

Who is this for?

We are working with faith leaders, faith schools, congregations, women’s faith groups, religious communities, retreat centres and environment organisations run by faiths. This is for any group from any of the world’s major religions, wanting to make a workable eco action plan for the future.

How can you develop your own Plan?

ARC has produced a guidebook, which can be downloaded from our website. Each faith can use the guidebook in different ways, in accordance with their diverse approaches and interests. At first, ARC will act as advisors and brokers while you, as a faith group, take the idea and run with it.

What happens next?

In November 2009, just before the UN Climate Change conference in Copenhagen, 31 faith traditions and organisations launched their Plans at Windsor Castle, in the presence of Prince Philip and the Secretary-General of the UN, Ban Ki-moon. Since then other faiths have announced an intention to create Plans in their own communities. We invite you to join them. Create local, provincial, national and international celebrations and highlight your commitment.

Faith communities worldwide are showing their determination to protect this fragile planet. Let us know you are joining us, and we will add you to our website and network, so your story will inspire others to make their own plans, open new doors, and make a real difference.



What is ARC?

The Alliance of Religions and Conservation was founded by HRH Prince Philip in 1995. It is a secular body helping the world’s major religions develop environmental programmes based on their own core teachings, beliefs and practices. It also helps secular environment groups work with the faiths to protect the natural world.



To learn more about the Long Term Plans and to download the latest Guidebook, see our website

**www.arcworld.org**  
**Email: arcworld@arcworld.org**

The House, Kelston Park, Bath, BA1 9AE, UK  
Tel: +44 1225 758004

The paper used in this leaflet comes from FSC woodlands

*“How can you stay constant, in a world that is constantly changing?”*

LONG-TERM FAITH COMMITMENTS TO PROTECT THE LIVING PLANET



*A vision of people, through their beliefs, treading more gently upon the earth.*

**ARC**  
**THE ALLIANCE OF RELIGIONS AND CONSERVATION (ARC)**  
*with support from the*  
United Nations Development Programme  
and the Government of Norway

## Why Long-Term Plans?

The destruction of the environment is probably the biggest challenge to the welfare of all life on earth. It threatens the survival of communities and puts the diversity and wonder of nature at risk. Many of the major religions of the world are ready to take the lead in finding solutions, sharing their insights and working with their faithful to address these issues for generations to come.

The Long-Term Plans are a response to requests by many faiths for advice on what to do next. It is designed to assist faith communities to create long-term action plans, offering practical models of engagement with key environmental issues. A major contribution that religions can make is to develop programmes of environmental action, not out of fear, guilt or apprehension, but because they are true to what the faith understands.

Each faith group is developing its plan depending on its strengths. Faith retreat centres are looking at food sourcing; Lutherans and Shinto are exploring their impacts on forests; Sikhs are concentrating on water pollution because that is where their land is suffering; Buddhists in Shanghai are cleaning the river; Jews are looking at community supported agriculture; Muslims are examining pilgrimage. Everyone is incorporating eco-celebration.

All the faiths are finding that by going through the formal process of discussing their strengths within the seven key areas, and by writing down their commitment as a Plan, they have been able to have a vision of the future: one that will allow the conditions necessary for the plans to manifest.

## Why the faiths?

Through their teachings and networks, faiths are uniquely positioned to develop programmes that can shape the outlook of people for generations to come. This could be through teaching children to love nature; creating prayers; investing pension funds in alternative energy; managing farms and forests ecologically; encouraging simpler lifestyles; persuading governments to act on illegal logging or pollution; greening their places of worship.

## How does it work?

There are seven key areas in which faiths can engage effectively in environmental action:

- 1. Assets.** Do you own land or forests? Hold financial investments? Run health clinics and hospitals? Own buildings? Run food, hotel or retail outlets? Are you managing these in the most ecological way?
- 2. Education.** Have you embedded your religion's perspective on the natural world into the curriculum of your faith-run schools or into informal education such as youth groups or camps? Do you manage school buildings? Could you encourage greater monitoring by of the world around us by pupils, whether this is river pollution, logging, or the local populations of voles and bees and migratory birds? Are your school grounds wildlife-friendly? Do they teach organic gardening?
- 3. Wisdom.** Do you include care of nature in your theological training? Do you know your faith's traditional stories about nature? Do you need to plan how you can help people adapt in areas where climate change makes this necessary?
- 4. Lifestyles.** How can you encourage simple living? Make pilgrimages more ecologically gentle? Unite your communities to use their green purchasing power to buy organic food or greener energy?
- 5. Media and Advocacy.** Can you ask others to take these issues as seriously as you do? Do you lobby governments and local councillors to act? Does your faith's media feature the environment as much as it could? And do you tell others about what you do to help the environment, in order to encourage other communities to do the same?
- 6. Partnerships and eco-twinning.** Can you link with others who are on similar journeys? Who from the secular world might help?
- 7. Celebration.** Can you, or have you, set aside a festival to focus on the environment? Can your place of worship be a place where thanks can be given for beautiful places and for new initiatives to protect nature? Can you help people find awe and wonder in creation once again?



TOP: GENERATIONAL CHANGE: Girls in India learn how Hindu herbal knowledge is being revitalised through village and temple gardens  
ABOVE: Muslim boys in Birmingham discuss cleaning up the city and making a "greener medina"  
BELOW-L: Maronites in Lebanon have worked with the government to protect their threatened holy valley of Qadisha  
BELOW-R: After a Catholic primary school held a full day of eco-inspired lessons, pupils asked for it to be "Earth Day every day"

