

Anglican Diocese of Melbourne

Protection of the Environment Policy

Draft April 2021

1. The Diocese has adopted the Protection of the Environment Canon 2007 (Canon No. 11, 2007) of the General Synod and will fulfil its obligations under the Canon, as set out in this policy.
2. The Diocese will have an “Environmental Commission” to assist the diocese to
 - 2.1 establish a Vision for an ‘environmentally sustainable Diocese,’ and
 - 2.2 fulfil its obligations under the Canon, specifically to:
 - a. undertake an initial survey to establish a “baseline” environmental footprint for the Diocese;
 - b. measure environmental footprint of the diocese on a regular basis;
 - c. recommend targets for reducing environmental footprint (impact);
 - d. prepare the Diocese’s report to General Synod on its progress under the Canon;
 - e. develop, identify and make available resources to assist parishes and agencies to measure and reduce their environmental footprint, and where appropriate incorporate resources into existing diocesan procedures;
 - f. develop, identify and make available resources for educating Church leaders, parishes and members and the wider community about God’s creation and our responsibility to care for it;
 - g. facilitate a network of environmental/sustainability groups within the diocese, including for example Climate Action Groups;
 - h. encourage the development of relationships with other church and community groups on environmental issues; and
 - i. support the development of liturgical, devotional and pastoral resources highlighting the protection of the environment and community effects.
3. The Diocese will annually measure its environmental footprint (see items a to e below) across all parish and diocesan agencies and set targets to reduce its environmental impact. The footprint and targets must include:
 - a. water use;
 - b. energy use;
 - c. consumables use;
 - d. waste reduction; and
 - e. actions to promote environmental sustainability, e.g. rehabilitation.
4. The Diocese, its parishes and agencies recognise and may observe World Environment Day (3 June), the Feast of St Francis (first Sunday in October), the liturgical Season of Creation, and other relevant secular and liturgical dates as important occasions to celebrate God’s creation and raise awareness of environmental protection. The environment could be a topic for Lenten or other bible study activities.
5. Before any new facilities or operations in parish and diocesan agencies are developed, the agency must report to the approving body on the environmental impact of the development and on the measures taken through the development to protect the environment.
6. The diocese and its member bodies will review investments (current or future) to ensure that businesses in which the diocese invests are managing and reducing their environmental footprint.
7. The Diocese will review the effectiveness of this Policy after three years.

Environmental Commission Terms of Reference (for consideration)

Membership – 12-15 people initial selection made by SRC to get Commission up and running – structure will be like those the Diocese of Brisbane and Perth

Meeting schedule – 4 to 6 per year

Reporting to SRC

Terms of Reference – mainly no. 2 above

Budget – for advice, surveys, secretarial support, website, workshops, articles in TMA, etc. – a work in progress

Issues

Cross-reference to Building Committee guidelines, Parish Council guidelines, liturgy committee, investment guidelines, etc.

Vision statement – to be considered and determined by the Environmental Commission (for example “Protecting God’s Creation” or “Towards an Environmentally Sustainable Diocese”)

The Policy would apply to all parishes and agencies within the Diocese. Application to agencies with more independence, such as schools, charities, etc., would need to be considered. Note that schools, for example, may already be involved in some activities listed in the Policy, for example item 2.2, and may have expertise that could assist the Diocesan Environmental Policy activity program.

Explanatory Notes to the Policy

This provides some more details of actions that may be required in the implementation of this Policy. These may be modified over time by the “Commission” as required.

In item 2.2a, information will be obtained by a survey (paper or electronic) of a **selection** of Diocesan parishes and other agencies to gauge the current typical levels of environmental emissions/use. The environmental items to be measured are specified in item 3. The data required will be quantities used (such as electricity or gas) and \$ amounts from annual/periodic accounts from service providers. Greenhouse gas emissions (e.g. CO₂) can be derived from electricity and gas usage. Information on miscellaneous environmental activities (3e) will also be gathered, e.g. existing environmental/sustainability groups and activities in parishes, etc.

In item 2.2b information will be obtained by annual surveys as in 2a for **all** Diocesan parishes and agencies.

In item 2.2c targets will be determined in relation to results from 2a and b and through consultation with relevant authorities/organisations.

In items 2.2e, f, g, h and i information will be gathered from groups (church and community) involved in activities related to environmental protection, compiled as available, developed as required and made accessible through suitable media (e.g. web sites, pamphlets, TMA articles, etc.).

In item 2.2g linkages will identified and developed through various reporting activities under Item 2.

Item 3c would include items such as paper, plastic cups, etc. and quantities could be determined from accounts.

Item 3d and e would include items such as waste disposal processes, recycling, installation of solar cells or solar hot water, rehabilitation, gardening or any other measures or groups which would facilitate improving the environment.

Item 6 would recommend against investments involving companies with large environmental footprints. This could involve those involved with extracting or using large quantities of non-renewable resources. There is an existing Diocesan investment policy limiting investment in businesses heavily dependent on coal, oil and gas usage. (Shane, pls check the correct wording.)