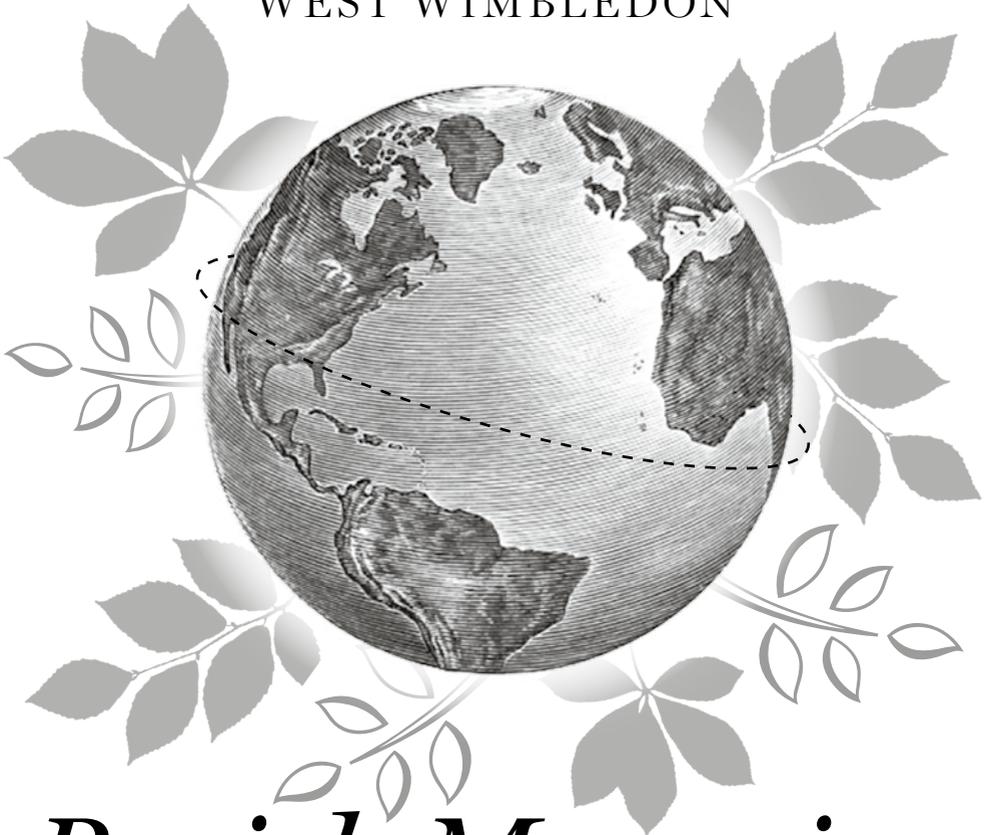


SPECIAL ECO EDITION • SPRING 2010



# CHRIST CHURCH

## WEST WIMBLEDON



# *Parish Magazine*

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**W**elcome to this special edition of the Christ Church Parish Magazine. As you will already have noticed, the entire Spring 2010 edition is dedicated to climate change and the Christian response to it.

These are not new issues for many of us at Christ Church. We were one of the first churches in the diocese to start paying attention to these matters, to undergo a 'green' audit and to hold Eco-festivals to draw the attention of the church and wider communities to the urgent need to reduce our individual and corporate carbon foot print.

Even now though, there are still people who ask why the church needs to bother about climate change. 'Isn't this work for the politicians?' some ask, 'What's the environment got to do with God?' others wonder.

A hundred years ago these might have been reasonable questions. In the days when we thought life on earth was merely a 'vale of tears' to be passed through on our way to heaven; when we thought that the degradation of the earth didn't matter because we were on our way out of it; when we believed that things earthly were dirty, flawed and godless and only the life to come was worth anything; then we were able to treat the earth carelessly.

Mercifully, most of the modern

church listens much more carefully to the truth of science.

Mercifully, our theology has taken a decidedly more ecological turn. We have come (and not a minute too soon) to understand that human life is part of all life, that God created all of life and therefore it and we together have an intrinsic value for who and what we are now whatever is to come after this life.

The earth, and all life on it, is good because God made and makes it, loved and loves it.

We humans have a distinctive and unique part to play in the story of life on earth but then so do the wasps and the dandelions and the tree frogs and the rain forests. We are part of creation and not it's crowning glory.

In these pages you will read lots of interesting and well informed material from Christ



Church's unusually well qualified and informed worshippers.

I hope that you will be inspired to join in the work that we are all called to, as individuals, as a society, as a church and start to undo the harm we have done and to resolve to live better together with the whole of God's creation in the future.

If we can't or won't then it is those to whom Jesus came first, the poor, the marginalised and the despairing that will suffer first and greatest.

If we are serious about following Jesus, then we need to be serious about combating climate change.

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Last year he was the researcher and lead author for the Church of England's new vision for action on the environment, Church and Earth.

He's a visiting professor at the University of Surrey and has worked in think-tanks, business, local government and Whitehall on environmental issues.

He was married to Caroline, a much-loved member of Christ Church who died in 2006. He is involved in projects for the Gerald Durrell Wildlife Trust on Jersey in Caroline's memory.



**Nick Robins** is a member of Christ Church and was involved with projects in preparation for the Copenhagen conference on climate change.

He is director of the global Climate Change Centre of Excellence at HSBC Bank, and an expert on ethical and sustainable investment issues.

He has worked on the policy, business and financial aspects of sustainability since the late 1980s.

He is a member of the editorial board of the leading environmental magazine Resurgence. Nick's books include a history of the East India Company, The Corporation that Changed the World, and a new collection of papers on Sustainable Investing.

Nick is married to Ritu Kumar, also a leading sustainable development advocate, and lives in Wimbledon with their three children.

# CARING FOR CREATION

## The Christian Imperative

Over the past half-century it has been dawning on humanity that collectively we are undermining the capacity of the natural environment to sustain us and other creatures.

A mass of scientific evidence shows that many of our impacts on the Earth are becoming unsustainable. It is often hard to feel that this is so - we live on a temperate island in an affluent society that is well shielded from what is happening.

Yet Britain is not immune: our island's wildlife and countryside have been terribly depleted and polluted over the centuries, and our environment is impoverished as a result, for all that there is still much to celebrate about it.

This is one of the prices paid for

industrial development, and the rest of the world has been following the path Britain trailblazed 200 years ago.

There is strong scientific consensus that human development is putting ecological stability at risk. The most obvious example is the climate system. For all the arguments about man-made climate change (see pages 12-13), the vast majority of scientists and governments accept that it is real and could turn into dangerous disruption this century.

But climate change is just one of the risks we are running. The extinction of wild species is being taken to unheard-of levels by our population growth, by loss of habitats, by pollution and climate change.

Wasteful use of soils and water threatens security of food and fresh

water supplies in many parts of the world. And chemical pollution damages human health worldwide, and often adds to the other environmental problems we face.

What has this to do with our Christian faith? Everything. Christ calls on us to love God and to love our neighbour as ourselves. In loving God, we should also love and respect His Gift to us of a bountiful world.

In loving our neighbour, we should care about justice and the fate of the poor and vulnerable. The environmental crisis is a challenge to both these fundamentals of our faith.

The plundering of the Earth as if there were no tomorrow is a sign of a deep forgetting of our dependence on its 'life-support systems' and of the humility and love we should offer to God. Climate change and other crises hit the poorest first and worst - the

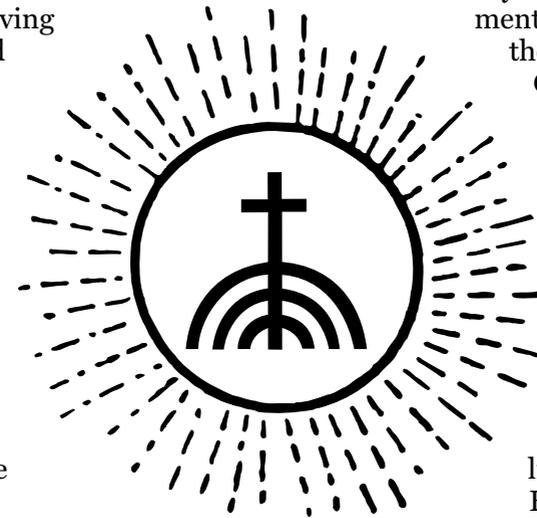
very people worldwide who have done little or nothing to cause the build-up of greenhouse gases to risky levels in the atmosphere.

The Christian life calls for discernment of how we are to follow Christ and bring our faith to life in our time and in our society. The environmental crisis goes to the heart of Christian witness.

In responding, we can not only help overcome the troubles we all face, but we can also show what it is to live in the light of Christ. Here at Christ Church we have made a start in 'Green' action, but there is much more to do. In taking further steps, we are doing our bit in a great and exciting global movement, as this special issue of our

parish magazine makes clear. We hope you enjoy it, and look forward to comments and ideas for action.

**Ian Christie, Richard Lane**



*'In loving God  
we should also  
love and respect  
His Gift to us of a  
bountiful world.'*

# OUR PERSONAL & COLLECTIVE RESPONSE

## Challenges & Opportunities

It is all too easy to be overwhelmed by the scale and nature of the ecological challenges we face in the 21st century. People often say that it is all too much to take in, and a common response is to avert our gaze and think about something else. Or we take refuge in denial that the problems are that bad, or that they exist at all.

We also know that this won't do as a response. In World War Two, people on the 'home front' were asked to do all sorts of apparently trivial things. They made do and mended, they recycled, they 'dug for victory', and so on. Anyone could have said to themselves, 'This is pointless - how can I make any difference to such a huge challenge? What's the use of my dig-

ging up the back garden, when the whole world is at war?'

Of course, any single person doesn't make that much difference. But together, as the home front effort showed in 1939-45, citizens can make a vast impact. And taking action personally to do the right thing is what we should always do, regardless of who else is joining in. The challenges posed by climate change and the need to make our global development socially fair and environmentally sustainable are often compared in scale to those of the Great Depression and World War Two. Personal and collective determination and ingenuity overcame even those huge disasters. Doing our bit, individually and with others, is crucial now as it was then.



This means taking the environmental challenge seriously in our home life, at work and at church.

For us at Christ Church, it means playing our part in making a reality of the Church of England's new vision and strategy for environmental action (see pages 8-10).

We are glad to report that the Christ Church Eco-Congregation Group is being relaunched, under the guidance of Alban Thurston. This group will continue and deepen the work that has been done so far, and will try to maximise the scope for the church and its congregation to contribute to and benefit from environmental initiatives locally and nationally. If you're keen to join in, let Richard, Alban, Ian Christie or Nick Robins know! **Ian Christie**

### Our Challenge

**We are called to continue to strengthen the projects we already have underway to reduce our environmental impact and improve our local place:**

- Making the church, hall and our homes energy-efficient and cutting out waste
- Reusing and recycling materials and avoiding waste (eg food waste)
- Cutting down on car use and using our feet and bicycles more
- Taking up new opportunities and incentives to invest in renewable energy for church, homes and workplaces
- Buying local food and goods whenever possible
- Supporting sustainable development - fair and Green development - for developing countries, and especially for Matabeleland in Zimbabwe, our twin diocese
- Celebrating the gifts of God's creation and reflecting environmental concerns in our prayers.

# CHURCH & EARTH

## A Fresh Environmental Vision & Strategy

*“For the Church of the 21st century,  
good ecology is not an optional extra but  
a matter of justice. It is therefore central  
to what it means to be a Christian.”*

**Archbishop Rowan Williams**

In 1967 the American historian Lynn White published an essay in which he assailed the Judeo-Christian traditions for their alleged role in the environmental crises that the world was then just beginning to grasp.

White argued that Christianity had contributed towards our collective pillage of the Earth's resources, as a result of the Old

Testament's claim that humans had been granted 'dominion' over other creatures. Christianity and the states and economies that it helped to shape had interpreted 'dominion' as 'domination'. It was an influential paper. Many in the environmental movements still see Christianity as part of the problem, not of the solution.

White had a point. Many nominally Christian states, business

leaders and clerics have indeed shown little concern for animals, wise use of resources or pollution over the centuries.

A fringe element in modern Christianity - as in the wilder parts of US evangelical churches - sees the Earth as a temporary home, about to be destroyed at the End of Days, therefore not worth conserving. But White overstated his case. 'Dominion' in the Bible plainly does not give license to 'domination' and reckless use of God's world. The Earth and 'the fullness thereof' belongs always to God. Humanity is not all God cares about, as is clear from the stories of Noah and Job.

Leviticus 25 is one of the earliest manuals for environmental protection on record: the idea of the Jubilee - the cycle of Sabbatical years, with land left fallow in the 49th - is based on recognition of the need for wise use of the soil and its fruits.

And of course St Francis and St Cuthbert are vastly influential voices in church history for celebration of the natural world and humble awareness of our place in God's Creation.

So the argument that Christianity is in principle and practice a problem for the environment does not stand up. But it is true that the churches - and other faiths - were not at the forefront of the environmental movements when they began to grow 40-50 years ago. In

recent years they have started to make up for lost time.

The Church of England began to make environmental policies some 25 years ago, and many churches have been active for decades in local conservation projects. It launched its overarching environmental campaign, Shrinking the Footprint, in 2006.

Most significant, in 2008 the UN and the Alliance for Religion and Conservation called on the world's major faiths to produce new statements of their environmental concerns and plans for action over coming decades (see page 15).

And so last November the Church of England published a new statement of its values and policies concerning protection of the environment and action on climate change.

This document, Church and Earth, describes action so far and plans for the next decade, and spells out why environmental concern matters to Christians.

Before I summarise the plans, it is worth reflecting on the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury at the head of this article.

Some critics see the Greening of the Church as a fad, a grafting of modern humanist values on to the faith. But Church and Earth is not about jumping on a secularist bandwagon. It asks, what does it mean to be a Christian in our time? In what ways are we called to →

→ live out our faith? We are meant to love God and love our neighbour as ourselves. This is not compatible with allowing ecological degradation and unsustainable over-use of the world's resources.

Christians should respect the Gift of God's world and should care about the fate of the poorest, who are hit first and worst by environmental problems generated by the consumption patterns of the rich world - the risks of dangerous climate change being the most obvious example.

Church and Earth starts, then, from the core of our faith, and asks how we should respond to the ecological crises we all face. To their great credit, last autumn the Bishops of the C of E endorsed a radical and demanding plan for the next decade, reflecting the urgency of action on climate, energy security and justice for the poorest.

If the world's governments had been as ambitious at Copenhagen,

we would now be celebrating a major advance.

What does it mean for Dioceses and parishes? We need to play our part in measuring our environmental impacts, energy use and other consumption, and in setting an example of 'living lightly' on the Earth. That means saving energy and water, using renewables where we can, purchasing Green products and minimising our use of cars and planes. And it also means celebrating God's Creation in our worship, projects and community activities.

Some of this will be easy to do, much will demand a lot of hard work and extra finance - for example from government grants - and partnerships with other churches, faiths and secular bodies. The Church has set itself a huge challenge. We should be proud that it has done so, and we have everything to gain by playing our part in making sure that the vision of Church and Earth is realised by 2020. **Ian Christie**

# DIOCESAN ACTION

## Shrinking The Footprint

All the Dioceses of the Church of England are committed to the Church's programme, Shrinking the Footprint, which aims to cut our collective carbon emissions and use our combined resources and ingenuity to improve our local environments and do our bit for sustainable development worldwide.

Most Dioceses have appointed Diocesan Environmental Officers (DEOs) to coordinate this work and to draw up environmental policy statements and plans.

In our Diocese, Southwark, the DEO is Dr Barry Goodwin. He and his colleagues have overseen a wide range of projects and we at Christ Church can draw on ideas, resources and encouragement from him.

Southwark has been active on a number of fronts; drawing up an environmental policy for the Diocese; producing a background paper on environmental challenges; publishing Enviro-News, a

newsletter for parishes, full of ideas for parishes drawing up their own environmental policies; and collaborative projects with the London Churches Environmental Network (LCEN).

LCEN's aim is to ensure that technical knowledge and environmental expertise is made readily available to all churches across London. Its remit is to hold seminars and other events and to act as a ginger group to remind us of our Christian responsibility to honour the fact that "the earth is the Lord's", and to accept that part of the mission of the church is caring for the earth's resources.

The next big challenge for Southwark and LCEN is to work over the next few years to implement the Church's new vision and plan for environmental action (see pages 8-10) - a task made more challenging by the recession. Sharing good ideas and inspirational practice - of which there are many in our Diocese - will be vital. **Ian Christie**

### The Church has committed itself to a wide range of measures...

- A cut of 80% in its total 'carbon footprint' by 2050
- A cut of 42% by 2020 - one of the biggest cuts planned by any state or organisation
- All Church schools to be classed as environmentally sustainable by 2016
- A voluntary Climate Justice Fund to support environmental projects benefitting churches and their communities in East Africa;
- Development over coming years of sustainable purchasing schemes for the Church, aiming for discounts on bulk procurement of environmental goods and services.



# COPENHAGEN & CLIMATE CHANGE

## ‘When We Were Still Far Off’

**I**t doesn't rain but it pours. First, the governments of the world failed to design a global treaty to combat climate change at their December 2009 conference in Copenhagen. Then the combination of a silly mistake about Himalayan glaciers and a series of scurrilous attacks have been claimed by 'sceptics' as grounds to doubt climate science. Then Toyota - the pioneer of clean technology for the automobile sector - was humiliated over safety failings. And to cap it all, it was the coldest British winter in 30 years, snowing heavily even in West Wimbledon. Perhaps global warming was just a passing phase after all?

Sadly, the answer is a firm No. There are many uncertainties, but the fundamental science is rock solid. The climate is average weath-

er over time and space: one cold winter in London and New York does not mean that the northern hemisphere or indeed the world as a whole is not warming.

Average global temperatures have risen over the past century; the last decade was the warmest on record; glaciers are melting; seas are rising; and the Arctic summer ice has been thinning and shrinking.

Further disruption lies ahead - the question is how much, when, where and with what impact.

The Earth has soaked up the interventions of humanity over the past 10,000 years. As part of the natural carbon cycle, the oceans and land can absorb some of the additional emissions from our activities. But beyond a certain level - likely to be around 2 tonnes of carbon dioxide per person per year -

extra emissions of carbon dioxide risk destabilising the climate system. Currently emissions in the UK stand at around 10 tonnes per person: we can view 8 tonnes of this as our 'carbon deficit'.

Most of the carbon dioxide we emit this year will still be in the upper atmosphere in 2110 - one of the several debts that we are bequeathing to our children and their descendants.

And who holds the world record in terms of 'carbon debt'? We do, in the UK - first into the Industrial Revolution, we have built up the highest per capita debt, greater even than the USA.

Climate change cannot be approached with ordinary human opportunism. It requires a sense of time, a degree of responsibility and an appreciation of risk that goes beyond the narrow bargain 'I'll cut my emissions, if you cut yours'.

This approach led to the dead-end at Copenhagen. What has emerged, however, is the recognition from key countries, notably Brazil, China, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, Norway, South Korea and the United Kingdom, of the need to transform economies to cut emissions and prevent transmission of dangerous 'carbon debts' to future generations.

Added to this, many of these countries also see 'green growth' as one of the prime ways of getting out of the current economic malaise: cutting out carbon means improv-

ing energy security, reducing waste, and spurring employment and innovation in new industries.

Yet policy alone, however good, is unlikely to be enough. Our starting point as Christians is the injunction to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbour as yourself'.

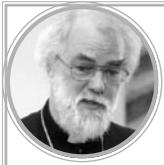
In a global age, our neighbours are not just in Wimbledon, but are people across the world now and in the future, for whom we must give a 'preference to the poor'. More than this, our neighbours are also the species with whom we share the Earth, and whom we must also love.

It is with this perspective of love for all Creation that we can understand St Francis's Canticle of the Sun and his invocation of not just Mother Earth, but also 'Sister Water and Brother Wind'.

It's been a cold winter for climate policy, but as the warmth returns this spring, we need to renew our commitment as Christ Church to actions that will support the vulnerable both in our community and in our extended family - such as Jordan and Zimbabwe. For it is those already on the edge who are and will be most affected by a disrupted climate.

So even if a global treaty is 'still far off', we recall that we have been met already by Jesus and must walk in his footsteps of simplicity and love - and this means caring about the climate.

**Nick Robins**



## THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

# Christian Witness For The Environment

**T**he Archbishop of Canterbury Dr Rowan Williams has become a formidable advocate of radical thinking and action in the face of the environmental crisis.

He is part of an impressive team of leading bishops who have made environmental concern a key part of their ministry. He preached in Copenhagen Cathedral during the climate change summit last December. Here are extracts from the Archbishop's sermon.

*"There is... no shortage of excellent excuses for turning away from decisions that will mean real change. But at least let's be honest about where they come from: it is fear – not necessarily irrational fear, not even necessarily purely selfish fear, but fear all the same.*

*And so long as that dominates our calculations, we are stepping back from love – love for the creation itself, which we must look at as God looks at it, love for one another and for the generations still unborn, who*

*need us to do whatever we can to guarantee a stable, productive and balanced world to live in – not a world of utterly chaotic and disruptive change, of devastation and desertification, of biological impoverishment and degradation.*

*The deepest religious basis for our commitment to the environment in which God has placed us is this recognition that we are called to be, and are enabled to be, the place where God's love for the world comes through.*

*We have to flesh out in our lives that fundamental biblical conviction that when God looks on the world he finds it good. We have to show in our lives some echo of the delight God finds in creation.*

*And as we should have learned by now, the truth is that we cannot show the right kind of love for our fellow-humans unless we also work at keeping the earth as a place that is a secure home for all people and for future generations."*

**For the full text go to...  
[archbishopofcanterbury.org/2675](http://archbishopofcanterbury.org/2675).**

# The Other Climate Summit

**A**s I walked up Castle Hill from the station, I saw a more exotic crowd of pedestrians than Windsor is used to. There were Buddhist monks in saffron robes; muftis and imams; Christian monks in their habits; white-bearded Hindu elders sharing the pavement with nuns and Pentecostal Nigerian ladies in full West African finery. What was going on?

In November 2009, a month before the Copenhagen climate summit, an altogether more optimistic and better organised conference was held in Windsor.

Set up by the United Nations and the Alliance for Religion and Conservation (ARC) its aim was to highlight the work done by the major religions to protect the environment. ARC encourages faith organisations to produce seven-year plans for 'Generational Change', and I helped write the C of E's Plan last year (see pages 8-10). You can see details of all the plans developed so far on the ARC website ([arcworld.org](http://arcworld.org)).

Projects include the greening of the annual pilgrimage to Mecca; development of green and ethical

product labelling for Muslims; green building schemes by Buddhist communities in China; and the C of E's bold target of a 42% cut in its carbon footprint by 2020.

The conference at Windsor was an inspiring event, showing how inter-faith cooperation can flourish. As well as presenting the plans from their particular faiths, many delegates also announced new partnerships they'd created.

Fittingly, this wonderfully ecumenical conference closed with a psalm sung in Arabic by a Maronite Christian priest from Lebanon, who was wildly applauded by the assembled Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Hindus, Evangelicals, Catholics, Anglicans, Greek Orthodox priests, Zoroastrians and Sikhs.

As I was leaving I got talking to an impressive teenager, who turned out to be a climate change campaigner for a new UK youth forum connecting Muslims and Christians.

No matter how disappointing the Copenhagen conference was, the memory of this Windsor multi-faith gathering fills me with optimism.

The environment can truly become common ground for people from all faiths and of none. **Ian Christie**

# Tensions... Conflicts... Questions...

**A**s Nick Robins notes on page 12, there has been a lot of controversy about climate science in the wake of the scandal over emails stolen from the climate team at University of East Anglia – which seemed to reinforce claims that evidence was being covered up or overstated. Things were made more complex and rancorous by the discovery of some mistakes in the reports of the International Panel on Climate Change.

There is no doubt that the scientists involved have made bad errors of judgement and sometimes tried to block what they saw as vexatious attempts to get hold of their data.

These mistakes do not undermine the basic science, but do highlight the inescapable uncertainties and tensions arising from it.

It is absolutely in the nature of environmental problems that there should be controversy, deep disagreements about the action we

should take, and profound questions about our values.

Just as our journey of faith is often beset by doubts, unresolved questions and conflicts of interest, so the path towards a more sustainable economy and society is a tortuous one. Here are just some of the tensions and conflicts that together we need to try to resolve in coming decades.

## **Evidence and action in the face of uncertainty**

The climate system is one of the most complex phenomena we have ever studied. The same goes for the web of species and habitats we call ecosystems and biodiversity. While we have a huge amount of knowledge and data about them, we know that our ignorance is vast.

We cannot know for sure what difference our actions now will make in 50, 100 or 500 years' time. We have to rely on computer models of the climate, since there is

no spare Earth that we can use as a controlled laboratory.

However, if we delay action to avoid further disruption of the climate until we have much more knowledge, we risk dangerous and irreversible damage. Contrarians argue that uncertainty means we should wait and see. Environmentalists argue that uncertainty means we should be prudent and take precautionary action.

What do you think? Most Governments and scientists conclude that since the stakes are so high, we need to act on an insurance basis, just as we do in everyday life in the face of uncertain but substantial risks.

## **Economic competitiveness**

Taking action to cut greenhouse gas emissions and protect biodiversity is costly. No country wants to take unilateral action for fear of losing out in the global economy.

Businesses resist extra costs from tax and regulation for fear of becoming uncompetitive. But if no-one takes a lead, everyone is paralysed - as happened at Copenhagen.

There are many uncertainties about the costs of action - but leading economists such as Lord Nicholas Stern argue strongly that even if they are very big (perhaps 5% or more of GDP pa over decades) they are dwarfed by the costs of inaction if we provoke dangerous climate change. If that happens, the costs could be on the scale of the

Depression and world wars, and maybe worse.

The global scientific and political consensus is that the risks and costs of inaction are much greater than those from taking urgent steps to save energy, cut carbon emissions and develop alternative energy systems. And increasingly major businesses are agreeing, such as M&S, B&Q, Tesco and Wal-Mart, all of which are developing ambitious environmental programmes.

## **Techno-fixes**

Some argue that the answer to environmental problems is more economic growth. This will generate the wealth we need to fix our problems, and will inspire development of new technologies to allow indefinite growth to continue.

At the extreme, some argue that we should try to 'geo-engineer' the climate and ecosystems to solve problems without interrupting growth and reducing living standards.

But environmentalists argue that we can't use technology to enable high consumption for up to 9 billion people, and that the attempt to do so would extinguish even more species and habitats. Is the world just here for humans? What are the limits to our use of the world's resources for our own benefit? These questions can't be solved through technical advances and specialist debates: they go to the heart of our political values - and faiths. **Ian Christie**

# Local & National Developments

**T**he Church's actions for environmental protection and carbon reduction have been applauded by Gordon Brown in a letter in the New Year to the Bishop of London congratulating the C of E on its new vision and policies.

Increasingly it is recognised that ambitious targets for cutting greenhouse gases and developing a more efficient and sustainable energy system depend not only on action by Government and business, but also on initiatives in communities and from every part of civil society. The Church and other denominations and faiths are beginning to play their part.

Although the environment and climate change did not have much publicity in the 2010 general election campaign, all the main political parties have agreed on the urgency of action and it is clear that it will be a priority for the new LibDem Conservative coalition government. The UK, while having a lot of challenges to face in meeting its environmental goals, has a creditable record as a leader on the world stage when it comes to

climate policy and protection of the environment. Here are some of the initiatives and policies that are underway and that will gain in importance in the next decade, regardless of who is in Government.

- The UK has enshrined in law the target of reducing our carbon footprint - the total emissions from industry, households etc - by 80% by 2050, in line with best scientific advice about what all developed nations need to do in order to avoid high risk of dangerous climate change.

- Further to this, the UK has set up a system of carbon budgets to help policymakers keep on track in meeting this ambitious target.

- Heavy industry and energy producers take part in the EU's emissions trading scheme (ETS) that aims, not very effectively so far, to provide incentives to cut carbon emissions.

- From this year, all private and public sector bodies that are heavy users of electricity become part of the new Carbon Reduction Commitment, a scheme that requires them to report on their emissions and then participate in an emis-

sions trading scheme. Transport-related and domestic consumers are exempt. But every organisation with a half-hourly meter must disclose its electricity use.

- Feed-in tariffs and grants for insulation to encourage take-up of green energy measures (home energy efficiency, small-scale renewables) by households and other organisations are being promoted. Churches could gain from the new tariffs, which offer an attractive rate of payment for surplus renewable electricity exported back to the Grid.

- Many organisations in all sectors are joining in the 10:10 campaign launched by the film-maker Franny Armstrong. 10:10 is backed by all the main parties and encourages us all to cut our carbon emissions by 10% by the end of 2010.

These are all big plans. They have to be turned into reality. And that will take much more than the work of policymakers and planners. To create a sustainable economy and to 'live lightly' on the Earth, people in all sectors, at all levels and in all kinds of community need to join in.

That calls for new incentives and regulations, but also for commitment based on our dearest values. For us Christians, the environmental mission is rooted in our calling to love God, work for justice, and love one another as ourselves. It is as fundamental as that. **Ian Christie**

## Books, reports & websites

There is a huge range of publications and websites on how to live a greener life, climate change and what a sustainable economy would look like...

- Excellent website for the Church's Shrinking the Footprint campaign. You can download the new vision and action plan Church and Earth 2009-2016 [www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org](http://www.shrinkingthefootprint.cofe.anglican.org)

- Church's Climate Justice Fund website [www.climatejusticefund.org](http://www.climatejusticefund.org)

- Leading network of projects on environmental action [www.arocha.org](http://www.arocha.org)

- Alliance for Religion and Conservation [www.arcworld.org](http://www.arcworld.org)

- Christian Ecology Link [www.christian-ecology.org.uk](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk)

- Operation Noah: ecumenical climate change [www.operationnoah.org](http://www.operationnoah.org)

- When Enough is Enough: a Christian framework for environmental sustainability, RJ Berry (Apollos, 2007)

- PlanetWise, Dave Bookless, (InterVarsity Press, 2008)

- Sharing God's Planet, Claire Foster, (Church House, 2005)

- How Many Lightbulbs Does It Take to Change a Christian?, Claire Foster and David Shreeve, (Church House, 2007)

- Don't Stop at the Lights: leading your church through a changing climate, Claire Foster and David Shreeve, (Church House, 2008)

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# Common Talk

Conserving the unique treasure on our doorstep



**T**he prediction for climate change in the UK is for drier summers and wetter winters. Therefore, by the middle of the present century, it is possible that southern England will experience prolonged periods of drought in the Summer and widespread flooding during the Winter.

The effect will be drought or water logged induced mortality for many of our native broadleaved trees and habitat loss for wildlife.

As guardians of the Commons, managing its flora, fauna and associated habitats entails the adoption of the well used adage, to 'think globally while acting locally'.

Over the last few years we have increasingly planted trees such as the Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*) which due to its Mediterranean origins may possess the key to withstanding the predicted increase

in temperatures.

But, to quote the Forestry Commission, 'no one is exactly sure what is going to happen' as a result of climate change and therefore we on the Commons must continue with our primary task of conserving what we already have in existence.

With an increase in global temperatures, pests and diseases are expected to spread much further than before but many of the current pathogens that affect our trees are as much the result of globalisation as global warming.

In these uncertain times, the Conservators and staff remain committed to preserving Wimbledon and Putney Commons and will respond to whatever measures are deemed necessary by environmental advisors to ensure its long term future. **Peter Haldane**, *Assistant Ranger & Wildlife Liaison Officer for Wimbledon & Putney Commons*