



Conference of European Churches  
Conférence des Églises européennes  
Konferenz Europäischer Kirchen  
Конференция Европейских Церквей

## **Public Issues Statement CEC Governing Board, November 2018**

### **Act now for a future with hope** Statement on COP24 and a sustainable future

Climate change is a serious threat to our future. The Conference of European Churches (CEC) welcomes the growing engagement of decision makers, as well as many initiatives among churches and elsewhere responding to climate challenges. We believe much more needs to be done. CEC calls for ambitious and immediate action from governments of individual countries and the European Union, as well as from individuals, enterprises and other public institutions to step up efforts to address climate change.

The recent [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\) report](#) urges 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.

As people of faith, we believe that responding to climate change and our hope for a sustainable life are linked to our ethical choices. Efforts to reduce carbon footprints have to start from an acknowledgment of our individual responsibilities. This includes our own commitment in CEC. A lifestyle and economy that do not respect the world around us are not sustainable. We need to acknowledge mistakes of the past and reverse attitudes to creation from ones of dominance and misuse to more stewardship and respect.

What is at stake is not only our future but the future of those living elsewhere and suffer from our consumption choices and lifestyle. Disproportionately, the impacts of climate change are felt by those who are most vulnerable but who contributed least to the problem. This will include future generations; those yet to come. Climate change needs to be addressed as an issue of justice.

In supporting the recent statement of the [European Christian Environmental Network \(ECEN\)](#) we underline the need to work together with hope for the future. Science can tell us what is happening; faith tells us why we must respond. We call upon governments of individual countries, the European Union and political decision makers to:

#### BRUSSELS

Rue Joseph II, 174  
BE-1000 Brussels, Belgium  
tel.: +32 2 230 17 32  
fax: +32 2 231 14 13  
e-mail: [cec@cec-kek.be](mailto:cec@cec-kek.be)

#### STRASBOURG

8, rue du Fossé des Treize  
FR-67000 Strasbourg, France  
tel.: +33 3 88 15 27 60  
fax: +33 3 88 15 27 61  
e-mail: [cec-strasbourg@cec-kek.be](mailto:cec-strasbourg@cec-kek.be)

[www.ceceurope.org](http://www.ceceurope.org)



Conference of European Churches  
Conférence des Églises européennes  
Konferenz Europäischer Kirchen  
Конференция Европейских Церквей

- Act accordingly and commit to reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions to align with the IPCC target of global warming of no more than 1.5°C;
- Work for a sustainable future and establish adequate mechanisms to support the most vulnerable. This includes allocating in a transparent way finance to address loss and damage caused by climate change in vulnerable parts of the world; to support implementation of sustainable development goals, to intensify efforts for energy saving and renewable energy production; and to promote an economy of sustainable production and consumption;
- In anticipation of the forthcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP24) in Katowice (Poland) we call for a visible and determined action plan with a clear time frame and commitment from all involved parties. We call for measures to develop trust that helps overcome obstacles in reaching an agreement on meaningful joint action.

We encourage CEC Member Churches to:

- continue and intensify efforts to bring about a more sustainable and equitable lifestyle in parishes and church communities across the continent, to respect creation, promote a just transition to a low carbon economy, act for inter-generational justice, share best practices among churches on these issues and work together as much as possible;
- engage in advocacy and dialogue with political decision makers to express our concerns and to urge increased action in response to climate change;
- develop theological resources on care for creation that address the crisis and offer a vision of a more just and sustainable future, and engage in this work in an open ecumenical spirit.

Effective response to the threat of climate change requires long-term effort, commitment and a profound transformation. Achieving this demands endurance. When grounded in faith it 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.”

CEC Governing Board  
November 2018  
Brussels

#### BRUSSELS

Rue Joseph II, 174  
BE-1000 Brussels, Belgium  
tel.: +32 2 230 17 32  
fax: +32 2 231 14 13  
e-mail: [cec@cec-kek.be](mailto:cec@cec-kek.be)

#### STRASBOURG

8, rue du Fossé des Treize  
FR-67000 Strasbourg, France  
tel.: +33 3 88 15 27 60  
fax: +33 3 88 15 27 61  
e-mail: [cec-strasbourg@cec-kek.be](mailto:cec-strasbourg@cec-kek.be)

[www.ceceurope.org](http://www.ceceurope.org)