



LAMBETH CALL: Environment and Sustainable Development

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1 Introduction

1.1 We have been gifted a world of breath-taking beauty, astounding abundance and intricate interconnection. It is a world God declared good and loves.

1.2 That world is now in crisis. Climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution threaten both people and planet. Poverty, inequality, injustice and conflict damage the lives of millions.

The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated inequalities and undermined the development gains of recent decades.

1.3 Yet, this is still God's world and God calls us to respond as Easter people: bearers of hope.

1.4 We are called to "have genuine mutual love" (1 Peter 1:22), expressed through hospitality, stewardship and mutual service (*diaconia*) (1 Peter 4:9-10). These are essential in our care for one another and our common home, the earth.

2 Declaration

2.1 Anglicans hold to Scripture and the teachings of the Church, reflected in the Five Marks of Mission. These provide a clear vision and holistic framework for intentional discipleship and for being God's Church for God's World. They call us to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom, nurture disciples, and to express our concern for people and planet, for justice, peace and care for vulnerable people, as well as our duty to safeguard creation (Genesis 2:15).

2.2 Anglicans therefore not only take human well-being and creation care seriously, but also see these as missional imperatives and how we share in the 'renewed creation of heaven and earth with justice' (2 Peter 3:13).

2.3 The Anglican Communion is building on the legacy of the 2008 Lambeth Conference, which made a strong commitment to the UN Millennium Development Goals and gave birth to the Anglican Alliance. It is also building on ACC 17, which reaffirmed this commitment in light of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

2.4 It continues to respond to local, national and global societal and environmental challenges. With crisis comes opportunity: for the Church to listen to God's voice, to imagine how the world could be different, and to help build towards God's Kingdom.

2.5 But the triple environmental crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution is an existential threat to millions of people and species of plants and animals across the globe.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has warned that it is "code red for humanity"; "It's now or never, if we want to limit global warming to 1.5°C".ⁱ Drastic action is needed in the next three years to bring down greenhouse gas emissions.

2.6 As a global, connected body with a shared identity that transcends national borders, the Anglican Communion has a distinctive perspective. Member churches of the Anglican Communion are involved in every part of the environmental emergency. We are the people facing devastation in disaster-stricken communities. We are all the polluters, especially in wealthy countries. We are people living in poverty and on the margins. We wield power and political influence. We are experiencing loss and damage of our land, homes and livelihoods. We are investors with financial capital. We are first-responders to disasters and those who accompany communities on the journey of recovery and resilience.

2.7 We contribute to the problem. We contribute to the solution. We are both local and global. We connect with one another, share our experiences and can leverage our networks and Anglican identity to mobilise for action. We do not speak from just one position but from many. We do not only speak to others; we speak also to ourselves. We are all part of the web of God's creation for 'in God all things in heaven and earth were created, things visible and invisible' (Colossians 1:16). And we are called now to act together for the sake of all humanity, for all creation, and our shared home, planet earth.

2.8 By the next Lambeth Conference, increasing areas of the Communion will be uninhabitable, because of drought, rising sea levels and other impacts as we reach tipping points in climate change. Meanwhile despite these terrible realities, carbon emissions continue to rise and there are over 50,000 new fossil fuel developments in the pipeline. ⁱⁱ Our oceans and rivers are clogged with plastic and people are choking and dying from polluted air. The web of life is becoming so damaged by the loss of biodiversity that the integrity of creation is under threat.

2.9 The global response has been wholly inadequate – both in the level of resources dedicated to the response and in the level of urgency with which those with most power to make radical changes are taking action.

3 Affirmation

3.1 For ourselves and for future generations we need to act now, urgently and at scale.

3.2 However, actions are difficult to sustain unless there is also the transformation of hearts and minds from which such action flows. The climate emergency is not just a physical crisis – it is also a spiritual one.

3.3 Humanity needs a spiritual and cultural transformation. We must see the world differently: repenting of and rejecting an extractive world view, which regards the earth and all nature as something to be exploited, and embracing a relational worldview, espoused especially by indigenous peoples, which sees the profound interdependence of all creation.

4 Specific requests (The Calls)

4.1 We call on the Instruments of Communion to:

1. Support commitments to tackle urgently the triple environmental crises of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.
2. Advocate with the international community to deliver, as a matter of justice, the required financial commitments for loss and damage due to climate change, and to speak and act prophetically within the Communion on the issue, to demonstrate solidarity.

4.2 We call on ourselves as bishops and the people of our provinces, dioceses and parishes to:

1. Treasure God's marvellous creation, recognising the profound interdependence of all life on earth and repenting of actions and theologies of domination, which have caused great harm to the earth and injustices to its people.
2. Recognise the triple environmental crisis as a crisis of cultural and spiritual values and build on the reach and influence of the Church to challenge ourselves and humanity to transform our mindset away from exploitation of the natural world to one of relationship and stewardship, as embodied by the wisdom of the Christian tradition and by Indigenous peoples.
3. Equip communities to build resilience to help them withstand and recover from disasters and promote the prophetic voice of young people and the key role of women as earth protectors, recognising that climate change impacts unequally on women and future generations.
4. Join in the Communion Forest initiative, to protect and restore forests and other ecosystems across our planet and commit to promoting tree planting at the time of confirmation, and other key life and faith moments, as a symbol of spiritual growth.
5. Ensure we use and invest our assets ethically to be good news for our planet and people and, as a matter of urgency, remove our funds from any new fossil fuel exploration, and seek to invest in renewable energy sources.

4.3 We call on world leaders to:

1. Enact bold and urgent policy changes, including:

- achieving net-zero carbon emissions as soon as possible to limit the global average temperature rise to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels.
- fulfilling and substantially increasing their commitments to climate finance, including for loss and damage due to climate change.
- halting new gas and oil exploration.
- protecting and restoring biodiversity and tackling pollution.

2. Challenge wealthier nations and those with greatest responsibility for climate change to take the lead on climate action and just financing for other countries to reduce emissions.

3. Support international cooperation and ambitious targets to transition to clean energy and to sustainable land use practices and food systems.

4. Acknowledge that the scale and urgency of the climate emergency is such that politics must give way to action based on science and rooted in a moral call to recognise our interdependence with each other and the natural world.

5. Recognise the wisdom within faith communities about the value and care of creation and the role that the faithful, and their faith leaders, can bring in influencing change in communities.

End Notes

Environment and Sustainable Development End Notes

i. 2022 IPCC Report: <https://unfccc.int/news/the-evidence-is-clear-the-time-for-action-is-now-we-can-halveemissions-by-2030>

ii. <https://theconversation.com/how-treaties-protecting-fossil-fuel-investors-could-jeopardize-global-efforts-to-save-the-climate-and-cost-countries-billions-182135>