

Ten steps towards environmental responsibility

1. Being informed

- The theme of the [2002 Catholic Social Justice Sunday Statement](#) is: *The Environment*.
- The Anglican, Catholic and Uniting Churches have produced an ecumenical resource, the *Ecumenical Environment Kit*.

2. Surfing the Net

Numerous sites exist where information and activities can be accessed.

- Australian Conservation Foundation www.acfonline.org.au
- Catholic Conservation Centre conservation.catholic.org
- Catholic Earthcare Australia www.catholicearthcare.org.au
- Columban Missionary Society www.columban.org.au
- Landcare www.landcareaustralia.com.au
- Social Action Office CLRI Qld sao.clriq.org.au

The following sites enable you to make a difference online.

- Give Water www.wateraid.org
- The Hunger Site www.thehungersite.com
- The Rainforest Site www.therainforestsite.com

3. Discovering the local environment

Become aware of the natural environment in your local area. What are the environmental issues in your local area? Is there a local action group? How can you enhance and raise awareness about your local natural environment?

4. Valuing and Conserving Water

Today, over a billion people lack access to safe drinking water, and more than 2 billion people lack adequate sanitation. Every year at least 5 million people, most of them children, die from illnesses caused from drinking unsafe water.

Participate in ongoing activities related to World Water Day (March 22) – for example, visit www.unwater.org.

Join the campaign against the privatisation of water in low-income countries – visit www.aidwatch.org.au.

5. The Earth Charter

The United Nations has released *The Earth Charter*, a synthesis of values, principles and aspirations to guide the future development of our Earth. Most of the Charter is in harmony with Catholic Social Teaching.

Read and reflect on the Charter, and use it for discussion. It is available at www.earthcharterinaction.org.

Which aspects of the Charter are not in accordance with Catholic Teaching and why?

6. Care for your pets

Pets are lovable and often make good companions. When caring for pets, remember that most household pets need to be contained within the area of your home. They can damage Australian flora and fauna.

We need to preserve our native creatures and their habitats. Cities, suburbs and rural areas are more than social communities in which human beings live and grow; they are also part of natural communities in which we share space with a wondrous variety of life.

7. Plant a tree

Planting a tree is an appropriate activity to mark many occasions: a birth in the family; the beginning of a new year; a special birthday; an occasion of celebration; or a particular environmental day.

8. Recycle, reuse, reduce

Consumerism impacts on the environment. If we reduce our consumption of both goods and energy we reduce waste and pollution. When we buy goods, we reduce waste if they are reusable rather than disposable. Recycling is essential at home and at school or work.

9. Thinking globally and acting locally

The Earth is our home and we all share a mutual responsibility for our planet. We need to make the connection, in whatever way we can, between ourselves and all life on Earth. That connection can be through modern technology, traditional means, or by working with other individuals and organisations. We can translate that connection into action through local environmental awareness and activity.

Wherever we are, we can make choices and work towards building a future where all people live in harmony with nature, eradicating pollution and any degradation of the natural environment.

10. Prayer

Use the accompanying [Prayer Card](#) prepared by the ACSJC for personal prayer, in schools and parishes, or at family prayer time.

Incorporate creation and environmental themes in the prayer and worship of your family, school or parish community.

