared at Chennai was presented before the Committee and discussed.. We planned to do the following: Eco- Clubs, Eco- Awareness Programs, Eco-Sunday, Eco- News/ Eco-Talk: Eco- Camp, Eco-Compete, Eco- Planting — Green Gold! Celebrate Eco-Day.

Eco- Awareness programs were conducted for Youth and Women. Eco- News: The month of January the Diocesan Magazines focus was Ecology.

Eco- Planting: Few plants were planted on the occasion of Annual Diocesan Womens Retreat held on

## NORTH KARNATAKA

On the guidelines given by the Synod Ecological concerns committee, the Diocesan Ecological committee was formed and constituted consisting of the following;

- (i) Officers of the Diocese
- (ii) Rev. Samuel S. Sakkari, Convener
- (iii) Prof Sujata Gokavi - Member
- (iv) Prof. Sangeet Prabhakar - Member



4<sup>th</sup> October 2008, in the Parsonage premises.

**Eco- Compete:** The Spirit of Ecology started to take its flame in the young hearts too. We created a platform for all the Kids and young adults in the Diocese to express their heart for Green World by conducting painting competitions with a theme "My World a Dream World". The response was wonderful.

**Eco- Christmas:** Beautiful Christmas Cards were made by School children at Parkal which added more color to the celebration of Christmas in 2008

We believe that great achievements always have small beginnings. Looking forward to continue the work that we began in making this world into a green world. To God we give all Glory and Honor.

Mr. B. Johnson

## DORNAKAL DIOCESE

Diocese is located in 5 revenue districts in Andhra Pradesh and one district in Orissa state and one in Madhya Pradesh. Geographically the Diocese is covered with thick forests, mountains, rivers and agricultural fields.

**Ecological Concern Activities in the Diocese:**

Our Bishop Thandrigaru has given instructions to educational institutions to plant trees at their institutions and also at Church premises. Now our Churches are green. For example at Cathedral and Kothagudem it has grown a beautiful garden in front of the Church. We are planning to have gardens in all the Churches. There are two Hospitals in our Diocese covered with gardens and trees. We are thankful to our Bishop Thandrigaru for encouraging the Diocese to make it green Diocese.

**Future Plans:**

To educate people to avoid the use of plastics and to use paper bags. Educate the people to use the Vermi Composite in agricultural fields and not to waste the water. Rainwater harvesting project has been proposed and will be planned before the coming monsoon. 3 Diocesan compassion hostels will be furnished with solar pannels by the end of february 2009.

REV. G. J. KANTHA RAO



The committee met and decided to conduct ecological programmes at Diocesan level in line with the Synod Ecological concerns committee.

It was decided to initiate Ecological programmes in all the congregations of the Diocese Such as ; Rain Harvesting and Planting tree in the Church campus , Introducing the subject in Sunday School and observing one Sunday with a special liturgy.



A circular has been issued to all the Churches with regard to the decision of the Synod ecological conference in initiating award such as Green Church , Green College and School awards to encourage ecological activities .

The Programme of Planting the trees was organized at Hebich Memorial Church & CSI-Church , Kalyanagar , Dharwad . CSI-College of Commerce is developing and planting trees at Cemetery in Dharwad.

Rain Harvesting pits were provided at Diocesan office compound , Basel Mission Girl's High school and Zigeler Hostel compound at Dharwad.

Action Play with regard to preserving the nature was conducted by the Students of Basel Mission English Medium School, Dharwad.

## Eco News Bulletin



I am happy to share with you that, Karnataka Regional conference was held at HRC , Dharwad on 28<sup>th</sup> November ,2008

Rev.Samuel.S.Sakkari

### KARNATAKA SOUTHERN

PROPOSAL FOR SEVEN YEAR PLAN UNDER ARC-UN PROGRAMME KARNATAKA SOUTHERN DIOCESE (C.S.I)

It is propose d to establish ECO MONITERING AND TRAINING CELL as a nodel Agent at Diocesan

Level to oversee the programme/ activities drected towards protecting, preserving and promoting ecology with branches atleast at District Level. Experts/ specialists will be nominated as members.

Some of the programmes that can be initiated under different aspects after the eco-auditing, as deed&deed in the group discussion held at Regional Level Training programme, Karnataka Region, R.L.T.C.-Dharwar, concerning South Karnataka diocese are:

#### 1) Land Re source Management .

The lands at the disposal of diocese /church need to be classified (Land capability) and develop plans for its proper use giving more emphasis on organic method of cultivation - using plant aad animal sources of manures/plant protection materials- to serve, mainly asoemonstration Fie lds /Plots to educate the Farmers.

Super phosphate imposed) Vermi compost and S.L.Fs (N.C.Cf, C.T.C.U., R.f.C.U. etc.,) may also be demonstrated for the benefit of the interested farmers. Water charging pits may be idane dug to harvest rain water which will m help inrecharging the groundwater, Agro Forstry (Effective carbon sink) is worth try ing.

#### 2) institutions and Students;

Education and other institution such as Hospitals, of theDioces required to be made eco-friendly by providing rain water harvesting and solar energy in stal. rents, instead of electrical bulbs C.F.L. may be used. inplace of brick and concrete wall use of bam-

boo and Vetiver fencing may be Sought of wherever possible.

Especially in educational institutions the students must be made aware of ecological problems as a result of misuse and use of plastic wears (Cups, Saucers, Bags etc.,)

The benefits of degracieable materials are to be taught. Use of Bio gas and its Dene fits may be demonstrated. Use of excess wastage of water to be avoided by proper guidance.

Cur ticular /syllabus regarding ecology to be developed.

Pastoral care and Churches

Clergies need to be made aware of ecological problems. Made arrangements for the training of clergies.

Rev. Prem Kumar Soans

### MADRAS DIOCESE

The Department of Eco-Vision of madras Diocese is giving leadership.

Awareness to Sunday School Teachers - Organised a seminar exclusively foe Sunday Achool teachers. 150 techers attended the programme. We have a periodical study circle to promote eco-awareness . The seminars on the following topics were arranged. Flora and fauna, Cosmic ecology, Global warming, and marine ecology.

Rev. T. Kumar

### MADURAI RAMNAD



Rt. Rev. Dr. Christopher Azir, Deputy Moderator  
Planting a Tree



Eco-painting

## MADHYA KERALA DIOCESE



**Distribution of Green Awards. Hon. Minister Mr. N.K.Premachandran addressing**



**CMS Primary School, Muhamma - Green School Award Winner with Hon. Minister Mr. N.K.Premachandran, Bishop Thomas Samuel, Most Rev. Dr. Philipose Mar Chrysostom**



**Rev. Sabu K. Cherian in his farmland**

### **Publishing Shortly**

- 1) Churches Response to Climate Change**  
Papers presented at the National seminar and National Consultation on Global warming
- 2) Eco- Bible studies**

**W**e celebrated the Eco-Sunday and World Environment Day during the month of June 2008. In collaboration with Thanal, NGO, we conducted seminars on Toxics in the Environment ( 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008) , on Waste Management (27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008). A workshop for the teachers of CSI Diocesan Schools was held on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2008 at Kottayam with the help of WWF. Bishop Thomas Samuel inaugurated the workshop. Rev.Sam Mathew , corporate Manager presided over the function.

The Diocesan Ecological Convention was held 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008. Mr. N.K.Premachandran, Hon. Minister for Water Resources of Kerala Government inaugurated the convention. Bishop Thomas Samuel presided over the function. Most Rev.Philipose Mar Chrysostom delivered the keynote address

Green Parish, Green School and Green Home awards were given on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2009

### **Green Parish Award 2008**

1. St. John the Baptist C.S.I.Church, Pallom
2. C.S.I Resurrection Church, Kanneetty
3. St.Andrews C.S.I.Church, Kumplampoika

### **Green School Award 2008 [Higher Secondary/High School]**

1. Baker memorial Girls Higher Secondary School, Kottayam
2. C.M.S HIGH SCHOOL, Puthuppally

### **Green School Award 2008 [L.P.School]**

1. C.M.S L.P School, Muhamma
2. C.M.S.L.P.School, Pallom

### **Green Home Award 2008**

1. Shri. Viji Thomas Chandy, Kallupurackal, Pannimattom
2. Shri Kurien Thomas, Ambattu Punnaveli, Karikattoor
3. Shri.Alex Kurien, Vettinilkunnathil, Nallanikkunnu

### **Special Prize**

Shri.T.J.Cherian, Puthuvellil, Kallely

**Rev.Alexander Cherian**

# Eco News Bulletin

## THIRUNELVELI DIOCESE



**Bishop Planting a sapling**

### Kerala Regional Conference

The regional conference was held at Tricur from 28th to 29th Nov. 2008. 32 members participated from four Dioceses. Rt.Rev.Dr. K.P.Kuruville, Dr.Selvin Samuel and Rev. Joshua Karmachander were resource persons. It was suggested that a campaign may be organised with scientific literature. The two day camp was beneficial to all the participants. Rev. Paul Joseph, SECC Kerala Convener

Rev. Paul Joseph

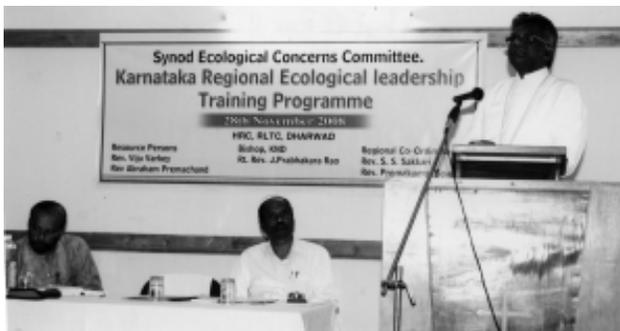
### Andhra Regional Conference

Nandyal Diocese hosted the conference on 8th November 2008. Rt.Rev.Dr. P.J. Lawrence, The Rev. V. Paul Raja Rao, Rev. Mathews P Oommen, Rev. Abraham Premchand were the resource persons. It was an eye opening to the participants. The biblical reflection paved the way to look at the creation not as objects but the core of life.

Mr. S. Premandan, AP regional Convener

### KARNATAKA REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The training programme was held on 28-11-2008 and attended by the participants from North and South Dioceses.



**Rt. Rev. J. Prabhakara Rao**



Rt. Rev. J Prabhakara Rao addressed the gathering. Rev. Abraham J Premachand the synod eco-resource person explained the importance of the meeting and the ill effects of global warming.,



Prof. Dr. B. Rabindra presented a paper which touched the environmental issues Rev. S.Sakkari presented a paper on ARC and Synod agreement.

Rev. Premkumar Soans Karnataka Regional Convener

### TAMILNADU REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Coimbatore Diocese hosted the conference. Rt.Rev.Dr. G.M.Dorai and Rev. Dr. P.K.Kuruville were the resource persons.

Dr. Peter G.B.Vedamuthu

## Our Pledge

We are deeply concerned about the environment, locally and globally, as members of society. We will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in our life. We will take measures that work to limit consumption and reduce wastes. We will practice care for creation. We will checkup all our activities to ensure our continued commitment