

THE CHRISTIAN CALL TO ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

We are called to be good
stewards of God's creation



**Climate change is affecting
God's creation.**

**It is the poor who will suffer the
most from the consequences of
climate change.**

The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it (Psalm 24:1)

**The Climate
Institute** 

www.climateinstitute.org.au

TAKING UP THE CALL TO CARE FOR CREATION

Climate change is proving to be a powerful reminder that we share a common belief – a belief that caring for God’s creation is our moral responsibility. Humanity does not own nature and does not have the right to destroy it. We are meant to look after it.

The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it (Genesis 2:15)

Here are just some inspirational Christian initiatives that remind us of our call to care for creation.

- The Anglican Church in Adelaide has the Green Cathedral Project. In Grafton they are switching to green power and installing solar panels. In the ACT Anglican schools are installing energy efficient lighting.
- Assisted by Catholic Earthcare Australia, growing numbers of Catholic parishes, schools and agencies are taking practical steps to address climate change.
- The Uniting Church in NSW, QLD and VIC is switching to green power and conducting energy audits to identify how to save energy, money and CO₂ emissions.

Christians are also combining their climate efforts with other religious groups through the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC).



REV. RICHARD CIZIK As vice president of governmental affairs for the U.S. National Association of Evangelicals, Richard Cizik uses his significant political sway to raise awareness about climate change and other environmental maladies. Evangelicals should “return to being people known for our love and care of the earth and our fellow human beings,” says Cizik.



POPE BENEDICT XVI has called upon Catholics to listen to the earth and live in tune with its cycles. He has strongly urged world leaders to take resolute action to avoid the worst effects of climate change. The Vatican has also committed to installing 1000 solar panels and sponsoring reforestation.

CLIMATE JUSTICE

It is the world's poor, who have contributed the least to this problem, who will suffer the most from climate change. The future impact of climate change on families, on whole communities and all other life will be significant. We must act now in order to halt any further damage and ensure a future for our children and grandchildren.

THE POOR AND THE VOICELESS GENERATIONS TO COME WILL SUFFER THE MOST

As a rich industrialised nation we are a large contributor to climate change. We therefore have a moral obligation to contribute to the solution.

From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded (Luke 12:48)

AS CHRISTIANS WE ARE CALLED TO HELP THE POOR

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in (Matthew 25:35)

REV. CANON SALLY BINGHAM attends the signing of California's carbon cap bill. Sally through her organisation Interfaith Power and Light (IPL) has been particularly involved in advocacy. Rev. Bingham and IPL actively supported both climate change bills that passed in California.



INTERFAITH POWER AND LIGHT is an American eco-faith network that includes 4,000 congregations with affiliates in 26 states. It has strongly supported Arnold Schwarzenegger's inspiring climate change policies. IPL also empowers churches to take practical actions to lower their CO₂ emissions like switching to green power, conducting energy audits and installing solar panels.

PEOPLE DISPLACED BY CLIMATE CHANGE



"We live in constant fear of the adverse impacts of climate change. For a coral atoll nation, sea level rise and more severe weather events loom as a growing threat to our entire population. The threat is real and serious, and is of no difference to a slow and insidious form of terrorism against us."

— Saufatu Sopoanga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, at the 58th Session of the United Nations General Assembly New York, 24th September 2003



The people of the Carteret Islands, located off the coast of Papua New Guinea, face relocation due to the impacts of climate change. The islanders have fought for more than twenty years against the rising ocean, building sea walls and planting mangroves. Yet storm surges and high tides continue to wash away their homes and livelihoods. Now this entire cultural group will be displaced.

If we genuinely care for the welfare of our neighbours we need to address climate change now - before it's too late.

To do this we must

- 1. REVERSE RISING POLLUTION**
- 2. SWITCH TO CLEAN ENERGY**
- 3. LEAD INTERNATIONALLY**

SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

MANY CHRISTIANS ARE SPEAKING UP AND LEADING BY EXAMPLE.

To ensure a sustainable future for our children and protect the poor from the worst effects of climate change, Christians, churches, governments and the whole community need to contribute to the solutions, which are:

1. REVERSE RISING POLLUTION. Australia's greenhouse gas emissions are still going up. To play our part in avoiding dangerous climate change, we need to:

- Ensure that our greenhouse gas emissions peak and begin to decline by 2012.
- Set emission reduction targets of at least 25% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80-95% below 1990 levels by 2050.
- Set world's best energy performance standards.
- Establish efficiency measures to cut energy waste and deliver all cost effective energy savings, particularly for low income households.

2. SWITCH TO CLEAN ENERGY. Churches and households can switch to green power and use their energy more efficiently. Our governments can ensure all new electricity generation comes from clean energy, by implementing policies such as a legislated clean renewable energy target of 25% in 2020.

3. LEAD INTERNATIONALLY. Christians can call upon the Australian government to play a proactive role in securing a global climate agreement. This includes helping developing countries to make the switch to clean energy and to prepare for the unavoidable impacts of climate change, which have mostly been caused by developed countries. Dedicating a proportion of emissions trading revenue to help our neighbouring countries to do this will be an important sign of Australia's commitment.



In wisdom you made them all, the earth is full of your creatures. There is the sea, vast and spacious, teeming with creatures beyond number - living things both large and small... When you send your Spirit, they are created and you renew the earth. (Psalm 104:24-25,30)

IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN AUSTRALIA

ACCORDING TO STUDIES DONE BY THE CSIRO, AUSTRALIA WILL BE IMPACTED HEAVILY BY AN INCREASE IN TEMPERATURE.

- Up to 1 degree rise will mean 70% increase in droughts in NSW.
- 1-2 degree rise will mean coral bleaching will devastate 80% of the Great Barrier Reef each year.
- 2-3 degree rise will cause 80% of the Kakadu wetlands to be lost.
- 3-4 degree rise could cause a 48% reduction in water flow in the Murray Darling basin.
- A rise above 5 degrees would result in 90–100% loss of core habitat for most Australian mammals.

One of thousands of species facing extinction from climate change, the mountain pygmy possum is the only marsupial in the world that hibernates during winter.



God made the wild animals... And God saw that it was good (Genesis 1:25)

To prevent creation from suffering churches can do things like:

- **Switch to green power**
- **Reduce energy consumption**
- **Encourage others to do the same**
- **Call upon our governments to:**
- **Reverse rising pollution**
- **Switch to clean energy**
- **Lead internationally**

To find out more go to
www.climateinstitute.org.au
www.arrcc.org.au
www.interfaithpower.org