



World Renew Creation Stewardship Policy

I. Statement of Principle:

God the Creator created all things (Genesis 1:1, John 1:3). The Creator and creation are distinct but in intimate relationship with one another (Genesis 9:9, Psalm 104, Matthew 6:26). Creation belongs to the Creator (Psalm. 24:1) who holds everything together (Colossians 1:17), and it was created very good (Genesis 1: 31). All creation is to praise and worship its Maker (Psalm 19, 104, 148).

Humans, God's special creature in creation (Genesis 1: 26-28, Psalm 8: 3-8), are called to be faithful stewards or caretakers of creation (Genesis 2: 15). Humanity and creation broke their relationship with the Creator, tarnishing creation's praise and worship, and distorting humanity's stewardship to one of self-interest. All creation, just like all humanity, is now eagerly waiting for the redemption of all things in Christ (Romans 8: 18-23, Colossians 1: 20) and the fulfilment of a new creation (Revelations 21: 1-4, Isaiah 11). As stewards, we are called to participate in this renewal of creation, restoring and preserving its task of praising and worshipping the Creator. A faithful and obedient response to this call is accompanied by the Creator's promise that we will enjoy the fruits and bounty of creation far beyond expectations (Leviticus. 25: 18-22, 26: 3-13).

A call to creation stewardship shapes how we should care for the poor. The poor too are called to be stewards of creation in their livelihoods and locales. Working with the whole person includes transforming their relationship with creation. Partnerships and programs must include a shared vision and wise stewardship of creation's resources for achieving sustainable livelihoods so the seeds of Shalom can yield a harvest. Stewardship and justice are often interrelated: "A poor man's field may produce abundant food but injustice sweeps it away" (Proverbs 13: 23). The poor are often disadvantaged by policies and practices regarding land, water, forests and minerals, requiring justice interventions that advocate for both the poor and creation. Stewardship and justice on environmental changes are also urgent in many countries and communities. Finally, the call for creation stewardship also extends beyond World Renew staff and programs; we are all called to be stewards of God's creation.

II. Statement of Goal:

Creation stewardship issues are closely connected to achieving development programs that are both effective and sustainable. World Renew strives, therefore, to:

1. Be committed to increasing the awareness and technical capacity of its staff and partners to promote environmental stewardship in its programs.
2. Be an agent for positive sustainable long term environmental change. As such, World Renew will advocate for stewardly and just environmental policies.
3. Increase capacity to analyze and advocate on environmental justice issues that can be caused by corporations, government agencies, consumers and general over consumption.

Strategies:

Organizational Strategies

1. World Renew will commit to the Reaffirmations, Statements and Call to Action as detailed in the CRC Creation Stewardship Report approved by Synod 2012.

2. World Renew's policies and organizational culture will support creation stewardship.
3. World Renew's board will support World Renew in promoting creation stewardship within the organization and its programming.
4. World Renew will engage individual and church donors on discussions on how daily activities impact the environment, which in turn impact poor communities around the world.
5. World Renew will strive to clarify with partners their own vision for creation stewardship.

Programmatic Strategies

World Renew has three programmatic foci relating to creation stewardship:

1. **Stewardship**: Increase positive impacts of programs and activities on the environment while reducing negative impacts. This includes the use of environmental impact assessment and the integration of environmental impact questions into our planning processes.
2. **Resilience**: Increase community resilience and capacity to adapt to environmental changes within their local area, which are caused by environmental factors that are out of their control. Using systems analyses we will help communities to understand the impact that environmental change is having on their livelihoods and how they can mitigate its impact and even thrive in this new reality.
3. **Restoration**: Restoration of locally or regionally degraded environments. World Renew will support activities that encourage creation stewardship (e.g. increase utilization of methods that restore and maintain soil fertility). Furthermore, activities / programs that have negative environmental impacts will be discouraged.

Planning:

1. World Renew commits to building our partners' capacity to integrate creation stewardship into their program planning process. This includes systems analyses methods to better help the communities we work with to make the linkages between the condition of the environment and the success and sustainability of their planned interventions.
2. World Renew will support its staff and partner staff in integrating locally appropriate environmental adaption and mitigation approaches into their country and partner strategic plans and to ensure that planning approaches address issues of resilience and vulnerability.
3. World Renew will use appropriate planning tools such as environmental impact assessment and environmental degradation risk and adaptation assessment or disaster-focused rapid environmental assessment to enhance sustainability outcomes.

Implementation:

1. World Renew will streamline dialogue and planning for long term environmental outcomes when planning with its partners on an annual basis, encouraging a participatory approach with all stakeholders.

2. World Renew will support projects that focus on ecological restoration and preservation. Interventions aimed at environmental restoration/rehabilitation, that are legitimate and encouraged under the following conditions:
 - a. when the target community is experiencing or soon would experience the negative effects of environmental degradation,
 - b. when interventions can be integrated with one of our standard measurable projects, and
 - c. when the project itself can be made sustainable.

Evaluation:

1. Country and program evaluations will consider how activities are affected by, and contributing to environmental change and what is being done to mitigate and adapt to changes.
2. Project and Partner evaluations will include verification that environmental stewardship and sustainability was promoted. Indicators should especially be valued by local communities, field staff, home office and government agencies.