



World Environment Day 5 June 2012 World Oceans Day 8 June 2012

Leader: 2012 World Environment Day Theme

In 1972 the United Nations General Assembly established the first World Environment Day to mark the opening of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. This was the first occasion on which the political, social and economic problems of the global environment were discussed at an intergovernmental forum with a view to actually taking corrective action. Another resolution led to the creation of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Green Economy: Does It Include You? is the theme of *World Environment Day* for 2012. The United Nations Environment Program defines *Green Economy* as "one that results in improved human well-being and social equity, while significantly reducing environmental risks and ecological scarcities."

U.N.E.P. lists three factors that make up a green economy:

- Low carbon
- Resource efficient
- Socially inclusive

In a green economy, both private and public investments contribute to growth in employment and income, while reducing carbon emissions and pollution, enhancing energy and resource efficiency, and preserving biodiversity and ecosystem services, U.N.E.P said. These benefits promote the common good by improving everyone's quality of life. This is how a green economy includes you, the U.N.E.P. Web site explains.

The theme of World Environment Day 2012 invites governments, industries, communities, churches, schools and individuals to learn more about the green economy, to assess whether or not they are included in it, and to improve their stewardship of creation to ensure that the benefits of a green economy do include everyone.

This year's theme '*Green Economy: Does it include you?*' invites everyone to both assess where the Green Economy fits in their daily lives and evaluate whether development through these pathways towards a Green Economy can deliver the kinds of social, economic and environmental outcomes needed in a world of seven billion people, climbing to over nine billion in 2050.

Brazil is the host country for World Environment Day 2012. Brazil had previously hosted World Environment Day in 1992, on the eve of the first Earth Summit, when world leaders, government officials and international organizations met to refocus, recalibrate and deliver a route map towards sustainable development. Three weeks after World Environment Day, Brazil will host Rio+20 where world leaders and nations will gather in order to design a more sustainable future.

Reader 1



Walk lightly
Each leaf, each petal,
each grain, each person,
sings your praises,
Creator God.
Each creature on the earth,

all the mountains and great seas
show your glory,
Spirit of love.
And yet the hand of greed
has patented and plundered
your splendour,
has taken and not shared
your gift,
has lived as owner of the earth,
not guest.
And so
the ice is cracked
the rivers dry,
the valleys flooded
and the snowcaps melt.
God our Father, show us
how to step gently,
how to live simply,
how to walk lightly
with respect and love
for all that you have made.

Amen

Linda Jones/CAFOD



(Pause for reflection)

Reader 2

We find ourselves ethically destitute just when, for the first time, we are faced with ultimacy, the irreversible closing down of the earth's functioning in its major life systems. Our ethical traditions know how to deal with suicide, homicide and even genocide, but these traditions collapse entirely when confronted with biocide, the killing of the life systems of the earth, and geocide, the devastation of the earth itself.

Thomas Berry, 1996

(Pause for Reflection)

Reader 3

Today the great gift of God's Creation is exposed to serious dangers and lifestyles which can degrade it. Environmental pollution is making particularly unsustainable the lives of the poor of the world...we must pledge ourselves to take care of creation and to share its resources in solidarity.

Benedict XVI

(Pause for Reflection)



Reader 4

Our mistreatment of the natural world diminishes our own dignity and sacredness, not only because we are destroying resources that future generations of humans need, but because we are engaging in actions that contradict what it means to be human. Our tradition calls us to protect the

life and dignity of the human person, and it is increasingly clear that this task cannot be separated from the care and defense of all creation.”

Renewing the Earth: An Invitation to Reflection and Action on Environment in Light of Catholic Social Teaching, 1991, 2.

(Pause for Reflection)

Reader 5

“As individuals, as institutions, as a people, we need a change of heart to preserve and protect the planet for our children and for generations yet unborn.”

Renewing the Earth: An Invitation to Reflection and Action on Environment in Light of Catholic Social Teaching, 1991,3.



(Pause for Reflection)

Action: Spend five to ten minutes today outdoors in a place where you can enjoy the beauty of Earth.

Leader: Let us pray together

God of the sun and the moon
Of the mountains, deserts and plains
God of the mighty oceans, of rivers, lakes and streams
God of all creatures that live in seas and fly in the air
Of every living thing that grows and moves on this sacred Earth.

We are formed by Christ into Your People
Called to bring the world into Your marvellous light
As the Body of Christ, we are messengers of ecological vocation
We are entrusted with caring for this Earth which You have created.

Help us to love and respect it
To repair what we have damaged
To care for what You have made good and holy
Give us the wisdom and the passion to change our minds, our hearts and our ways.



Let us be mustard seeds in our world
Bringing about ecological conversion which grows and
Spreads to every corner of the Earth
For our sake now and for every generation which is to come
We ask this through Christ, Our Lord. Amen
Catholic Earthcare Australia, 2002



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