



Lausanne Global Consultation in Collaboration with the WEA
Creation Care & The Gospel - Call to Action
St. Ann, Jamaica, November 2012

Introduction

The *Lausanne Global Consultation on Creation Care and the Gospel* met from 29 Oct – 2 Nov 2012 in St. Ann, Jamaica to build on the creation care components of the *Cape Town Commitment*. We were a gathering of theologians, church leaders, scientists and creation care practitioners, fifty-seven men and women from twenty-six countries from the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania, North America and Europe. We met under the auspices of the Lausanne Movement in collaboration with the World Evangelical Alliance, hosted by a country and region of outstanding natural beauty, where we enjoyed, celebrated and reflected on the wonder of God's good creation. Many biblical passages, including reflections on Genesis 1 – 3, Psalm 8 and Romans 8, informed our prayers, discussions and deliberations on the themes of ***God's World, God's Word and God's Work***. Our consultation immediately followed Hurricane Sandy's devastation of the Caribbean and coincided with that storm's arrival in North America; the destruction and loss of life was a startling reminder as to the urgency, timeliness and importance of this Consultation.

Two major convictions

Our discussion, study and prayer together led us to two primary conclusions:

Creation Care is indeed a "gospel issue within the lordship of Christ" (CTC I.7.A).

Informed and inspired by our study of the scripture – the original intent, plan, and command to care for creation, the resurrection narratives and the profound truth that in Christ all things have been reconciled to God – we reaffirm that creation care is an issue that must be included in our response to the gospel, proclaiming and acting upon the good news of what God has done and will complete for the salvation of the world. This is not only biblically justified, but an integral part of our mission and an expression of our worship to God for his wonderful plan of redemption through Jesus Christ. Therefore, our ministry of reconciliation is a matter of great joy and hope and we would care for creation even if it were not in crisis.

We are faced with a crisis that is pressing, urgent, and that must be resolved in our generation. Many of the world's poorest people, ecosystems, and species of flora and fauna are being devastated by violence against the environment in multiple ways, of which global climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss, water stress, and pollution are but a part. We can no longer afford complacency and endless debate. Love for God, our neighbors and the wider creation, as well as our passion for justice, compel us to "urgent and prophetic ecological responsibility" (CTC I.7.A).

Our call to action

Based on these two convictions, we therefore call the whole church, in dependence on the Holy Spirit, to respond radically and faithfully to care for God's creation, demonstrating our belief and hope in the transforming power of Christ. We call on the Lausanne Movement, evangelical leaders, national evangelical organizations, and all local churches to respond urgently at the personal, community, national and international levels.

Specifically, we call for:

1. **A new commitment to a simple lifestyle.** Recognizing that much of our crisis is due to billions of lives lived carelessly, we reaffirm the Lausanne commitment to simple lifestyle (*Lausanne Occasional Paper #20*), and call on the global evangelical community to take steps, personally and collectively, to live within the proper boundaries of God's good gift in creation, to engage further in its restoration and conservation, and to equitably share its bounty with each other.
2. **New and robust theological work.** In particular, we need guidance in four areas:
 - An integrated theology of creation care that can engage seminaries, Bible colleges and others to equip pastors to disciple their congregations.
 - A theology that examines humanity's identity as both embedded in creation and yet possessing a special role toward creation.
 - A theology that challenges current prevailing economic ideologies in relation to our biblical stewardship of creation.
 - A theology of hope in Christ and his Second Coming that properly informs and inspires creation care.
3. **Leadership from the church in the Global South.** As the Global South represents those most affected in the current ecological crisis, it possesses a particular need to speak up, engage issues of creation care, and act upon them. We the members of the Consultation further request that the church of the Global South exercise leadership among us, helping to set the agenda for the advance of the gospel and the care of creation.
4. **Mobilization of the whole church and engagement of all of society.** Mobilization must occur at the congregational level and include those who are often over-looked, utilizing the gifts of women, children, youth, and indigenous people as well as professionals and other resource people who possess experience and expertise. Engagement must be equally widespread, including formal, urgent and creative conversations with responsible leaders in government, business, civil society, and academia.
5. **Environmental missions among unreached people groups.** We participate in Lausanne's historic call to world evangelization, and believe that environmental issues represent one of the greatest opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ and plant churches among unreached and unengaged people groups in our generation (*CTC II.D.1.B*). We encourage the church to promote "environmental missions" as a new category within mission work (akin in function to medical missions).
6. **Radical action to confront climate change.** Affirming the *Cape Town Commitment's* declaration of the "serious and urgent challenge of climate change" which will "disproportionately affect those in poorer countries", (*CTC II.B.5*), we call for action in radically reducing greenhouse gas emissions and building resilient communities. We understand these actions to be an application of the command to deny ourselves, take up the cross and follow Christ.
7. **Sustainable principles in food production.** In gratitude to God who provides sustenance, and flowing from our conviction to become excellent stewards of creation, we urge the application of environmentally and generationally sustainable principles in agriculture (field crops and livestock, fisheries and all other forms of food production),

8. **An economy that works in harmony with God's creation.** We call for an approach to economic well-being and development, energy production, natural resource management (including mining and forestry), water management and use, transportation, health care, rural and urban design and living, and personal and corporate consumption patterns that maintain the ecological integrity of creation.
9. **Local expressions of creation care,** which preserve and enhance biodiversity. We commend such projects, along with any action that might be characterized as the "small step" or the "symbolic act," to the worldwide church as ways to powerfully witness to Christ's Lordship over all creation.
10. **Prophetic advocacy and healing reconciliation.** We call for individual Christians and the church as a whole to prophetically "speak the truth to power" through advocacy and legal action so that public policies and private practice may change to better promote the care of creation and better support devastated communities and habitats. Additionally, we call the church to "speak the peace of Christ" into communities torn apart by environmental disputes, mobilizing those who are skilled at conflict resolution, and maintaining our own convictions with humility.

Our call to prayer

Each of our calls to action rest on an even more urgent call to prayer, intentional and fervent, soberly aware that this is a spiritual struggle. Many of us must begin our praying with lamentation and repentance for our failure to care for creation, and for our failure to lead in transformation at a personal and corporate level. And then, having tasted of the grace and mercies of God in Christ Jesus and through the Holy Spirit, and with hope in the fullness of our redemption, we pray with confidence that the Triune God can and will heal our land and all who dwell in it, for the glory of his matchless name.

Agreed together by the participants of the Lausanne Global Consultation on Creation Care and the Gospel, St. Ann, Jamaica, 9 November, 2012.