

# **Church of South India(csi)**

## **The Eco-mission priorities of CSI** (Paper presented on 24-8-2010)

### **Introduction**

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Alliance for Religions and Conservation (ARC) has honoured the ecological contributions and long term commitment of CSI in protecting the life in this planet by giving an award on 3rd December 2009. This event is one of the historic moments of CSI. We could receive the award from Mr. Baan Ki Moon, Secretary General of UN in presence of Prince Philip in a function organized at Windsor Castle, London. We are thankful to UNDP and ARC for the royal honour bestowed upon us. We consider this as a team work and we would like to thank all the Bishops and SECC members for working together as a team.

The Most Rev. Ryder Devapriyan, then Moderator of CSI, inspired by the call of WCC, constituted an ecological committee in 1992. Later CSI incorporated ecological concerns in the constitution of CSI. The Church of South India recognizes that God's mission has various dimensions. 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. This is the only Church in India that has specifically mentioned the ecological concerns in the constitution itself. (Ecological concern is a part of Social concerns in some churches). 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." We have a committee at the synod level for ecological concerns (CSI SECC).

### **Biblical understanding of Ecology:**

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it (Psalm 24:1). For every wild animal of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the air and that moves in the field is mine (Psalm 50:10-11). The ownership of creation by God is a strong motivation for the Christian to be involved in its protection or stewardship. Such Psalms as 8, 104, and 148 are full of praise for creation and clearly show that God's revelation to us is both through the scriptures and through the wonders of his creation

The story of Noah has much to say about biodiversity. In itself it was a massive rescue of biodiversity, and reminds me of efforts to rescue animals before closing a dam, but more important was the covenant that resulted between Noah and God. In Genesis chapter 9 the phrases 'every animal' or 'every living creature' is mentioned six times as well as 'every bird' twice more. This is a biodiverse chapter, but most importantly God's covenant was not just with Noah and his descendants, but with the animals. It is quite obvious that it is not God's will that the animals perish or become extinct. Regardless of their value or perceived value, all species were saved in the ark and to be protected through the covenant. Here is the real biblical basis for the preservation of biodiversity

For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You shall do the same with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard (Exodus 23:10-11). These verses, and similar ones on Leviticus (19:9-10), promote both good management of the land and the soil and also care for the wild animals. The rest for the land is as good for biodiversity as it is for the restoration of the soil. This is

different from much of modern agriculture that over-uses the soil drastically, kills biodiversity with chemicals and pollutes the river and water tables

If you besiege a town for a long time, after making war against it in order to take it, you must not destroy its trees by wielding an axe against them (Deuteronomy 20:19). If you come on a bird's nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs with the mother sitting on the fledglings or the eggs, you shall not take the mother with the young. Let the mother go, taking only the young for yourself (Deuteronomy 22:6). Greatest passage on biodiversity in the Bible is to be found in the book of Job (Chapters 38–41). After Job has been allowed to suffer terribly and then received visits from his friends whose words were of little comfort, God finally answered Job out of the whirlwind. God does not call on Job to repent but instead gives a wonderful account of many aspects of both the physical and biological sides of creation. There is no shortage of biodiversity here, the hawk soaring, the eagle nesting and feeding her young, the mountain goats and deer calving, lions, ravens, the ostrich abandoning her eggs, and the wild ass roaming the mountains. Behemoth, a water creature, perhaps the hippopotamus and Leviathan the crocodile. This is God's view of his creation, and its biodiversity is obviously very important. The descriptions of animal behaviour and of the wonders of the heavens did lead Job to repentance.

But ask the animals, and they will teach you, the birds of the air, and they will tell you, ask the plants of the earth, and they will teach you and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this?. In his hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of every human being (Job 12: 7–10). Four things of the earth are small, yet they are exceedingly wise: the ants are people without strength yet they provide their food in summer; the badgers are a people without power, yet they make their homes in the rocks; the locusts have no king yet all of them march in rank; the lizard can be grasped in the hand yet it is found in King's palaces (Proverbs 30:24–28).

By joining hands with Christians around the world we can have a greater impact in order to stop the destruction of God's creation and of human livelihoods. CSI Synod Ecological Concerns Committee Calls for continued awareness-building and theological reflection among congregations on a new cosmological vision of life and eco-justice through study and action, and through the production and dissemination of relevant theological and biblical study materials. Christians who are spiritually alive should actively seek to discern God's will and act as collaborators with God. The Creator-Redeemer seeks the renewal of the creation and calls the people of God to participate in saving acts of renewal. We are called to cooperate with God in the transformation of a fallen world that has not fulfilled its divinely given potential for beauty, peace, health, harmony, justice and joy (Isa. 11:6-9, Micah 4:3-4, Eph. 2:10, Rev. 21:1-5). Our task is nothing less than to join God in preserving, renewing and fulfilling the creation. Can we be collaborators with our Creator if we want to pollute air, pile up atomic waste, denude our forests, and foul our rivers and lakes? No. A serious spirituality begins with a deep conversion from callous tearing of whatever we want from the earth to a mutual partnership and sharing.

CSI SECC published five books. **Reconciling with Nature, God is Green, Eco- Vision and Mission, A Christian response to Ecological crisis and Green Gospel.** Reconciling with Nature has been translated to Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam. CSI instituted Green Diocese, Green Parish, Green School Awards. CSI Synod Ecological Committee has joined with ARC-UN Seven year plan in addressing the issues related to environment and Climate Change.

### **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 endeavours 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.

### **Eco-Mission Priorities of CSI**

The Synod Ecological Committee decided to concentrate in seven key areas in association with ARC programme. We have chalked out many projects for the coming ten years manifesting vision and mission of CSI.

### **THE 7 KEY AREAS**

1. **ASSETS**
2. **EDUCATION**
3. **WISDOM AND PASTORAL CARE**
4. **LIFESTYLES**
5. **MEDIA AND ADVOCACY**
6. **PARTNERSHIPS AND ECO-TWINNING**
7. **CELEBRATION**

#### **I. ASSETS**

**1.1 Plant Trees and Manage Communal Land:** The members of Church of South India will plant as many trees as they can to improve the green cover. Forests are one of the most effective carbon sinks and critical for preserving the ecological balance. Besides other plants, emphasis will be given in promoting the planting of Vetiver, Jatropha and Mangroves. These three plants are ecologically significant, especially in the context of Global warming, the shortage of groundwater and in the background of Tsunami. The proposal to promote their planting in all lands owned by CSI has been accepted. In June 2009, the CSI Synod urged all its 4 million members to plant at least one tree during the month of June 2009. This was linked to the UN Environment Programme's tree-planting initiative.

**Long term planning- If any Dioceses would like to plant saplings in a massive scale, CSI is planning to help them financially. We propose Jatropha waste lands, Mangroves in coastal areas, Vetiver where ground water recharging and preventing soil erosion, fruit bearing plants in populated areas. CSI will join hands with ecumenical and environmental organizations in planting 40 million plants in the next 10 years.**

**1.2. Green lighting:** CSI promotes the use of compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs) which use one-third of the power of conventional bulbs. The Indian government has launched a massive programme to popularise CFLs by launching schemes to encourage consumers to buy them. It can lead to reduction of 10,000 MW of electricity. **Use alternative forms of energy** wherever possible, including solar, both passive and active forms. **Consider installing solar voltaic panels** to generate electricity. Place solar-absorbing panels on the roof(s) for hot water and reduction of heat build-up within the building.

**Long term planning- CSI will make necessary arrangements to have solar-absorbing panels to generate electricity in all the institutions owned by CSI. CSI promote the use of solar energy wherever possible.**

**1.3. Green Fencing:** Instead of concrete compound walls that consume loads of cement and brick, not to mention steel (all huge carbon emitters) there is a rising trend of growing

fences through cultivating bamboo and vetiver instead. They are far more eco-friendly and act as great sinks for carbon.

**Midterm plan – CSI promotes the use of bamboo and vetiver in fencing of Churches and of School campuses, wherever possible.**

**1.4. Green Water Charging:** Bore wells that form the major source of India's water supply are now beginning to run dry. Digging for them is getting even deeper and costlier. Groundwater accounts for nearly 40 per cent of the available water resources in India, meeting 85 per cent of the rural requirement and 50 per cent of urban and industrial needs. But most states are experiencing an alarming fall in water table as groundwater is being over-exploited. There is need for mandated water harvesting and recharge zones in urban areas. There is also need to recharge deep aquifers and prevent their over-use. India gets an average of 600 mm of rainfall a year. This means a total precipitation of 4,000 billion metric tonnes—a mini sea of water deluging us every year. Yet, as much of 75 per cent of this is lost due to run-offs. As a result many parts of the country are water-stressed and in danger of turning into water-scarce regions in the next 30 years. That may sound far off but the interim could be harsh with daily battles over water. There is an urgent need to improve water-harvesting systems and put the deluge to more productive use. As a part of the CSI Synod programme for June 2009, each member was asked to dig one pit to harvest rainwater falling on their rooftop. This was to stop desertification, recharging ground water and to encourage people to be more thoughtful of where their water comes from.

**Mid term plan- . CSI promotes the digging of mud pits in all the lands of our churches and institutions, in order to harvest rain water. All the campuses of CSI will have mud pits to harvest rain water, within next three years. CSI will promote rain water harvesting, cultivate Vetiver to prevent soil erosion with the support and cooperation of other environmental groups.**

**1.5. Green cooking and lighting:** Community biogas plants are back in business. Cow dung and human waste is used as cooking gas and for lighting in villages. It helps improve sanitary conditions and ends the search for firewood. CSI will promote the use of bio gas plants and smokeless chulas which will reduce Green House Gas.

**Mid term Plan- All the institutions of Church will have biogas facility within next five years. Diocesan eco committees will promote biogas plants in their area. Diocesan eco-committees will promote smokeless ovens also for cooking. Diocesan eco-committees will popularize subsidized smokeless chulas given by State Governments among BPL communities.**

**1.6.Green Home/Church Audits:** CSI will promote a green audit in our homes/Churches. The CSI Synod ecological committee is requesting all the Dioceses, Congregations and Institutions to undergo Green Auditing. We have to assess how ecologically sound we are. Green Rating should be given to all dioceses.

**Short term plan- Every biennium, all the Dioceses have to submit a self study report basing on SWOT analysis. The expert committee appointed by the CSI Synod will evaluate the report by visiting the Dioceses. Green rating will be given to the dioceses basing on the recommendation of the expert committee. Green Diocese, Green Parish, Green College and School Awards will be given every biennium basing on the self study report.**

**Mid term plan – An independent expert committee for green rating may be appointed by CSI Synod like NAAC of UGC. The financial help will be given to the Dioceses, basing on the effort the dioceses are taking up to improve the green rating.**

**1.7 Protect threatened and endangered species and their habitats:** Dioceses are urged to love nature, animals and plants as you love yourself. When animals or birds are domesticated to provide food or other products or services, pay attention to ensure their proper care and welfare. The ethics of introducing such changes in living creatures needs to be examined in the light of scriptural teachings. Destroying the animal world upsets not only the animals but also the ecological balance. Such destruction results from poaching, abusive use in entertainment, animal sacrifices and pollution and destruction of their homes and habitat. Abusive use always takes place when cruelty is involved, and/or the species is over-exploited. Trade in animals and animal parts must always be done in accordance with strict ethical criteria.

**Long term plan- CSI will request its members to protect all the groves now existing. Educate the people to use organic fertilizers and to avoid chemical fertilizers and insecticides.**

**1.8.GE Crops-**By unnaturally intervening into the order of creation, destroying the integrity of God's creation, and meddling with biodiversity and the life-sustaining interdependence among species. It is obvious that the introduction of Bt Brinjal would contaminate the large number of traditional Brinjal varieties available to us, particularly those with unique medicinal properties. This would also shift the control of seeds from the farmers to profit hungry corporations that have already established virtual monopoly over seeds through the new patent regime. As a nation and communities, what is at stake is not only our food security but also our food sovereignty. The inevitable consequences would be the disempowerment of small and marginal farmers, and their displacement by aggressive models of corporatized agriculture. Insertion of genes into the genome of a particular organism can result in unintended effects. The native genes of the crop could be affected in unpredictable ways. Unknown toxic/allergenic components could be generated. Church of South India (CSI) Synod Ecological Concerns Committee (SECC) strongly protested against the decision of the Genetic Engineering Approval Committee (GEAC), in approving the commercial cultivation of genetically modified (GM) Bt brinjal.

**Short term plan and policy- CSI appeals to the government of India to apply the precautionary principle in the introduction of GE crops and not to be influenced by corporate entities that strive to establish their monopoly on every aspect of agriculture**

#### Examples of Diocesan action on Assets

**Dornakal Diocese** is located in 5 revenue districts in Andhra Pradesh, one in Orissa and one in Madhya Pradesh. It is covered with thick forests, mountains, rivers and fields. Bishop Thandrigaru has instructed 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. There are two Hospitals in our Diocese covered with gardens and trees. Educating people to avoid the use of plastics and to use paper bags, and for educating the people to use the VermiComposite in agricultural fields and not to waste water. A rainwater harvesting project. Three Diocesan hostels were furnished with solar panels in 2009. There are a total of 20 such hostels in the Diocese, and each is now offering the slogan "each one plant one tree" – along with the degree college, the Junior college and six schools.

**Thoothukudy Nazareth Diocese** has the motto: Cleaner and Greener Villages. It is strengthening eco-clubs in schools and Colleges, encouraging plastic-free villages and towns, supporting rallies of

students and youth, making time for planting of trees, promoting eco-awareness for pastors and Church leaders, and participating in a rainwater harvesting programme.

**Karimnagar Diocese** is involved in tree-plantation, supplying seed to women for kitchen gardens, and planting mango saplings

**Karnataka Northern Diocese** is adopting a village (developing a model eco-village spending money of the Diocese), and undertaking rain water harvesting,

**Madhya Kerala Diocese** In 2008 the Christian Women's Fellowship in Kottayam, Kerala, India set up a snack centre in the middle of their town. It was the first outlet in Kottayam to run on biogas. Most of the parishes and the schools and Colleges have rain water harvesting tanks and pits. Rain water falling on the roof top of Bishop Moore College, Mavelikara is collected in two small wells. Because of this there is no water shortage during the summer. Malayala Manorama selected Bishop Moore College as the best College in Kerala in 2008 for introducing best rain water harvesting techniques. The College bagged Rs. One Lakh as award prize from Manorama.

## **II. EDUCATION**

**CSI urges dioceses and parishes to plan educational campaigns through which the members of the congregations are made aware of environmental issues and why God's creation is hurting. Recommended processes included:**

**2.1.Designating a person** and select a committed group of lay people or teachers to form an Eco- Management committee. The committee becomes responsible for guiding the development of the management plan, for instituting and monitoring practices, and for being alert over time to better and improved approaches, means, and technologies of eco-management.

**Long term plan -Secular Eco-committees-** If the Diocesan Eco-committees can register under charitable societies of act, they are eligible to get financial assistance from the government. As per the act, one or two persons should be from other communities to keep up its secular nature. As per the advice of diocesan eco-committees Bishop can nominate two environmentalists to this committee. The committee will be able to form a net work with other secular environmental groups. Our services in the environmental field should be available to the community with an ecumenical concern. Diocesan eco-committees will work with two angles , one addressing CSI members and another angle addressing the community irrespective of caste and religion.

**Short term plan-** Synod ecological committee will coordinate the activities of the Diocesan level committees. It will have a director and staff in the Synod level to promote the work.

**2.2.Creating an education plan** to inform, teach, and train all users of the buildings and grounds of the church and School in eco-management. Such a plan can call for special events and training sessions as well as integrate the concerns into the regular curriculum. Education is critical to the success of any conservation program.

**Short term plan-The SECC will publish eco- theological literatures in all the four (Andhra, Karnataka, Tamil, Kerala) regional languages to educate the believers. Planning to publish two books- Green Gospel 2<sup>nd</sup> volume and Green Sermon for preachers immediately. Diocesan Eco-committees are requested to organize programmes to educate the people.**

**2.3.Waste Management education in schools**, with pupils designing posters, writing essays, producing a drama, and making other presentations to the adults about recycling. As a hallmark of operation should be the phrase "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle."

**Short term plan- We will analyze all operations generating waste and decide which items can be either eliminated or reduced. If the item itself cannot be done away with, see what other things associated with the product can be reduced, particularly in packaging and other waste by-products associated with the item in question. CSI will request the public to purchase products that are not only recycled but also recyclable.**

**Long term plan- Develop a common system of recycling throughout the facility and the grounds. Produce an educational program for recycling to train all users of the facilities. Have the children and youth design posters, write essays, produce a drama, and make other presentations to the adults about recycling.**

#### **Examples of Diocesan Action on Education:**

**Kanyakumary Diocese** is committed to strengthening the Eco-clubs in Schools and Colleges, with ecological awareness classes arranged through Churches. They have requested the Bishop to start a department in the Diocese for ecology. Other plans include eco-lessons in Sunday School, competitions on environmental topics in essays, paintings, and slogan writing. Also Celebrating World Environmental Day celebration, Environmental Sunday . The Ecological Concern Committee (ECC) of CSI Kanyakumari Diocese conducted an Environmental Awareness Programme on Global Warming in February 2009.The objective was to boost awareness about global warming among technical students and Sunday school teachers, to conserve the Earth for the welfare of future generations.

**Coimbatore Diocese** arranged Ecological Sundays, as well as Ecological awareness programmes to teachers and students, Eco-leadership programmes, an Eco-youth rally, Eco-stickers and handbills, competitions in eco-topics and eco awareness programmes for clergy and lay leaders

**Trichy Tanjavore Diocese** is strengthening eco- clubs in Bishop Heber College, Bishop Thorp College , Bishop's college of Nursing. Also introducing green clubs in schools, and environmental orientation for the Christian Women's Fellowship

**Madurai Ramanad Dicoese** Eco clubs in Schools and Colleges, training programmes for teachers, competitions in eco-painting, eco-drawing, eco-essays etc. Tree planting and Ecological Sunday.

**Madras Diocese** is promoting environmental training for teachers, students and pastors. The Eco-Vision Department organised a seminar for 150 Sunday School teachers. It also runs a study circle to promote eco-awareness, and has arranged seminars on flora and fauna, cosmic ecology, global warming, and marine ecology.

**Karimnagar Diocese** has organised an eco-painting competition for children, with the theme "My World A Dream World." As one of the organisers reported, "the response was wonderful. The Spirit of Ecology started to take its flame in young hearts too."

**Karnataka Northern Diocese** has formed an Ecological committee, creating awareness among the Church members and school students

**East Kerala** Start Eco-clubs in schools and parishes. Networking with other organizations

**Madhya Kerala Diocese** is organising Green School awards, a deputation of environmentalists to all the parishes to deliver sermon on ecological Sunday, Eco-pilgrimage, Eco-clubs in all schools, competitions in eco-essays, seminars on eco-architecture, distribution of vegetable seeds, training for clergy, youth, Sunday school teachers, Eco-Committees in Diocesan, District and pastorate levels, seminars, networking with other eco-groups. It has been awarded Green diocesan Award from CSI Synod. The Eco-training was given to the teachers who were in charge of Eco-clubs.

### **III. WISDOM AND PASTORAL CARE**

**3.1. Climate Change as a Moral Issue:** 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. (1 Thessalonians).

**Long term plan- We think Globally and act locally. We demand- Climate change negotiations should be negotiations about equity, justice and the equal right to development. Hence we seek climate justice. Though climate change is a global problem, people are not all equally responsible for causing it. The industrialised nations, representing less than 20% of the world's population, account for nearly 90% of annual GHG emissions over the last century, largely through the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil, gas). We must make a distinction between the 'luxury emissions of the rich' and the 'survival emissions of the poor'.**

**Short term plan- Locally CSI will do all efforts to reduce green house emissions to mitigate global warming. Promote smokeless chulas, bio-gas plants, planting of saplings, rain water harvesting etc.**

**3.2. Setting up Creation-awareness centres with an ecumenical concern:** Each Green congregation should see itself as a centre for exploring the scriptural and theological foundations for caring for Creation. We also will learn from people suffering the severe impact of environmental degradation. Churches should seek to develop as creation-awareness centres in order to exemplify principles of stewardship for their members and communities and to express both delight in and care for creation in their worship and celebration. They should particularly aim to produce curricula and programs which encourage knowledge and care of creation. The Christian community must initiate and support the process of education on the Christian approach to environmental ethics

### **3.3. Natural Calamities**

Certain natural calamities like earthquakes or tsunamis cannot be prevented, but precautions and early warning systems can prevent catastrophic outcomes and high death tolls. There are, however, natural calamities triggered or at least facilitated by human action: mudslides often occur in regions where deforestation has destabilized the soil.

**Long term plan – Education –No building in areas prone to flooding or droughts also helps limit the losses from natural calamities. With the help of government warning system may be introduced. Immediate relief measures will be taken whenever there is a natural calamity. Fund will be generated to help the poor people suffering from natural calamities. The diocesan eco committees will study ecological damages of the state occurred each year and inform authorities to rectify the damages. The new buildings should be ecologically sound in all respects. For this CSI should have an expert committee of eco-engineers to advice the Dioceses.**

#### **Diocesan Action on Theological Wisdom**

**Madras Diocese** Eco-Study circle in every first Tuesday of the month

**Karimnagar Diocese** Eco-awareness programmes for youth, clergy, and women.

**Dornakkal Diocese** Seminars at Diocesan and Congregational levels.

**Medak Diocese** conducting awareness programmes to pastors and heads of institutions, eco-clubs will be started in schools, support governments programmes, prepare charts, banners, slogans, street plays, etc.

**Nandyal** Strengthen eco-committees, Eco-awareness programs for pastors and clergy

**Karnataka Northern Diocese** Formation Ecological committee, creating awareness among the Church members and school students

**Karnataka Southern Diocese** Boosting awareness through literature, Ecological Sunday Seminars, special orders of Worship

**Madhya Kerala Diocese** has organised a deputation of environmentalists to all the parishes to deliver sermons on Ecological Sunday

#### **IV. LIFESTYLES**

As members of Green Church, we commit ourselves to personal lifestyles that contribute to the health of the environment

**4.1.Environmental tithing:** We challenge ourselves, particularly those of us who are economically secure, to tithe environmentally. Tithers would reduce their burden on the earth's bounty by producing 10 percent less in waste, consuming 10 percent less in non-renewable resources, and contributing the financial savings we have made to Earthcare efforts. Environmental tithing also entails giving time to learn about environmental problems and to work with others toward solutions.

**4.2.Recycling and living more simply:** The two gospel words, "Saving" and "Restoring" have very practical implications for our use of the earth's resources. Begin saving and recycling, newspapers. Donate money to an environmental organisation or to an international ministry among the poor. Use recycled paper for Christmas cards and gift wrap. Respect the environment in the gifts you select. Look for ways of saving energy (and money) in your home. When purchasing appliances, look for low-energy, high-efficiency models. Conduct a thorough audit of the energy use in your church buildings and programs. Look for ways that energy can be saved. Turn off lights, fans, and air conditioners when not in use.

**Carbon consumption as a spiritual exercise:** CSI wants to equip its members to explain to others the reasons for their actions – which are excellent ways for the congregation to proclaim the good news and build up the body of Christ.

**4.5.Encouraging rediscovery of old agricultural techniques:** Modern methods of agriculture with their inputs of chemical fertilizers and pesticides may lead to pollution of groundwater and other problems. Such pollution can produce health problems for human and animal populations. Chemical fertilizers fail to sustain the natural nutrients in the soil, resulting in reduction of crop productivity and eutrophication of surface waters. Often in the past, pests were controlled and the nutrient status of the soil maintained by practices such as crop rotation, inter- cropping, multiple cropping, etc. It is necessary to identify successful traditional practices and upgrade them as appropriate in order to develop or recover appropriate site-specific technologies which enhance crop productivity without degrading the environment.

**Educate the people to use organic fertilizers and to avoid chemical fertilizers and insecticides.**

**Examples of Diocesan Action on Lifestyles:**

**KARNATAKA SOUTHERN DIOCESE:** proposed a Seven Year Plan under the ARC-UN Programme, through establishing an ECO MONITORING AND TRAINING CELL to oversee programmes and activities directed towards protecting, preserving and promoting ecology with branches at least to District Level. Experts and specialists will be nominated as members.

**Karimnagar Diocese: running** Eco-prayer day once in a month, Eco-Christmas programmes

**Madhya Kerala Diocese:** Eco pilgrimage, promote organic farming, Plastic free campuses.

## V. MEDIA AND ADVOCACY

**5.1.National Consultation:** CSI is encouraging dialogue between Eco Church Groups and secular eco groups. In 2009 CSI Synod SECC organised a national consultation in partnership with National Council of Churches in India. 30 members from different Churches in India participated.

**5.2International Ecological Conference:** In 2008 the Madhya Kerala (Central Kerala) Diocese organized an International eco conference. This helped us to link up with International eco activities and organizations, and as a direct effect CSI is now working fully with the ARC-UNDP Seven Year Plan Programme.

**Short term plan – CSI SECC is arranging a National Seminar on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> September 2010 at Chennai in the Impact of Climate Change on Bio-diversity. CSI SECC is bringing out two Eco news bulletins every year.**

**Mid term Plan- Planning an international conference in 2011 in partnership with WCC.**

**Long term Plan- Planning to form a net work of all the eco-groups working in India. CSI would like to provide a common platform to all the environmental groups to exchange their ideas, to plan future activities and to help in their search for alternate technologies.**

### **5.3 Request to members**

**Diocesan eco-committees are requested\_**to keep track of how your governmental leaders react or respond on environmental issues. Make your congregation aware of the statements and actions through a regular column in your church newsletter. Ask people to consider this information when voting.

**Explore ways of getting media coverage for an issue that concerns environment.** Letters to the editor, paid advertisements, and public service announcements are avenues open to everyone. Public policy makers are far more likely to respond to an issue that has generated public concern.

**Bring people together in an annual Eco-Stewardship conference** with invited experts. Stagger the Eco-Stewardship conference about six months apart from the Environmental Festival.

**Publicize what is happening on the environment** in your regular church/School newsletter and bulletin; in a periodic "Eco-Times" church/School publication; in the local newspaper, radio, and television; and in your denominational news outlets. Make it a key element within your church's website. Talk it up in the community as a point of significant expression of faith.

**5.4.Advocate for clean air, both indoors and outdoors, and clean water:** The principle that the "polluter pays" and that "one person cannot exploit or pollute another person's source of living" must take account of who the polluter is. He or she is often the actual consumer on whose behalf the producer acts. Shaping technology so as to prevent pollution and or reduce it at source can often be much cheaper than cleaning it up later. The Bible insists that the environment be protected.

**Short term plan -CSI schools will have a bulletin board dedicated to environmental issues, place signage throughout both the building and the grounds as a tool for instruction, gentle reinforcement, and awareness. And both schools and seminaries are recommended to include environmentally related symbolism in the classrooms and along the hallways.**

**Diocesan Action on Advocacy and Media:**

**Trichy Tanjavore Diocese:** Organises Youth Movement and Sunday School Eco awareness through Diocesan magazines, documentary films, Posters, street plays, as well as writing regularly on environmental issue in the Diocesan magazine.

**Tirunelvely Diocese** dedicates a page in the Diocesan magazine for environmental issues

**Karimnagar Diocese** runs fundraising and ecological orientation through Diocesan Magazine, **Medak Diocese** supports government programmes and practices advocacy through charts, banners, slogans, street plays, etc.

**Karnataka Northern Diocese** has identified talented writers and encouraged them to write on environmental issues

**Madhya Kerala Diocese** Ecological orientation through diocesan magazines. Publish books. Media is covering all our activities.

**VI. PARTNERSHIPS AND ECO-TWINNING**

Gather information on soil contamination, air and water pollution and endangered species and make it available to church members. Invite learned persons to speak in churches. Arrange Dialogue and Programmes with other environmental groups. Arrange environment programs and eco-partnerships with other churches. Create networks with groups with whom you thought you had nothing in common, but with whom the environment is a shared concern. Bring in experts, and work together

**Mid term plan** CSI would like to conduct programmes in partnership with other Christian Churches, Other religions, secular organisations. Also CSI would like to have partnership and twinning programme with national and international organisations.

**Diocesan Action on Partnerships and Eco-twinning:**

**Kanyakumary diocese** to collaborate with existing Voluntary Environmental organizations

**Karimnagar Diocese:** arranging eco-partnerships with other organizations

**Nandyal Diocese** has created a Partnership with the Korean Church in planting coconut trees, promoting partnerships in other areas.

**East Kerala** Starting Eco-clubs in schools and parishes and networking with other organizations

**Madhya Kerala** –All the schools and Colleges have eco clubs and networking with voluntary organisations all over India and abroad

**VII. CELEBRATION**

“We need to recognise that what we do with God's creation around us will have a tremendous effect, for good or ill, on the lives of our grandchildren and on the generations of their children and grandchildren. By our attitude to God's creation now, we determine the nature of the society that will be inherited later this century by the children of our children.”

**Celebrate an Environmental Festival** with all age groups participating. Make it an annual event.

**Short term plan- celebrating Environmental day on 5<sup>th</sup> June every year. Ecological Sunday every second Sunday in June.**

**Mid term plan- All the Dioceses will arrange one day in a year for environmental celebration. We celebrate Harvest not as just a time to give thanks for the production of food but also to think about care of nature.**

**Diocesan Action on Celebration:**

**Kanyakumary diocese ,Tirunelvely Diocese, Trichy Tanjore and Karnataka Northern Diocese** are all celebrating World Environment day.

**Madras diocese is holding** Eco-vision Sunday in February and celebrating all of February as Eco-vision month

**Madhya Kerala Diocese** annual gathering of eco-activists during the month of January. Celebrating World environment Day and Environment Sunday

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