

## **Back cover**

SAFCEI is an institute of people of many faiths, united in our diversity through our common commitment to earthkeeping. Our aim is to support the faith communities in fulfilling their environmental & socio-economic responsibility.

### **SAFCEI upholds the principles of the Earth Charter:**

#### **Respect and care for the community of life**

- Respect Earth and life in all its diversity
- Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion and love.
- Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable, and peaceful.
- Earth's bounty and beauty for present and future generations.

#### **Ecological integrity**

- Protect and restore the integrity of Earth's ecological systems, with special concern for biological diversity and the natural processes that sustain life.

#### **Social and economic justice**

- Eradicate poverty as an ethical, social, and environmental imperative.

#### **Democracy, non-violence and peace**

- Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision making and access to justice.
- Treat all living beings with respect and consideration.
- Promote a culture of tolerance, non-violence and peace.

# Earthcheck

**An environmental audit guide for  
local faith communities**



**Southern African Faith  
Communities'  
Environment Institute**

*Draft 1: October 2007*

This is a draft document for use by faith communities across southern Africa. SAFCEI would greatly appreciate comments, corrections and suggestions for changes and improvements.

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Southern African Faith  
Communities'  
Environmental Institute

## Acknowledgements and sources

Many people and resources have been involved in the development of this document. A primary source has been *Creation Care*, a document was drawn up by Kate Davies of SAFCEI with support from members of the Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Kalk Bay. In developing this more generic version, *Earthcheck*, for use by all faith communities, we have drawn on a number of other resources:

- the British Eco-congregation programme  
[www.ecocongregation.org](http://www.ecocongregation.org);
- the Alliance of Religions and Conservation  
[www.arcworld.org](http://www.arcworld.org);
- *Divine Nature, A Spiritual Perspective on the Environmental Crisis*, published by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust;
- *Sacred Gifts for a Living Planet* published by The Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues in the UK;
- *Oikos, God and the Olive Agenda: Theological Reflections on Economies and Environment*, a paper by Prof Steve de Gruchy, (UKZN, Durban, 2007);
- *Listening to the Earth: an Environmental Audit for Benedictine Communities* - a manual developed for Benedictine Communities in South America (and hence with a developing world perspective).

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## **How are we doing as earthkeepers?**

Across the various faiths our prophets, our sacred texts and our theologies or philosophies are remarkably consistent in their injunctions to us as faith practitioners and devotees to care for this planet in its entirety; its living creatures, its natural cycles, its life-giving systems. This is our responsibility, and caring for our home in this way is an act of worship and devotion.

But with the many concerns around the way we seem to be pursuing destruction instead of a nurturing and caring way of life, we need to assess ourselves as earthkeepers; ask ourselves some hard questions, and take appropriate action.

Why are the natural systems of our planet beginning to break down as they are? Why, despite (or perhaps because of) the efforts of major development initiatives, are some getting richer while at the same time so many are struggling and living a hand-to-mouth existence? Why is it that some of us are concerned about how big our ecological footprint is, while not having a footprint is the reality for many?

We see careless life-styles all around us and wonder why. We see rampant consumerism and we see a lack of care for 'the other', including the living things around us.

Our questions lead us to spiritual answers and to living in ways which are not destructive, either of people or of the Earth, our home.

This audit booklet is a first step to help you take stock, both as individuals and as local faith communities or congregations. Having completed the audit you will be invited in this document to take concrete steps to improve your earthkeeping efforts. There are many sources of practical ideas for action. SAFCEI is also in the process of developing support materials that you can access either from the SAFCI website or by contacting us directly.

This environmental audit document has been written with all of SAFCEI's faith community members in mind. It sometimes uses specific terms or refers to practices of particular faiths. Let this not deter you; make it your own and use it appropriately for your faith.

The booklet also takes into account its southern African context. It is not just a 'green' audit for materially rich people concerned about how large their ecological footprint might be, although it also is directly useful for that. It acknowledges the contexts of people who do not have good access to safe drinking water, to decent sanitation, whose food security is threatened and who use public transport rather than private cars.

Finally, unlike many similar audits for religious communities, the booklet has been written with both the formal religious groups in mind (for example, audits of religious community buildings and premises and related environmental management practices), but also includes individuals and their home and working lives directly in the audit. It is intended to be a resource that we can all use to measure ourselves, particularly at congregation level, in terms of our environmental performance and status. How well are we doing to protect our world, to be faithful earthkeepers?

For we, the people of faith, as individuals and as small worshipping communities, are a sleeping giant, a powerhouse for change. We could start a groundswell and alter the course of history as we hold God's amazing creation in our heads, hands and hearts.

## How to use this booklet

The audit process described in this booklet should be part of a wider set of activities. On the next page we provide a summary of how this process could work.

The audit itself needs to be coordinated by a group that is put together within your local faith community / congregation for this purpose. The audit is not intended as a technical or legal process conducted by people with clipboards, but by your own people – the more people who think about their impact on the Earth and their spiritual responsibilities the better. This is because this booklet is intended more as an educational resource, and a stimulus for action – by working through it you will learn an enormous amount, even if you can't answer all the questions yourselves at the time of reading. Do not let that bother you – keep finding out. Use the booklet both within your faith community – the way you manage your buildings, grounds, internal programmes, religious practices, and so on as well as at an individual level – in your homes and places of work.

There are 11 sections in the book and they cover the main environmental challenges that we face – energy, waste, transport and so on. Each section occupies only two pages – this is to keep it simple and workable. There is a short explanation of the topic, and then some key questions. Each question needs to be answered by circling the number from 1 to 5 that you think applies best. A '1' means that you assess yourself badly – your environmental practice on that item needs to change. A '5' means you are doing well, and you don't think you have a big environmental impact on that item.

Near the end, on page 20, there is a summary table. You need to compile your scores there and use that to decide what your priority areas are. From there you could develop an action plan for that year. The audit will then have done its first job. After a year you should revisit the audit and see how you have progressed. You might decide to stop some of your activities as a job well done, (or maybe to

continue them) and also to take on new ones, as you have the ability and resources.

The process is intended to open up ideas and is only the beginning of a journey of exploration. It aims to:

- deepen our faith,
- ground it in the real world and
- kindle a commitment and response to caring for the Earth.

You will need to be selective in the way that you use this audit booklet. If parts of it don't apply to you, leave them and move on.

**Process summary:**

1. Consider becoming a SAFCEI Eco-congregation
2. Set up a coordinating group
3. Conduct the audit
4. Develop and implement a programme of action
5. Revisit the audit annually
6. Apply for a SAFCEI Eco-congregations Award.

An overview document entitled *A route map for eco-congregations* is available from SAFCEI and is on the SAFCEI website. The route map document outlines the steps a congregation can take to become a SAFCEI Eco-congregation.



## **1. Worship and Religious Life**

Through our acts of worship and devotion, our prayers and use of sacred texts we have the opportunity to express our gratitude and appreciation for the bounty of the Earth and the many gifts we are given. There is also space for us to share our needs and concerns within the context of our own community.

More text

<b>Worship and religious life audit</b>	
Are environmental themes included in your services?	1 2 3 4 5
Are special environmental liturgies ever used?	1 2 3 4 5
Are special environmental days celebrated? e.g. World Environment day, Earth day, World AIDS day etc.	1 2 3 4 5
Do prayers include	
• Praise for the Creator / the Divine	1 2 3 4 5
• Thanksgiving for the gift of life on Earth?	1 2 3 4 5
• Repentance for neglect, abuse or overexploitation of our home, the Earth?	1 2 3 4 5
• Intercessions for the healing of the Earth / creation?	1 2 3 4 5
Have you used nature walks, the outdoors symbols of nature to aid worship?	1 2 3 4 5
If you use music in worship, are songs / hymns / music chosen that celebrate the beauty of the Earth or express the calling to care for the environment?	1 2 3 4 5

1 = no / strongly disagree / community practices unhealthy / change needed.

5 = yes / strongly agree / community practices healthy / no change needed.

## 2. Food

The way we produce food and transport it to our homes, the kinds of food we eat, and who prepares it are all deeply environmental issues.

Food that is produced (and prepared) far from where we eat it needs to be transported. That uses energy usually in the form of petrol and diesel, and produces pollution, including greenhouse gases. Global climate change is strongly driven by the increasing levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and there is now a worldwide realisation that we have to reduce carbon dioxide (and other greenhouse gas) emissions NOW. So eating locally produced food is an important environmental action.

Food produced by large-scale agriculture (also called agri-business) also usually has negative impacts on water resources and soil quality. So, grow your own food (the best option!), eat locally produced food, and where possible, eat food produced in small-scale farms or smallholdings. This also improves ordinary people's lives and enhances opportunities for self-employment.

Seek out organically grown food – in rural areas most people grow their own food and it is usually organic anyway. In the cities we have to work harder to find organically grown food, and it sometimes costs more. That small extra cost helps preserve soil quality, reduces the use of pesticides and commercial fertilisers, both of which cause damage to eco-systems and habitats, which in turn makes it more difficult for Earth, our only home, to regulate temperature and to maintain its all-important natural systems.

Commercial meat production, especially of beef, consumes large amounts of grain and other plant-based food products which require land, water, energy and chemicals to produce them. Cattle also produce large quantities of methane gas, which is a potent greenhouse gas. It is logical to reduce our meat intake and to eat more food from plants (which we grow ourselves!)

<b>Food audit</b>	
Do you know where your food comes from and how far it travels to get to you?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you have enough healthy food for you and / or your children to stay healthy?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you try to buy locally grown food?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you grow any of your own food, especially if you can't afford to buy?	1 2 3 4 5
Where people don't get enough food has your religious community started a feeding scheme, especially one that grows food locally?	1 2 3 4 5
If you produce your own food, do you try to use water carefully, protect and feed the soil using compost, and avoid pesticides?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you limit meat intake for environmental reasons?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you know the conservation status of the fish and seafood that you eat?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you buy organic food and/or free-range meat (happy meat!!)	1 2 3 4 5
How much of your food intake is fast food or pre-cooked compared to home-cooked from raw materials?	1 2 3 4 5

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### **3. Energy**

Energy is one of the hot topics at the moment, and it isn't going to go away soon because of concerns about global climate change. Our modern world is heavily dependent on fossil fuels, yet our use of these fuels is one of the major causes of global warming.

Those who can afford electricity use large amounts of it. Most of our electricity comes from burning coal, even though that energy source (which includes the mining, storage and transporting of coal) is destructive of people's health, of water quality, of ecosystems and ultimately, of our planet. The entire global economic, social and industrial system is based our reliance on petrol and diesel for transport, and coal for electricity, in spite of their threats to the planet. Most governments, our own included, are unwilling to do anything that will damage the economy and slow down growth, even though it is clear that this kind of growth simply cannot continue forever, or even for the next decade.

In many parts of the country, people don't have electricity, or simply can't afford to use it. As a result people use firewood (or charcoal), which results in serious devegetation, or they use paraffin for cooking and lighting, but it can result in bad indoor air pollution with sometimes serious health impacts. The same applies to using coal for heating, because it produces a lot of smoke. Access to electricity will help with some of this, but adds other problems. Planting woodlots and using alternatives such as solar energy are other options. So who is causing the most environmental damage – the rich who use electricity, or the poor who use firewood? It doesn't help to blame. We all need to work towards a healthier Earth and a healthier environment for people.

Certainly, we need to reduce the demand for electricity through more efficient use of it, through better insulation, use of solar water heaters, making do with a simpler life-style, using energy efficient lighting or maximising natural light – there are many options.

Energy audit	
Do you use energy-efficient appliances and light fittings?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you sometimes cycle, not use a car even though you could, walk, or use public transport specifically for environmental reasons?	1 2 3 4 5
Does your house have ceilings, and is the house properly insulated?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you have an energy-efficient cooking stove (electric, wood or charcoal stove / fireplace)?	1 2 3 4 5
Have you ever bought a vehicle specifically because of its energy efficiency?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you switch off lights and appliances (even from standby mode) in order to use less energy?	1 2 3 4 5
Is your geyser on a slightly cooler setting in order to save energy? (The hotter the inside temperature, the more energy is used to keep it hot).	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use solar energy for water heating or electricity generation?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use natural light whenever possible?	1 2 3 4 5

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## **4. Consumerism and waste**

Modern society is a hugely wasteful one. We consume vast quantities of items, including their packaging. In the 'developed' world, per capita consumption of water, food, energy, fuels and natural resources is high, creating an ecological footprint that would require many planets to sustain if everyone on the planet consumed the same amounts. By contrast, many people do not have the means to consume in the same way, yet there is growing pressure to have such a consumerist lifestyle. 'Living the good life' is becoming the norm, yet looked at from an earthkeeping perspective, it is surely 'abnormal?' Consumerism is a global and growing phenomenon and it is a global threat as well.

People living affluent lifestyles generate huge amounts of waste, most of which (as much as 90% of it) ends up in landfill sites. Our carbon waste from using fossil fuels ends up in that great big dustbin in the sky. We somehow have to find a way of living more lightly – buy less, grow more of our own food, avoid excess packaging, give hand-made or simple gifts, travel less, recycle waste and try to minimise how much we have to throw away. Of all the waste from a suburban middle class home, less than 20% of it by volume really needs to go to the garbage dump. So most people living this lifestyle waste up to 80% of their 'rubbish' and add to the problem of space for landfill sites and managing those vast amounts of waste.

But this is about more than just wasting and consuming less, and even goes beyond 'lifestyle'. As members of faith communities we need to learn about simpler lifestyles, more in keeping with our religious principles. Our wealth needs to be found in non-material things, in spirituality, simplicity, in relationships and activities that feed our relationships. Many faith communities give gifts, and many of us are uncomfortable with the way major celebrations such as Christmas and Eid have been secularised and materialised, yet we have succumbed to it – we spend lots of money, buy lots of things, and fuel the consumerist lifestyle where happiness comes from things. It is possible to challenge this.

<b>Waste audit</b>	
Do you re-use items rather than throw things away (e.g. plastic packets, paper, envelopes, re-usable plates and cups, water)?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you recycle? (Paper, plastics, metal items, bio-degradable items)	1 2 3 4 5
Do you encourage purchasing of items with a minimum of packaging?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you redistribute used items (e.g. clothing) not only for fundraising but to encourage more sustainable living?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you try to minimise wastage of water? (This is covered more in the next section)	1 2 3 4 5
To what extent would you say you / your local faith community have a consumerist lifestyle?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use waste water for watering food plants, and waste food and other items for making compost to feed the soil for food plants?	1 2 3 4 5
To what extent do you send 'rubbish' to a garbage dump that can be re-used or recycled in some way?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you dispose of hazardous waste carelessly?	1 2 3 4 5
Is other people's waste a problem in your area?	1 2 3 4 5

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## **5. Water and sanitation**

Water, especially in this part of the world, is a precious resource, and likely to diminish in quantity and quality as a result of climate change. We are very fortunate to have drinking quality water coming out of our taps – not many countries in the world have that. But we also have many homes where there is no piped water, so people (usually women and children) have to walk, sometimes long distances, to fetch water. The problem then is to make sure the water is purified and remains safe to drink while it is being stored in containers. It is not easy in those circumstances to maintain cleanliness at all times, especially hand-washing after using the toilet and before preparing food. Approximately 35 to 40 children below the age of 5 in South Africa die of preventable water-related diseases (mainly diarrhoea) each DAY. So access to sufficient water of adequate quality is a health issue. And when municipalities do supply water, poor people are sometimes unable to pay for it, which means they can get cut off. This then becomes a justice issue. Water is a basic human need and right.

And whether we have good access to water or not, most of us use it wastefully in one way or another. We plant 'thirsty' gardens that require lots of water, rain water is not harvested, soil is not mulched (i.e. covered with organic matter to keep it moister), we leave taps to drip, or even leave them running. This is especially true of communal taps where no single person has to pay for it. Automatic toilet flushing is left on through the night, and so on. Industrial processes continue to use large volumes of water- currently about 45 litres out of every 100 are wasted, even while much less wasteful options are already available.

And yet we know that South Africa is a water-scarce country.

<b>Water audit</b>	
Do you or your local faith community use water wastefully?	1 2 3 4 5
Do people in your community have good access to safe drinking water?	1 2 3 4 5
After you have finished using water do you allow it to run straight down the drain?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use used water (i.e. grey water) on your plants?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you ensure that none of your waste (e.g. old engine oil, old chemicals, household products, hazardous substances) can pollute natural water sources?	1 2 3 4 5
Are you sure that your toilets (e.g. flush toilets, pit toilets, septic tank systems) do not pollute groundwater?	1 2 3 4 5
Is your human excreta disposed of safely?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you have leaking taps, pipes or flush toilets?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use water conserving devices (e.g. low flow showers, dry-type urinals, dual flush toilets)	1 2 3 4 5
Do you practise water-wise gardening?	1 2 3 4 5

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## 6. Transport

Transport is one of the big issues – most vehicles use fossil fuels, which, apart from being a non-renewable resource, are behind a lot of the conflicts in the world, cause severe pollution, cause severe disruption of poorer economies and families when fuel prices increase. Transport, including air travel, is responsible for the production of large amounts of greenhouse gases, and for many other atmospheric pollutants.

What is the environmental impact of a motor car, from the manufacturing of its parts and the assembly of the car itself, through the years of its use, through to its final disposal? A research project carried out in Germany (the figures are a bit dated, but have not been revised yet) suggests that each average sized car produced in Germany produces 25,000 kg of waste and 422 million cubic metres of polluted air in the extraction of raw materials alone.

During a 10 year life-span involving a mere 13,000 km per year, the same car produces

- 44.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide
- 4.8 kg of sulphur dioxide
- 46.8 kg of nitrogen dioxide
- 325 kg of carbon monoxide
- 36 kg of hydrocarbons.

Apart from that, motor vehicles have other costs – road accidents, injuries, trauma and related costs, traffic congestion; the pressure of consumerism to have a fancy car leads many into financial trouble.

So we wonder why we have cars, and yet, how would we do without them? Given the enormity of climate change problems, we actually need to stop the use of vehicles that use fossil fuels almost entirely. There are no easy answers, but this may help “All further development (‘growth’) must be limited by the need to protect and manage the resources of the world sustainably, and in ways that enable equitable access to those resources.”

<b>Transport audit</b>	
Do you have a transport sharing scheme to reduce use of private vehicles?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you encourage walking and the use of public transport or bicycles as a way of reducing the environmental impact of transport?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you buy local to reduce the transport distances of goods or food?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you support and lobby for more efficient public transport?	1 2 3 4 5
Have you ever purchased a particular vehicle specifically because of its lower environmental impact?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you have a desire to reduce our use of fossil fuels and our reliance on motor vehicles?	1 2 3 4 5
Have you ever walked somewhere rather than use your car for environmental reasons?	1 2 3 4 5
How reliant are you on fossil fuels (talk about this with others – it is a complex issue and affects all aspects of our lives!)	1 2 3 4 5

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## **7. Grounds and buildings**

Faith communities own land and buildings. As earthkeepers, we need to begin 'at home' by ensuring our own facilities are environmentally friendly and are used to build communities, and as part of our networks against poverty and injustice.

Usually faith communities do not have large properties, and even amongst wealthier congregations, their environmental impact isn't huge. The reason we do an audit of our grounds and buildings is to set an example, of course, but more importantly, it is an opportunity to think about it, to debate it and to learn. The bigger value of this exercise is to encourage a more caring ethic to transfer to our members' homes and places of work. For this reason, the grounds and buildings audit needs to be done with much publicity and even ceremony. The more status it is given in the minds of the members, the better. It should also be linked to worship and prayers so that the spiritual aspects of why we are doing this are not lost.

<b>Grounds and buildings audit</b>	
(Issues like water, energy, transport, food & financial policies are covered in more detail in other sections)	
Do you have an environmental land-use policy of any kind?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you take care of this part of the earth as part of your spiritual responsibility and as an example to your members and community?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use your gardens or open spaces for worship or spiritual reflection?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you use available land for growing vegetables or other food crops for people in need or to provide employment or skills training?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you try to make your grounds a haven for local indigenous plant and animal / bird life?	1 2 3 4 5
Do you keep your buildings well-maintained?	1 2 3 4 5
What kind of environmental impact do your buildings have? (think of energy - light, heating & cooling, insulation, materials used, water, neighbourhood impacts, chemicals used, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5
Do your facilities serve and improve community life?	1 2 3 4 5
Are your facilities in any way a 'refuge' for people in need?	1 2 3 4 5

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## **8. Economics and financial matters**

	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5

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## **9. Increasing understanding**

	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5
	1 2 3 4 5

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## 10. How did you do?

Use these tables to record the results of your audit.

### Table 1: Average scores

Go back to each audit table and calculate an average score for each one. Enter that score in the right hand column.

Category	Average score between 1 and 5
1. Worship and religious life	
2. Food	
3. Energy	
4. Consumerism and waste	
5. Water and sanitation	
6. Transport	
7. Grounds and buildings	
8. Economics and financial matters	
9. Increasing understanding	

This table allows you to identify areas of your audit where you scored badly. If you got between 1 and 2 for any category, you need to take some urgent action! Probably, you scored badly on most of the categories. You will then have to decide which areas are of greater priority, or which are more manageable, and tackle those first.

**Table 2: Priority areas**

In each of your audit categories, there may be some items that stand out as being really bad, or worrying, even though you might have achieved a good average score for that category. Write down a few words in this table to describe those items.

<b>Category</b>	
Worship and religious life	
Food	
Energy	
Consumerism and waste	
Water and sanitation	
Transport	
Grounds and buildings	
Economics and financial matters	
Increasing understanding	

## **11. Developing an action plan**

So, you have completed your audit and have used the scoring tables to identify actions that you need to take. Your Eco-congregation environmental committee now needs to develop an action plan to guide what you do next. Here are some suggestions.

### **Prioritise**

You probably have too many actions to take on all at once, so take some that are urgent or critical. Depending on your resources you might even decide to work on only one matter at a time. Also select those that are easy to get going with and where the success of achieving them will be motivating to the members of your congregation and your committee.

### **Create interest and excitement**

It is important to create interest and excitement around this project. Launch it during one of your services, in fact, structure the whole service around it, by using environmentally related prayers, scriptures and music, if you use music in worship. Announce who will be leading the different projects to give them the status and recognition they need to carry out their tasks. Ensure you get strong endorsement from your faith community leaders, even from leaders at a level above your congregation.

### **Appoint project leaders**

Each of the various actions you have identified needs to have a single point of accountability and leadership. These project leaders can come from your committee, but it is better to draw in a wider range of people, and they should bring skills that are required by that particular project.

### **Accountability**

In order to keep your project leaders motivated, hold regular report back meetings. This also has the effect of holding people accountable. If they are struggling, give support, and re-strategise.

**Use outside support**

Most people don't know a lot about environmental issues, so you should consider getting advice from outside people or organisations. In fact, one of the Eco-congregation Award criteria relates networking and partnerships, so this is encouraged.

**Use the Eco-congregation award criteria**

The document "A route map for Eco-congregations" mentioned earlier in this booklet mentions the Eco-congregations Award Scheme. We encourage you to develop your plans so that you will meet these criteria from the beginning. This is not only to help you work towards receiving the award, but, more importantly, to guide you in developing a well-rounded and effective plan. We certainly don't want you to end up spending huge amounts of time and energy on some thing that involves just a few people, ignores the spiritual aspects and focuses only on a narrow form of environmental response. That is why the award criteria were developed.

Importantly, ensure your action plan covers the three areas of (i) worship and religious life, (ii) your own grounds and buildings and (iii) action projects, networking and partnerships

**Have faith!**

This is not going to be an easy journey. You will start with grand plans and will very likely encounter difficulties and disappointments along the way. You will need to keep at it and slowly build momentum and commitment. But the reality is that it will always be a small group providing the energy. The average person will get involved for short-term, high-energy events but will not be able to sustain that commitment. But over time they will all learn a little about their environmental and social justice responsibilities and will slowly begin to change their habits. And as a faith community your work will contribute to a growing awareness of 'Earth-spirituality', of our God-given responsibilities as earthkeepers.

Changing the world was never going to be an easy.

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(facing the inside back cover).