

Council for World Mission – Mission Education School IV

All Creation Groans: The Eco-Crisis and Sustainable Living – Understanding the Implications for Mission

We the participants, representing the 31 member churches of CWM, have:

listened to stories from our sisters and brothers from Kiribati and Tuvalu facing loss of land and identity; from Sub-Saharan Africa struggling with the impact of drought, desertification and food security; from the Caribbean, East Asia and the Indian sub-continent speaking of the growing intensity of storms and incidents of flooding; and from the Northern Hemisphere who are experiencing the rapid melting of the Arctic sea-ice;

studied the Bible, reflected on various theological perspectives and their implication for mission, and recognized in our reflections that ecological justice is a mission imperative for the church;

heard the credible scientific consensus and evidence on the reality and impact of global warming, that the window of opportunity to avert catastrophic climate change is fast closing;

recognized the connection between humanity's way of living driven by the dominant socio-economic model and the impact on all of creation;

grieved for the suffering of people and the degradation of ecological systems;

lamented humanity's reluctance to act and propensity to procrastinate on this spiritual issue.

But we hold onto an absurd hope for the redemption of all creation, despite the increasing groaning (Romans 8:24–25).

As a covenant people, we therefore commit ourselves to:

reject the theological understanding of a disposable Earth and the socio-economic drive for limitless growth, which is motivated by a relentless focus on profit; affirm that the economy should benefit humanity within 'the bounds of the sustainability of creation'; and engage the Bible in ways that speak of the interconnectedness of all creation and traditional teachings of right relations among all creatures (2004 Accra Confession of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches);

encourage our churches to address the growing need for nations to welcome people who may be displaced by climate change (we are mindful of the 2009 Moana Declaration of the Pacific Conference of Churches);

share resources and material that will help in the process of education and informing our regions, denominations and local churches on climate change issues, so they may become agents of transformation;

urge our churches and CWM global about the necessity of:

exploring ways to minimize fossil fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions in all operations;

engaging with governments, the business sector and wider civil society in shaping and implementing policies in the area of energy and climate change.

Kuala Lumpur, October 2009