

## SURVEY OF AUSTRALIAN DIOCESES

As part of its terms of reference the General Synod Environmental Working Group sought to discover the response of each Diocese to the Canon for Protection of the Environment so that we could understand the Australia-wide response and extend the reporting made through the General Synod office.

We also wished to identify the needs of the Church with respect to developing effective responses to the fifth mark of mission. In December and January the working group developed a survey, which would help to identify the current situation regarding environment and sustainability activity in Australian Dioceses. In late January 2010 the working group wrote to the Bishops of each Diocese in Australia requesting them to complete the survey so that we could draw together an Australia-wide summary. Responses to this request were received during February and March and collated with the following results.

Of the 23 Dioceses in Australia, 22 returned the survey distributed in late January. The Diocese that did not respond is known to have adopted the Canon, but no further information is available.

Of the 21 Dioceses that considered the Canon for Protection of the Environment, 16 have adopted the Canon, which equates to 70%. Most of these have also established Environment Commissions or equivalent bodies within their Diocese. These include:

- Diocese of Perth Anglican EcoCare Commission
- Diocese of Bathurst Task Force for the Environment
- Diocese of Grafton Environment Committee
- Sydney Diocesan Environmental Initiatives group
- Adelaide Diocesan Environment Commission
- Newcastle Diocesan Environmental Commission
- Melbourne Diocesan Environment Committee
- Rockhampton Diocesan Environmental Commission
- AngliGreen, Diocese of Brisbane Environment Group
- Diocese of Wangaratta Environment Commission
- Canberra & Goulburn Diocesan Commission for the Environment
- Diocese of Bendigo Environmental Working Group
- Diocese of Gippsland (commission name not provided)
- Diocese of the Northern Territory (commission name not provided)
- Diocese of Ballarat (commission name not provided)

Table 1 provides a summary of the responses to some of the items in the survey.

**Table 1: Responses from Australian Anglican Dioceses surveyed (n = 23)**

	YES:	NO:
Diocese has considered the Canon	91%	9%
Diocesan synod has adopted the 2007 Canon on the Environment	70%	30%
Diocese has established an 'Environment Commission' or equivalent body	65%	9%
Diocese would like to see copies of Anglican environment/sustainability material prepared elsewhere	65%	5%
Diocese is willing to send the EWG copies of any environmental or policy material prepared	52%	4%

Diocese is prepared to share such material with other Dioceses who might find It helpful
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48%

0%

The survey also asked Dioceses to report on what had been implemented and how they were engaging with environmental issues within their Diocese. The results indicate a breadth and depth of response that is both exciting and inspiring, but also reveals some challenges which need to be addressed if we are to make general progress in this area.

The Dioceses which had adopted the Canon reported a range of procedures, practices and material that had been developed, including material which may be useful to others. The responses are provided in Table 2.

Most of the Dioceses which had adopted the Canon were able to indicate some of the goals or targets that had been set as well as achievements and difficulties related to these (Table 3).

Some of the Dioceses which had not adopted the Canon gave reasons as to why this decision was made (Table 4).

In most cases Dioceses which had not adopted the Canon indicated that alternative steps had been taken which addressed the same issues (Table 5).

**Table 2: Procedures, Practices and material prepared in response to the Canon for Protection of the Environment**

Diocese	Procedures and practices put in place in response to the Canon requirements	Material prepared that may be useful to others
Perth	Currently producing a Diocesan Sustainability Policy. The Diocese has created and funded a full time position for Coordinator Advocacy Commissions, which will represent the Social Responsibility Commission and Eco-Care Commission. Appointment is to be made.	Eco-Care website being developed Carbon emission reduction pilot project - Parish audit material delivered via trained Parish 'Environmental Ambassadors' - over 30 parishes involved Hot Gospel six week bible study c/- Felicity Roux, the Perth Diocesan Mission Plan Strategy Leader for 'Environmental Responsibility'.
Grafton	Implementation plan including most of the above	Have already had permission to use Canberra/Goulburn & Bathurst Material Environmental Audit.
Bathurst	<i>Bishop in Council has endorsed the report 'A Carbon-Neutral Diocese' produced by its Task Force in June 2008. The report includes recommendations related to reduction in greenhouse emissions for consideration by parishes.</i>	<i>No specific material at this time apart from the original report.</i>
Ballarat	At this time consideration is being given to a program of energy audits for Diocesan Buildings, Green(er) vehicles and transport policy, and revegetation projects.	A draft environmental plan for the Diocese (includes Theological Background); A dot point checklist for preparing local (parish) plans/projects
Wangaratta	Procedures in preparation to present to next Diocesan Synod, May 2010	Strategy Documentation approved in 2009 & distributed. Building Environmental Audit trialled 2008 & distributed. Environmentally sensitive transports advocated. Potential use of tele-communication based meetings advocated.
Canberra	Code of Good Practice which incorporates sustainable vehicle policy; sustainable water policy; and biodiversity. Implementation of code of practice, leadership modelling, promotion of solar panels on wide scale, insulation program and website resources	Codes of Practice which provide practical application of policy into practice and green guide for parishes
Bendigo	A carbon audit has been done of our parishes	We have largely used material prepared by the Diocese of Canberra/Goulburn
Gippsland	Establishment of a Centre for spirituality and the environment on a property on the Gippsland Lakes	in process

Adelaide	Sector agreement with the State Government; Environment audit material for parishes; Green Cathedral project; water subsidies for parishes; water harvesting at Bishop's Court; Anglicare-SA project, 'Angligreen'	see Q3 response
Melbourne	At the Synod of 2003 the Melbourne Diocese adopted its current Environment Policy. This contains practical environmental advice including water and energy audits, liturgical resources, and links to other agencies. It is currently being upgraded as part of an action strategy which will introduce the policies and practises required in response to the General Synod 2007 Canon requirements, The policy is located under Social and Environmental Issues on the Melbourne Anglican Website <a href="http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/">http://www.melbourne.anglican.com.au/</a>	The action strategy which will introduce the policies and practises is currently in draft form and is awaiting some crucial research into the environmental footprint of churches in the diocese. It will, when completed, go forward to the Council of the Diocese for adoption. When this happens it will be available for use by other Dioceses and will be accessible on the Diocesan Website.
Rock-hampton	“Expos” of the different environments (including flora and fauna) found in each Parish at 2009 Diocesan Synod; Progressive environmental audit of all Diocesan property focussing particularly on reducing carbon footprint (energy), water use and waste.	Environmental Lent Study; Environment expo. material; water tank project in Parishes; solar lighting projects in PNG partner Diocese
Brisbane	Two energy reduction workshops were held this year following adoption of the Canon to advise Parishes on how to reduce their energy use and encourage them to consider alternative energy. An Energy Use Recording Sheet has been distributed to all Parishes with the request that it be completed and returned with their Annual Parish Returns.	Prior to adoption of the Canon, two levels of environmental audits were distributed to all parishes.  The Energy Use Recording Sheet that has been developed.

**Table 3: Diocesan targets set, achievements made and difficulties encountered**

Diocese	Targets set	Achievements	Difficulties
Perth	Canon adopted Oct 2008 Synod	Additional Motions relating to Canon were adopted at the Oct 09 Synod	Implementation has been slow due to time and resourcing issues
	Hot Gospel Bible Study	Very well attended	
	Eco-Care 'Open Space' workshop to identify projects and project leaders	Well attended	
	Carbon Emissions Reduction Project (c/-Reverend Trevor Burt)	Launched November 09 and Commissioned over 30 Environmental Ambassadors	
	Copenhagen Prayer Vigil 5th Dec 09	Well attended	
	Diocesan Sustainability Policy	Work has started on formulating this	
	Carbon Neutral Synod Oct 2010	The commitment has been made	
	Green Liturgies		
	Appointment of Advocacy Commission Coordinators		
Grafton	Every parish to conduct an Environmental Audit	4 of 27 parishes have done the audit	Getting parishes to do it or people to do it for them
Ballarat	20% reduction in GHG emissions by 2020 - for Diocesan operations	Too Early	Lack of belief in Climate Change. Lack of Commitment. Lack of Resources. Lack of Will. Lack of connection between the green issues & Christian beliefs or role of the Church
	Keynote address by Prof. Peter Gell at 2009 synod generally well accepted.	Enthusiastic advisory/steering group established	
Wangaratta	Decrease ecological footprint, reduce energy use	Evidence of increased awareness in some parishes, Increased use of sustainable energy in some areas	Most congregations are conservative and aging. Many congregations are rural, disparate & small
	Decrease use of petrol	Strategic plan approved by Synod, Past and present Bishop's use of appropriate transport	2009 serious bushfires diverted energy and resources
	Efficient use of water resources, paper use, office administration, network with Schools on Environmental Issues, use of media to "educate" community		Goals and aspirations slowed by limited resources: if we had more we could do more!

Canberra	See attached material: Codes of Practice & Parish Green Guide		
Bendigo	Conduct carbon audit	The Diocese has the results of the carbon audit but has not introduced any targets yet	
Gippsland	In process of setting targets		
Adelaide	The Environment Commission can report on this in detail if requested		
Melbourne	Research into a sample of churches being conducted.	Delayed due to work circumstances of the person conducting the survey	The wording of the Canon caused initial delays as there was little to clarify what was meant by policies and practices.
Rockhampton	Environmental audit of Kershaw House (Diocesan Office and Restaurant facility)	Task yet to be completed	Technical expert volunteering time while running solar business
	Environmental Audit of Anglicare-CQ Regional Office	Task yet to be started	

**Table 4: Reasons given by Dioceses for not adopting the Canon for Protection of the Environment**

Diocese	Reasons for not adopting or implementing the Canon
North Queensland	The argument turned on what was perceived to be the onerous reporting methodology contained in the Canon as presented.
Willochra	After a very good and lengthy debate, the Synod decided that these matters were not really affected by Synod motions and discussions.
Sydney	<p>At its session in 2009, the Sydney Synod received the following report from its Standing Committee about the Protection of the Environment Canon: "The <i>Protection of the Environment Canon 2007</i> seeks to establish mechanisms by which the Church may respond to the threat of climate change. The Canon commits the Church to reducing its environmental footprint. The Canon requires each diocese to establish processes and procedures that are necessary to achieve this commitment. Each Diocese is also required to report to General Synod in relation to its commitment.</p> <p>The Standing Committee commends the sentiment behind the Canon but notes that our Synod has already passed resolutions 17/07 and 17/08 about climate change. Consistent with the terms of these resolutions, the Property Trust has undertaken environmental audits in a pilot group of parishes and developed an Environmental Assessment Report which expresses principles of good environmental stewardship and care.</p> <p>In view of the work already being undertaken in this Diocese in relation to the environment, the Standing Committee recommends that our Synod not adopt this Canon and that the following motion be moved at our request at Synod - '<i>Synod requests that a report be provided to its next session about the environmental initiatives being undertaken in the Diocese</i>'</p>
Canberra	We adopted and created a Care for the Environment Ordinance based on the Canon
Bendigo	Too much other business to consider
Riverina	There appears to be considerable amount of reporting/recording of information required to comply with the Canon
North West Australia	We regard the emphasis given to this issue at the 2007 General Synod excessive and Bishop Browning's claim that this is our core business to be completely misguided.
Armidale	<p>Small Diocese with limited resources and efforts would therefore impinge on the proclamation of the Gospel which must be its primary role. As Christians we can unite with the wider community in dealing with this issue and make a unique contribution. The Armidale Synod declined to adopt the GS "Protection of the Environment Canon 2007" Ordinance. The major reasons behind this action were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the resultant channeling of scarce Diocesan and Parish resources away from the work of the Church as outlined in the 'Great Commission'</li> <li>2. the administrative structure required (Par. 2.2)</li> <li>3. the extra reporting required (Par. 3)</li> <li>4. the wider community has many resources and information available which can already be tapped into.</li> </ol>
The Murray	The Diocese of The Murray has not been in a position in recent years to consider any General Synod Legislation aside from the recent Long Service Leave Canon. This has been primarily due to the Bishop being on extended sick leave.

**Table 5: Alternative steps taken to address environmental issues**

Diocese	Alternative steps to address the issues relating to the relationship between Creator and Creation.
North Queensland	The Synod unanimously adopted a motion to conduct an Environmental Audit across the Diocese. This was achieved successfully and the information is stored at the North Queensland Diocesan Office.
Sydney	<p>In response to the recommendation of its standing committee, the Sydney Synod passed resolution 2/09 by which Synod requested that a report be provided to its next session about the environmental initiatives being undertaken in the Diocese.</p> <p>The Standing Committee subsequently appointed a Committee chaired by Dr Karin Sowada to undertake the work requested in Synod Resolution 2/09. The Committee has commenced its work and is expected to provide its report initially to the Standing Committee and ultimately to the Synod in its session in October this year.</p>
Armidale	Encouragement of parishes and parishioners to take responsible environmentally sustainable actions wherever possible. It was suggested that a copy of a resolution passed at Diocesan Synod in 2007 be forwarded to the General Synod Office for information. The motion reads - "That this Synod encourages each Parish to take practical local steps towards addressing climate change, by installation of [for example] solar electricity and solar hot water panels and rainwater tanks, and by providing information to assist Parishes in calculating their carbon footprint with a view to reducing that footprint"
North West Australia	Local churches are free to implement measures. For reconciliation we proclaim the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.



