



Responsibility to Care for the Creation

A discussion paper
for Salvationists



The Salvation
Army Australia
Moral and Social
Issues Council

Let's talk
about...

Responsibility to Care for the Creation

The intention of Discussion Papers for Salvationists is to present issues of importance in a way that stimulates thought and discussion. Many of the issues give rise to opposing points of view with people often thinking of issues as right or wrong, black or white. Discussion papers are not definitive in themselves but enable prayerful exploration by Salvationists and friends. Faith-based-facilitation is the ideal way for a group to work through this material but it can equally be used by individuals or other group processes.



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*"And God saw
that it was good."*

Genesis 1: 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31



1. The issue

1.1 The issue – an introduction

Caring for his creation is the responsibility God gave us when he created humankind. As Christians, we must seriously consider what this requires of us if we are to follow God's intentions for looking after the world in which we live – God's world.

The opening chapter of the Bible declares that all of creation is the outcome of God's will and purpose. He declared, at each stage, that it was good. We are now beginning to discover afresh the core truth of Genesis 1 that, as General Brian Peddle expresses it, "Made in God's image, we have been called to be stewards of God's creation not its exploiters."ⁱ

The evidence of the need to care for creation surrounds us every day. It ranges from the threat of extinction for large numbers of plant and animal species, to the degradation of fertile land

and healthy waterways, to our creation and disposal of 'waste', to energy supply forms that add to greenhouse gas emissions. Subsequent sections of this discussion paper will explore some of these, note some principles for practical responses and provide resources for additional detail.

Salvationists have been assisted in trying to find a path to understand and respond to this issue by the release of an International Positional Statement by International Headquarters on 'Caring for the environment'.

1.2 International statement of position: 'Caring for the environment'ⁱⁱ

The Salvation Army believes people are made in the image of God and have been entrusted with the care of the Earth and everything in it.

The Salvation Army recognises

environmental degradation as one of the most pressing issues facing the world today. Its effects are felt disproportionately by the most vulnerable communities, particularly in terms of health, livelihood, shelter and the opportunity to make choices.

The Salvation Army is concerned about the effects of environmental damage on present and future generations. Sustainable environmental practices are required to meet today's global needs and aspirations without compromising the lives of future generations.

2. Describe and analyse

2.1 What does the Bible teach about the relationship between humankind and the other aspects of God's created world?

Creation

The Scriptures begin with a clear declaration that our world and everything in it is the product of an eternal Creator God.ⁱⁱⁱ “The Earth is the Lord’s and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.”^{iv} And not only is the creation God’s work, but it bears continual evidence of him and exists to bring honour to him.^v

At times there has been a tendency within Christianity to regard the material world as “in some way evil”,^{vi} whereas God declared each stage of his creation “good”.^{vii} In the New Testament it is revealed that creation is the work of Jesus.^{viii} We should regard our world as a gift from a loving God to be enjoyed and cared for.^{ix x}

God has given us
a unique role
within creation.

(Dr Rowan Williams)

Creation and humankind

The biblical record makes two definitive statements about humankind. Firstly, we are part of the broad totality of God’s creation.^{xi}

Secondly, we have a unique status within that creation. We:

- Are made in God’s image^{xii}
- Are a little lower than the angels^{xiii}
- Have responsibilities towards the broader creation^{xiv}

When Paul explains the Creator God to the Athenians^{xv}, he draws their attention to the unique status of humankind within creation.

Paul’s letters to the Thessalonians give a lot of attention to reminding them that Jesus will return. But at the end of his second letter, he deals with a misunderstanding of some. They thought, if Jesus is coming back – maybe soon – then they should only

prepare for that and not care about working for their living.^{xvi} In a similar vein, a question for us to consider is, if we are expecting a new Heaven and a new Earth,^{xvii} does that mean we shouldn't bother about caring for the created world we currently live in?

Dr Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury and an eminent theologian, in an address at St Pauls' Cathedral, spoke about the fact that God has made us human and has "given us a unique role within creation, not at a distance from creation" (emphasis added). We are part of this physical world and dependent on it, but at the same time, he argued, the wellbeing of the physical world depends on us. He describes creation as being like a neighbourhood, a dwelling place which, he says, is what 'ecology' is actually defining. He further states that being human is about balance, interaction, giving and receiving. "At a time of unprecedented crisis in human relation to the material

world, we belong in a neighbourhood. This is significant for each and every one of us and every aspect of the created world."^{xviii}

This understanding is similar to what our First Nations peoples would tell us, "Humans are on an equal footing with nature; are part of nature and are morally obligated to treat plants and landforms with respect. [They] established ways in which all things should live in interconnectedness so as to maintain order and sustainability."^{xix} In Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies, "All living organisms and their relationship to each other was a cornerstone of their beliefs and governance."^{xx} Their "law ensure[d] that each person [knew] his or her connectedness and responsibilities."^{xxi}

2.2 Evidence of our failure to adequately care for creation

We do not have to look very far to discover some of this evidence, although

it is often the more dramatic or emotive ones that receive media coverage. The following is a very brief introduction to a number of 'evidences', but it is by no means an exhaustive coverage.

Species extinction

A common media attention focus is concern about the decline of the population of koalas in many regions of Australia. Although some of this can be attributed to disease, no one is surprised that at the core of this issue is increased urbanisation. This requires land clearing, which removes feeding and breeding habitats^{xxii} for these and other native animals. Urbanisation also brings an increase in domestic pets, a proportion of which go feral. While cute and cuddly 'flagship' species win the media stories, remedial action is slow and sparse with little publicity to the hundreds of animal and plant species facing extinction^{xxiii} from God's creation. The UN Convention on Biological Diversity concludes that up to 150 species are lost each day.^{xxiv}



Species extinction

of both flora and fauna is increasing because of loss of habitat.

The enormity of species variety is estimated by scientists to number at least 8.7 million, of which only around 1.3 million have been classified.^{xxv} This vast array of species – from bacteria to marsupials – that God has brought into being, exists in complex ecological relationships, each performing different but essential roles within their ecosystem, a vast ecological web involving in-depth interconnecting cascades. The impact of lost or diminished populations of a species

within a system has the potential to collapse the broader ecosystem.

When we consider the factors that contribute to the extinction of a particular species, it is generally caused by changes in the environment that modify the habitat conditions beyond the capacity for that species to survive. Usually there is a cluster of factors. Each of the following ‘evidences’ have varying degrees of impact on the sustainability of the world’s diverse flora and fauna.

Land degradation

The degradation of fertile land and healthy waterways is occurring across Australia as well as in other regions of our planet. It is accepted that there are multiple contributing factors to weather events, which see tonnes of valuable topsoil removed from farming areas, but some of these factors could have been anticipated and countered. News broadcasts often report a toll of death and destruction when whole mountainsides, denuded of vegetation, slide and bury everything in their downward path. Waterways are dammed or diverted with the subsequent loss of significant wetlands, the feeding and breeding ground for a rich variety of bird and marine life.

Deforestation is causing significant loss of habitat for plants and animals in many parts of the world. Although tropical rainforests are often the focus of attention, at a broader level, “Vegetative cover is consistently declining, affecting forests, croplands, grasslands and rangelands. We have lost around 70



million hectares of forests since 2000 and have seen desertification advancing on fertile lands in many areas.”^{xxvi}

Waste disposal

One of the by-products of our technological development is that we are a society which seeks the latest innovations, in turn, this creates a ‘waste’ disposal problem. In addition to the volume of disposable goods, the modern materials used are created from complex molecules that often are not readily biodegradable. A common example of these developments is

plastics which replace glass and cardboard containers in domestic and commercial applications. Recycling can help reduce waste accumulation, but as General Brian Peddle observes, “When we recycled our garbage, we thought we were helping the environment. As it turns out, we were simply shifting the problem” to various Asian nations – a cheap non-solution.^{xxvii}

On a different scale of disposal is the question of what to do for the long-term storage of radioactive waste from nuclear power plants.

Christians have a responsibility to look after the world.

Greenhouse gases

“The greenhouse effect is a natural process that warms the Earth’s surface”^{xxviii} by re-radiating some of the sun’s energy back towards the Earth. There is a mixture of gases in the Earth’s atmosphere that provide the greenhouse effect, with carbon dioxide being the dominant gas. Although the

impact of greenhouse gas emissions has been hotly debated for several decades, the overwhelming consensus of the scientific community is that there is a strong human activity element contributing to the increased levels of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere.^{xxix} The changes are evidenced in various ways across our globe – from a decrease in the areas of our planet that once held vast reserves of ice, to farmers having to adapt to changed climate patterns for their crops and animals.

The demand for energy

Energy sources that increase levels of greenhouse gases are now seen as significant human actions that can be reversed. Alternatives such as wind, hydro schemes and solar are being adopted to varying degrees in countries around the globe. It may be a long road ahead, but a sign of change was in 2018 when Great Britain celebrated for the first time operating for a period of 14 days without the use of coal-fired power.^{xxx}

An excerpt from our International Positional Statement says, “Coal, natural gas and oil accounted for 87 per cent of global energy consumption in 2012. It is predicted in 2040, liquid fuels, natural gas, and coal will still account for more than three-fourths of total world energy consumption. Given the finite nature of these resources and a rapidly expanding global population together with the impact of industrial and rural activities, it is clear that this consumption of resources is not sustainable.”^{xxxi}

Food insecurity

In of each the above evidences, there is an underlying impact on the ongoing needs of the world’s population for food and water.

The journal, *Science*, has reported on research which examined whether ‘climate change’ is depleting our essential fisheries. The study by C.M. Free^{xxxii} highlights that the number of fish around the world has decreased by 4 per cent since 1930. This sounds small but the broader





Earth's climate

**is currently getting warmer, and
this trend will continue.**

scope impacts the size of the fish, the zoo plankton, the food chain and the ecosystem at large. The North Sea and the Sea of Japan are already identified for overfishing and warming water temperatures. This warming also affects the ability of the fish to reproduce. Food security becomes an emerging concern as fish is the primary diet for billions of people. Those who make their living from the sea will be also significantly impacted by these changes.

In Australia, severe drought has almost crippled pastoralists and their local communities. Agriculture and urban water supplies were severely impacted by the millennium drought of 1997-2009. It was one of the longest droughts in Australia's history and for many of those affected another drought began in 2012. "Rainfall deficiencies have affected most of New South Wales, Queensland and South Australia parts of the Murray-Darling Basin since the start of 2017. The 31 months from January 2017 to July 2019 [have] been the driest on record."^{xxxiii}

There is a further insecurity which reaches beyond the simple availability of food. Rural communities experience a flow-on effect from farm production decline: services withdraw, local businesses become unsustainable and some small towns literally die. Some farming families have walked off the land that has been in their family for generations. Poor mental health outcomes and increased numbers of suicides have occurred as a result of the hopelessness generated by drought.

The balance between food production of the world's available farming land and the needs of an increasing global population becomes more challenging each year.

Climate change

The increase in severe weather events in Australia is of concern to those directly or indirectly impacted. Tropical cyclones, severe storms, flooding on an immense scale as seen in the north west of Queensland in early 2019,

and devastating "unprecedented" bushfire events are some examples of the variability of weather patterns. But beyond the immediate weather, there are underlying long term trends that indicate a change of climate is happening. "Earth's climate is always changing and we know that it is currently getting warmer and, whatever the reasons, it will continue this trend for the next 100 years."^{xxxiv} Katharine Hayhoe, a distinguished atmospheric scientist, explains, "Climate change is a long-term trend superimposed over natural [weather] variability."^{xxxv}

Scientists have discovered that Greenland's ice shelf is melting faster than any time in the previous 350 years – and it's driving sea levels up around the world.^{xxxvi} A rising sea level is but one indicator of a global change of climate. Increasingly people in both rural and urban locations in the Pacific Islands such as Port Vila in Vanuatu, Honiara in the Solomon Islands, various locations in Fiji and the whole nation of Kiribati





are experiencing the additional impact of rising sea water levels to perennial battles with storm surges, cyclones and other natural events. Already villages have had to be relocated.^{xxxvii}

The most vulnerable are those who live on flood plains or close to the sea because they are unable to live in safer places. In Sri Lanka, parts of Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries, the poor live in areas vulnerable to cyclones, flooding and rising sea levels. They are unable to relocate elsewhere, and besides, this is where they make their livelihoods. This vulnerability can and does leave them unable to meet their most basic needs. Thursday Islanders have recently raised the issue of rising

sea levels at the United Nations. They claim that land, artefacts and cemeteries have been destroyed as a result of this environmental change.^{xxxviii}

The science of climate change indicates that the increasing warmer climate can be directly attributed to additional levels of greenhouse gases. In turn, those additions “are primarily input by human activities such as the burning of fossil fuels.”^{xxxix} The majority of scientific opinion predicts that human activity in its current patterns will result in increased temperatures leading to more extreme and less predictable weather patterns. Katharine Hayhoe’s blunt conclusion is, “To stabilise climate change, we have to eliminate our carbon emissions.”^{xl}

Current ecological changes often result in injustice for those aspects of creation which are most vulnerable.

3. Reflect and evaluate

3.1 How can we strive for ecological justice?

The starting point is to be informed about today's situation, the original intentions of creation, and the likely future outcomes that current human beliefs and practices will produce. All of the preceding material, plus suggested further reading and discussion questions, provides a foundation for this task. This foundation is solidly grounded in our Christian beliefs about God as Creator and God's vision for all of creation, his shalom: "The wholeness or the flourishing of life."^{xli} There is an acceptance of "ties of a mutual relationship"^{xlii} between all humankind and between us and creation.

We stand in accord with the belief of the wider church fellowship that, "The God of the Bible is a God of justice who protects, loves and cares for the most vulnerable among his creatures."^{xliii}

Failure to address vulnerabilities contributes to injustice and inequality. It counters a commitment to God's shalom which he calls us to. This challenge is acknowledged in The Evangelical Climate Initiative (USA) where, as a basis for a call to action, it is acknowledged that, "The consequences of global warming will hit the poor the hardest."^{xliv}

Salvation Army tradition maintains that justice requires holistic engagement in people's lives – in all systems in which people are marginalised and disadvantaged. In considering our responsibility to care for the creation, our actions begin at the personal level and extend all the way to the international level.

At a personal level, one's carbon footprint can be a useful measure of commitment to care for the creation. It has been estimated that, "If every person in the world had the same sized ecological footprint as the average citizen of most developed nations, we

would need the resources of at least five Earths to sustain the energy demands.”^{xlv} At the macro level, “Whether we call it advocacy or prophecy, we need to push our governments to enact national and international policies that will support just and sustainable ways of living.”^{xlvi}

Our Christian response is modelled on Jesus who had “a profound commitment to the vision of the Kingdom of God come near, of a community in which shalom reigns over greed and injustice.”^{xlvii} We acknowledge that this kingdom knows no boundaries, a reality which finds a parallel in the ecological

consequences of our consumption of fossil fuels. Their impacts “do not acknowledge national boundaries. They fall upon a total geographical world – not a divided political world. As a global village, we must be prepared to treat our changing climate as a shared, international concern.”^{xlviii}





4. Decide and plan – how then shall we live?

4.1 Practical responses of caring

To reiterate the purpose of this discussion paper, it is intended to provide Salvationists with material to help them explore an understanding of their relationship with God's creation and to discern what God expects in that relationship. The focus of this next section of the paper is to present some key principles that will provide a foundation for decisions about future action. The development of potential action plans is a further step, a step which moves beyond the purpose of this paper.

Practical responses reach across the whole spectrum of human behaviour. There are responses at international and national levels, corporate and organisational levels, and community and individual levels. There are existing guidelines and toolkits that assist individuals and groups with engaging in

positive actions that care for creation. In particular, attention is drawn to:

- The International Positional Statement, ‘Caring for the environment’
- The Canada and Bermuda Territory’s Green Toolkit
- The World Council of Churches ‘Roadmap’

(See ‘Further reading: essentials’)

There are also multiple United Nations conventions and agreements to which Australia is a party that identify policies and practices for “thriving, well-functioning ecosystems”.^{xlix}

The Australia Territory has five core values with the expectation that “every Salvo behaves according to our stated values.”ⁱ

The values are:

- Integrity
- Compassion
- Respect
- Diversity
- Collaboration

The following points will offer some basic exploration of the implications of applying these values as a guide for our practical responses of care for the creation.ⁱⁱ (*‘Further reading’ provides sources for specific practical actions.*)

Integrity

There are two essential elements at the heart of this value: honesty and accountability. Honesty entails a humble and realistic look at our failures to care for the creation. These failures may be small and personal or may be societal and large scale. Such honesty is the first step of repentance as we aim to move in a new direction.

Accountability operates across all levels whenever particular action plans are adopted, whether they are personal, organisational/corporate, national or international. As followers of our Creator Saviour, we must never lose sight of his intentions and our ultimate accountability to him for how we have ‘used’ the responsibilities entrusted to us.ⁱⁱⁱ

“Salvationists are encouraged to consider their responsibility to the environment by taking practical steps to preserve God’s creation.”

General Eva Burrows

Compassion

We often think of this in terms of how we feel and respond to other people. To broaden our action vision, there is value in considering just one incident in the life of Catherine Booth. “If, in her walks and drives, [she] happened to notice any horses left out to graze which looked overworked and ill-fed, she would send round to the dealers for a bushel of corn. In the evening she would sally forth ... carrying a supply of food ... watching with utmost satisfaction while they had a ‘real good tuck-in’.”^{lviii} In today’s society, we demonstrate compassion towards undomesticated animals by such events as rescue of whales caught in shark nets, rescue of native fauna affected by bushfires and regeneration of habitats.

Compassion is a heartfelt response that meets the need of suffering. It is always about the “other”, never about “me”^{liv} and extends to the whole of creation.

Respect

Respect acknowledges that there

is an inherent value in everything the Creator has brought into being. Furthermore, one could accept that the special protection and care afforded to those who are vulnerable^{lv} should be a principle for relationship with the whole of the creation. That respect not only extends to caring for what is, but we join with the Creator in actions for the redemption and restoration of that which has been lost. United Nations General Assembly has declared 2021 to 2030 as the Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. “Restoration is about reclaiming some of the world’s 70 per cent of wetlands lost over the last century and 70 million hectares of forest lost since 2000.”^{lvi}

Diversity

The Australia Territory asserts, “We celebrate diversity and embrace difference as a gift.”^{lvii} In the natural world, the necessity of biodiversity is a given which we understand. For example, “The ecosystem of the Great Barrier Reef ... [has] a food chain that

has multiple levels in which every part is reliant on everything else. No one marine creature could exist without another ... if one life form becomes endangered, the rest of the reef suffers.”^{lviii} We are continuing to learn the secrets of creation, its healing properties, its nutritional properties, and the sustaining properties of the diverse species of flora and fauna we share the planet with. Every year, large numbers of new species are ‘discovered’.^{lix}

Collaboration

We believe in God’s ultimate vision of a creation in which all elements flourish to attain their God-ordained destiny. Therefore, our action plans will ensure that we work in collaboration with creation’s Designer. We need to work in harmony with the circadian rhythms of life for the benefit of the whole. We act collaboratively with other groups who share our understanding of holding an obligation to care for the creation in all its elements.

**“While humans pollute the world,
as they do now, I’ll fight.
While we destroy the environment for
animals, as we do now, I’ll fight.
While we burn fossil fuels which cause
climate change, as we do now, I’ll fight.
While there is a shortage
of clean water,
While people fill their community
with rubbish,
While there remains one single home or
community without trees;
I’ll fight – I’ll fight to the very end.”**

Nazia Yousaf, Intern,
International Social
Justice Commission (ISJC).

Summing up

Here then are guiding values for any action we may propose to follow individually or as a group to care for God’s creation. Although they are presented as the values embraced by The Salvation Army in Australia, their foundation and their vision are inherent in our commitment to be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. We accept that, “Followers of Christ are to be ambassadors for salvation, healing and hope, sharing God’s love and peace to each other, the church, communities and ecosystems we live within and depend upon. We broaden views of salvation from notions of purely personal spirituality and/or eternity in Heaven towards the healing, shalom and abundance for all life here right now in God’s creation.”^{1x}

5. Additional Resources

5.1 Further reading

Essentials:

- International Positional Statement, 'Caring for the environment' www.salvationarmy.org/isjc/ips
- Green ToolKit. Salvation Army Ethics Centre, The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda, 2013.
- World Council of Churches. 'Roadmap for an Economy of Life and Ecological Justice.' <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/how-do-we-walk-the-talk-on-climate-justice-we-have-to-change>

Other:

- 'International Social Justice Commission – Call for Climate Justice.' 25 Aug 2011.
- https://issuu.com/isjc/docs/climate_justice_full.docx
- Facebook group, 'Red, Yellow, Blue and Green.' www.facebook.com/pg/RedYellowBlueGreen2015

- The Salvation Army New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territory. 'Responsibility for all Creation.' www.salvationarmy.org.nz/research-policy/positional-statements
- The Salvation Army Australia, Moral and Social Issues Council. 'Climate Change.' www.salvationarmy.org.au/masic/guidelines-for-salvationists
- 'Caring for the Environment': https://s3.amazonaws.com/cache.salvationarmy.org/bd8885f7-16a9-4ab7-bcee-c035301e2f9e_English+Caring+for+the+Environment+IPS.pdf
- UNFCCC Paris Agreement. <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports. www.ipcc.ch
- Seamans, M. in www.academia.edu/1253728/Red_Yellow_Blue_and_Green_Eco-theology_within_The_Salvation_Army
- National Council of Churches in Australia. Resources of Eco-Mission Network <https://www.ncca.org.au/eco-justice>
- Evangelical Climate Initiative – Call to Action – USA. www.christiansandclimate.org/statement
- Australian Government Climate Change in Australia. www.climatechangeinaustralia.gov.au
- TED Talk, Katharine Hayhoe. 'The most important thing you can do to fight climate change: talk about it.' www.ted.com/talks/katharine_hayhoe_the_most_important_thing_you_can_do_to_fight_Climate_change_talk_about_it/transcript?language=en



Responsibility to Care for the Creation

5.2 Conversation guide (A preliminary outline of the discussion journey for each group participant)

At an individual, congregational and organisational level, Salvationists are called to seek and know the nature and will of God. As we study the Scriptures and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit, our discussion aim is not to develop a 'correct' answer, but to have open and respectful conversations as we explore and journey together. In doing so, we learn more about the nature of God, and God's Kingdom.

STEP ONE: What is the issue?

What were God's intentions when he created our world?

How did he envisage the role of humankind?

What are your thoughts as you read our International Positional Statement?

STEP TWO: Describe and analyse

How well do you think we have cared

for the created physical world?

What examples can you identify which indicate humankind has done a poor job of caring for creation?

How do you respond to the statement, "Regardless of different eschatological (end times) views, there is a divine mandate that requires us to care for creation until the new Heavens and the new Earth are manifested"?

STEP THREE: Reflect and evaluate

Take time to reflect on how people react when gifts are misused or the intricate detail of a craftsperson's work of beauty is defaced. Do those reactions have a parallel in how creation has been treated?

Are there some aspects of modern society that we might see as totally temporal and secular and therefore outside the workings of the Kingdom of God?

How wide do you think a commitment to ecological justice should extend?

**STEP FOUR: Decide and plan —
How then shall we live?**

How do the values we uphold as Salvationists translate into actions of daily living?

What sorts of actions can you prioritise for yourself in the immediate future and then others for medium- or longer-term commitment?

How can your local corps, your local community and our nation become active in ensuring we have “thriving, well-functioning ecosystems”?

5.3 Additional suggested discussion prompts

1. Genesis 1:26 When God decided to create humankind, he also decided to “let them have complete authority over ... the entire Earth, and over everything that creeps and crawls on the Earth” (Amplified). Other translations use words like: “rule”, “have dominion”, “subdue”. In the original Hebrew the verbs can

be understood as literally meaning “trample on”.

Discuss: Does this mean we have uninhibited “authority” to do as we please with our world, our universe and everything that inhabits it? Or is John Stott right when he says, “The ‘dominion’ God has given us is a delegated and responsible stewardship”? (Stott J. *Through the Bible Through the Year*. 2014 p.24)

(In a further comment by Stott, he suggests it would be ludicrous to think that – having created the Earth and declared everything about it to be good – God would then hand it over to humankind to exploit to the point of destruction.)

2. On a global scale, Australia’s proportion of global emissions and ecological degradation are at a very low level.

Discuss: If my actions will make hardly any difference to the total required change, what principles of ecological justice should I adopt as my guide?

3. The discussion paper notes that Jesus is part of the creative Godhead and also that we have been created in the image of God. As Christians, we often sing prayers that express our desire to be like Jesus.

Reflect/discuss: Now take time in reflection to imagine how Jesus looks and feels today about his creation – a “very good” creation. How then should you be acting?

4. Katharine Hayhoe, a distinguished atmospheric scientist, has said, “Our Christian values are integral to how we treat this issue [of climate justice]. Our values demand we be on the forefront of this issue” (in ‘Caring about Climate Justice.’ *Others Vol 1:7* (July 2017) p.12).

Discuss: What does it require for us to be “on the forefront”? What specific values should be determining our responses?

5. Although the care of creation entails global applications, there are responsibilities which are personal and localised. Share/discuss in your group what your action plan includes. (Note: The 'Further reading – essentials' section offers many ideas.)

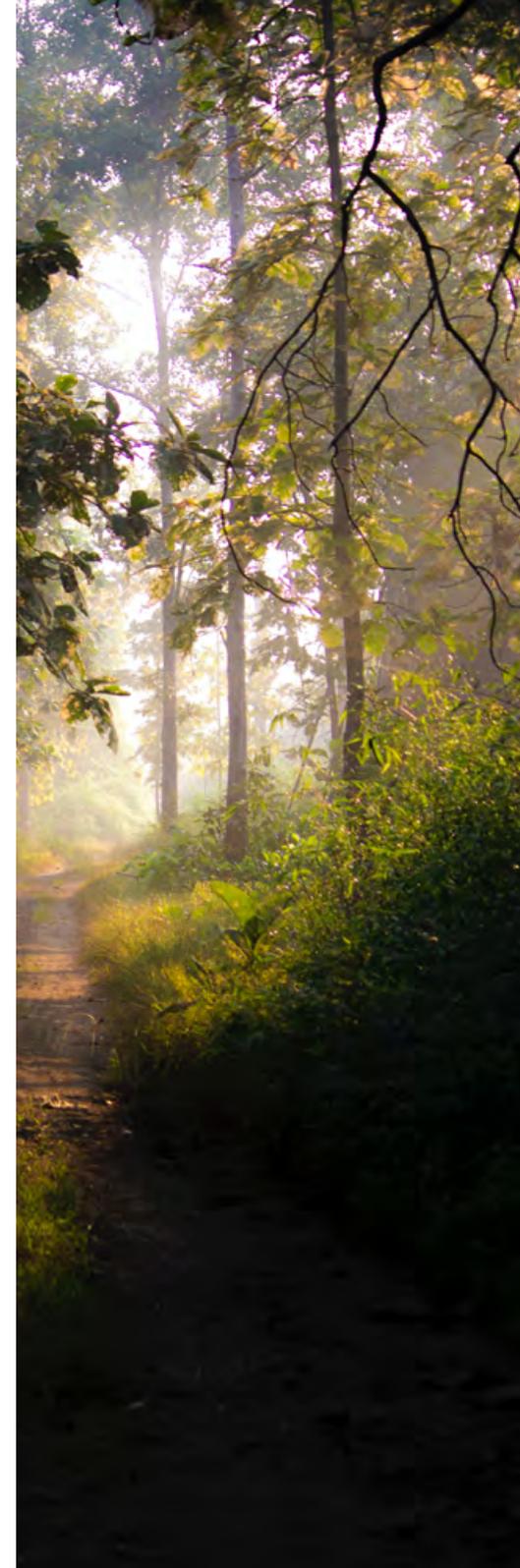




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