



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
THE ETHICAL INVESTMENT ADVISORY GROUP

ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

“The whole creation belongs to God. As human beings we are part of the whole and have a responsibility to love and care for what God has entrusted to us as temporary tenants of the planet. We are called to conserve its complex and fragile ecology, whilst recognising the need for responsible and sustainable development and the pursuit of social justice.”

This statement by the Church of England National Institutions reflects the four principles on the environment adopted by the Lambeth Conference in 1998:

- i. the covenant of God’s love embraces not only human beings but all of creation;
- ii. creation is everywhere filled with God’s sacred presence;
- iii. human beings are the priests of creation, seeing God’s presence in it, and offering creation’s worship;
- iv. the Sabbath principle of “*enoughness*” is a challenge to us to rest from unnecessary consumption.

These principles lead us to a deeper awareness of the increasing strain which human activities are placing on the earth’s soil, water supplies, biological diversity, atmosphere and climate. These challenges require urgent and concentrated international action. For Christians in particular they entail changes at different levels:

- As individuals we need an enhanced sense of wonder and gratitude at creation’s fragile beauty, leading to changes in our lifestyles;
- The Church at national, diocesan and parish level should give public support to the need for environmental vigilance. It should back this by auditing its ecological “footprint” and promoting a responsible use of energy and other resources within its own activities;
- The Church investment bodies (the Church Commissioners, the CBF Church of England Funds and the Church of England Pensions Board) advised by the Ethical Investment Advisory Group, must develop their witness by engaging with companies on environmental risk, management and performance, as well as on specific issues such as sustainability and climate change. The Church’s Statement of Ethical Investment Policy includes a commitment to invest in companies that ‘are conscientious with regard to environmental performance.’ In this regard;
 - We believe ongoing engagement with companies to be the best means of exercising shareholder responsibility and communicating the Church’s concerns.
 - There may be special opportunities to witness these principles by investing in profitable, well-run companies specialising in environmentally friendly new technologies.
 - Disinvestment is considered if a company is in clear breach of the ethical investment policy, or if, after sustained dialogue, it does not respond positively to our concerns. Disinvestment, if recommended, remains the preserve of each Trustee body.

On behalf of the Ethical Investment Advisory Group

November 2004

The Church of England Ethical Investment Advisory Group was established in 1994 and includes representation from the Church Commissioners for England, the CBF Church of England Funds, The Church of England Pensions Board, the General Synod, the Archbishops’ Council, and the Council for Mission & Public Affairs