

**Conference of European Churches
Governing Board
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Public Issues Proposal

Act now for a future with hope

Conference of European Churches statement on COP24 and a sustainable future

Climate change is a serious threat to the future of humanity and all life on Earth. As people of faith, we believe that responding to this crisis is a theological imperative and matter of justice. What is at stake is not only the future. The effects of climate change are already felt now, especially among the world's poor and vulnerable who suffer disproportionately from our unsustainable lifestyles. Future generations will continue to pay the price for the decisions we make now.

In anticipation of the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP24) in Katowice (Poland) we call for visible and determined action plans from all parties. We call for measures to develop trust, and for all parties to agree on meaningful joint action. This also requires vision and voices from the Christian faith. As the recent assembly of [the European Christian Environmental Network \(ECEN\)](#) stressed, "Science can tell us what is happening; faith tells us why we must respond. To give life on earth a future with hope we must act now."

The recent [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) report](#) urged rapid, far-reaching, and unprecedented action to limit global warming to no more than 1.5°C. Individually and collectively we must reduce our environmental impact and rapidly transition to a low-carbon economy with a more just distribution of resources. As a disproportionately high contributor to climate change, Europe and the European Union have a special responsibility in this regard. The people of Europe expect joint and committed action.

We call upon governments and political decision makers to:

- Commit to reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to align with the IPCC report target of no more than 1.5°C.
- Work for a sustainable future and support the most vulnerable, including addressing loss and damage caused by climate change in at-risk parts of the world and support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Intensify efforts for energy conservation and renewable energy production, and promote an economy of sustainable production and consumption.

We encourage CEC Member Churches to:

- Continue and intensify efforts to bring about a sustainable and equitable lifestyle in parishes and church communities, to respect Creation, promote a just transition to a low-carbon economy, and act for intergenerational justice, and share best practices among churches on these issues.
- Engage in advocacy and dialogue with political decision makers to urge increased action in response to climate change.
- Develop theological and spiritual resources on the care for Creation that addresses the crisis and recognises inherent industrialised civilisation, and also a vision of a more just and sustainable future nurtured in an open ecumenical spirit.

Effective response to the threat of climate change requires long-term efforts, deep commitment, and profound transformation. Achieving this requires endurance, when grounded in faith leads to a hope that cannot disappoint as “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”