

# Synod of Scotland

## Environmental Policy

### Local churches

1. carry out a systematic environmental audit of their buildings and follow the strategies outlined below for reducing their carbon footprint; in this the resource Greening Church Buildings produced by Eco Congregation Scotland will be helpful
2. raise awareness, through prayer, preaching, Bible study, teaching and discussion, of the need for confession and repentance in relation to the causes of climate change, and of our calling, as God's redeemed people, to live joyfully, simply and responsibly with respect to God's Creation - caring for and treasuring that Creation, and celebrating all that is achieved in fulfilling that calling
3. seek to achieve 'Eco-Church' status [[www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk](http://www.ecochurch.arocha.org.uk)] in the case of churches in England and Wales, or 'Eco-Congregation' status in the case of churches in Scotland [[www.ecocongregationscotland.org](http://www.ecocongregationscotland.org)]
4. celebrate 'Time for Creation' as encouraged by the World Council of Churches.<sup>8</sup> Creation Time runs from 1 September until 4 October each year
5. ensure that energy is used efficiently and that their buildings are environment friendly through the use of energy-saving technologies and by identifying and using renewable sources of energy as appropriate
6. help members of their congregation to make adjustments in the carbon emissions associated with their lifestyles by supporting them in a personal audit and in finding appropriate strategies
7. involve their children and young people in activities focusing on care for the environment
8. engage their local political representatives, urging them to support policies that take effective steps towards realising the commitment to a minimum 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050 and minimum 42% by 2020
9. support campaigns and popular action around climate change issues as appropriate
10. ensure that church-owned land is used in ways that encourage an enjoyment of nature and both enhance and protect the environment
11. produce a piece of community artwork celebrating the Creator God.

### Denomination

- a) to lower incrementally its carbon footprint by a significant amount each year by carbon budgeting, that is by setting specific year-on-year reduction targets in the percentage of emissions over a defined period
- b) to campaign at local and national level for policies that strengthen, and take steps towards realising, the Westminster government's commitment to a minimum 80% reduction in carbon emissions by 2050 and the interim goal of reducing carbon emissions by 42% as set by the Scottish Parliament
- c) to ensure that its buildings are environment friendly through the use of energy-saving technologies and by identifying and using renewable sources of energy as appropriate
- d) to reduce, where practicable, car and air travel for meetings through the use of videoconferencing. With due regard for distances and costs involved, individual members are encouraged to use transport with minimum impact - to cycle, use buses and trains, and car-share and use energy-efficient vehicles where possible. Members are also encouraged to adopt the practice of carbon off-setting with respect to essential travel by making payments supporting sustainable projects (e.g. through Climate Stewards)
- e) to promote an environmental theology.