

Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action

Theological Foundations For Creation Care

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[Third and concluding part of the paper 'Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action']

Theologically, climate action is central to the gospel. Colossians 1:15–20 proclaims Christ as the one who reconciles all creations. Romans 8:22 speaks of creation groaning for liberation. Revelation 21 envisions a restored Earth. To follow Christ today is to walk in solidarity with all creation.

Pilgrimage Toward Systemic Change

As we enter the Ecumenical Decade of Climate Justice Action, we are called not only to charity but to systemic change. We must challenge extractive economies, unjust trade policies, and false solutions like geo-engineeringⁱ and carbon offsetsⁱⁱ. New economic models such as the Economy of Lifeⁱⁱⁱ and Doughnut Economics^{iv} offer pathways to true sustainability. Both models align with Christian values of justice and care for the poor and vulnerable. They challenge the dominant systems of greed, overconsumption, and ecological sin and offer hope for a just and sustainable future.

References

Geo-engineeringⁱ

refers to large-scale, human-made technological interventions in the Earth's climate system designed to counteract global warming. Reflect sunlight back into space to cool the Earth. Extract CO₂ from the atmosphere and store it.

Why Critics Call It a "False Solution":

- **Unpredictable side effects:** Could disrupt rainfall, monsoons, or ecosystems.
- **Moral hazard:** May reduce pressure to cut actual emissions.
- **Control and equity:** Who decides when, where, and how to deploy such technologies? Could impact vulnerable nations without their consent.
- **Distraction:** Focuses on techno-fixes instead of addressing root causes (like fossil fuel use, overconsumption, and ecological degradation).

Carbon offsetsⁱⁱ

are credits purchased to

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compensate for greenhouse gas emissions by funding projects that claim to reduce or absorb carbon elsewhere.

Examples of Offset Projects: Planting trees. Renewable energy projects in developing countries

Methane capture from landfills, Forest conservation

Why They're Often Criticised:

- **Lack of real emission cuts:** Offsets allow polluters to keep emitting without changing behavior.
- **Questionable effectiveness:** Many offset projects don't deliver promised reductions or are hard to measure/verify.
- **Land grabs and injustice:** Some projects, especially forest-related ones, have displaced Indigenous peoples or restricted local land use.
- **Greenwashing:** Companies or governments claim climate leadership while continuing business-as-usual.

In Theological and Justice Terms:

- Both geo-engineering and carbon offsets may ignore ecological humility, relying on control and compensation rather than repentance and



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systemic change.

- They often delay true transformation, allowing extractive economies to continue exploiting both Earth and the poor.

- A faithful response calls for real emission reductions, justice-centered adaptation, and ecological restoration — not shortcuts.

Economy of Lifeⁱⁱⁱ

The Economy of Life is a faith-rooted economic vision developed by the World Council of Churches (WCC) and partners like the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)

and Lutheran World Federation (LWF). It proposes a just, sustainable, and life-affirming economy that serves all people and the planet, not profit or power.

Key Principles:

- **Justice and sustainability** over exploitation and profit
- **Dignity of all life**—human and non-human
- **Redistribution of wealth and power**, especially from polluters to vulnerable communities
- **Economy guided by ethics**, compassion, and responsibility
- **Ecological conversion**—shifting away from extractive industries

Actions Promoted:

- Divesting from fossil fuels
- Promoting renewable energy
- Tax justice and debt cancellation
- Supporting local economies and food sovereignty
- Integrating economic ethics into theological education

Biblical Inspiration:

- **John 10:10:** "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly."
- **Amos 5:24:** "Let justice roll down like waters..."

Doughnut Economics^{iv}

is a concept developed by economist Kate Raworth. It visualises a new economic model where humanity can meet everyone's needs within the limits of the planet.

The Doughnut Image:

It looks like a doughnut with two rings:

- **Inner ring (social foundation):** Ensures everyone has life essentials—food, water, education, health, housing, income, etc.
- **Outer ring (ecological ceiling):** Keeps humanity within planetary boundaries—climate, biodiversity, oceans, air, etc.

The goal: Stay within the "safe and just space" between these two rings.

Core Values:

- Equity and inclusion
- Planetary boundaries (climate, water, biodiversity)
- Circular economy and regeneration
- Systems thinking and long-term well-being

Moving beyond GDP as the measure of success

Cities like Amsterdam, Brussels, and Nanaimo (Canada) are applying Doughnut Economics to shape climate-resilient and socially just urban planning.

Centering the Marginalized and Collaborative Leadership

In this pilgrimage, youth, women, Indigenous peoples, and climate migrants must be at the center. Their wisdom and leadership are essential. Churches are called to collaborate ecumenically and interfaithfully to amplify action.

Conclusion: Faith in Action for Creation

The Christian response to the ecological crisis must be holistic, prophetic, and rooted in faith. It must combine prayer with protest, theology with action, and repentance with restoration. We are called to rise—across nations and generations—to dance in rhythm with God's renewing Spirit.

"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24).

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For some kings
THRONES
are, really,
THORNS!

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