

DOC.ID:	GEN_PUB_4_Final
Language:	English
Original:	English
English only	



Public Issue Statement Called to a Better Stewardship of Creation

It is now apparent that climate change is taking place more quickly and in more complex and dynamic ways than had been predicted even in recent years. The earth's climate system has tipping points and once certain thresholds are passed, the rate and variation in climatic conditions may increase dramatically. In addition there is no certainty that a new natural equilibrium on a higher level will be achieved. There is an imperative to act as individuals, on a community level, and also nationally and globally.

In the act of creation God entrusted the whole earth to humanity to exercise responsible stewardship for the oikoumene. The command of God to human beings to have dominion over every living creature presupposes an accountability and a stewardship to the Creator. Humanity's lack of due attention to the responsibilities of stewardship and to care for the creation of which we are part, has brought us to the loss of the intended harmony and symphony of the whole.

Despite the greater contribution of wealthier countries to climate change, the impact falls disproportionately upon the poor and vulnerable both through the different distribution of physical consequences and through unequal availability of resources to counter the effects. Therefore the financial contribution of richer countries should be greater.

Amongst the signs of hope and opportunity that we discern in facing this serious challenge to God's good creation are the forthcoming UN climate change conference in September 2009 and the subsequent world conference in Copenhagen in December 2009.

The 13th Assembly of the Conference of European Churches urges politicians, scientists and others with responsibility at these meetings not to delay the decisions of substance that are urgently needed, and to make of these meetings a time of return to a better stewardship of the gifts of the creation. The Assembly recommends the celebration of the "creation time" from 1st September to 4th October as highlighted in the declaration of the Third European Ecumenical Assembly in Sibiu.

As churches in Europe we commit ourselves:

- To increase involvement in promoting changed life styles and promoting the "economy of enough" for a more sustainable and just development.
- To intensify inter church and inter religious cooperation in addressing the need to care for creation.



As churches in Europe we ask the public authorities:

- To adopt precise and binding commitments within specified timetables for the reduction of the causes of climate change by the Conference participants in Copenhagen in December 2009
- To provide additional financial support to assist developing countries to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.