

Diocese of Saldanha Bay
2015 MOTION ON CREATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Principle:

WHEREAS our Planet Earth has in recent decades suffered the environmental impact of: over-consumption, increasing population growth, deforestation, over-fishing, exploitation of non-renewable resources, insurmountable waste dumps, and pollution;

AND WHEREAS we believe that this has been the underlying cause of: environmental disasters, acid rain, ozone depletion, climate change, and the extinction of species;

AND WHEREAS the Encyclical “Laudato si” (“Praise be to you”) of Pope Francis has been met with universal acclaim, and echoes the prophetic sentiments of the “Green Movement”, and the call for us to be good stewards of God’s Creation;

AND WHEREAS one of the five marks of mission of the Anglican Communion is: “To strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation and sustain and renew life of the Earth”; and the ACSA Environment Network, SAFCEI (The Southern African Faith Communities’ Environment Institute} and other organisations are promoting the application of this through the eco-congregation movement.

Resolution:

NOW THEREFORE THIS SYNOD RESOLVES THAT:

1. The Diocese of Saldanha Bay, through its structures, be encouraged to:
 - Listen to ‘the cry of the Earth’ and identify, proclaim and implement measures to protect the Environment and reduce our own ‘carbon footprint’.
 - Engage with different communities to listen to, discuss with and challenge them regarding their use and abuse of the Earth’s resources, to foster responsible ‘Earth-keeping’ for future generations, appropriate to their circumstances.

2. All Parishes be encouraged to:
 - “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle” – both as a parish and as individuals – through the use of paper, glass and plastic recycling bins in Parishes.
 - Go a step further, to:
 - (a) Find ways to save water and electricity.
 - (b) Develop and use their grounds to the benefit of the community (e.g. food gardens).
 - (c) Use their Church plant space to the benefit of the community.
 - Study environmental issues, and share ways to be “Good Stewards of God’s Creation” – through articles in “Quill & Quiver” and by other means.
 - Celebrate A Season of Creation and/or special Environment days.

The Bishop be respectfully requested to:

- Facilitate the formation of a Diocesan Environmental Task Team to address the relevant issues.
- Mandate the Liturgy Team to source and facilitate special liturgies to celebrate Creation and the Environment.
- Mandate the Department of Theology and Spiritual Formation to source study material and to train our Clergy in Environmental Theology.