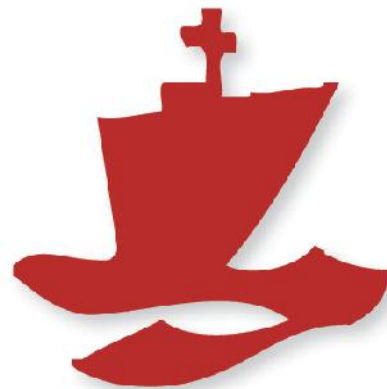


Ecumenical Youth Council in Europe aisbl



Statement on Sustainable Development and Ecological Justice

The disharmony of mankind with God and Creation has led to multiple and deeply complex crises. Following up the Budapest Ecumenical Youth Declaration Addressing Poverty, Wealth and Ecology, as well as the statement by the participants of the EYCE and WSCF-E joint study session “Climate Justice Now!”, the 38th General Meeting of EYCE declares the following:

Excessive consumption and the dogma of unlimited growth are dominant aspects of most, but not only, industrialised societies. A prevalent belief is that there are no viable alternatives to our current ways of life, which are based on unsustainable methods of working, producing and consuming. We need to question the status quo, including globalisation, trade, industrialisation and the way we deal with creation. We have to demonstrate that a sustainable, yet progressive way is indeed possible.

As Christians, we understand that human beings are part of creation and depend on it. Creation is more than the natural world, it also encompasses social, political and economic structures. For centuries, dominion of the earth was used as justification to exploit resources and destroy creation. However, in our understanding dominion of the earth firstly entails the protection of the God-given gifts and living in a way that does not compromise the needs of future generations.

As young Christians, we acknowledge that we should be promoters of change, living examples and multipliers of sustainable lifestyles. Solidarity and social justice on local, national and global level should be manifested through education, prayer, lobbying, advocacy, and sharing of expertise.

In light of the upcoming UN conference on sustainable development “Rio+20” in June 2012, we stress the importance of cooperation between nation states and civil societies, including youth organisations and churches, on the international level. Most importantly, legally binding agreements on the protection of climate, biodiversity and oceans as well as measurable goals for global sustainable development must be achieved.

In the current situation of a rising number of refugees directed by climate change and its economic and social consequences, it is urgent to adopt international regulations on the recognition of climate refugees and regulate their future status. As the treatment of political and economical, as well as climate refugees is highly unjust, new ways of dealing with migration need to be found quickly.

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