

Climate of Justice

A Platform for Climate and Development promoted by churches, mission agencies, and development services

Climate protection, food security and fighting poverty are central challenges to humanity today. Accordingly, this policy paper names the aims and positions of church organisations involved in development, mission and partnership and draws political conclusions. The Climate Alliance is a broad-based coalition of over 90 German organizations - churches, trade unions, environmental and development organizations. The churches, mission agencies and development services that have signed up to it express their positions on development in six propositions:

- I. Churches bear responsibility for climate justice.
- II. The decisive phase of global policy change on energy and climate is now.
- III. There can be no climate protection without global justice.
- IV. Climate justice - development-based positions on climate protection
 - Nuclear energy is not a sustainable contribution to climate protection
 - Rising meat consumption and energy crops threaten food sovereignty
 - The production and use of bioenergy must meet certain criteria
 - Technology transfer must be speeded up
 - The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) must contribute to climate protection and fighting poverty
- V. Climate protection as a part of development cooperation and partnerships
 - Examining innovative ways of financing emissions trading
 - Calling for a climate-friendly and socially just energy supply
 - Strengthening natural, locally appropriate methods of using land
 - Supporting developing countries in adapting to climate change
 - Gender-mainstreaming in climate protection
 - Intensifying advocacy on climate policy in the North
- VI. Climate protection begins with us!

The signatory churches, mission agencies and church development services are actors in environmental and development policy. With this platform they invite discussion, position-taking and cooperation within the church and society. Since the authors' are active members of the Climate Alliance, this initiative may also be understood as a contribution to articulating and strengthening its concerns.

I. Churches bear responsibility for climate justice

“As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease” (Genesis 8:22). This assurance of God to Noah concludes the story of the flood in the Bible. The flood was not able to change the fact that “the inclination of the human heart ... is evil” (Genesis 8:21). But God will never again respond to that with annihilation. God defies evil by giving us life in community directed toward the future. Human beings may - and should - rely on that.

In the 20th century the technical development of nuclear weapons of mass destruction for the first time enabled something that had been completely unthinkable since the origins of humanity: the fact that humanity is capable of plunging the earth into a nuclear winter

extinguishing life. The disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant showed how vulnerable nature and human beings are when exposed to the dangers of modern technology.

But even below the threshold of military and non-military nuclear disasters, plant and animal species have long been threatened, or have become extinct owing to the reckless exploitation of natural resources and the consequences of industrial production and human lifestyles. Many human beings also suffer under the impact of environmental degradation.

The climate change triggered by human beings is already irreversible. It endangers human life support systems and the sensitive web of life on earth. The only question is whether or not the change can be slowed down or mitigated so that the impending catastrophic developments can be reduced to a bearable extent by the end of the 21st century.

“The earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it” (Psalm 24:1). This biblical assurance binds human beings into a community of life with all creatures and assigns them the responsibility to encounter the world with reverence, to make it habitable and to preserve it as such (Genesis 2:15).

“The description of humankind as God’s image bearers (Genesis 1:26f.) depicts humans as the earthly agents of God’s work in creation. We are regarded as proxies and communicative representatives of the constant, caring reign of God. We are allocated a position of co-responsibility in the sustainable use and beneficial management of the living space created by God, with the responsibility before God of carrying this out.”¹

Today we understand that this main feature of biblical theology corresponds to the ideal of sustainability. It is incompatible with an arbitrary and exploitative way of dealing with nature.

We recognize:

“Global climate change probably represents the greatest existential threat for the present and, to a much greater extent, coming generations. ... We must actively address this challenge. As those to whom God entrusted creation as a loan, we humans bear responsibility for its wellbeing.”²

Climate change exacerbates poverty and threatens life. Global climate change destroys natural resources, amplifies poverty, undermines opportunities of development and intensifies injustice. People living in poverty, especially in the countries of the global South, are the main sufferers from climate change, i.e. from the over-consumption of energy of the industrialized countries and the global consumer classes. In addition to this, misdirected climate protection strategies - like the massive employment of bioenergy³ to cover high energy consumption – threaten the food security and development of many southern countries.

Climate change means taking responsibility for God’s creation and, at the same time, ensuring that all human beings can enjoy a life in dignity and just participation. For this reason we as churches and church-related groups advocate for participatory justice in the access to environmental goods and services worldwide. It is about fair development chances for all human beings and for succeeding generations. It is about climate justice.

“This requires a radical change of mentality and awareness in society as a whole and especially among decision-makers in business, politics and society. A shift to a truly sustainable, nature-friendly economy and way of life requires, in biblical language, metanoia, which is to say, a radical change of mind. Such a change can have healing and liberating effects, but it also demands of us that we become aware of the

¹ EKD Council Chairman, Bishop Wolfgang Huber, It is not too late, EKD-Texte 89, 2007, section IV <http://www.ekd.de/english/1715.html>

² The German bishops: Climate Change: A Focal Point of Global, Intergenerational and Ecological Justice, Bonn 2007, p. 5. http://www.lienkamp-berlin.de/DBK_Klimawandel_2_Aufl_2007_engl.pdf

³ See below, “Rising meat consumption and energy crops threaten food sovereignty”.

negative aspects of our culture's underlying attitude towards the rest of creation and towards other cultural approaches to dealing with it."⁴

Sustained by God's promise and good instruction we assume our special responsibility for climate justice. We are ready to take the side of the poor and the excluded, the future generations and the endangered creation. In this key situation we want to produce our contribution to a climate policy that is just towards human beings and the environment and to amplify our advocacy for climate protection.

"Many kinds of resistance will have to be overcome in respect of the problem of climate change because this is one of those unpleasant truths that we like to suppress and that we 'hear, but do not listen or understand' (Matthew 13:13)."⁵

At the same time we are aware that, in this situation, the pressure of worldwide civil society on those who are politically active is of crucial significance so that nebulous declarations of intent are forged into practical action. That is why we have got involved in the Climate Alliance with other activists in civil society.

II. The decisive phase of global policy change on energy and climate is now

The 4th report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the United Nations published in 2007 contains dramatic findings. The anthropogenic greenhouse effect is more dynamic and more consequential than previously assumed. There is a timeframe of only 7 to 10 years to stabilize global human-induced warming at under 2 degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrial times. Global greenhouse gas emissions must be slashed by at least 60% by 2050. The baseline for these calculations is the greenhouse gas emissions of 1990. Global climate gas emissions must be strongly reduced at the latest in 10 years if we are to attain this goal. Without counter-measures we can expect that the global average temperature will increase by up to 6.4 degrees C by the year 2100. This would have unforeseeable and most likely catastrophic consequences.

The 13th Conference of the Parties (COP13) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in Bali, Indonesia, adopted a new road map for negotiating a new global climate protection convention. Following the first period in force of the Kyoto Protocol, i.e. beginning in 2013, it is meant to regulate both the global reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and support adaptation to climate change. In December 2009 the negotiations are to be completed at COP14 in Copenhagen. In Bali, however, the international community did not succeed in defining clear goals for the upcoming negotiations - e.g. limiting the temperature rise to 2 degrees C or naming specific greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

While in various regions of the world the socio-ecological crisis is worsening with increasing poverty, hunger or the loss of biological diversity, influential lobby groups are doing 'business as usual'. The expectation of short-term returns and location interests still too often take priority over long-term benefits and human welfare.

Climate protection can only be attained through a change of course in society. Fundamental changes are necessary and especially in all fields and at all levels of policy and - nationally and internationally, in business and in society as well as in the private sphere. It is not a technological revolution that is required to move from the 'fossil' age of apparently limitless growth to a low-carbon, environmentally sustainable global economy with a social dimension.

⁴ EKD Council Chairman, Bishop Wolfgang Huber, op. cit.

⁵ The German bishops, op.cit.

Rather, we need a far-reaching cultural change, a turning away from models of development that are based on growth, especially in the industrialized countries.

Today we are standing at the crossroads. We must take a self-critical look at the values and ideals that have formed our personal life, our economy, politics and society.

Are we willing

- to adopt another, climate-friendly lifestyle?
- to work for a sustainable world community based on solidarity?

Are the industrialized countries willing

- to really accept the development rights of the South and future generations, not only formally, and also to forgo short-sighted national egoism?
- to accept the polluter-pays principle in that we take over the costs of adaptation and that we ourselves become forerunners of global climate protection?

In this context, it is to be welcomed that the European Union and German Federal Government went on the offensive politically in 2007. Germany declared itself willing to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases by 40% by 2020 (baseline: 1990).⁶ These ambitious climate protection goals and action packages underscore the seriousness of German climate policy and could maybe even pull braking and blocking states like the USA, and also emerging economic powers like India and China 'on board' for climate protection.

The EU climate and energy package that was presented in January 2008 deserves particular attention. A series of draft directives have taken central parts of energy and climate policy out of the responsibility of the member states and thus out of reach of blockades based on national interest.

Nevertheless, doubts are appropriate as to whether or not German and European policy-makers will have the assertiveness to forge their own – problem-specific - goals into appropriate programmes of action and implement them consistently.

III. There can be no climate protection without global justice

Climate change increases poverty and endangers life

The greenhouse effect destroys natural life support systems, amplifies poverty, undermines development opportunities and reinforces injustice. While the use of energy in the industrialized and newly industrializing countries persists at a high level, in some cases even increasing rapidly, about 2.5 billion people have no access to modern energies, e.g. electricity. This 'energy poverty' goes hand in hand with material poverty and with poor quality education and development opportunities. At the same time, disadvantaged population groups suffer most from climate change, i.e. from the over-consumption of energy by the industrialized countries and emerging economies.

In addition to this, misguided energy strategies - like the massive spread of biofuels⁷ – threaten the development of the countries of the global South. The rising prices for agricultural products make food more expensive and endanger people's food supply. Cultivating energy crops along with production of animal feed claims more and more acreage

⁶ See below, "Rising meat consumption and energy crops threaten food sovereignty".

⁷ According to latest figures global greenhouse gas emissions need to be reduced by 60-70% by 2050 (baseline: 1990) in order to achieve the 2° C target; that puts the reduction targets for the industrialized states by 2050 at well over 80%.

in the developing countries. This takes away living space and land for the production of food, heightens the exploitation of natural ecosystems and reduces biodiversity.

From a Christian and ethical standpoint this development is neither willed by God nor is it an unalterable fate. It is the expression of a blatant lack of just behaviour towards developing countries, posterity and the creation on the part of industrialized states and increasingly of emerging economic powers that follow the western model of development. Climate protection therefore involves responsibility both for God's creation and for human dignity. Participatory justice is involved, being able to partake in environmental goods and services. It involves giving fair chances of development to the people of the South and generations to come.

Aligning emissions at a sustainable level

The atmosphere is a global and public good and is at the disposal of all people for sustainable usage. However, the atmosphere has been, and is being, misused by the politically influential and economically strong industrialized and newly industrializing countries as a 'dump'. In keeping with the polluter-pays principle (taking responsibility) and their respective capacity, the industrialized countries are the ones required to take over greater burdens for climate protection. They must reduce their emissions by at least 40% by 2020 and by more than 80% by 2050 (baseline: 1990). However, emerging economies are also duty-bound to make their contribution to reducing greenhouse gases.

A climate protection convention enshrined in international law, verifiable and entitled to impose sanctions for the period after 2012, must therefore be based on the principle of the common, but differentiated responsibility of all states. They should also guarantee a quick alignment of greenhouse gas emissions per capita at a sustainable level. It is equally necessary to reach agreements on how to internationally distribute the costs for the reduction of greenhouse gases and for adapting to the consequences of climate change.

Developing and newly industrializing countries must be supported financially and technologically to a significant extent so that they can build up a climate-friendly system of energy supply and adjust to the inexorable effects of climate change. This is a matter of justice, not of handouts. Financing the cost of climate change and the required adaptation must not lead to a further indebtedness of the developing countries. The cost of climate change must be a substantial part of debt sustainability analysis. The expenditure for climate protection and adaptation to inescapable climate changes takes priority before the servicing of debts.

IV. Climate justice - development-based positions on climate protection

Developing strategies against climate change calls for a differentiated assessment of the consequences and a far-reaching consideration of what is useful and harmful. A good end does not justify every means in the area of climate protection.

Nuclear energy is not a sustainable contribution to climate protection

The German resolution to get out of nuclear energy must be maintained. The advocates of a worldwide 'renaissance of nuclear energy' make light of the intolerable risks and catastrophic consequences of using nuclear energy with the argument that it protects the climate. In order to effectively reduce the emission of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide through nuclear energy several thousand nuclear power plants would have to be built in the next 40 years in the industrialized and developing countries. This would only be possible by a massive entry into a plutonium economy (fast breeder reactor technology). This, in turn, would dramatically increase the danger of reactor disorders and terrorist attacks – and it would be practically impossible to finance.

Moreover, studies have demonstrated that carbon emissions from the nuclear fuel chain - from the mining and the manufacturing of uranium to the assembly and disassembly of nuclear plants - is significantly higher than is the case with renewable energies and even higher than for efficient gas-powered plants.

Rising meat consumption and energy crops threaten food sovereignty

The sufficient production of basic foodstuffs deserves priority over the production of animal feed and energy crops. Ongoing climate change and increasing global meat consumption - coupled with the rising demand for biofuel – are already contributing to a worsening of food security in developing countries. States need to review and modify their policies on this issue, in order to guarantee the implementation of the human right to food.

Biofuel is to comprise 17% of the fuel consumption in Germany by 2020 according to the original resolution of the Federal Government. The required amounts of biofuel are so great that the demand can only be covered by purchases on the world market. That will lead to fiercer competition for acreage between food, feed and fuel as well as to rising prices for agricultural products. Meanwhile the government has begun to slow down the expansion of energy crops.

Nevertheless, it is to be feared that the worldwide bioenergy boom will severely worsen food supply, especially in the developing countries and primarily for the poorer population. The same applies to natural resources (biodiversity). Already primary forests are being cut down for biomass plantations, e.g. for the production of palm oil. As long as maintaining the lifestyle and economic system of the western world calls for a disproportionate consumption of energy, attempting to replace fossil fuels by renewable raw materials will prove impossible.

The disproportionate increase in the share of biofuels that has been included in the climate protection package of the German Federal Government is therefore not acceptable. Bioenergy cannot be given free rein in the name of ecology. The consequences of utilizing large areas of land for energy crops must be evaluated critically in view of the large growth potential and rising demand. Food security and the integrity of creation take top priority.

An environmentally and socially sustainable expansion of bioenergy is possible, but it presupposes clear limits. It must be accompanied by a radical drop in the use of primary energies in the industrialized countries by energy saving and rational energy utilization. Beside that, wasting food and high meat consumption must be reduced in the affluent societies because of the danger of competition for land use. Consequently -

The production and use of bioenergy must meet certain criteria

- 1) Human food security takes priority over the production of animal feed and energy crops.
- 2) The production of bioenergy must be socially and ecologically sustainable.
- 3) Establishing regional value chains should take priority over trading with biofuels. Bioenergy should be produced to meet regional demand and should not increase the dependence of producers on the world market.
- 4) Genetically modified plants must be excluded from the cultivation of energy crops.
- 5) Grain must not be used as a source of bioenergy ("No heat with wheat!")
- 6) The production and trade in biomass should only be allowed under strict rules with independent inspections (bioenergy certification). The certification criteria must be comprehensible and verifiable at all times and support socially and environmentally sustainable development in the producing countries. Criteria for such certification are:
 - a. Respecting the established core labour norms of the International Labour Organization (ILO), along with fair wages and the protection of health,
 - b. Respecting the human right to food (UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, articles 11 and 12),
 - c. Prohibiting any change in use of land hitherto under cultivation for food crops,
 - d. Protecting biodiversity,

- e. Prohibiting the direct or indirect destruction of primary forests and other valuable ecosystems,
- f. Utilizing local crops as appropriate to the location,
- g. Significantly reducing greenhouse gases compared with the use of fossil energy carriers,
- h. Fully involving⁸ the local population in planning and implementation.
- i. Not certifying additional imports of energy raw materials from countries with violent conflicts (e.g. Columbia and Indonesia) where the local population is being expelled and human rights are abused by (para)military groups.

Current plans of the Federal Government for a biomass sustainability regulation ignore the social dimension and do not go far enough in ecological terms either.

Technological transfer must be speeded up

The worldwide reduction of CO₂ emissions to a tolerable level is not attainable in the industrialized countries alone. The developing countries, too, and especially the dynamic emerging economies with their large populations must chart a course of climate-friendly, decentralized energy policy that will reduce poverty. For this they need access to appropriate energy technologies. This requires the right conditions for technological transfer. Patents and intellectual property rights must be designed to maintain the dynamic of innovation and, at the same time, spread new environmental technologies at acceptable costs.

This process must be supported by the funding policies of the bilateral and multilateral financing instruments. However, the policy of the World Bank has hitherto pointed in the wrong direction. 96% of World Bank lending in 2006 went to the fossil and nuclear energy sector.

The World Bank should therefore stop financing nuclear energy immediately and transfer its activities from fossil technologies to renewable energies. A well-financed global fund for investment programmes in the developing countries is also necessary. Renewable energies and climate change adaptation programmes can be financed with these resources. One possible way of financing the fund could be by increasing charges in emissions trading and imposing a levy on air travel.

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) must contribute to climate protection and combating poverty

The Clean Development Mechanism provided for in the Framework Convention on Climate Change is an instrument of emissions trading. Companies from industrialized countries with a reduction obligation carry out climate protection projects in developing countries without a reduction obligation. The emissions avoided through the project (known as certified emission reductions or carbon credits) are credited to the particular industrialized country as a reduction. The goal of the CDM is not only to reduce emissions at lower cost but also to help the developing and newly industrializing countries build up a climate-friendly economy through technology transfer.

To date, however, the CDM has proved to be a very weak instrument and in need of improvement.

CDM projects may continue to benefit only a small number of industrialized countries in discharging their national reduction obligations. In the light of their high per capita emissions and in order to set an example, greenhouse gas emissions must first be reduced in the industrialized countries themselves. At present, however, the CDM benefits those countries

⁸ Participatory land-use planning with early involvement of the local population in decisions on regional development (=> principle of free prior informed consent); prior clarification and guarantee of the (also traditional, unrecorded) land rights of small farmers and the indigenous/traditional population.

that are more strongly developed industrially and that possess greater potential for reducing CO₂. That causes poorer developing countries to fall back even further in technological investments. The rules must be conducive to supporting decentralized and poverty-reducing CDM projects. In addition, possible and planned development projects to combat poverty in the South must not be replaced by CDM projects. That means that CDM projects must be new and additional, and not financed by official development aid (ODA).

Clear guidelines must guarantee that nuclear reactors, fossil energy-fired power plants and large hydro-power plants remain excluded from CDM and that CDM projects do not harm biological diversity. Reforestation must not be recognized as compensation for carbon emissions. For this reason, social and environmental standards applicable worldwide must be established for the execution of CDM projects.

High standards and improved oversight by independent agencies (CDM Watch) are needed to monitor CDM projects. Local civil society must participate more than hitherto in the recognition of CDM projects. In cooperation with environmental and One World organizations the churches should feel responsible for checking CDM projects in the South with respect to their additionality and fulfilment of eco-social standards, and publicising offences and irregularities.

V. Climate protection as part of church development cooperation and partnerships

Church projects in the field of cooperation for development and church partnerships already make an important contribution to climate protection. As churches, mission agencies and church-based development services, we want to build on this potential even more.

Our goals are therefore

...examining innovative ways of financing emissions trading

Independently of the criticism of the social and ecological effects of existing CDM projects and their framework conditions, emissions trading at the project level offers new financing options that are available for development funding and poverty-reduction projects. It remains to be seen whether the Clean Development Mechanism and the voluntary CO₂ offset schemes offer additional possibilities for church development cooperation to fund small-scale and poverty-reduction projects. The church development organizations and mission agencies will examine whether and how such projects can be realized cost efficiently and according to Gold Standard criteria. We aim to offset unavoidable CO₂ emissions e.g. for air travel, car travel, conferences etc. through the voluntary support of independently certified compensation projects – if possible with our own partners in the South. This can take place via existing programmes (e.g. atmosfair, flugfaircare for air travel) or via new projects. We want to realize these projects in addition to our planned development cooperation activities.

...calling for a climate-friendly and socially just energy supply

The developing countries suffer under an extreme shortage of energy. 2.5 billion people are without access to modern energy. In our church development cooperation and partnerships, as in the work of mission agencies, we are particularly committed to supporting decentralized energy generation projects that are adapted to local conditions. Attention must be given to ensuring that all disadvantaged population groups benefit from them.

Yet existing way of obtaining and supplying energy must also be improved in terms of their use of resources. In our church advocacy and lobbying we will insist on technology transfer to developing countries for the construction of decentralized energy supply systems (especially renewable energies) and urge that the installations benefit all population groups.

...strengthening natural, locally appropriate methods of using land

Rural development and sustainable use of resources make important contributions to climate protection, limiting deforestation and improving the local climate through land use that is close to nature (see Agroforst (agroforest) and similar initiatives). Here we can refer back to the longstanding experience of church development cooperation in the area of agricultural methods that are natural and locally appropriate. In view of the increasing extreme weather events and climate variability we are committed to supporting methods of cultivation methods that minimize risk and capital input, and also foster biodiversity.

As churches we fundamentally reject transgenic agriculture. We are committed to promoting natural, locally appropriate farming methods as a contribution to climate protection.

...supporting developing countries in adapting to climate change

Many different forms of adaptation are necessary to deal with the consequences of climate change that is no longer preventable. This concerns disaster prevention, reconstruction and the securing of elementary rights such as food, health, housing etc. Additional adaptation measures are required to keep climate-related migration as low as possible (e.g. drift from rural to urban areas, migrating to other regions in which the pressure on resources is then increased). For church development cooperation, partnerships and the work of the mission agencies it will also become more important to consider the adaptation to climate change in project cooperation. That includes the development of adjustment strategies and projects with partners in the South, the strengthening of South-South cooperation as well as networking with other activists and organizations to promote know-how transfer. It is necessary to make finances available so that research into the consequences of climate change and adaptation to it can be carried out in the developing countries. The uppermost principle of adaptation in the church and the public sector is that they adhere strictly to human rights. That means giving priority to the population groups that are most vulnerable and at risk, and to their active participation in the action programmes.

...gender mainstreaming in climate protection

Women in developing countries are particularly hard hit by the impact of climate change. This stems from their social role and function, specifically as providers of food and water, and supplying and using energy (biomass). Women do not participate much in decision-making processes on climate protection, or on the development and selection of adaptation/avoidance strategies. Gender issues have hitherto not been sufficiently considered with respect to climate protection. In keeping with their importance and role, women need to be more closely involved in the development and implementation of climate protection and adaptation programmes. As churches, church development organisations and mission agencies we are committed to empowering women and encouraging them to participate in decision-making and implementation processes at all levels (gender-mainstreaming).

...intensifying advocacy on climate policy in the North

As churches, church development services and mission agencies, we consider it most urgent to engage in advocacy for climate justice on behalf of developing countries and the populations concerned.

The most urgent fields of action are:

- Increasing finance from industrialized countries to finance climate protection projects and adaptation programmes, particularly for most vulnerable groups
- Guaranteeing just distribution and participation
- Reducing emissions in industrialized countries
- Complying with social and ecological criteria in climate protection programmes
- Promoting renewable energies and energy efficiency

- Supporting capacity-building in the developing countries for climate protection and renewable energies

We are committed to ensuring that the members of our partner churches get the opportunity to present their perspectives and demands in position statements to decision-makers in the government departments of industrialized countries. As churches and church development organizations we particularly support the 1 t CO₂ (eq) emission target per person/year by 2050.

VI. Climate protection begins with us!

According to a study published in 1996, parishes, conference facilities, administrations and diaconal facilities in the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) use as much energy as the city of Hanover. They emit as much carbon dioxide as the countries of Sudan and Kenya taken together. That is 10% of the CO₂ emissions of Denmark. Investments to be written off in the foreseeable future alone encompass a CO₂ saving potential of 37% of total emissions. In 2007 the energy agency of NRW (North Rhine Westphalia) estimated the potential for economies through behaviour change and small-scale investments in parishes and church facilities in NRW alone at an annual €40 million.

In order to utilize this potential and to practise climate protection 400 parishes and church facilities throughout Germany have introduced the Green Cock programme. The system is based on the European Union's eco-audit regulation EMAS II/DIN ISO 14000. With the help of this system, parishes and church facilities carry out environmental and climate protection in continual, verifiable steps, systematically lowering their energy consumption and involving many people in the process.

Since January 2008 the buying behaviour of the churches has been the focus of the project Buying the Future. The project is designed to prove that 'buying' climate protection is not only possible but very effective in the light of the huge volume of goods purchased by the churches. They range from fair-trade coffee to recycling paper and even subscribing to green electricity is not the end of it...

The transition from a 'fossil' age of (apparently) limitless growth to a low-carbon, environmentally and socially sustainable global economy forces us into a critical debate with the values that have hitherto formed our lifestyle, our economy, politics and society. However, values are never abstract; they are supposed to be lived – and demonstrated. The church will be able to engage in this value debate credibly, also as an example to its partner churches in the South, if it sets its own house in order and faces up to the challenge of climate protection in a totally practical way.

For this reason we want to further develop church environmental management systems – like the Green Cock and Buying the Future - from projects into principles and introduce them throughout the entire church so that parishes and church facilities can experiment with sustainable and climate-friendly consumption. The freedom to which Jesus Christ liberates us⁹ places us before the task of overcoming the dependency on consumerist lifestyles that, if adopted on a global scale, will be the downfall of humanity. Finding ways in affluent societies to 'live more simply', in the context of social justice and for the life of the world, is something we therefore view as a central challenge for churches.

⁹ Barmen Theological Declaration II, 1934.

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The first ones to sign this Platform for Climate and Development of churches, development services and mission agencies are:

Evangelische Kirche der Pfalz (The Evangelical Church of the Pfalz)
Evangelische Kirche in Hessen und Nassau (The Evangelical Church in Hessen and Nassau)
Evangelische Kirche von Westfalen (The Evangelical Church of Westphalia)
Evangelische Kirche im Rheinland (The Evangelical Church in the Rheinland)
Evangelische Landeskirche Anhalts (The Evangelical Church of Anhalt)
Föderation Evangelischer Kirchen in Mitteldeutschland (Federation of Evangelical Churches in Middle Germany)
Lippische Landeskirche (The Church of Lippe)

Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst/eed (Church Development Service)
Misereor (Catholic Bishops' organisation for development)
Kindernothilfe (a children's relief agency)
Südwind e.V. (an institute for economics and ecumenics)
Vereinte Evangelische Mission/VEM (United Evangelical Mission)
Ökumenische Initiative Eine Welt (Ecumenical Initiative One World)

N.N.

Diözesanrat der Katholiken im Bistum Aachen (Diocesan Council of Catholics in the Diocese of Aachen)
Diözesankomitee im Erzbistum Paderborn (Diocesan Committee in the Diocese of Paderborn)
Bund der Deutschen Katholischen Jugend (Federation of German Catholic Youth)
Evangelische Jugend Berlin-Brandenburg-Schlesische Oberlausitz (Evangelical Youth Berlin-Brandenburg-Silesian Oberlausitz)
Amt für Mission, Ökumene und Kirchliche Weltverantwortung der EkvW (Office for mission, ecumenics and church world responsibility of the Evangelical Church of Westphalia)

The Platform welcomes further signatures from churches and church organisations which share its positions.

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