

Southern Synod Environmental Charter and Strategy

Introduction

Our concern for the environment stems from our belief in the creator God who calls us to exercise care and wise stewardship for the wellbeing of the whole of creation and climate justice for people, in all places, for our and future generations.

Southern Synod Environmental Charter

A: We believe that creation reveals the glory of God. That we are called to be stewards of God's creation working with all people of good will to make sure that God's earth remains a beautiful place full of wonder, worship, love, justice and peace, by respecting the environment and all creatures.

B: We challenge ourselves to live simply and in solidarity with the poor not taking unfair amounts of the world's resources or creating waste and pollution.

C: We commit ourselves to safeguarding life and living sustainably by taking our environmental impact fully into account.

Southern Synod Environmental Strategy

Our strategy is to:

1. Consider and take forward steps to deliver the current Environmental Policy of the URC, with particular attention to tasks identified for Synod.
2. Consider and take forward environmental resolutions agreed by Southern Synod Together.
3. To proactively engage with developing environmental concerns.

In adopting this Strategy, Synod Together recognise that the environmental agenda cross-cuts Synod's whole life and mission, such that the question 'what are the implications of the Synod's Environmental Strategy?', form a part of the consideration and decision-making of each Synod Committee and function.

The URC Environmental Policy – role of Synods

The current URC Environmental Policy agreed by General Assembly by in 2019: [201905 URC Environmental Policy.pdf](#) includes the following tasks for Synods:

5.4 Our synods will seek to:

- a) encourage their churches to gain 'Eco Church' status (in the case of churches in England and Wales) or 'Eco-Congregation' status (in the case of churches in Scotland); in so doing they will encourage churches to see the positive benefits in terms of the financial savings that environmentally-friendly practices can bring;
- b) develop and implement plans to become 'Eco Synods';
- c) ensure that their buildings, including manses, are environment friendly through the use of energy-saving technologies and by identifying and using renewable sources of energy as appropriate;
- d) encourage their churches to work in collaboration with, or initiate, local transition or sustainability groups;
- e) encourage their churches to receive training and support on issues of climate justice and environmental care;
- f) appoint one or more 'Green Apostles' to monitor progress on carbon reduction in their synod (if preferred this role could be differently named, for example 'Sustainability Ambassador');
- g) draw up an 'environmental charter' along the lines of that adopted by North West Synod in 2015.

Synod Together, October 2021