

Resolution on Global Warming

Approved by the 2006 General Assembly of the National Council of Churches USA and Church World Service

TITLE: Resolution on Global Warming

POLICY

BASE: Christian Concern and Responsibility for Economic Life in a Rapidly Changing Technological Society, adopted by the General Board of the National Council of Churches USA Governing Board, February 24, 1966

The Ethical Implications of Energy Production and Use, adopted by the National Council of Churches USA Governing Board, May 11, 1979

RATIONALE: Prominent scientists and major, respected scientific bodies are in agreement that the Earth is warming because of human-induced carbon emissions. Global warming threatens the very fabric of God’s creation and will hit those who are least able to adapt—both human and nonhuman—the hardest. Because the Christian community is called to justice, to be good “neighbors” with our brothers and sisters across the globe, and to steward God’s creation, addressing global warming is a moral imperative and a Christian call.

RESOLUTION:

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18

The National Council of Churches has stated:

The rapidly expanding dimensions of (human) “dominion” over the earth and its physical resources call for new and deeper commitment to the Christian doctrine of stewardship . . . Natural resources, human techniques and institutions all together constitute an interlocking and interacting system of amazing complexity, precision and balance.¹

An ecologically just society will be guided by the values of sustainability, fairness, and participation. Sustainability refers to the earth’s limited capacity to provide resources and to absorb the pollution resulting from their use. Sustainability requires that biological and social systems which nurture and support life not be depleted or poisoned. Fairness refers to . . . an equitable distribution of the total benefits and costs.²

19 Whereas the impacts of global warming, as currently predicted and understood by
20 leading scientists and scientific bodies around the world including the National
21 Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Academy of Sciences, and
22 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, will dramatically and negatively
23 alter God’s gracious gift of creation and
24

25 Whereas the predicted impacts of global warming will have a disproportionate
26 impact on those living in poverty and hunger, the elderly and infants, and those
27 least responsible for the emissions of green house gases.
28

29 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF
30 CHURCHES IN CHRIST:

- 31
- 32 1) Expresses its deep concern for the pending environmental, economic, and
33 social tragedies threatened by global warming to creation, human
34 communities, and traditional sacred spaces
35
 - 36 2) Urges the Federal Government to respond to global warming with greater
37 urgency and leadership and gives support for mandatory measures that
38 reduce the absolute amount of greenhouse gas emissions, and in particular
39 emissions of carbon dioxide, to levels recommended by nationally and
40 internationally recognized and respected scientific bodies.
41
 - 42 3) Urges the Federal, State and Local Governments to support and invest in
43 energy conservation and efficiency, sustainable and renewable, and
44 affordable and sustainable transportation
45
 - 46 4) Calls for business and industry to respond to global warming with
47 increased investment in conservation and more efficient and sustainable
48 energy technologies that are accessible, sustainable, and democratic.
49
 - 50 5) Stands firmly with all of God’s children by urging that adaptive measures
51 and financial support be forthcoming from government and industry to aid
52 those directly impacted by global warming and in particular those least
53 able to relocate, reconstruct, or cope with the current and pending impacts
54 of climate change
55
 - 56 6) Calls on all Christians, people of faith and people of good will the world
57 over to lead by example and seek active means whereby they may,
58 individually and in community, quickly reduce their emissions of green
59 house gas emissions and speak out for engagement by their elected
60 officials on matters of global warming.