

# GREEN PILGRIMAGE NETWORK

A HANDBOOK FOR FAITH LEADERS, CITIES, TOWNS AND PILGRIMS



*“WHAT WOULD YOUR PILGRIM CITY BE LIKE  
IF IT WERE A SUSTAINABLE PILGRIM CITY?”*

The Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC)



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ARC  
The House  
Kelston Park  
Bath  
BA1 9AE,  
United Kingdom

+44 1225 758004

[www.arcworld.org](http://www.arcworld.org)  
[arcworld@arcworld.org](mailto:arcworld@arcworld.org)

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Editor: Victoria Finlay

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**For comments, changes or additions for the next edition, please contact Alison Hilliard [alisonh@arcworld.org](mailto:alisonh@arcworld.org)**



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ALLIANCE OF RELIGIONS AND CONSERVATION

launched in 1995 by HRH The Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh KG KT

## LETTER FROM ARC

**In 2001 more than 60 million Hindu pilgrims attended the Maha Kumbh Mela in Allahabad, making it the largest human gathering in recorded history. The crowds were so huge they could apparently be seen from outer space. But even on any ordinary day of the year, hundreds of thousands of people around the world are on pilgrimage. Indeed, at least 220 million people become pilgrims each year – whether for a few hours, days, weeks or months. And most of these pilgrims are undergoing this journey in order to experience something sacred. It is as if whole cities are on the move, waiting to be transformed.**

Many pilgrimage sites have overwhelming amounts of plastic bottles, rubbish, and the remnants of food that involved pesticides, battery farming and wasteful practices. But imagine the good that could be done if people who go on pilgrimage are reminded of their sacred responsibility to the Earth, and return home with more knowledge and understanding of what they can do to respect that.

ARC has been working on the environmental aspects of sacred sites and pilgrimage routes since it was founded in 1995. In November 2009, supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), ARC held a major event at Windsor Castle, UK, titled MANY HEAVENS, ONE EARTH: FAITH COMMITMENTS FOR A LIVING PLANET. In the presence of the Secretary-General of the United Nations HE Ban Ki-moon, and HRH Prince Philip, nine major world religions launched long-term commitments to environmental action in what the UNDP described as “potentially the world’s largest civil society movement on climate change”.

The Armenian Orthodox Church proposed to green the holy city of Etchmiadzin; the Muslims expressed their vision that the pilgrimage city of Medina in Saudi Arabia should become a model of ecological action; the Jewish Plan proposed greening Jerusalem so that a place that is holy to Jews, Christians and Muslims around the world becomes a model of sustainability. **This gave birth to the idea of linking faiths to set up a network of green pilgrimage cities, towns and pathways around the world, sharing experiences and ideas. The aim is to help faiths green their holy cities, towns and shrine places according to their own theology and understanding.** Given that pilgrimage is central to the experience of faith, this could have a dramatic impact on protecting our planet.

A common denominator for each and every religion is a deep care for the planet, and the natural world that sustains us. With that common denominator, it makes

sense that people reaching into their faith to embark on a spiritual journey do so with a sense of the spirituality of the land they are passing through.

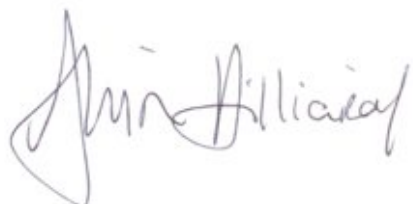
As we prepare for the launch of the Green Pilgrimage Network at Assisi in November 2011, each faith group is preparing a theology supporting the green vision of pilgrimage. These theologies will be widely publicised in order to inspire millions of followers worldwide.

In Assisi, each faith and city will present a draft action plan of what they hope to achieve in the next year. And we look forward to annual meetings to share what has been achieved, to welcome new members and to inspire generations of pilgrims as we walk together to protect our shared planet.

Assisi is the birthplace of Saint Francis who is the Catholic Patron Saint of Ecology, known for his love of birds, animals and nature. Assisi is one of the founding members of the Green Pilgrimage Network, and it is also where the modern movement of religions and conservation can be said to have started, with a meeting organised by WWF for their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary 25 years ago, bringing together for the first time representatives of Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Judaism, to discuss how each has traditions of care for nature embedded in its teachings.

We are delighted to welcome founding members of the new network from Armenia, the People's Republic of China, Egypt, England, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, Norway and Scotland.

Martin Palmer and Alison Hilliard

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Palmer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alison Hilliard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

## INTRODUCTION



*Imagine what could be achieved if pilgrims and pilgrim cities were to become models of care and respect for the environment, reflecting the deep values of the world's faith traditions.*

*Imagine a network of Green Pilgrimage cities, towns, villages and shrines, inspiring environmental care all along the great pilgrimage routes, and encouraging all pilgrims to leave a 'positive footprint' on their journeys and in their destinations.*

This handbook has been created as one of the first steps on the journey of making this vision into a reality.

### **The sections**

It is in four sections: Part One is about creating a theology and making a strategic plan. Part Two is very practical guide for city and town authorities, faith leaders and members to make their cities and towns greener. Many of the ideas will also be useful for faith guardians and municipal authorities in pilgrim areas in villages or in remote areas. Part Three includes sample theologies, while Part Four is a resources section, including links to information about other pilgrimages, and contacts for technical solutions and both secular and faith organisations that could be helpful to you in your own journey.

### **Partnerships**

The network needs to engage secular partnerships as well as faith partnerships. Local authorities, academic institutions, environmental organizations and other stakeholders (including transport providers, solar power experts and local NGOs) will be encouraged to come into discussion and partnership with religious groups to promote all aspects of greening pilgrimages. It is vital for the Mayor and City Council in each city to commit to the goals of the network. One of the network's first secular partners is ICLEI (Local Governments for Sustainability) an international association of some 1,100 local governments in 68 countries taking responsibility for creating a more sustainable society.

### **The Next Steps**

The first members announced their commitments to join the network in Assisi, Italy, in November 2011, at a celebration hosted by ARC and supported by the Norwegian Government. The event was be an opportunity for faith leaders and city administrators to discuss why they want to become a green pilgrim city, what they are doing at the moment, and what they would like to do in the future. For ARC it was also be a chance to listen to, and collect, the stories we heard from participants



and others in order to include them in this handbook and help create materials and lesson plans for schools and colleges around the world.

We would be delighted to hear your comments and any further examples you would like to see included as this document expands as an online resource.

It begins, as so many initiatives begin, with a plan and a vision. And each local faith community has started by drawing up its plan in co-operation with the local authority, mayor or city council, starting with the question: “What would your city be like if it were a sustainable green city?”

### **The Vision and Hope**

The hope is that this new global network of green pilgrim cities and pilgrimage routes will inspire pilgrims of all faiths to:

- Prepare mindfully for their pilgrimage
- Walk lightly and travel responsibly in the spirit of their faith
- Choose sustainable tourist agencies
- Eat and drink sustainably and ethically
- Minimise their waste and water use
- Dispose of their rubbish... and pick up after others
- Support a fund to green the city or town they are visiting
- Help local people in ecologically sensitive activities
- Share the art of green pilgrimage with the people they meet on the way
- Bring greener ideas for living home with them

The vision is that this new global network will inspire pilgrimage cities and routes to:

- Receive and accommodate pilgrim visitors sustainably
- Green their religious buildings, energy, infrastructure and open spaces
- Safeguard and celebrate their wildlife and parks
- Create a green pilgrim fund
- Create green maps highlighting eco projects, issues and volunteer opportunities
- Bring faiths and local authorities together to create sustainable cities
- Provide clean, accessible drinking water
- Improve sanitation for pilgrim routes and destinations
- Work with tour operators, airlines and others to provide carbon neutral travel
- Spread greener living habits among their own population
- Be proud of their status as Green Pilgrim Cities, and publicise it
- Celebrate their pilgrims and green their faith festivals
- Work with, and support, each other in greening initiatives

## The first members of the Green Pilgrimage Network are:

- Bahá'í World Centre
- The City of Haifa, Israel
  
- The Armenian Orthodox Church
- The City of Etchmiadzin, Armenia
  
- The Franciscan Order in Assisi
- The City of Assisi, Italy
  
- The Coptic Orthodox Church, Egypt
  
- St Albans Cathedral, Church of England
- The City and District of St Albans, England, UK
  
- Nidaros Diocese, the Lutheran Church of Norway
- The City of Trondheim, Norway
- The National Pilgrimage Centre, Norway
  
- Luss Parish Church of Scotland
- Luss, in the Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, Scotland, UK
  
- The Qadiriyyah Sufi Movement in Nigeria
- The City of Kano, Nigeria
  
- The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), Amritsar, India
- The City of Amritsar, India
  
- Jinja Honcho, Japan
- The Association of Shinto Shrines
  
- Louguantai Taoist Temple and the China Taoist Association of Shaanxi
- The City of Louguan, People's Republic of China
  
- The City of Jerusalem, Israel

The Green Pilgrimage Network aims to affiliate with key pilgrim shrines and routes which are destinations for many thousands of pilgrims every year, and are facing some of the same ecological issues. These include St Bishoy Monastery at Wadi El Natroun in Egypt, which is the destination for some 100,000 mainly Coptic Orthodox pilgrims every summer. Here, reclaiming the desert is a critical ecological issue. It is a popular location for bird watching, with many rare species attracted to the salt marshes and nine lakes in the vicinity. All these areas need to be protected from pollution and hunting.



## Part One: how to start

*“Being a Green Pilgrimage city or town means far more than just dealing with tourism responsibly: this is an ethos that can have a role in every element of urban decision-making”*  
– Tony Juniper, former head of Friends of the Earth.

### A vision

-- *What would your pilgrim city be like if it were a green, sustainable city?*

-- *What would your pilgrimage route be like if it were green, sustainable route, in keeping with your beliefs*

Many cities around the world are engaging increasingly with green issues – partly because they are responding in a responsible way to the global environment crisis, and partly because this is what voters are asking for. And partly because planning decisions that are carried out with ideals of healthy air and water, greenbelt areas where wildlife thrive, clean transport systems, well-insulated and beautiful buildings, and a sense of aesthetics which makes people happy where they live, are all long-term decisions that make members of the city leadership and councils proud of what they have done in their working life.

If your city is a pilgrim city – a place where people go in order to be transformed in the rest of their lives – then you have an extra responsibility and an extraordinary opportunity. It is easy today, while making pragmatic cost-led decisions about development, or struggling with issues of bins or schools or prisons or traffic-snarled roads, to forget the element of profound faith that brings many people to your city, and that by harnessing this element you can find some solutions.

**Our vision is of pilgrims and the pilgrim cities that receive them becoming models of care for the environment, and leaving a positive footprint on the Earth.**

### A process

Each regional, city and town council has its own individual ways of looking at proposals, making decisions, and implementing changes. To become a Green Pilgrim City you do, of course, need to work within your internal structures. However, these steps will probably include: establishing a co-ordination committee to guide and oversee the implementation of the planning exercise; signing a declaration; analysing available resources and the current state of biodiversity, ecology and water quality, etc; developing an implementation plan (based theologically and practically); publicising it widely; following through.

### The first step: A theology

The first step is to explore why caring for the environment has a role in your faith, and therefore why the pilgrim cities in your region or country have a particular reason to be ecologically based. Each faith member group of the Green Pilgrimage Network has therefore committed to draw up a theological statement to share with their followers. In Part three of this handbook you will find sample theologies from many of our founding faith members, drawn up as part of this process.

### The second step: A declaration of commitment

Once the city and the faith have decided to join the Green Pilgrimage Network, they need to create and sign a document of commitment. This could be a simple commitment for the faith group and the city to work together to make their city a green pilgrim city. Alternatively the city might want to sign a charter such as the one below (see box):

#### **SAMPLE CITY CHARTER**

- **We commit** to journey together with the faithful in our city to build a vision of the city we both want to have, a city that is transformed into a place we want to share and a city that aims to leave a positive footprint on this earth.
- **We commit** to work with those who journey on pilgrimage to our city to make their journey as ecological as possible through transport, accommodation, food, water, sanitation, etc.
- **We commit** to take existing environmental initiatives by our city and exploring in what ways partnerships with the faiths and pilgrims could enhance and increase the scope of our city's ambitions, from reducing our city's carbon footprint to increasing our city's biodiversity and sustainable energy targets.
- **We commit** to work with the faith communities in our city to green their own buildings and land and other assets such as schools and places of worship.
- **We commit** to develop an awards certificate for hotels, restaurants, shops for best practice and for providing the best spiritual experience to the pilgrims visiting our city.
- **We commit** to produce a green pilgrim guide or map to the city, updated on an annual basis.
- **We commit** to draw up an action plan to work towards these goals.

### The third step: an environmental audit

It is vital to do an environmental audit of your buildings, land, places of worship and practices at an early stage. This gives a clear idea of what faith leaders and civic authorities are already doing, and it indicates quickly where you could have a more positive impact.

E.G. Between 2008 and 2009, communities from 31 different faith traditions worldwide worked with the ARC/UNDP Long-Term Plan Guidebook to assess their environmental impact and potential. It looks at seven key areas in which faith communities can often have huge impact: their buildings, land, forests

and assets; education; their teachings and wisdom; their impact on lifestyles; their media outreach and advocacy; their partnerships; their experience in organising inspiring celebrations. Since 2009 there have been two more plans, from Mongolian Buddhism and the Coptic Orthodox Church, with another 27 being prepared by Muslim, Christian and Hindu leaders in Africa as well as by one by Buddhists in Bhutan. Download the handbook [here](#)<sup>1</sup>.

E.G. Interfaith Power and Light in the USA works with more than 4,000 congregations and faith communities in 38 states to promote energy conservation. It has a simple Cool Congregations Calculator to help faiths work out their carbon emissions in areas including energy, transportation, purchasing and waste. The calculator is [here](#)<sup>2</sup> and the general site is [here](#).<sup>3</sup>

E.G. The Jewish Seven-Year Plan proposed that before 2015 every synagogue, Jewish community centre, student facility and school around the world should develop a plan for greening itself, to include an energy audit, energy efficiency measures, transferring to a renewable energy programme, zero waste catering, sustainable local food and planting gardens.

E.G. The UK-based ecumenical organisation Eco-Congregations has created an [environmental audit](#)<sup>4</sup> designed primarily for churches. However many of the ideas are relevant for, or easily translatable to, issues facing other faiths.

E.G. At an early stage in their process the Catholic Bishops Conference of England and Wales compiled an environmental audit of which groups and organisations were doing what and where, so their plan would be built on current activities rather than duplicating them.

E.G. The Armenian Orthodox Church has committed to undertake eco audits at its seminaries and church buildings. As a result it decided to install energy efficient lights in all churches and seek funding to install solar hot water systems at five Church-affiliated summer camps and guesthouses around Armenia. It has committed to create green surroundings around churches. This forms part of the pledge to green the holy pilgrim city of Etchmiadzin.

### [The fourth step: a strategic plan](#)

Without a clear plan, many great ideas come to very little. Start by asking the following questions: what do we want to have achieved in five years? In 10 years? In 20 years? For the next generation? Other questions you need to ask are:

- **What does it mean, for us, to be a green pilgrim city or town?**
- **Who will help us?**
- **Where will we look for funding?**
- **What are the next steps?**

There is a wealth of guidance on strategic planning on sustainable urban tourism.

E.G. Cities of the Future<sup>5</sup> is a collaboration between the Norwegian Government and the 13 largest cities in Norway to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make the cities better places to live. It has a terrific and inspiring website, showing the efforts that each of the cities is making, with an interactive session that gives a vision of what a sustainable city will be like to live in, in the future.

E.G. In 2005 the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) created a Sustainable Tourism guide<sup>6</sup> which has useful pointers for policymakers.

E.G. Canada-based independent tourism expert Rachel Dodds has an influential website, [www.sustainabletourism.net](http://www.sustainabletourism.net)<sup>7</sup>, with sample policies, case studies and strategy documents from around the world. It includes a useful checklist of questions for town and city authorities to ask themselves before drawing up policies<sup>8</sup>.



## Part two: Seven key areas to make your pilgrim city greener

- I. Infrastructure, buildings, land, transport**
- II. Education, young people and volunteering**
- III. Faith wisdom, stories and teachings**
- IV. Lifestyles: hotels, food, souvenirs and funerals**
- V. Media and advocacy: communicating the message**
- VI. Partnerships and Funding**
- VII. Celebration**

This guide is intended for faith leaders, businesses that work with pilgrims, city municipalities and pilgrims themselves. Some of the sections are more relevant to some groups than others.



## I. Buildings, land and transport infrastructure

### 1. Greening your buildings

One of the outstanding features of most long-term environmental plans by the faiths is a commitment not only to audit their buildings, gardens, farmlands and energy use but also to create model ecologically-managed and built places of worship. While faiths can concentrate on their places of worship and office buildings, local authorities can look much more widely to see which secular public buildings (museums, bus stations, council offices, supported housing, libraries) they can make, or plan more ecologically because their city is now a green city. They can work in their role as planning authorities to establish green criteria for new buildings. They can also work with the faiths to source funding and expertise to transform the buildings visited by pilgrims into models of contemporary ecological thinking.

#### 1.1 Existing buildings

Is there anything you can do, both immediately and long-term, to improve the footprint of your office buildings and places of worship? This can range from using eco light bulbs and cutting down heating and air-conditioning to using solar energy, insulating the buildings more efficiently and establishing policies about carpet purchasing and composting.

E.G. Daoists in China are installing solar panels at all their temples in China. The first Daoist ecological temple – at Taibaishan pilgrimage mountain in Shaanxi Province – was built in 2007 with local sustainable materials. It is now a model for ecological temples being planned throughout China. The Daoists have produced a handbook, *How to Green Your Temple*, which can be downloaded [here](#)<sup>9</sup>.

E.G. As part of their EcoSikh initiative, Sikhs in Punjab (including the holy city of Amritsar) and elsewhere have started the process of deciding what would constitute a green gurdwara (Sikh temple), with the aim of setting up a network of green gurdwaras around the world.

E.G. Quakers in the UK have pledged that their historic conference centre, Swarthmoor Hall in Cumbria, will come off-grid by 2012 through on-site small-scale energy production. They are investigating using their surrounding farmland to install commercial wind turbines.

Establish trusted green building certification criteria systems. For example, LEED, (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design<sup>10</sup>), is an internationally recognised green building certification system, developed by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). Points are awarded for a structure's eco-friendly features; for example, the use of certified wood, or CO2 monitoring. LEED platinum is the highest designation a building can earn. In Chicago, a mosque has installed solar panels to heat water for 20,000 weekly worshippers to perform ablution. In Salt Lake City, the new church



history library of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has been awarded a LEED Silver certification. And in Wilmette, Illinois, the Baha'i Visitor's Center is obtaining permits to install a cistern to collect rainwater for irrigation.

According to the US Green Building Council, in 2003 only one religious institution sought to obtain LEED-certification. By 2007, there were 19. And in 2010, 58 religious institutions, from a Serbian Orthodox church in California to the Campus for Jewish Life in New Jersey to a mosque in Dubai, sought LEED certification.

### 1.2 New buildings

Many faith groups have designed new places of worship that are environmentally friendly, and models for others. Have you looked at the environmental impact of your construction activities and decisions? For example, to what extent have you assessed the environmental impact of new buildings? What were the key ecological problems and did you find any solutions? Can you link with places of worship that have already decided to be green, to find out how they did this and what it involved? Could you incorporate green building codes in all that you do?

E.G. Europe's first ecologically responsible mosque is being built in Cambridge, UK. Skylights mean the mosque will be naturally lit throughout the year, the building will be well insulated and use energy from ground source heat pumps. The community garden will expand, the building will be surrounded by greenery, and there will be secure areas for bicycles. The £13 million project, for up to 1,000 worshippers, will include a café, teaching area and meeting rooms for both Muslim and non-Muslim members of the local community.

E.G. The Holy Family Catholic Church in Saskatoon is the first new Catholic Church to be built in Western Canada in 50 years. Its large stained glass windows, with embedded solar panels, will combine art and technology.

## 2. Greening the land

The faiths own around seven percent of the habitable land surface of the planet, and more than five percent of the world's forests. Checking how your sacred sites are maintained ecologically is a good first step to greening the land you own or influence. Also, to what extent have you examined assets such as farmland, forests, mines and quarries around your sacred city, and asked whether they could be differently protected or managed to better contribute to sustaining our planet?

Pilgrim trails often pass through long stretches of land: can you work with the landowners to make this land more environmentally sustainable, because it is holy?

In the city, town or the shrines along the route, could you green a space beside your place of worship that is testimony to your commitment to be green? Could this space also stimulate the recovery of lost skills, such as the restoration of intricate traditional architecture and ancient gardens?

E.G. During the Soviet era there were barely half a dozen churches operating in Armenia. With independence, most historical church buildings, many dating back to the Middle Ages, have been returned to the Armenian Apostolic and Catholic Churches. They have repaired many of them and re-opened them for worshippers. Thousands of trees have been planted around churches throughout Armenia.

E.G. Up until 2008, Dechen Phodrang Monastery and monastic school in Thimphu, Bhutan, was in a terrible condition. There were just two taps for more than 200 monks and just one toilet block, meaning that the bushes around were filthy. Some 80% of the young monks had lice, and when their heads were shaved the scarring could be seen. The cooks had nowhere easy to wash their hands before cooking. With the endorsement of the Crown Prince, now King of Bhutan, and government funding, a new toilet block and water supply were installed, there were classes in awareness of a clean environment and new electric stoves (saving tonnes of wood). And as part of this it was decided to grow flower gardens which the monks would learn to tend. The Royal Society for the Protection of Nature (RSPN) also developed a manual for monks to develop gardens, because sanitation is just the beginning of a better environment.

Or is there a larger plot of land – a farm or a forest – that your faith has ownership of, or control over? Can this be managed more ecologically?

E.G. Solan is a community of Orthodox nuns in France's Rhone valley. They took over a building in 1991 in an abandoned farm complex, without water or electricity, and have built it into a working organic farm, producing organic wine, apricot jam, chestnuts and figs. The local authority offered a 75 percent subsidy for them to chop down their forest, sell the logs, replant new trees and leave them for 30 years – but they wanted to do it differently. Instead, a forester felled selected trees and planted 5,000 new saplings by hand. The result for the nuns is a constantly mature forest, which provides wood and income, while maintaining a sense of a special and sacred place. The result for the local authority is a change in practice: it now subsidises hand planting. For local landowners there is another proven (and subsidised) model of forestry to follow. And wild animals and plants have places to thrive.

E.G. In 1999 British Sikhs planted woodland on the outskirts of Nottingham. Ten years on, Khalsa Wood is a quiet place used for walks, picnics, ceremonies and meditation by many communities – and has become a model for faith-created woodland around the world. Oaks were chosen for their longevity, to be enjoyed by generations to come; fruit trees were chosen for their blossom and beauty for today's generation. The initiative came at the time when Sikhs were beginning to distribute saplings at ceremonies, in place of the traditional prasad of sweets.

E.G. The Armenian Apostolic Orthodox Church, which is one of the founding members of the Green Pilgrimage Network, is replanting an ancient historical forest that used to grow near to the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin. The ancient historic Nersisyan forest formally stretched for 100 hectares around the Mother Cathedral of Holy Etchmiadzin but now is almost vanished. Recently, the Church has acquired the administration of 8.5 hectares. A small part of the forest will become a playground. The bigger plan is to plant 1.5 million trees throughout the country in the memory of the 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide at the beginning of the 20th century.

The faith does not have to own the land to have influence over its use.

E.G. In Bhutan, Buddhist monks are traditionally asked to pray for the success of a new road or building project. As part of the monks' ecological action plan, the monastic body has decided to play a more leading role in decision-making about infrastructure. "Only we know what deities live in the rocks and the trees," said one monk at the first Buddhist Environment meeting, in Thimphu, in September 2011.

Can the city authorities take another look at the parks inside the city, and established roads, and make sure they are protected and cared for? Can they look at the trees, and see whether there could be more urban trees along roads to the pilgrim site, and if so whether there could be a way to care for them, because they are holy, and if not, whether more could be planted. Can they start, or expand, community garden programmes?

E.G. Chicago has set up more than 50 community gardens in its parks. According to the Chicago Park District website: "Visually, the community garden can reflect the health, unity, creativity, beauty, culture and diversity of its community. Physically, the community garden can become a natural outdoor gym, where lifting, bending, pulling and pushing all promote muscular and cardiovascular activity. Socially, the community garden can bring neighbours together by providing a setting for acquaintances to become friends. Mentally, the community garden is a safe place for residents to connect with nature through caring for ornamental and edible plants<sup>11</sup>." Gardeners take initiative and responsibility for the garden and in effect, the park as a whole. Please link [here](#)<sup>12</sup> for a five-step plan for communities wanting a garden, and [here](#)<sup>13</sup> for documents about how the city has achieved this.

E.G. The holy Muslim city of Kano in Nigeria is planning to re-green old roads as well as plant trees along new roads, including the major routes between the city and the Maukib shrine.

### 3. Giving living space to pollinators: birds, bees, butterflies and bats

Worldwide there is disturbing evidence that pollinating animals have suffered from disease, parasites, pesticides, loss of habitat, and competition from non-native plant and animal species. The U.S. has lost over 50 percent of its managed honeybee colonies over the past 10 years. Can your city make sure there are gardens where birds, bees, butterflies and bats can thrive? It involves looking at local species and seeing which are most appropriate.

E.G. The Tributary Fund in the US has worked with faith advisors and the US-based Pollinator partnership to launch a campaign to help faith groups get involved in planting native or “B” gardens to attract birds, bees, butterflies and bats. First find a patch of lawn on the faith’s property that can be converted. In the US visit <http://www.pollinator.org/guides.htm> or elsewhere consult your local botanical gardens to find appropriate native plants. Congregations can involve youth groups, volunteers, unemployed or others in maintenance, and can consider starting a garden club. The last step is to watch – see the nests, the chrysalises, hives, blooming flowers, visiting birds, and butterflies. And encourage your congregation to do the same. Their website <http://thetributaryfund.org/programs/pollinators/> has brochures for Buddhists, Christians, Jews and Muslims to celebrate, theologically, why it is entirely faith-consistent to create these pollinator, or “B” gardens.

### 4. Transport infrastructure

Transport generates around three quarters of the five percent of the global total of CO2 emissions contributed by tourism,<sup>14</sup> Transportation has a high carbon footprint and careful consideration should be given to how pilgrims will arrive and travel round your pilgrim destination. Could your city encourage carbon-neutral travel through faith outreach, travel agencies, tour groups or tour leaders? Could you offer options for carbon neutrality and offsets to pilgrims as well as service providers?

#### GREEN TRANSPORT IDEAS

- Can you work with rail and coach companies to promote pilgrim rail-passes and bus-passes to help people not to choose air flights?
- Try to reduce the use of on-site vehicles in any events organized by the city and use electric or bio-diesel powered vehicles.
- Consider using shuttle buses powered by green energy.
- Encourage car-pooling.
- Provide information about how pilgrims can use public transit by showcasing maps, bus and subway routes.
- Encourage walking and cycling. Make it fun by giving a prize to the most eco-friendly arrivals.

E.G. One and a half million Muslim pilgrims from West Africa travel each year to visit the tombs of the local Qadiriyyah Saints for the annual Maukib festival in Kano, Nigeria. The Qadiriyyah Movement is the largest Islamic sect in Nigeria. There has been a real effort to make the pilgrimage environmentally friendly. On Maukib day, conventional vehicles are banned. Cars and motorcycles must be parked several kilometres from the celebration, with

buses bringing pilgrims to the site. The leader of the movement, Sheikh Qaribullah Nasir Kabara uses a horse-drawn cart for the pilgrimage, setting an example of carbon reduction. In addition Kano plans to introduce electric buses, and ban the purchase of diesel buses in the Kano Metro Bus service fleet. It will be introducing mandatory emission tests for motor licensing, and will push for tax hikes on non eco-friendly motorcycles and cars.

### 3.1 Along the Pilgrimage Route

There are probably many routes for pilgrims to arrive at your city. Some may walk or cycle along ancient track-ways and roads, but others are probably coming by air and car. Could the faith authorities, in your teachings and publicity, encourage people to choose more sustainable ways of getting there – such as going by train or coach or cycling, rather than driving or flying? Or could you encourage them to leave a positive footprint such as planting trees in a certain area, or picking up rubbish as they go? Clean-ups could be encouraged by funding rubbish bins along the route, with beautifully written notices about how pilgrims should not only clear their own rubbish but also clear after others less thoughtful than they are. Could the local authorities work to encourage this, and advertise it?

E.G. WWF suggests that carbon off-setting should be a last resort, because it might discourage people and businesses from reducing emissions at source, because it might delay action to cut emissions, and because there are questions about the credibility of some of the many offset schemes. However, recognising that it is better than doing nothing, WWF recommends using Gold Standard<sup>15</sup> accredited schemes only.

E.G. Kano authorities in Nigeria are taking care to provide public mobile toilet facilities and rubbish bins along all pilgrim roads on Maukib day.

### 3.2 At the destination

Could you work with the local authority and local environmental NGOs to improve the green transport network in your city?

E.G. Sustrans promotes and creates cycle paths around the UK. At St Albans<sup>16</sup>, for example, Sustrans helped create the St Albans trail from a former railway track. At the pilgrim city of Canterbury<sup>17</sup> they have developed a whole cycle programme connecting the city to the rest of Kent. What could your city do?

How can local congregations or faith communities be examples to pilgrims? And how can you impart the information about what you are doing locally to the pilgrims who visit?

For city administrations, is it possible to restrict motorised vehicles from certain areas and encourage non-motorised transport in these areas? Are there adequate parking facilities in the outskirts of your city in order to reduce the adverse effect of pollution caused by vehicular emission? Could you discuss this issue with the local authorities?

E.G. In Assisi, cars and buses park outside the city in designated areas and people walk through the mainly narrow and often steep streets.

E.G. Jerusalem is outlawing vehicles in the old city, to help the environment and make the pilgrim experience more pleasant.

E.G. The Sikh holy city of Amritsar has made the area in front of the Golden Temple accessible by foot and cycle only. The City has also introduced locally-made eco-rickshaws, lighter than other cycle rickshaws, linked to a call centre by radio (so more convenient to use), with financial structuring so that for the first time it is easy for rickshaw pullers to buy their vehicles, with repayments covered by advertising banners on the back. Amritsar's example is a model for other Indian cities, including Chandigarh and Ludhiana.

Other ideas for city administrators include:

- Introducing mandatory environmental labelling for all new vehicles, with the aim of doubling fuel efficiency within a decade
- Replacing diesel-powered buses with buses powered by hydrogen fuel cells
- Revitalising town centres by connecting them to suburbs via safe cycle routes, walkways and buses
- Introducing cycle-friendly road network, including slower traffic speeds, segregated cycle lands, better cycle parking facilities, the continuing development of a national cycle network, to help to persuade people that it is safe and easy to cycle for day-to-day journeys to work, to the shops and to visit friends
- Recommending walking. Well-maintained and well-lit paths would make walking more appealing, maintain the beauty and diversity of neighbourhoods and help to make them more vibrant socially.

#### 4. Greening your healthcare

Many pilgrim places attract people who are ill or infirm. If you run medical facilities such as clinics or hospitals for pilgrims and others, have you made an environmentally sustainable management plan on the use of water, sanitation, cleanliness, provisions, buildings, transport, electricity, reducing waste, reusing materials etc? It can help the planet and – through creating cleaner air – it can directly and immediately help your patients. Have you looked at the sourcing of the food served to patients and visitors – and perhaps increased the amount of food that is grown locally, in season, without pesticides and according to natural, vital principles?

E.G. Daoists are prohibiting the use of ingredients from endangered animals and plants in their food and Traditional Chinese Medicine.

## 5. Waste disposal: create a zero waste society

### 5.1 Refuse, re-use, recycle and compost

Are your buildings, schools, cafés, faith meetings disposing of waste in environmental ways, using composting, recycling etc? And are you organising faith clean-up days to help out the city authorities AND be an example for people not to throw their rubbish away? Can you promote no-litter-lout campaigns in your schools? Can you work with your city on a campaign, contributing ideas, and then telling your faith followers and pilgrims about it?

E.G. In summer 2007, Muslims in the British city of Birmingham hosted a “Cleaner Medina” street party – with music, street clean-ups, video, information and fun. It is being used as a model for action and information in other Islamic communities.

E.G. One recent environmental problem in Nigeria is caused by the widespread use of “Pure Water” – clean water packed in polyethylene bags. Several thousand tons of used water bags are dumped everyday. Sheik Qaribullah Kabara is the leader of the Qadiriyyah Sufi Movement, with 15 million followers. He estimates that if every schoolchild picked up 100 pieces of used poly-bags each week, Kano’s neighbourhoods would be cleaner, and children who pick up the bags will probably be less inclined to throw them in the first place. Every child will be rewarded with academic points as part of the school’s continuous assessment. Collected poly-bags will be used to hold tree seedlings at his nurseries. The seedlings will then be distributed to schoolchildren and the public. Excess poly-bags at the nurseries will be sold, with the proceeds going to the schools.

Recycling in the UK is already saving around 10-15 million tones of carbon-dioxide equivalent per year, equivalent to taking about 3.5 million cars off the road. Better than recycling is to avoid producing waste in the first place, by reusing things as much as possible before buying replacements. “Fix it first” should be the motto, and local councils and faiths should be leaders in this.

### 5.2 Ban free plastic bags

A survey by the Angalita Research Foundation discovered six kilos of plastic for every kilo of plankton caught in the Pacific for sampling in trawl nets<sup>18</sup>. Plastic bags threaten many sea birds and the world’s seven marine turtle species.

E.G. Ireland launched a scheme in 2002 to charge 15 cents for each bag. The effect was dramatic. Before the tax some 1.2 billion plastic bags were being handed out each year in Ireland; after the tax this was cut by 90 percent.

E.G. Ludhiana in Punjab has banned plastic bags less than 30 microns in size. Bags need to be made of virgin plastic, without colours, and with the manufacturer’s name printed on it. Lighter bags break more easily while higher quality bags are more expensive, and will probably be recycled.

### 5.3 Save water

Efficient appliances, showers and toilets can cut water demand from mains supplies. So can storing rainwater from roof run off for garden use. Small-scale renewable power systems and building standards that require water as well as energy efficiency and would help.

### 6. Using technology

Information and communication technologies and broadband connectivity can reduce carbon emissions and stimulate economic developments in urban environments. Initiatives led by [Connected Urban Development](#) (CUD)<sup>19</sup>, include: Smart Transportation Pricing, an Urban EcoMap, Smart UrbanEnergy for Homes and Schools and the Connected Bus.

E.G. Several of the meetings to start the Green Pilgrimage Network were conducted by videoconference, kindly donated by international networking [company Cisco](#)<sup>20</sup>. This cut both costs and carbon emissions. Could your city set up a videoconference facility?

### 7. Water and sanitation

As the source of life, water often represents birth and rebirth. It cleans the body, and by extension purifies it. These qualities confer a highly sacred status on water. This is reflected in the way people use water and in the way they design water systems as well as in the need for accessibility of water for washing after toilet use or washing hands.

Water provision for drinking, hand washing, flushing, cleaning, school meal preparation and the provision of clean toilets and urinals in schools is vital to keep children healthy. Yet in so many cities, water provision is inadequate. Could you, as part of your preparation to be a green pilgrim city, look at the sewerage and sanitation facilities available?

E.G. *The Green Guide to Water (The Hajjar Story*<sup>21</sup>) is a booklet looking at the importance of water conservation in Islam. It was launched at the Assisi meeting in November 2011 as a complement to the *Green Guide for Hajj*<sup>22</sup>. It has a detailed list of recommendations for how pilgrims should use water and quotes the Prophet Muhammad: "Food is blessed when one washes his hands before and after it"<sup>23</sup>.

E.G. Buddhists in Shanghai, People's Republic of China, have pledged to be more actively involved in the Mother River Project to protect the city's Suzhou River from pollution.

E.G. The Greek Orthodox Patriarchate of Antioch and All The East is promoting water-saving devices in all Church institutions and all Orthodox homes. This is particularly important in water-scarce countries in the Middle East.



## II. Education, young people and volunteering

Some 50 percent of educational institutions around the world are founded, managed, or associated with faith institutions. Are the schools in your holy city included in the plan to make it greener? Can your faith organisations and city administration look at the schools and buildings in your Green Pilgrim City, and see how they might be greener? Both in terms of the immediate environment effects, and the long-term effects of educating children in a beautiful place where they learn to value the natural environment?

### 1. School curricula

What potential is there in your educational work for incorporating more in-depth and faith-consistent teachings about the environment into the curriculum of all the schools in your holy cities and towns? Do you, or can you, have vegetable patches where you teach pupils how to grow food? Do you look at and promote preparation of food grown without pesticides? Or go into nature to paint and study birds and wild plants, to help young people appreciate their beauty?

E.G. In 2006 some quarter of a million Baha'is participated in study circles, devotional meetings and school classes on the environment. Such courses, and the acts of service associated with them, "represent a significant transformative process for Baha'i communities worldwide". The environment has been set as the focus for all such Baha'i education initiatives 2009-2014.

E.G. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales has pledged to develop: "a sense of awe and wonder for creation in our young people through all subjects and ground them in a spiritual awareness of the need to care for Creation". For example, on Earth Day 2008, the entire timetable at All Hallows Catholic school in Somerset, England, centred on ecology. It included cleaning a stream and having a lesson in the life found in it; dyeing with natural ingredients; and making prayer flags on which to write environmental prayers.

E.G. St Albans' green pilgrimage plans include involving local schools and the community. For example, the Cathedral Trust has launched a competition to calculate the number of Roman bricks used to build the Cathedral, as an excellent example of early recycling. Professor Andrew Starr at the University of Hertfordshire has collated a wealth of material to arrive at an "expert's best guess".

Could you create lesson plans for schools in your pilgrim city or sacred place that incorporate knowledge of pilgrimage, green pilgrimage, and your own pilgrimage history? These could include history, theology and geography lessons, but also could inspire creative writing, art, pottery and literature, etc.

## 2. Informal education and youth camps

Often it is out of the classroom that children will learn some of their most important lessons. Of the “Big Six” youth organisations in the world, all of which take the environment seriously, the YMCA and YWCA are explicitly faith-based, and two others (the Scouts and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts) have considerable faith elements. Can you work with the youth organisations in your pilgrim town or city to inspire them to care for the environment?

E.G. The Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference is actively practicing green living, gardening and food in all its schools and places of education and introducing the concept of ecological conversion. It says: “We encourage all to develop their ecological vocation.”

E.G. The New Psalmist Baptist Church in Maryland has introduced an annual Science Fair for children. It is part of an educational Voyage of Exploration Programme that includes entrepreneurship, environmental science and engineering training to explore creative ideas to preserve our living planet and celebrate God’s creation.

Do you have faith-associated youth organisations where environmental ideas could also be integrated – for example, through running youth camps in nature, organising street cleaning projects, and forest schools?

E.G. In June 2011 the Evangelical Church of Ghana announced plans to form eco-clubs in all of its schools throughout the country. Eco-clubs will include learning farming and gardening techniques, protecting trees and understanding issues around climate change. Prizes will be given to schools with the best-performing eco-clubs.

E.G. In 2000 the Maronite Church in Lebanon made its portion of the fragile and precious Harissa forest into a Maronite-Protected Area. The town of Jounieh and three landowners all voluntarily joined the scheme, losing themselves the chance of considerable money being offered by developers. Asked why he had made that decision, one landowner said that he remembered going for a childhood camp in the forest, organised by the church. “It was one of the happiest times of my life. That’s why I want to protect the forest now.”

## 3. School buildings and grounds

What potential is there for making sure that all new builds and extensions in your pilgrimage city, town or village are rigorous in their attention to environmental details, and that any playing fields and gardens pay attention to the needs of wild flora and fauna as well as children?

E.G. In 2009 the most ecological school in England, scoring the highest UK BREEAM rating<sup>24</sup> (a world-wide recognised standard for sustainable building design) was the Krishna-Avanti Primary school in Harrow, North London, the

country's first state-funded Hindu school. It has: ground source heat pumps; an eco-friendly timber structure; hardwood larch cladding; sedum roofs to help with rainwater harvesting; a sophisticated building management system monitoring heating, oxygen concentration and natural light; vegetable gardens for lessons, vegetarian locally cooked food; an eco-curriculum. It has also created a place of beauty. In the middle of north London suburbia, Krishna-Avanti has managed to create tranquil surroundings. Before it was built, the community was consulted to see what a Hindu school should be. Everyone agreed that if it was truly Hindu it should be truly environmental. Hinduism emphasises simplicity, and that all living beings are sacred because they are elements of God.

E.G. The Church of England has pledged that all 4,700 church schools will become sustainable schools by 2016.

Do you have water and energy conservation policies for your educational buildings? What do you do about paper, food, sewerage and other waste? Do you encourage children to walk, cycle or take public transport to school?

E.G. The Kagyu Buddhist tradition in India and Tibet has encouraged all its schools, as well as its temples and one million followers, to recycle all materials. It has set up boxes for all recyclable items, even in remote places where there is nowhere to send the items yet – in the hope and faith that it will encourage local government to act. This is an example of where faiths walk ahead, in the hope that governments will come and walk beside them.

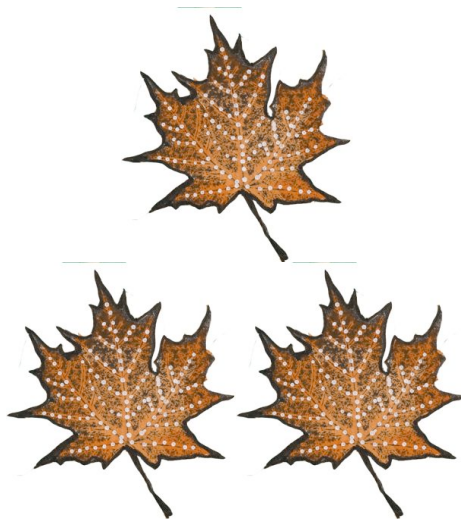
#### **4. Environmental monitoring**

As part of life's education, could you work with the natural curiosity, expertise and grassroots outreach of young people in the city to organise environmental monitoring of the world around them? Sometimes it is only through compassionate mindfulness and systematic observation that scientific details will be collected, that rivers and ecosystems will be monitored for flora, fauna and pollution, and that early action can therefore be taken to deal with the problem. If there are places valued by the faithful in your city –perhaps because they are holy or beautiful or perhaps simply because they are there – then you are in a wonderful situation to watch over and protect them.

E.G. ROAR (Religious Organizations Along the River) is a network of religious congregations and organisations in the Hudson Valley of New York State. Their mission is to protect the Hudson River, through advocacy, networking, education, sustainable practices, and simply inspiring people to love it, know it and monitor it. This movement is inspired by the Catholic Bishops of the dioceses that span the Columbia River along the western seaboard of the USA who realised in the 1980s that their precious waterway was becoming polluted. They encouraged their faithful to monitor the river and feed that information back at all levels to the state government, to the polluting companies and to the communities.

## 5. Green volunteering

Some pilgrims come on pilgrimage to visit and pray and leave, but others would like to stay longer and become involved in the life, and the issues of their holy city. Are there good volunteering possibilities for these people, many of whom will be young? Are these opportunities advertised? If you were to have green volunteers, what could they do that would be good for the city, good for them, and good for the Earth?



### III. Faith wisdom, stories and teachings

#### 1. Theology of the environment

What is the theology of the environment, according to the faith or faiths that view your city as holy? If there is no written theological statement, then could you create one and publish it? It serves as an important document to return to, again and again, for administrators, pilgrims and faiths. Please see the final section in this handbook for some examples of theologies that could be useful.

E.G. Could your faith community or small groups of your faith community adopt a yearlong programme of events focussing on the natural world? Catholics in Bristol in England organised such a year of action and reflection, which they called *The Sound of Many Waters*, from September 2007 to the weekend of October 4, 2008 (St Francis Day). It included a night vigil of reconciliation and reflection for Creation, a Dawn Chorus and Owl Prowl in spring, talks about Saints and Sustainability, outreach for schools, and celebratory opening and closing weekends. The Catholic Bishops Conference in England and Wales has recommended that each of their dioceses adopt such a programme – ranging from special days of reflection to bird watching meetings to nature trails<sup>25</sup>.

E.G. The Green Guide for Hajj recognises that pilgrims will undertake a series of rituals that include: performing the circular walk (Tawaf) around the Kaa'bah; running or brisk walking between the Al-Safa and Al-Marwah Hills seven times; drinking of water from the Well of Zamzam and performing a vigil on the plains of Mount Arafat. All of these, actually or metaphorically, can hold a message about our relationship with the natural world.

#### 2. Faith statements about green pilgrimage

Many faiths – and many secular organisations as well – recognise that the environmental crisis is a spiritual issue, an external sign of deep malaise. And that therefore its solution can only be found through exploring the root causes of this degradation; in particular, in fostering an ethos or an atmosphere of compassion and care for the natural world. While many wish to legislate our way out of these crises, the faiths wish to guide, not with ethics and codes but by example and mindfulness, care and companionship, rooted in their experience down the centuries.

E.G. In 2007 the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People<sup>26</sup> noted that tourism contributes to global warming, if only through the sheer movement of so many people. It urged Catholic pilgrims and tourists to remember the Biblical text in which the Earth is described as "a garden, a place in which creatures praise the love of Him who created them and where equilibrium is the norm", and to remember that as tourists they can choose between being for or against the planet. "Perhaps we can travel on foot, opt for hotels and hospitality facilities that are closer to nature, and carry less luggage, so that means of transport emit less carbon

dioxide... We can also eat more eco-friendly meals, plant trees to neutralise the polluting effects of our journeys, choose local handicrafts rather than more costly and poisonous items and make use of recyclable and biodegradable materials.”

When an initiative is taken, could faith leaders celebrate it with services or rituals or blessings? Are there special prayers that they can use – and, once used, could they share them as a resource for others?

### 3. Training of clergy

How are religious teachers and future religious leaders trained on environmental issues? Could the training curriculum for future priests, imams or rabbis in your city be “greened”? Could the training colleges in your cities be models for the rest of the country? And could they also publish books on eco-theology?

E.G. In 2007 the Armenian Orthodox Church introduced new approaches in the education process of the Vaskenyan Theological Seminary, which operates under the direct supervision of the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, one of the pilot Green Pilgrim Cities. Today all its students of theology, throughout the country, are trained on nature protection and ecology, and there are plans to set up a publishing unit for books on eco-theology.

E.G. The Seven-Year Plan for American Evangelicalism through the Vineyard Community of Churches includes facilitating an annual Creation Care Leadership summit to inspire and equip evangelical leaders to support creation care in their community.

### 4. All services, offerings and faith practice

Could you introduce greener standards to all religious rituals and services at all times of year? (See section VII for stories and ideas about greening faith festivals.)

E.G. Both Chinese Buddhists and Daoists have pledged to promote a new “Three Sticks of Incense Programme” as a response to the recent practice in newly affluent China of people burning so many hundreds of incense sticks that it creates local pollution. By insisting that three sticks are enough, Daoist and Buddhist monasteries are not only protecting their own clear air, but are also sending a powerful symbolic message that wastefulness is not a good way to be faithful. That is part of creating an ethos of mindfulness and respect, which it is hoped will bring changes for generations to come.



## IV. Lifestyles: hotels, food, souvenirs and funeral practices

### 1. Greening your accommodation

Wherever there are pilgrims, there are also places for them to stay. Almost all pilgrims need to find some kind of accommodation, both en route and at the destination. In many cases local faiths offer a limited amount of pilgrim beds and rooms while the majority of pilgrims stay in privately run or corporately owned hotels and hostels.

#### 1.1 Faith-run Accommodation

Do faith organisations run hostels and accommodation in your pilgrim cities? Or do they have an affiliation or association with pilgrim hotels? For example, the Catholic charity Caritas runs many hotels for Catholics and others to stay, as well as welcoming businesspeople and wealthier people to other hotels in which profits are put into compassionate programmes. Or the Indian city of Amritsar, sacred to Sikhs, has a street of simple pilgrim hostels run directly by the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC), in charge of all Punjab gurdwaras, or temples. However the SGPC also has links to many other hostels throughout the city and many people who run hostels and hotels as private businesses are active Sikhs, who might be open to approaches by the SGPC on this matter and could answer the following questions:

- Is the accommodation as kind as possible to the environment and community?
- Are the cleaning chemicals gentle?
- Does the hotel/hostel compost, recycle, employ people fairly?
- Does it source ethical/organic/local breakfast and food ingredients?
- Are all eggs free-range?
- Are new buildings planned to have a minimal environmental footprint?
- Is toilet paper (where relevant) recycled or FSC-certified on principle?
- If there are gardens, are they maintained to take care of biodiversity?
- If there are staff uniforms, are they made of organic cotton?
- Is the furniture environmentally sourced?
- Does the company doing the laundry have a sustainable ethos?
- Is there a sign in the room giving an option to have linen and towels washed?
- Have they shampoo/soap from dispensers rather than throwaway bottles?
- Is there a mechanism to switch off aircon/heat when there is no-one in the room?
- Is the lighting LED and energy-saving?
- Does the hotel use green energy?
- Does the hotel provide a walking, bike and public transport guide to the city?
- Does it call itself an “eco” hotel?
- And does it tell guests about what it does, and why it is faith-consistent to do so?

E.G. The Methodist International Centre (MIC), a faith-owned four-star hotel in London has won the first ethical hotel mark in the UK. It offers seasonal, local produce in its hotel, sources food much of the year from within the M25

ring road around the city; uses environmentally-responsible cleaning and catering standards (to ISO14001 standard), has signed on to the City of London Climate Pledge<sup>27</sup>, and in the past three years has radically changed its waste disposal policy so that almost everything is composted or recycled. And all eggs are free-range. It has not cost a great deal more, and involved an internal audit which left many of the staff much happier. A third of income supports educational projects both in the UK and in Africa.

E.G. There are no hotels in the pilgrimage city of Etchmiadzin because it is so close to the capital of Yerevan, just 20 km away. As part of its green pilgrimage plan, Etchmiadzin plans to set up a network of initially 20 bed & breakfast places, coordinated by the Armenia Inter-Church Charitable Round Table Foundation of the World Council of Churches. This would provide plain and affordable lodging in people's homes, with the possibility of closer acquaintance with the local culture. It will also generate income for local people and promote green values.

E.G. The Lutheran Church of Norway, along with the government of Norway, has established a National Centre of Pilgrimage at Trondheim, aiming to make Trondheim a major European pilgrimage destination. They aim to make accommodation along the different pilgrimage routes to Trondheim green and sustainable. Cafés, food outlets and accommodation will be awarded the already well-established Eco-Lighthouse<sup>28</sup> (Miljøfyrtårn) accreditation.

## 1.2 Other Accommodation

If you already recommend other accommodation on your website or in your material or at your own hostels when they are full, could you create a separate category for "Recommended green hotels and hostels?" And could this be based not only on cost and proximity and attractiveness but also on their faith-consistent attitude to resources and nature? If you contact the managers to ask them about how environmental they are, you might be surprised at the positive stories you hear.

Use your leverage: where otherwise recommendable hotels, etc, have no environmental record you might be able to ask them to do an ecological audit, see whether they can improve their footprint, on the understanding that once they have done this, you will be able to recommend them to pilgrims. You might even consider instituting an award (see below). Sometimes even big chain hotels in pilgrim cities can see the immediate advantage of improving their ethical footprint, if they will attract more guests, get a better image, and establish a well-founded ethos of being a good place to stay and work. This is, of course, particularly relevant if you are organising a religious meeting in a hotel or convention centre.

E.G. An increasing number of secular hotel chains and convention centres are taking ecological steps which pilgrimage centres could learn from. The Anaheim Convention Centre in California, with one million visitors every year, has set up a "green zone" which includes two composters (the size of commercial ovens) that process leftovers into nutrient-rich plant food, which is then donated to a



landscaping company. Fruit, eggshells, burger remains and coffee grounds are mixed with uncoated paper products and fed into the composting machines. The process takes less than 15 hours and according to [one report](#)<sup>29</sup> the finished product is “like wet coffee grounds and smells like barbecue sauce”. It is so rich that if you put it directly on your lawn, it would burn it, so it is mixed with soil at a ratio of 15:1.

E.G. The United Nations Environment Programme supports a [European Hotel Energy Solutions project](#)<sup>30</sup>, with a vision of expanding uptake of energy-efficiency and renewable energy technologies in the European accommodation sector. It involves developing a toolkit, enabling small and medium enterprise hotels to assess their current energy use and carbon footprint against similar hotels and rank practical, cost-effective investment options. It comprises: a carbon calculator, an energy benchmarking tool, information on best practices and capacity building materials.

E.G. The international Tour Operators’ Initiative has produced guidance on accommodation sector [good environmental practices](#)<sup>31</sup>

E.G. A multi-sector initiative in Minnesota titled [Renewing the Countryside](#)<sup>32</sup> includes the US Green Routes network directing people to places where they can buy locally grown foods, visit green attractions, and [find eco friendly places to stay](#)<sup>33</sup>.

## 2. Food: greening cafés, restaurants and hospitality

With up to 30 percent of an individual’s carbon footprint coming from our food, choosing planet friendly food is the most important everyday way for people to reduce their environmental impact. Faiths run hotels, guesthouses, gift shops, cafeterias, retreat centres and restaurants all around the world. Have you looked recently at your hospitality and retail outlets to see if the sourcing is ethically and ecologically sound? Many faiths have done this, but surprising numbers have not.

### 2.1 Food standards and targets

It is helpful to introduce minimum standards and targets. We recommend adapting the suggestion of the Soil Association (the UK’s leading organic certifier and a not-for-profit enterprise), and using the 70-50-30-100 principle as a realistic aim, whether in teashops, restaurants, school meals or in people’s homes. Food should be at least:

**70 percent fresh or unprocessed  
50 percent local, and  
30 percent organic, with  
100 percent free-range eggs**

E.G. In the Friends House in London, which contains the central offices of the Quakers, there is a restaurant and café that is building on its recent Good Egg Award for using only free range eggs by gradually implementing a strict food policy for its catering and restaurant services

E.G. Although there are no specialised cafés or restaurants for pilgrims in Etchmiadzin, the Armenia Inter-Church Charitable Round Table Foundation is currently developing a project to establish a canteen for pilgrims, where they will get simple and healthy food made using old Armenian recipes. The 70-50-30-100 standards will be incorporated.

E.G. The first international conference on sustainable food production and tourism was held in 2010 at the Linnaeus University in Sweden. See the conference website for [papers](#), [contacts](#) and [materials](#).<sup>34</sup>

E.G. The Slow Food network, which itself started in Italy, offers ideas, case studies and information about local food cultures and how to conserve and promote them.

## 2.2 Green eating awards

Could the city administration think of awarding green stars (or similar) to places that promote green eating and standards? Could you work with the city authorities to do that? This is perhaps an even better initiative if it includes both secular and faith based establishments.

E.G. Holland House is a Christian retreat centre in rural Worcestershire, UK. In 2007 its new director decided to take steps to go green. In May 2011 Holland House came first out of 33 in the Community category of the [Footsteps Award](#),<sup>35</sup> and was the only faith nomination.

## 2.3 Building links to organic farms

US-based Jewish environmental organisation [Hazon](#)<sup>36</sup> has pioneered a faith-based Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) programme, and currently has 40 places in North America and Israel supporting local, sustainable agriculture. It involves setting up a partnership between synagogues and local organic farmers to buy shares in the farm produce at the beginning of the year. That way the farmers know they have already sold a proportion of their produce, and the communities share the risk of the harvest; in a good year they all get more, in a bad year they get less. Fresh boxes of vegetables are delivered to the synagogue each weekend, trips to the organic farm are organised and cookery classes are held to involve all generations in the preparation and sharing of food, and understanding the importance of not using pesticides or treating animals inhumanely. Could you replicate this in your own community? Could you find a way of pilgrims learning about it?

E.G. Two million tourists come to Assisi each year. Most are pilgrims visiting the tombs of St Francis and St Claire. Most of the food served in restaurants and sold in the shops in Assisi is local. Could you work with your pilgrim city authorities to recreate this commitment?

E.G. The Board of Deputies of British Jews in the UK has published a Jewish Guide to Fairtrade brochure outlining the theological and moral reasons for buying fair trade goods. It encourages synagogues to become “Fairtrade

synagogues”, buying Fairtrade<sup>37</sup> tea, coffee and other drinks for all meetings. It suggests that kosher cafés and restaurants not only serve Fairtrade drinks and other products but that they make their customers aware of this, and why it is important.

#### 2.4 Green energy in restaurants and cafés and places of worship etc

So many places of worship have restaurants and cafés in and beside them. Have you looked at the use of “green” energy in your food outlets? Not only is it a model of faithfully not wasting resources, it can also be an excellent economic decision as well.

E.G. Sikh gurdwaras around the world all have free kitchens, feeding people regardless of their belief or of their need. They feed some 30 million people every day. A few are now running their stoves on bio fuel, made from their compost. Imagine how much energy could be saved, and what an excellent model it would be, if they all started to use sustainable technology in this way. They also would save money.

E.G. In 2008 the Church of South India’s Christian Women’s Fellowship in Kottayam, Kerala, set up a snack centre in the middle of town. It was the first outlet in Kottayam to run on biogas. At Rs 40,000 (around US \$1,000) the set up costs were comparatively high but within a year they had saved that much from reduced fuel bills. They have become an example of environmental excellence and an inspiration to other businesses and households.

#### 2.5 Food and drink packaging

Have you thought about the packaging you offer your food in for pilgrims? What is your food wrapped in? Although much of this will be served by private businesses can you work with them to make the packaging more compatible with faith beliefs about caring for nature?

Do you serve water from plastic bottles? Bottled water is leading to a vast increase in the use of plastics and in fuel consumption in transporting all those bottles to the shops. Pilgrims are recommended to carry a reusable metal hiking bottle. Actions to discourage the waste involved in bottled water could include a deposit and return system for bottles. An ecological tax on bottled water is also worth considering.

E.G. *The Green Guide for Hajj*, launched in Assisi in November 2011, states that in 2010, two million pilgrims performed the Hajj and about 100 million plastic bottles were left behind on Hajj sites. “Imagine what a difference can be made if all two million pilgrims were aware of how they can make a positive contribution to combating climate change and conserving the environment through individual efforts.”

E.G. At the Sikh Golden Temple in Amritsar you do not see any plastic bottles, despite the intense heat. Instead there are water stations, manned by volunteers, who give pilgrims bowls of well water, and then, efficiently, wash the bowls and redistribute. This is a model that requires many volunteers –

Sikhism has this sense of “seva” inbuilt into its theology. In 2010 ARC commissioned a report into the system of water distribution in Amritsar<sup>38</sup>.

E.G. At the launch of the Mongolian Buddhist Eight-Year Plan in Ulaanbaatar in 2010, small flasks in the ochre colour of local Buddhist robes were distributed. The aim was to reduce the number of water bottles from which the monks and nuns were drinking. Could souvenir pilgrim flasks be provided on your routes or at your destination at a reasonable price? Could these be beautiful, desirable, reasonable, and personalised with tags or pilgrim badges so it is hard to confuse them with other people’s?

E.G. At the Assisi launch of the Green Pilgrimage Network, delegates will be given a pilgrim flask to remind them of their water use, and encourage drinking water without plastic bottles.

### 2.5 Cutting down meat consumption

Could faith leaders encourage followers to cut meat consumption by at least half? This would reduce pressure on natural habitats, reduce pollution and help combat climate change. A recent Swedish study compared four different meals with the same energy and protein content in terms of the greenhouse gas emissions they caused throughout their life cycle. It found emissions of 190g of carbon dioxide for a vegetarian meal with local ingredients, compared to 1800g for a meal containing meat and with most ingredients imported. Cutting our meat consumption by half would help align our diet with a more sustainable food economy. Supporting less intensive systems such as organic farming and raising standards of animal rearing would help too.

E.G. In 2007, the Karmapa of the Tibetan Kagyu tradition, Orgyen Trinle Dorje became vegetarian. He made a statement<sup>39</sup> that no meat is to be prepared in any Kagyu Buddhist Monastery or pilgrimage centre kitchen, and that no students or monks in robes should buy or sell meat. He condemned the practice of using *Tsok* (offerings during a gathering) as an excuse for eating meat. This had immediate impact on his million followers (many of whom became vegetarian) and also on the eating habits during pilgrimage to Bodhgaya in northern India.

### 3. Tourist souvenirs and information

Could the tourist information and souvenirs available in your pilgrim town or city have a specific aim to promote sustainability and be sustainable? Are souvenirs local and handmade, promoting the local economy and safeguarding the environment?

E.G. In Assisi, the Italian city where St Francis, the patron saint of ecology for the Catholic Church was born, tourist shops sell local olive wood crosses and sculptures, handmade paper is produced and local crafts such as sewing and painting on handmade paper are integral to the tourist scene. The Basilica shop sells locally made products such as soaps, sweets and embroidery<sup>40</sup>.

E.G. There is a monastic co-operative in Lille, based around the cathedral. It includes honey from monasteries around France, attractively crafted pilgrim crosses and other objects and food items, each with a story, and each beautifully and ethically made.

Are your faith outlets promoting traditional, local handicrafts? Have you organised for visitors to see this living part of local heritage being created? Are your cards and postcards all printed on sustainable paper that is visibly marked with your commitment to preserving the environment?

### 3.1 Printing and other materials

What kind of paper do you print your information or guides on? What ink do you use as witness to your commitment to protecting the planet? Do you advertise that it is recycled and FSC certified? This kind of paper is easier to source in some cities and countries than others, but take an example from a group of Methodists who found that they had no access to sufficiently ethically sourced paper and did something about it.

E.G. In 2000, the million-strong Women's Division of the United Methodist Church in the US launched an initiative to eliminate chlorine in paper products used by the Church. United Methodist women in 34 states visited Kinko's stores to request processed chlorine-free (PCF) paper. They found that only two thirds of stores had PCF paper in stock, staff were badly informed about the product, and there was a surcharge for the PCF paper. Within months, Kinko's had eliminated the price differential, and had agreed to stock PCF paper in every store. In 2002 the Division had similar results with Staples, another major paper supplier.

With a city administration behind this as well, some real citywide changes could be made.

## 4. Greening your funeral practices

Some pilgrimage places are where people come to be healed, and others are where people come to die, sacredly. If this is the case for your local pilgrim place, how green are your funeral arrangements? What kind of coffins do you use? Could you promote more environmental coffins? Or if you undergo cremation, what kind of energy do you use? What environmental impact does this have?

E.G. As part of their preparations for creating a Long-Term Environmental Plan, the monastic body in Bhutan discussed supporting greener cremation, using an electric incinerator (powered by hydroelectric energy) rather than the current practice of burning the body with a truckful of firewood. The government established an electric incinerator in Thimphu 10 years ago but it has not been used: it would require the monks to say that it is a beneficial practice to be cremated without wood. Additionally they pledged to promote an alternative to the current practice of erecting 108 *mani* flags in honour of

the deceased, each on a separate freshly cut tree trunk, which is later burned. In 2008 around 60,000 trees were felled for this purpose.

E.G. In South Africa, trees that are defined as “alien invasive species” including eucalypts and pines, which are not indigenous, do not have predators, and often serve to reduce the available watertable, are routinely cut down by the government in a programme that doubles as an employment programme for poor labourers. With World Bank seed money and ARC advice, some of this wood is now used to make “eco coffins”, which are supported by Christian, Jewish and other faith groups around the country. Not only are these coffins green, but they are cheaper for poor families to purchase and their manufacture provides employment for the long-term unemployed.



## V. Media and engagement: communicating the message

One of the key things about becoming a Green Pilgrimage place is telling people about it – and why it is such an important part of being faithful. This is not just about launching programmes, but about sustaining them in the long term, so your pilgrimage town or city becomes a living lesson and example of how to respond to the environmental crisis.

### 1. Media

How might you best engage with the local and national media? How can you pass on the message again and again, in different ways, that a dedicated pilgrim must prepare mindfully for pilgrimage? How can it become one of the great truths that because this is a place based on faith, then it is natural for it to be a leader in taking care of nature?

To what extent are faith and secular media outlets engaging in these general issues? Do local newsletters, radios, newspapers, TV stations, websites, etc, have special sections on ecology? Can you ask them to? Are the faith media using their editorial authority to promote simpler living, and looking after the natural environment with more care? Could your website have a special section, blog, picture galleries, etc, on the development of your Green Pilgrim City?

E.G. Part of the plan by the holy city of Kano in Nigeria is to establish a Green FM Radio Station, involve local artists in mass media environmental campaigns, and introduce mobile public film shows about nature and environmental issues.

E.G. The Armenian Orthodox Church runs the Shoghakat TV Company in Armenia which in 2010 launched the Green Theology project to broadcast environmental programmes.

E.G. In 2007 WWF in Australia invited people in Sydney to switch off their lights and appliances for one hour, which they called Earth Hour. More than 2,000 businesses and 2.2 million people did that. It reduced the city's energy consumption by 10.2 percent, equivalent to taking 48,000 cars off the road for a year. It was a good reminder what a privilege electricity is, and how we can take steps to stop wasting it. Could your city (led by faiths in your city) join Earth Hour (in March every year)? And could faiths take that example and use the privilege of electricity, or the importance of saving energy, in their sermons and teachings that week?

### 2. Engagement with pilgrims

What kind of information do tourists look for? Are you providing information to them about the place, the prayers, and the history? Could you incorporate within

that a sense of how your activity is part of a continuous ancient tradition of looking after sacred places in a responsible, loving way? Could you produce a well-written *Green Guide for Pilgrims* to your city and make this available online and at secular tourist information offices as well as in your place of worship? Can this be interesting and desirable for people who come as tourists and are surprised and inspired by the sense of pilgrimage, ready too to experience something deeper? Could you work with the secular Tourist Information Centre to extend the pilgrim experience?

E.G. The *Green Guide for Hajj*<sup>41</sup>, launched at Assisi in 2011, gives the millions of pilgrims to the Hajj advice on how to be green in their pilgrimage and their life. It identifies simple steps that pilgrims can take to reduce the negative impact of their participation in the Hajj pilgrimage, and ideas of how their pilgrimage can be a blessing to the Earth. The brochure is available in English and Arabic, and will be adapted and translated for use by Hajj pilgrims in Nigeria (which sends some 100,000 pilgrims to the Hajj every year) and Indonesia (which sends around 250,000). If beautifully and carefully designed, such material might be kept as a sacred memento.

E.G. The Coptic Orthodox Church has produced a leaflet for pilgrims visiting St Bishoy Monastery in Egypt, visited by around 100,000 pilgrims every year. The leaflet explains what the monks are doing to protect the environment and reclaim the desert and recommends that pilgrims take care of the environment once they are at home. The Coptic Orthodox Church's Long-Term Plan to care for the environment, launched at Assisi in November 2011, has been endorsed by its leader, Pope Shenouda III. Such endorsement on a leaflet or plan can give additional authority to the environmental message. The leaflet itself will often be kept as a treasured blessing and keepsake.

## 2.1 (National) Pilgrimage Centre

If people are employed to look after pilgrims in a formal way, whether as guides or as clergy or in any other capacity, could they be trained about why this city is now a green pilgrim city, what this means, and why it is faith-consistent?

E.G. In the Middle Ages, Trondheim<sup>42</sup> was the most visited Christian pilgrimage site in the Nordic countries. Large numbers of pilgrims walked from Oslo to Trondheim's Nidaros Cathedral – a journey of several weeks. Today the Cathedral continues to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors from around the world – and in recent years growing numbers are walking all or part of that distance. Increasing interest from pilgrims led to the church establishing a new position for a minister serving pilgrims in 1994. A National Centre of Pilgrimage as recently been opened and several different pilgrimage routes to Trondheim are being restored and revived.

E.G. One of the pledges of St Albans in England as a member of the Green Pilgrimage Network is to ensure that everybody who makes a pilgrimage to St Albans knows that it is a Green Pilgrimage City. A logo will be added on all



visitor information, interpretation panels will be placed in the cathedral, on the website and on café menus. There is also a commitment that all cathedral guides will know about the environmental element of pilgrimage and include it in their presentations.

## 2.2 Green maps and handbooks

Could you prepare a green pilgrim map of your city? Can you find ethical businesses – hotels and restaurants with green credentials that could advertise on that map? Could you make this a self-financing or even profitable enterprise, with the profits from advertising returning to a green city fund? Could you print the map on eco-friendly paper? Could you create information boards in the city (made of FSC or recycled materials) on which the map is printed?

E.G. The global Green Map<sup>43</sup> movement is now operating in 775 cities in 60 countries to develop maps that are appropriate and inspiring for both tourists and local residents. This non-profit organisation creates mapmaking tools used by schools, colleges<sup>44</sup>, NGOs, governmental and tourism agencies. Places of worship, eco-spiritual sites, green living sites and others are highlighted with special symbols. There are tours, workshops and signage systems that engage a deeper understanding of creation protection that influences behaviour long after visitors have returned home. Green Map has put forward the suggestion of an interactive Open Green Map to include all Green Pilgrimage Network cities, towns and shrines. These can be embedded in any website and the data can also be explored from mobile phones.

## 2.3 Helping pilgrims leave, taking new ideas with them

What materials could you prepare for pilgrims, explaining how and why you're green and some ideas of how this could be replicated at home?

E.G. In 2009 the Daoist monastic community, working with ARC, created a Daoist Eco Handbook in Chinese<sup>45</sup> and English.<sup>46</sup> It includes ecological prayers for morning, afternoon and evening, case studies of eco temples all over China, and suggestions of how pilgrims and monks can green and beautify the environment, preserve water, protect animals and follow the "three sticks are enough" principle to reduce the considerable air pollution and waste that comes from people offering armloads of incense at temples around the country.

## 3. Engagement with the entire community

The Green Pilgrimage Network initiative is an opportunity to engage with the entire community – and to give residents outside the faith community a chance to engage, at least partly, with making the city more ecological – and a nicer place in which to live. Could your pilgrimage community run a campaign for residents to identify and encourage green places?

E.G. The UK-based Conservation Foundation launched the Green Corners Awards<sup>47</sup> in April 2010, inviting Londoners to join the campaign to make

London one of the greenest capital cities. And to find the “beautiful, unusual, unexpected, inspirational, gorgeous, delicious and witty green corners” of the city. The publicity read: *“It’s the gardening competition you don’t need to have a garden to enter... Pavement side patch or postage stamp size plot. Colourful roof terrace, balcony or simple windowsill. Alleyway or serene sacred space away from the urban rush. Community area cared for by many or playground green corner for children’s flowers and veg. Pretty mews transformed by green fingered neighbours or flashes of floral colour at bus stops and stations which brighten our journey round town: Green Corners are for anyone to create and everyone to enjoy.”* There were several categories, including sacred spaces. Could your pilgrim city run a similar competition?

### 3.1 Marketing

Can you develop a messaging and marketing campaign that promotes the Green Pilgrim City concept, incorporating sustainable local travel options as well as promoting local heritage and cottage industries associated with the pilgrimage? Can you sell your city as a green city?

E.G. The World Religious Travel Association estimated that there are 300 million religious journeys and 600 million faith-based trips annually and that one in four Americans are interested in faith tourism. Could this be a selling point for your city?

Marketing outreach could involve developing leaflets and brochures, sending out newsletters linking relevant parties, publishing green pilgrim guides, and publishing tourist guides to pilgrimage designed specifically for secular visitors, emphasising the importance of Creation, or the natural world.

### 3.2 Jobs, businesses, skills and training

How can you make the most of green pilgrim city projects to sustain the local economy?

### 3.3 Pledges, eco-certification scheme and awards

In 2008, the environmental group GreenFaith set up an interfaith environmental certification program<sup>48</sup> for houses of worship in the USA. So far it has conducted hundreds of energy audits for churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and gurdwaras around the country. Many of their ideas would be transferable.

E.G. In 2008 the City of London developed a “Climate Change Pledge”<sup>49</sup>. This is now something that businesses, hotels, restaurants, transport providers can read and decide to sign up to – and then, by signing gain publicity from making this ethical choice.

E.G. Norway’s Eco-Lighthouse Program<sup>50</sup> (Miljøfyrtårn) started in 1996 when Kristiansand was selected as one of seven municipalities to participate in the Norwegian local Agenda 21 pilot programme for sustainable communities. City authorities presented a proposal to companies as diverse as a hotel, a housepainter, an ice-cream factory and a wood product company. A

consultant was employed to do an environmental audit and drew up a three-year environmental plan designed in co-operation with workers and management. In return, firms undertook to carry out the plan and share their experiences with others in the same industry. Based on the audits, criteria for local, industry-specific environmental certification schemes were developed. The original “lighthouse” firms became eligible for certification once the first measures in the consultant’s plans had been carried out. Other firms could also apply for certification and receive a 50 percent subsidy for the audit and plan.

E.G. In May 2011 CAFOD and EcoCongregation launched the “livesimply”<sup>51</sup> Parish Award: a national UK prize for parishes making a difference to their community and the planet. It asks the following questions: Do people in your parish care about the environment? Do they support people in need? Do they enjoy the chance to put their faith into action? Since 2006, more than 60 Catholic organisations had been encouraging all Catholics to live sustainably with creation, and in solidarity with the poor. From “greening” their church buildings to supporting Fairtrade, there are many ways parishes can win an award.

E.G. The Catholic Coalition on Climate Change, a partnership of a dozen national Catholic organisations including the US Conference of Catholic Bishops has since 2009 been inviting parishes, schools, campuses and youth groups around the US (and overseas) to join the Catholic Climate Covenant<sup>52</sup> by taking the St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor (see box), both in their communities and online<sup>53</sup>.

#### THE ST FRANCIS PLEDGE TO CARE FOR CREATION AND THE POOR

**PRAY** and reflect on the duty to care for God’s Creation and protect the poor and vulnerable.

**LEARN** about and educate others on the causes and moral dimensions of climate change.

**ASSESS** how we – as individuals and in our families, parishes and other affiliations – contribute to climate change by our own energy use, consumption, waste, etc.

**ACT** to change our choices and behaviours to reduce the ways we contribute to climate change.

**ADVOCATE** for Catholic principles and priorities in climate change discussions and decisions, especially as they impact those who are poor and vulnerable.

#### 4. Recycling the message

You have spent a lot of time and energy thinking through your theology, your purpose and your strategy; you have created logos and lesson plans and newsletters. How can you now recycle that message? Is there anywhere else where the material you have developed might be useful?

E.G. The Green Guide for Hajj has been translated into English and Arabic but we hope that it will be translated into other languages including Bahasa

Indonesia and Hausa to be used by pilgrims from Indonesia and Nigeria, which between them send 350,000 pilgrims on Hajj every year.

### **Questions for businesses on pilgrimage routes**

- Do you have an environmental policy? Do you adhere to it?
- Do you hire local staff? What training do you give your staff?
- If there is a staff uniform, does this use sustainable materials, eg organic cotton?
- Do you source supplies locally?
- Do you recommend clients to buy local products?
- Do you have a supply-chain policy for fair trade and equity?
- Do you take responsibility for the impact of your business on the environment e.g. by using water in a dry area?
- What conservation/reduction measures are you undertaking for water, waste and energy?
- Do you benchmark yourself against other companies? How?
- Do you offer incentives for your staff to carpool or use public transport or bicycles or walking to work?
- Do you offer such alternatives to your guests or clients?
- Do you provide staff with information on how to be more environmentally responsible? This will save you money.
- How do you reduce waste, water and energy?
- Do you print on recycled paper, use biodegradable ink?
- Do you plant indigenous trees or shrubs in your garden or other areas?
- Do you have dual flush toilets, bricks to reduce water in cisterns, or other simple conservation measures?
- If you offer tours, what size are your tour groups? Travelling in small groups has lower impact on flora and fauna.
- Do you ensure you do not purchase products made from endangered species?
- What local projects do you support? Do you give a percentage of profits to wildlife protection or social causes?
- Do you tell your clients/guests about all of this? And do you tell them why it is important?
- Do you make being environmental fun?



## VI Partnerships and funding

The key to a successful Green Pilgrim City is creating a strategic partnership between the faith leadership and the local authority or municipality, as well as other relevant and helpful bodies.

E.G. The Armenia Inter-Church Round Table Charitable Foundation has close links with the mayor and the Etchmiadzin city municipality. A person has been assigned to work on identifying city priorities regarding the Green Pilgrimage Network programme. Their plan includes a vision to partner with the UNDP Armenia office (which is already supporting a programme to promote local companies managing collection and recycling of plastic bottles), and NGOs such as the Armenia Tree Project and the Urban Foundation for Sustainable Development.

### 1. Making key strategic partnerships

If you are on the faith side could you appoint a Pilgrim City Manager to link with secular authorities? And could one of their roles be to highlight environmental stresses and opportunities created by the pilgrims?

If you are on the municipality side, how good are your relationships with the faith or faiths in your city? Are you in contact with the right people? Could you set up a point of contact or a pilgrim officer? Is he or she fully up-to-date on the links between faith and sustainability?

Sitting down together is often the first critical step in any new partnership. If you are part of the municipality, invite your faith leaders to the table to discuss greening your city and ask them from a very early stage not only to be part of the process, but also to participate in creative ideas, getting things changed and getting the word out. Some faiths, including the Sikhs with their principle of seva (service), have very strong traditions of volunteering and community participation, and where this is the case, faith volunteers could and should be an intrinsic component in the planning process.

E.G. The local authority in the city of St Albans, England, has a vision for a “sustainable and pioneering city for all, which values the past and embraces the future”. Inspired by this, and in partnership with the authority, the cathedral is submitting a bid to fund a significant change in its welcome to visitors and pilgrims.<sup>54</sup> This involves a substantial building project. At the heart of this partnership are cultural, spiritual and environmental stewardship and sustainability.

E.G. In Amritsar, holy city to Sikhs, Sikh Environment Day has been celebrated since 2011, on March 14. It involves planting trees, giving talks, putting up posters, getting the message out through radio, TV, news, and each year has involved increasing numbers of volunteers joining in to get the message out.

## 2. Working with enterprises along the pilgrimage supply chain

The World Religious Travel Association estimated<sup>55</sup> that 300 million people every year engage in religious travel: not only pilgrimage but also religious meetings and conferences, and leisure activities organised by religious organisations. The industry involves wholesalers, tour operators, ground operators, safari operators, travel agents, restaurants, tourist boards, attractions, museums, national parks, nature reserves, suppliers, retailers, insurance companies, publishing, hotels and resorts, lodging facilities, convention centres, cruises, riverboat operators, water transport operators, airlines, airports, air service companies, airline catering companies, train/rail operators, coach companies, car hire, travel associations, faith leaders, local parishes, souvenir makers, souvenir sellers, cafes, municipalities, local councils. In other words, it involves every sector of the travel industry, and many sectors of the faith leadership.

## 3. Funding the initiative

According to UNEP, investment in the tourism sector represents almost 10 percent of total investment worldwide. In some countries this figure is as high as 50 percent. At the same time, there is a growing focus on tourism, including pilgrimage, as a generator of foreign direct investment in developing countries. A recent UN Conference on Trade and Development study indicates that tourism is the number one priority for Investment Promotion Agencies in developing countries.

When done correctly, tourism investment can be an effective tool for generating sustainable economic returns, conserving environmental biodiversity, and creating employment opportunities.

Finance for sustainable tourism and pilgrimage is complex. And in order to be sustainable it has to be funded properly. Often there is a need for substantial up-front funding for initiatives to green an area, and also a need for ingenuity in securing new sources of finance.

### 3.1 What the faith leadership could do

Could you set up funds and bursaries for environmentally friendly schemes in your pilgrim cities to which pilgrims would contribute? Could you introduce a new “eco” fountain into which pilgrims could throw money for green programmes and outreach? Could you encourage pilgrims to go and visit some of the programmes?

### 3.2 UNEP and SIFT funding

The Sustainable Investment in Financing for Tourism (SIFT) network<sup>56</sup>, associated with UNEP, has the vision of helping make sustainability into a normal, mainstream consideration in all tourism development investment. More details are here.<sup>57</sup>

### 3.3 How tourism can fund conservation

Sometimes tourism can be a great funder of conservation programmes, through:

— **Direct financial contributions:** revenue from park-entrance fees, diving licences, etc, can be allocated to support environmentally sensitive areas.

— **Indirect contributions to government revenues:** User fees, income taxes, taxes on sales or rental of recreation equipment, and hunting and fishing licences can

provide funds needed to manage natural resources.

— **Alternative** employment.

See here<sup>58</sup> for resources on partnerships for sustainable tourism and finance.

#### 4. Models among pioneering green cities and towns

Many pioneering urban environmental actions have already started, and many of the most effective have been in small cities and towns. Are there things your town is already doing that it could share with other green cities?

E.G. **Montmelian**<sup>59</sup> in the Rhone-Alpes, France has an award-winning urban plan. It includes: a solar energy plan making it the per capita solar installation leader in France; spatial planning to increase the central population density while reducing sprawl and protecting biodiversity; water saving and rainwater collection encouraged by financial incentives; investment in electric vehicles for the municipal fleet; a town energy manager; arranging visits for schools, residents and outside policymakers to see the achievements.

E.G. **Aalborg**<sup>60</sup> in Denmark is a leader in sustainable development practice and planning. The city strategy covers climate, resource management, natural environments, environmental health, purchasing, finance, transport and energy management.

E.G. The resort of **Calvia**<sup>61</sup> in Mallorca, Spain, has produced a long-range sustainability plan, titled Calvia Plus 10.

E.G. **Freiburg**<sup>62</sup>, **Germany** is a global leader in sustainable urban development and renewable energy investment.

#### 5. Sharing resources

The Green Pilgrimage Network initiative can be considered as part of your town or city's wider strategy for urban sustainability. There are many points of contact between the pilgrimage experience and the urban fabric, which can improve the wellbeing of the local community and minimise environmental impacts. There are several organisations, initiatives and guides that can help with this complex task.

**1 ICLEI**<sup>63</sup> is an international network of local authorities on sustainable development. It provides advice, policy guidance, case studies, publications and conferences. Its document on "How to Organise sustainable meetings and events in Brussels"<sup>64</sup> has many ideas of how to organise green meetings and events that can be replicated for faith and city groups. It is a supporting partner for the Green Pilgrimage Network. Pilgrim cities are recommended to join.

**2 UN HABITAT's Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme (BLP)**<sup>65</sup> is a global network of government agencies, local authorities, professional and academic institutions and grassroots organisations dedicated to identifying successful solutions for sustainable development. Areas include housing and urban development, urban

governance, environmental planning and management, architecture and urban design. The lessons learned are incorporated into Habitat's *State of the World's Cities* report<sup>66</sup>.

**3. The UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)** has resources on sustainable tourism<sup>67</sup>. A 2008 UNEP report on links between climate strategy and tourism<sup>68</sup> has useful comments on the impacts of climate change on tourism as well as the impact of tourism on climate change. UNEP estimates that tourism causes some five percent of global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and "by 2035, tourism's contribution to climate change may have grown considerably"<sup>69</sup>.

**3. FORUM FOR THE FUTURE** has produced a vivid set of predictions<sup>70</sup> on tourism in 2023. It includes four scenarios:

1. Will mass tourism, swollen by the huge increase in middle classes in China, India, Brazil, etc, cause huge overcrowding in popular destinations?
2. Will soaring oil prices make air travel so expensive that families have to save for years to fly abroad?
3. Will we see "Doomsday tourism", with visitors rushing to see glaciers and coral reefs before they're gone for good?
4. Or will household "carbon quotas" see people holidaying more at home?

**4. CITIES OF THE FUTURE** is a collaboration between the Norwegian Government and the 13 largest cities in Norway to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make the cities better places to live<sup>71</sup>. It has an inspiring website, full of ideas and case studies.

**5. SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF EU MAYORS** is a commitment by town and city administrations around Europe to go beyond the objectives of EU energy policy in terms of reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions through enhanced energy efficiency and cleaner energy production and use<sup>72</sup>. A list of covenant towns and cities can be found here<sup>73</sup>.

## 6. Governance and partnerships

Like all initiatives in sustainable tourism, the policies and projects for Green Pilgrimage need to connect people and organisations from different sectors, areas of expertise and background. The resources listed below offer some guidance for the creation and management of partnerships across business sectors, civil society and the public sector.

**1. UNEP** has a Global Partnership for sustainable tourism<sup>74</sup>.

**2. ICLEI** has produced a Local Government Climate Road-Map<sup>75</sup>, emphasising the crucial role of cities, towns and other local bodies in partnerships with national governments and other agencies in implementing strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation. Every two years ICLEI holds a conference on Sustainable Cities and Towns.<sup>76</sup>



**3. The International Tourism Partnership** offers resources<sup>77</sup> on cross-sectoral co-operation for sustainable practice.

**4. The Sustainable Urban Tourism programme of the European Union** has a large body of material on governance and partnerships.<sup>78</sup>

**5. The Responsible Tourism Partnership** is another multi-sector programme to develop and disseminate good practices.<sup>79</sup>



## VII Celebration

Can you make all your festivals, services and events more ecological?

### 1.1 Existing Festivals

E.G. At the annual pilgrimage to the tombs of local Qadiriyyah Saints in Kano, Nigeria, pilgrims are encouraged to drink from natural cups made from *duma* – which is like a dried gourd – and clay pots are used for cooking. Pilgrims are led by the example of Khalifa Sheikh Qaribullah Nasir Kabara, leader of the Qadiriyyah Sufi Movement in West Africa with an estimated 15 million followers in Nigeria. He gives an annual green message and asks all his followers to plant one tree.

Some festivals have lost their original ecological significance. For example, the Shalosh Regalim, the three key Jewish pilgrimage festivals of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot (Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles) were initially related to the cycles of the agricultural year, although over the centuries these meanings have been largely superseded by more historical and theological concerns. Are there festivals at the heart of your pilgrim city calendar that have similarly changed? Could the ecological significance be recovered?

E.G. The Jewish Seven-Year Plan proposes to reclaim the ecological significance of Pesach, Shavuot and Sukkot. The aim is to promote educational outreach renewing Pesach as the holiday of spring rebirth, Shavuot as the holiday of harvesting first fruits and Sukkot as the holiday of acknowledging our interdependence on the natural world. Could Jewish pilgrims be at the forefront of this rediscovery?

### 1.2 New Festivals

Can you celebrate the environment in a new annual faith festival? And can it be a beautiful occasion where pilgrimages around that time will be focused on protecting the environment, where pilgrims can do service in the local community to create gardens, clear litter or engage in other ways with protecting the holy city?

E.G. In 2011, March 14<sup>th</sup> (an important day in the life of the Seventh Guru) was celebrated for the first time as Sikh Environment Day. More than 450 schools and gurdwaras (Sikh temples) both in India and the diaspora led the celebration. Gurbanis (hymns) celebrating nature were particularly selected to be sung in the gurdwaras and on Sikh radio that day. Eco notice boards were set up in gurdwaras, saplings were given as offerings, lectures were arranged, clean-ups organised, and many people went to the countryside or parks to share their experience of nature. It is spearheaded by EcoSikh ([www.ecosikh.org](http://www.ecosikh.org)), initially supported by the Norwegian Government and

the Sikh community, and assisted by ARC. The aim is for March 14 to be celebrated every year as Sikh Environment Day.

E.G. The Bhumi Project, which produced a Nine Year Plan of Environment Action by Hindus in the UK, has created a list of minimum environmental standards for any Hindu Festival. It has suggestions for catering, waste, carbon footprint, travel, etc, when planning a large event – and might be a model for many other faiths. The Bhumi programme suggests that religious festivals are opportunity to offer homegrown produce at the temple and recommends devotees bring their own plates to temple gatherings or at least promote biodegradable plates, cups and spoons. Bhumi is the Sanskrit word for Mother Earth.

Festivals in your green pilgrim city do not have to be faith festivals to benefit from the spirit of environmentalism – indeed, the same thing applies to all festivals, and conferences and exhibitions and any events, secular or religious.

E.G. In 2010 in the UK, [www.agreenerfestival.com](http://www.agreenerfestival.com) gave awards to 18 festivals around the world, based on their environmental credentials<sup>80</sup>.

E.G. The ICARUS Foundation in Canada has worked with Toronto Authorities on Greening your City Festivals<sup>81</sup>. It gives persuasive reasons for greening all public festivals:

1. **Fans actually want green events** • Over 80 percent<sup>82</sup> think noise, waste and traffic have a negative impact • 48 percent would pay more for greener events • 36 percent say green is important when buying a ticket
2. **Green events can save money.** For example: collecting name badge holders for reuse at an event of 1,300 attendees can save nearly \$1000<sup>83</sup>
3. **Green events can save resources.** For example: Using biodegradable cups and plates instead of Styrofoam or plastic at an event for 2,200 people can prevent one tonne of rubbish from going into a landfill.
4. **Other benefits are:** saving money, motivating people, creating company loyalty and satisfying regulatory requirements.
5. **AND it's The Right Thing to Do.**



## Part three: theologies

**PLEASE NOTE. Some of these theologies have been shortened for inclusion in this handbook. The full versions can be found within the section for each faith on the ARC website<sup>84</sup>**



### Bahá'í theological statement on green pilgrimage

Sites of pilgrimage have been sanctified by their association with holy souls, which elevates the station of these sacred places to one worthy not only of respect, but also of reverence. By engaging with the spirit of these spots, we can be assisted to rise to a higher level of consciousness about our responsibilities to our world and to translate this into practical expressions.

So central is the role of pilgrimage in a person's spiritual development that Bahá'u'lláh made it an obligation to be performed at least once in the lifetime of any believer financially able to make the journey. At the present time, Bahá'í pilgrimage takes the form of a nine-day programme of visits to the Shrines of Bahá'u'lláh and the Báb and places associated with the lives of Bahá'u'lláh and 'Abdu'l-Bahá, all located on or near the coast of northern Israel, between Haifa and Nahariya. Pilgrim groups are scheduled during a nine-month season that runs from late October until the end of July. The logistical hub of the pilgrimage programme is in Haifa.

Participants in this programme reflect the diversity and geographical spread of the Bahá'í community, and the Bahá'í institutions are working to make pilgrimage ever more widely accessible to believers from all walks of life and all 235 countries and territories where the Faith has taken root. As the community grows and matures, we fully expect the flow of Bahá'í pilgrims to increase dramatically in the years to come.

Since it requires international travel, Bahá'í pilgrimage necessarily involves substantial economic and environmental costs, but greater efforts can be made to promote values of simplicity, to minimise waste and other harmful side-effects, and to ensure that the planning for future expansion of the pilgrimage programme takes full account of environmental factors and the need for sustainable solutions, all without sacrificing the spiritual nature of the pilgrimage experience or the goal of making it universally accessible.

#### **Pledge of Support**

Within the framework outlined above, the Bahá'í World Centre will work closely with the Municipality of Haifa and other local stake-holders to reduce the environmental impact

associated with Bahá'í visitors by promoting the use of public transport; propagating sound environmental practices in the hospitality sector; improving the management of scarce resources such as energy and water; reducing waste and ensuring that more of it is recycled; and encouraging individual pilgrims to play an active and responsible role in caring for the environment both during their pilgrimage and back in their home communities. Recognising that we have much to learn and a great deal to do to improve the environmental sustainability of our own operations, our approach will be incremental and collaborative.

We look forward to collaborating with all the other participants in this international, inter-faith endeavour, utilising the diverse facets of human creativity from the spiritual to the technical, to make the world a better place, in terms of both the physical environment of the planet and the wellbeing of its present and future inhabitants.



## Armenian Apostolic Church: Theological Statement

As representatives of the Armenian Apostolic Church, the Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, we join our efforts in safeguarding the creation and call upon the whole mankind to take care of the nature the way our Heavenly Father takes care of His flock because:

We believe that the whole universe and the various beings existing in it as well as life were created and loved by Lord God. On the sixth day of creation humanity received the commandment from God: “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” (Genesis 1:28, and 9:2), echoed in the Psalms: “You made him ruler over the works of your hands” (Psalm 88:6). However, this commandment does not imply the exploitation of nature by humanity; instead it lays particular responsibility on the wreath of creation. This is affirmed in the next chapter of The Book of Genesis where we read that: “Lord God took mankind and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” (Genesis 2:15). Humanity with its abilities is not the only witness of God: yet, as the Psalms say, nature is also witness: “The heavens praise your wonders” (Psalm 89:5).

Lord God, Creator of the Heaven and the Earth, teaches humankind through creation. Nature is one of the most important means of knowing God and perceiving God. And the whole Holy Scripture from Pentateuch to the Books of the Prophets, from the Gospels to the Book of Revelation is full of natural sceneries making divine truths perceivable.

Finally, the special value of nature is emphasised by Christ by making it an oratory (Matthew 26:36, Mark 14:32). The cradles of spiritual life in Armenia are the monastic brotherhoods and monasteries full of hermits and anchorites, and the theological schools wreathed by the presence of Reverend Fathers. The prayer houses are always located in forests, high mountains, by lakesides or on desolate islands which for centuries have inspired harmony with nature to the thousands of Armenian as well as foreign pilgrims and ordinary visitors.

During daily service we also pray: “for seasonable weather, gentle rains and abundance of fruit” (Book of Hours, Etchmiadzin, 1999, p. 399). And during the orders of Andastan (Blessing of the four directions of the world), Djrorhnek (Blessing of the water), Khaghoghohrhnek (Blessing of the grapes) established as a result of the reforms realised by the Holy Fathers, the Armenian clergymen bless the land, its fruit, the fields, the plants and their roots, the churches and the dwelling places together with the four directions of the world (Book of Hours, Etchmiadzin, 1999, p. 268).

The Armenian Apostolic Holy Church, loyal to the divine commandment, the tradition of its predecessors and the rich experience of the Church, expostulates and teaches its faithful children. And at the same it takes care of nature, the witnesses of which are various environmental measures and seminars, classes of green theology, tree-planting in the Nersisyan forest in Etchmiadzin (organised by the joint efforts of the Holy Armenian Apostolic Church, the Armenian Round Table and ECLOF Foundations) as well as installation of solar power in the Vazkenian Theological Seminary on the island of Sevan for water heating and other household needs.

The harmonic implementation of this goal is to be established firmly on our branches like the Truthful Vine (John 15:1-17).

*Prayerfully*

*Bishop Hovakim Manukyan*

*Director for Inter-Church Relations, Armenian Apostolic Church*



## **A Franciscan theology of the environment and pilgrimage**

*A Call to Communion with Creation*

St. Francis was born and died in the Umbrian town of Assisi in Italy. From his conversion in 1204 he dedicated himself to God and to a life of prayer, simplicity and preaching. He exemplified a reliance on God for everything and for his ever-present awareness of God in all of creation. His theology challenged the established church then, and continues to do so today, by asking us all to consider the natural world as our brothers and sisters and to treat all of life with love and respect.

Throughout his life he walked through Umbria inspiring others to see his simple life as a way to connect personally with God. By preaching to birds, befriending wolves and rescuing fish, he demonstrated his belief that God is present in all of his creation and we are duty bound to show kindness and restraint in our treatment of the natural world.

Pilgrimage is at the heart of Franciscan spirituality, as an Order of Friars we are dedicated to spreading the Word of God through our lives of poverty, chastity and obedience. It is therefore fitting that the birthplace of St Francis, Assisi is one of the founding cities of the Green Pilgrimage Network.

In St. Francis, we are reminded of our union with all of creation. That union is rooted in God's voluntary poverty, revealed in God's compassionate self-donation. This incredible generosity began with the act of creating the cosmos, and reached its high point in the person of Jesus Christ, first through the Incarnation and then in the Paschal Mystery. Centuries before the Second Vatican Council, Francis was able to recognise the Eucharist as "the source and summit" of the Church's life. It became for him the definitive symbol of our communion with God, one another, and the whole of creation.

We have become accustomed to thinking of the liturgy, the Church's act of public service, as a locus for our action on behalf of justice and peace. Francis' reflections on the Eucharist and the elements of sacrament – the integration of action, word and the things of the earth challenge us to also make it a locus for our action on behalf of the integrity of creation. These reflections also invite us to consider creation as a sacrament, with God speaking, acting and creating something new from a formless wasteland and wind-swept waters (Genesis 1: 1-2:4). Franciscan Scholars emphasise creation and our communion with God as the results of God's initiative. They see creation and communion as a consequence of the divine nature itself.

Franciscan theology of creation takes as its starting point the Trinity of love. Creation is a limited expression of the infinite and dynamic love between the Father and the Son. To say that creation flows out of the infinite fountain of divine love is to say that God is creative and loving. In order for divine glory to be consciously expressed, God creates human beings who are capable of participating in and manifesting that glory. Thus God freely creates a glorious universe and calls forth within this universe human persons who are endowed with the freedom to participate in this divine artistic splendour. Responding to this generous invitation demands that we enter more deeply into contemplation.

Francis was the consummate pilgrim. He was not a monk, nor did he ever live in a monastery. He saw "the world as his cloister". In this way he came to see God in creation because he contemplated God in the things of creation that he encountered on his own pilgrimage through life. "Contemplation is a penetrating gaze that gets to the truth of reality."

Our deeper understanding of the communion of creation increases our consciousness of our interdependence. It also requires that we develop a more holistic understanding of our world, avoiding destructive dualisms (humanity vs. nature, spiritual vs. material, etc.) and the compartmentalisation that has even contaminated our own work when we have failed to integrate environmental concerns with our work for justice and peace.





## St Albans, Church of England: pilgrimage theology

Inspired by Alban, Britain's first Christian martyr, sustained by our tradition of hospitality, worship, and learning, and renowned as a place of pilgrimage, the cathedral is a community of welcome and witness.

### **St Alban**

Alban lived in the Roman town of Verulamium, about the end of the third century. During a time of persecution, he welcomed and sheltered a Christian priest who was on the run. Alban was so impressed by his guest that he was converted to Christianity. When soldiers came to Alban's home in search of the priest, Alban exchanged clothes with him allowing him to escape. Alban was arrested in his place. Standing trial, Alban was asked to make offering to the Roman gods, but Alban refused, declaring his faith in "the living and true God who created all things". This statement condemned Alban to death, and he was led out of the city, across the river and up a hillside where he was beheaded.

### **A tradition of sustaining and welcome**

Alban was buried, and Christians came to the spot to venerate the martyr saint. Around this grew a Benedictine community, replaced by a large Norman Abbey in 1077, the remains of which are still visible in the tower and parts of the cathedral. Since then, a strong tradition of pilgrimage developed and continues today, including to the annual celebration of St Alban in June.

As such, Alban is the first Christian martyr in Great Britain. The place where he was buried and which rapidly became a place of worship and pilgrimage, is the oldest surviving place of Christian worship. So it is that St Albans was a major place of pilgrimage, and the town of St Albans grew up around it as a place of hospitality. In its various forms, the community of St Albans has kept alive the story of Alban and celebrated his faith. Through the communion of saints, they believe that Alban is a present reality and a sign of the Christian hope.

Sustaining this vision has not been easy. Raw materials were hard to find in this part of the world, and so the building claims to be Britain's oldest recycled building, containing bricks from the Roman town, as well as elements of Saxon and then Norman architecture. The building itself has preserved all these features and is considered to be a schoolroom to different styles and periods.

After the Reformation, the Abbey was suppressed at the King's orders and the building suffered much damage and neglect. The townspeople of St Albans purchased the Abbey and it became their parish church. In 1877 the Abbey became a cathedral as St Albans became a new diocese. Today, the cathedral probably has the largest regular congregation of all English cathedrals. It receives about 160,000 visitors a year and 16,000 school children. It is supported by about 1,000 active volunteers.



**'My name is Alban, and I will worship and adore the living and true God who created all things'.**

This confession by Alban points to the belief, which Christians share with other monotheistic faiths, in God as the creator of all that exists. Just as God created the first man and woman in his image to care for the world and share in his work of creation, so God continues to entrust to humanity the care of the Earth. This comes from the conviction that all that God made was very good, and continues to be.

The book of Genesis also shows what happens when things go wrong. It tells the ancient story that God placed the first man and woman in the garden of Eden to care for it and to live within it in a relationship of mutual inter-dependence. However, they departed from God's plan. As a result, sin, or a separation, entered the world and the man and the woman left the garden for a life of struggle in the wilderness. This separation operates at different levels: between humanity and God, between human beings themselves and between humanity and the rest of the created world.

Nevertheless, the story did not finish: God did not abandon humanity or his created world, but continued to communicate with humanity and to sustain the world of which we are part. So God called a family to be in a special relationship to communicate his blessing to all people, and God placed this people Israel in a land said to be flowing with milk and honey, which they were to sustain and nurture in relationship with God. Then, in Christ and through his death and resurrection, this covenant was opened to all peoples, healing the breach between God and humanity, and to work towards a right relationship with the created world.

The Bible ends with a picture not of a garden, but of the city of the new Jerusalem. In this city is a tree which brings healing for the nations of the world, and where water flows as a sign of blessing, mirroring the tree of life in the beginning.

This is therefore the story of a journey from the Garden of Eden to the new Jerusalem. It represents the journey that we all make towards God in our life and our experience of failure and towards redemption. However, it is not only a journey we make as individuals; rather all creation is caught up in this hope. A pilgrimage that we make to a holy place like St Albans is an acted symbol of this hopeful journey that we make with and towards God, and it is this to which St Albans has borne witness from its very beginning and underlies the welcome which it extends to all people.

In St Albans, the care and development of our building and tradition through the centuries needs to be in parallel with our care for the environment and the physical resources that God has entrusted to us. Thus, our environmental strategy is part of our wider task of responsibility and care. Alongside this, the community of faith has sustained the story of Alban and celebrated and passed on his faith, which enlivens and inspires today.

At the heart of the cathedral in St Albans is the Shrine, which houses a relic, or the physical remains, of the saint. This is important, because it reminds us that the Christian hope is located in a definite place, and that it is our physical world and our physical bodies which communicate the Christian hope. In Jesus, God took upon himself a physical nature by becoming a human being, and God continues to communicate to us in physical ways, in the water of baptism and in bread and wine, his body and blood of the Eucharist. In this way the

very matter of our created world becomes charged with supernatural meaning. Likewise, Jesus was raised physically from the dead, and so in the hope of eternal life, our own physical nature is not left behind, but taken up and transformed. The matter of this world is not left behind in the Christian hope, and in caring for the world, we are not only preserving something for the past, we are also anticipating a glorious future – the reconciliation of every one and every thing in God.

*St Albans, October 2011*



## Lutheran Church: green pilgrimage theology from Nidaros Diocese, Norway

As the majority faith in Norway, the Church of Norway through the Nidaros Diocese is responsible for the reception of pilgrims at Nidaros Cathedral, which is the main destination of the Route of St. Olav Ways<sup>85</sup>. Together with the different Christian churches and other faiths represented in Trondheim City, we believe that all life has been created by God and is loved by God.

As Christians we confess together with the Apostolic Faith that says: *I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth*. As Lutherans we are committed to Luther's Catechism, which states:

*"I believe that God has created me together with all that exists. God has given me and still preserves my body and soul... all the necessities and nourishment for this body and life. God protects me against all danger and shields and preserves me from all evil. And all this is done out of pure, fatherly and divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness of mine at all!"* The Small Catechism, the First Article.

Since humanity appeared on Earth we have told stories about the Creation. These stories are part of our faith, our deep conviction and thus the stories are intrinsic to our relation to the Creation. The stories tell us that Creation belongs to God. According to Psalm 8, God has made us to have a special responsibility and role in Creation. As a result of these beliefs, we are committed to walk gently upon His Earth, conscious that Psalm 24 says: *"The Earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world and those who live in it."* The book of *Genesis* further states that God saw all of Creation to be good.

The Lutheran faith says that the Creator is the Trinitarian God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit (CA art I) and that "He (Christ) was in the beginning with God" (John 1). "For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him." (Colossians 1; 18) As Christians we believe that Jesus Christ came to restore not just humanity's relationship with God, but as St. Paul further says of Jesus, "God wanted all perfection to be

found in him and all things to be reconciled through him and for him, everything in heaven and everything on earth” (Colossians 1; 19-20).

Following the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, we should walk as pilgrims through this world and life, learning about trust in God’s providence, as St. Matthew’s Gospel tells us, by the example of the flowers of the field and the birds of the air.

Jesus also underlined our responsibility for our neighbours. The way we move upon the Earth will have consequences for the whole human family, present and future generations. To care for the Creation is to care for our neighbours.

The Scripture tells us that we, as humans, are responsible to care for all God’s Creation. As we go on pilgrimages, we must be aware of the vulnerability of the land, the water and all other living creatures that God is placing upon His Earth. We call upon all Christian pilgrims to live out these beliefs when they are walking the way of Christ as pilgrims and guests in the places to which they go.

As a pilgrimage community we commit ourselves to walk on a path that is true to our faith in God, the Creator and the Lord, Jesus Christ, and by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as well as true to our companions on God’s Earth and true to the entire Creation itself, by:

- Building a strong partnership with ecumenical partners, multi-faith partners and the civil society of our city to wake awareness of the challenge of the Creation
- Struggling for sustainable development and equitable distribution of our common resources of the Earth
- Organising our pilgrimages with as little cost to the planet as possible
- Staying, during our pilgrimages, in places where resources are used wisely and carefully

*Nidaros Diocese, October 2011*



## Coptic Orthodox Green Pilgrim Theology

The belief of the Coptic Orthodox Church is that all life is sacred, and is created and sustained by God in love. The world was crafted by God for humankind, whom He only brought into being once He saw that all “was good”. Nature has been a source of both provision and refuge for humanity against the self-made worries and concerns of life. Isaiah the prophet escaped fear and persecution in the wilderness under a broom tree where he rested and was fed and cared for by the angel of the Lord (1 Kings 19). It is in nature that God often chooses to talk to those who will listen to Him, as Moses met with God in a cloud on a mountain (Exodus 19), and spoke with God in a burning bush (Exodus 3:2). Similarly, Jonah the prophet held dialogue with God through his experience of a plant and worm (Jonah 4).

We believe that God, having dominion over all nature, garners a relationship with us. It is through the awesome power of a storm that the Lord demonstrated His majesty to his

disciples (Matthew 8:23), and taught faith to Peter by calling him to walk on water (Matthew 14). As David the Psalmist expresses, our relationship with God is most likened to “walking beside the still waters and laying down in green pastures” (psalm 23). And it is in nature, away from distraction, that a closeness with God can be achieved; the example of Christ meditating in the wilderness, is one emulated in the monastic life. The true value of nature can be measured in Christ’s choice to pass His final hours on this Earth, in the Garden of Gethsemane in spiritual preparation (John 18:1).

We also believe that God, Who created our natural world, also looks to teach us through His creation. The most prevalent source of teaching in the Bible is the example of nature, as Saint John the Evangelist reminds us with the parables of our Lord, demonstrating that spiritual life must be well rooted in good soil, sufficiently nourished, and lovingly sustained in order to yield its fruit.

The task of stewardship over this great source of peace and wisdom is given to us as children of God. In the same way that “God took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it” (Genesis 2:15) so must we too be diligent looking after this precious gift. In the same way that God commanded Noah, saying “every beast of the earth, on every bird in the air, on all that moves on the earth and on all the fish of the sea; they are given into your hand” (Genesis 9:2), so we too share that same responsibility for and over God’s creation.

In His divine wisdom, the Lord God, our Creator, engineered a harmonious world, made up of numerous systems that were so finely balanced within themselves and with one another that all were provided for and nothing was forgotten, not even the “ravens and the young beasts”. Saint Gregory of Nazianzus writes that: “The Creation is a system and composite of earth and sky and all that is in them... harmony and unison of the whole, and how each part fits with every other in fair order, and all with the whole, tending to the perfect completion of the world as a unit.” In such a world, according to God's plan and without negative human intervention, there would be no hunger, poverty, or destruction of a beautiful environment.

As the stewards of our Lord Jesus Christ and His partners in the ministry, we have a responsibility towards every person and every creature. While it is understandable that we are responsible for every human being, we sometimes forget our very serious responsibility for that which surrounds him and for that which forms an integral part of God's Creation: the world and the nature therein.

In considering the environment, we find ourselves in a very real partnership, not merely with human organisations and bodies, but with the Creator and Master Craftsman Himself. We find ourselves in the place of Noah, with whom God not only entrusted his own family, but every creature that was in the ark, and that was to be part of the new beginning. Just as Noah was faithful in maintaining and caring for all those creatures on the ark as commanded by God, so too are we to be faithful in maintaining our world so that we may hand it over to those who come after us, and they in turn hand it to those who come after them.

We see evidence of the importance that the Coptic Orthodox Church places on matters of nature and the environment in the presence of dedicated prayers for them in every ritual service. The most visible example of this is in the litany that is prayed in every liturgy and ritual service:

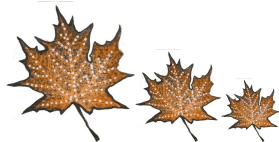
*“Raise the rivers to their measure according to Your grace. Give joy to the face of the earth; may its furrows be abundantly watered and its fruits be plentiful. Prepare it for sowing and*

*harvesting and manage our life as You deem fit. Bless the crown of the year with your goodness for the sake of the poor of your people: the widow, the orphan, the traveller, the stranger, and for the sake of us all who entreat You and seek Your holy name. The eyes of every one look upon You for You give them their food in due season. Deal with us according to Your goodness, O You Who gives food to all creatures. Fill our hearts with joy and gladness, that we too, having sufficiency in every thing always, may abound in every good deed."*

The environment is not something relegated to theological textbooks, but is a very real part of our life and our prayers, an essential part for which we thank God and ask His continued blessing. Our theology must be witnessed in our lives as pilgrims, especially in our places of pilgrimage. Those going on pilgrimage should set an example of caring for creation by dealing with the Earth with the sanctity that it deserves and safeguarding its resources. Our places of pilgrimage are beacons of our Faith, leading our pilgrims to become environmental stewards, caring for the whole of God's creation.

We believe, as Christians and stewards of God's creation, that we have a duty towards that which we have been given. We are called to be the vinedressers in the vineyard of our Lord, and be ready to give account for the harvest that has been entrusted to us (Matthew 21:33). To this means and purpose we dedicate ourselves not only as hired workers, for hired workers do not know what the master is doing, but rather as partners and fellow-workers with God in making this earth fruitful, that His whole creation, crowned by humankind, may have a more abundant life, and a joy that is full. (John 15:11-15 & 10:10)

*+Bishop Angaelos  
General Bishop, Coptic Orthodox Church, United Kingdom*



## Hindu Theological Statement on Green Pilgrimage

We believe that our life is a sacred journey and we are all pilgrims on planet Earth. Our scriptures tell us that being pilgrims is not just wandering aimlessly, or earning *karmic* merit by enduring hardship on a strenuous journey: they exhort us to follow *Dharma* so we may lead a daily life of contentment, discipline and righteousness without straining the Earth's resources.

As Hindus, how we follow the pilgrims' way is more important than the actual destination. The doctrine of *karma* cautions us that every step we take today will yield a corresponding result in the future: *If one sows goodness, one will reap goodness; if one sows evil, one will reap evil (Vedas)*. Thus we believe that the greenhouse effect, acid rain, toxic waste, soil erosion, pesticide contamination, groundwater pollution and other environmental problems that continue to threaten our survival are the result of our past collective actions (*karma*).

Since good *karma* yields positive results, we should adjust our lifestyles and accept certain restraints on our desires so as to tread as lightly as possible on the planet that is our shared home, and so minimise our impact on the environment. *Ishavasya Upanishat* advises us to lead a devout and frugal lifestyle and eliminate greed and wasteful consumption:

*“Everything in the universe belongs to the Lord. Therefore take only what you need, that is set aside for you. Do not take anything else, for you know to whom it belongs.”*

We believe that cutting down of trees and destruction of flora is a sinful act. We should worship trees as *Vriksha Devata* (tree gods), forests as *Vana Devatas*, mountains as *Giri Devatas*, rivers as Goddesses, cow and cattle for their agrarian utility. *Kautilya’s Arthashastra* prescribes various punishments for destroying trees and plants. *The Vedas* state, “*Vriksho Rakshati Rakshitaha*”, meaning, “*Protect trees, trees will protect you.*” We believe water is a purifier, thus we offer a daily prayer to the deity of water: “*The waters in the sky, the waters of rivers, and water in the well whose source is the ocean, may all these sacred waters protect me*” (*Rig-Veda 7.49.2*).

We see all creatures as spiritually equal. We are urged by *Krishna* to “*see with equal vision a priest, a cow, an elephant and a dog*”. We do not support the exploitation of animals, especially on the industrial scale that is commonplace in today’s farming industry. We believe this exploitation does great damage to the natural environment as well as to the human spirit.

Our ancient sages personified the Earth as Mother Earth and worshipped her as Goddess (*Devi*): “*Mata bhumi putro aham prithivyaha*”, meaning, *the Earth is my mother, I am the Earth’s son* (*Atharva Veda*). Thousands of years later, at the Global Conference in 1992 in Rio, world experts addressed our planet as Mother Earth at an international meeting for the first time.

To the Hindus, the notion of subjugating or exploiting Mother Earth is akin to violating the body of one’s mother. The sanctity of our relationship with Mother Earth is expressed in our morning prayer recited before setting our right foot on the floor when we ask *Devi* to forgive us for trampling on her body: “*Salutations to Lord Vishnu’s divine wife, ocean-clad, adorned with mountains, pardon me, Mother, for setting my foot on you.*” (*Samudra Vasane Devi, Parvata Sthana Mandite, Vishnu Patni Namasthubhyam, Pada Sparsham Kshamasva Me*).

We believe that this teaching may well be the earliest imperative to caution mankind to be mindful of our impact on the Earth. We Hindus must acknowledge that our *Dharma* teaches us to love the Earth, appreciate her beauty and as “wanderers” explore her many mysteries.

As followers of Sanatana Dharma, which teaches harmony and respect for nature, we call on all Hindus to:

- Follow Lord Krishna’s message, “*Conserve ecology or perish*”, and develop a sustainable lifestyle
- Reduce your carbon footprint and ideally “leave a positive footprint”
- Support local conservation programmes that protect terrestrial and marine species and their habitats
- Protect portions of the planet that are held in common, including the oceans and the atmosphere
- Help eliminate and clean up open sewers, impure water, unplanned development and polluted air
- Do not waste water or electricity
- Dispose of rubbish appropriately, no matter how much litter lies around
- Eat natural, healthy, fresh foods, avoiding consumption of meat
- Recycle whenever possible
- Support people and initiatives that achieve these Earth-friendly goals

Compiled by Kusum Vyas, Hindu Climate Change Ambassador, The Bhumi Project. Editorial input from Ranchor Prime, Acharya David Frawley (Pandit Vamadeva Shastri), Dr. M. G. Prasad, Swami Nikhilanand, Jagadguru Kripalu Parishat, Radha Madhav Dham. Supported and authenticated by Hinduism Today and its editors.



## Jewish Theological Statement on Green Pilgrimage (Summary and Introduction)

This short paper considers the sources for a green pilgrimage theology in Judaism. It is written at the invitation of ARC, in the context of their Green Pilgrimage City network.

Pilgrimage, *aliyah l'regel*, was a central practice in Judaism almost from its origins. The Bible declares three times, "three times a year shall all of your males appear before the Lord your God". (Exodus: 23:17; 34:23; Deuteronomy, 16:16). This tradition continues today. In 2010, four million overseas visitors came to Jerusalem. There were eight million individual visits to the Western Wall, the principal Jewish religious site.

This statement, drafted at the invitation of the Alliance for Religions and Conservation's Green Pilgrimage Network considers how Jewish pilgrims and pilgrimage sites today should manage *aliya l'regel* so as to minimise its negative environmental impact. Jewish tradition contains a wealth of environmental wisdom and ethics avoiding waste and wanton destruction, (*ba'al taschit*), and acting in a way that reflects God's role as Creator and our responsibility to be wise stewards of creation. Jews should live up to these requirements in all they do, especially when engaged on a religious journey.

In addition, traditional Jewish sources about the ancient pilgrimage experience to Jerusalem were acutely conscious of the environmental dimension of the pilgrimage – its potential impact on public health, safety and the aesthetics of the city (*Mishnah Avot, 5:1*). They describe the beauty of Jerusalem. (*Talmud, Sukkah 51b*), the spiritual grandeur of the pilgrimage (*Mishnah, Bikkurim, 3:3-4*) and show a keen awareness of how the influx of many thousands of pilgrims risked defiling the city with dirt, stench, disease and commercial exploitation. They outline measures that the city and religious authorities undertook to ensure, as far as humanly possible, that the *aliyah l'regel* was managed so as to maintain the beauty and cleanliness of the city, (*Talmud Bava Kamma 82a*) the health of pilgrims and residents and the dignity of the pilgrimage. There is also an awareness in the sources that a *walkable* pilgrimage promotes humility and enhances the spiritual quality of the experience. (*Mishnah Bikkurim 3:4*)

We can learn from these sources that the city and religious authorities are responsible to ensure that Jewish religious travel today, whether to Jerusalem or other sites, is managed so as to maintain the dignity and beauty of the journey and religious sites; to travel with as little cost to the planet as possible and particularly to encourage walking, to stay in places

where resources are used wisely and carefully, to eat and drink sustainably and ethically, and to leave a positive footprint on the Earth.

### **Introduction: Jewish Pilgrimage**

Pilgrimage was a central practice in Judaism almost from its origins. The Bible declares three times, “three times a year shall all of your males appear before the Lord your God”. (Exodus: 23:17; 34:23; Deuteronomy, 16:16). These three occasions were the pilgrimage festivals of *Pesach*, *Shavuot* and *Sukkot* (usually rendered in English as Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles, respectively.) At those appointed times Jews converged in their masses on Jerusalem. From the building of the First Temple in 1003 BCE until the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, (with an interlude of about 70 years during the Babylonian exile,) the Temple in Jerusalem was a central pilgrimage destination for Jews from throughout the Land of Israel, the Mediterranean and the fertile crescent.

The Biblical injunction was understood to be optional. It was meritorious, though not essential to travel to Jerusalem on the pilgrimage festivals. Nevertheless, large numbers of Jews responded to the Bible's exhortation. Whole families made the journey, not just the males. The book of Psalms holds numerous descriptions of the joyful throng of celebrants ascending to Jerusalem.<sup>86</sup> Psalm 84, for example conveys something of the anticipation and yearning that accompanied the experience:

"How lovely is your dwelling place,  
O Lord of hosts.  
I long, I yearn for the courts of the Lord;  
My body and soul shout for joy to the living G-d.  
Even the sparrow has found a home.  
And the swallow a nest for herself in which to set her young,  
near your altar, O Lord of hosts, my king, my God.  
Happy are those who dwell in your house;  
They forever praise you.

Happy is the man who finds refuge in you,  
Whose mind is on the pilgrim highways...  
They go from rampart to rampart,  
Appearing before G-d in Zion....  
Better one day in your courts than a thousand (anywhere else.)

Josephus in his *Antiquities* writes of hundreds of thousands of Jews ascending to Jerusalem for the pilgrimage festivals. Arguably the practice of *aliya l'regel* (literally, ascending to Jerusalem on foot) was the original, prototypical religious pilgrimage experience.

After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, Jews continued to make pilgrimages, now tinged with sadness, to Jerusalem, in so far as political and physical conditions allowed. From the same juncture, Jerusalem began to be regarded as a Holy City and a pilgrim destination for Christianity, and then later for Islam too. From the early 20th century Jews were able to travel to Jerusalem in ever greater numbers. In 2010, four million overseas visitors came to Jerusalem. There were eight million<sup>87</sup> individual visits to the Western Wall<sup>88</sup>, the principal Jewish religious site.



In addition to Jerusalem, three other places in the Land of Israel are designated as Holy Cities in Jewish tradition, Hebron, Safed and Tiberias. These are also destinations for religiously inspired travel, as are gravesites of various saints and scholars dotted around the country.

Over the past 20 years Eastern Europe has opened up as a venue for Jewish pilgrimage, principally to the graves of celebrated *Hassidic rebbes* by their latter day followers. Of these, by far the largest destination is the grave of Rebbe Nachman of Bratslav in the Ukrainian town of Uman; 35,000 *Hassidim* went to Uman for *Rosh Hashanah*, the Jewish New Year in 2010. Although this is a growing phenomenon it is still very small compared to the number of Jews who journey to Jerusalem.

### **Towards a Green Jewish Pilgrimage Ethic**

The Seven-Year Plan for the Jewish People, commissioned by ARC in 2009, details the sources in Judaism for the sacred obligation to walk lightly on the Earth and protect God's creation. One possible approach to constructing a green Jewish pilgrimage ethic would be to take all that as read and add that one should do likewise, and all the more so, when engaged in religious pilgrimage. That is true, of course, but it adds little to our understanding of why *pilgrimage* should be a particular focus of green thoughts and deeds.

A different and potentially more interesting approach would be to inquire as to what Jewish sources about pilgrimage can teach us about how to be pilgrims in a more environmentally conscious way. The thousand-year long history of *aliyah l'regel*, Jewish pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem, generated an immense religious literature about that event – how to prepare for it, how to journey, how to stay in Jerusalem and conduct the attendant rituals, and how the city arranged itself to cope with the immense influx of travelers. Surveying this literature can provide us with insights about how a city and the pilgrims who travel to it should act to promote public health and hygiene as well as the beauty, cleanliness, and dignity of the city and of the pilgrimage experience. These dimensions are not co-extensive with what we call "green" or environmental factors but they strongly overlap with them. This is the approach that we will follow in the paper.

*July, 2011,*

*Rabbi Yedidya Sinclair*

Link here<sup>89</sup> for the full document.



## Muslim Theological Statement on Green Pilgrimage: Kano

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. May He bless the holy Prophet (P.B.U.H.) even more, his household, companions and the righteous.

Allah the Exalted, the Merciful, the Creator, and the Sustainer, has created a green beautiful planet Earth in absolute perfection for a purpose. And Allah the Exalted has destined His marvellous creatures to dwell upon the planet Earth in a wonderful complex relationship. And Allah the Exalted ordained the human being to be His vicegerent on the planet Earth, and warned the vicegerent to behave reasonably there upon it.

It behoves the status of the vicegerent therefore to behave in a manner righteously so as to justify his vice-regency on Earth over other creatures.

We believe that Allah the Exalted is absolutely clean and He is with those who are clean in soul, in body and in deeds. We therefore implore every pilgrim while journeying to seek Allah's blessings and favours to borrow a leaf from the exemplary life of the holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) on exceptional environmental practices by:

- Espousing modesty and simplicity for all your needs and deeds.
- Eating and drinking sustainably, and walking respectfully.
- Shunning excesses and unnecessary materialism.
- Avoiding meddling with nature and its intricate balances.
- Impacting positively on the world to make it a better place.



## Part four: resources and links

### 1. Resource documents

Please note that this section is still in an early stage. We will be collecting a full library of resource documents for use by the Green Pilgrimage Network.

**The Green Pilgrimage Network:** the plans and best practice examples of each member of the GPN can be found on the ARC website:

<http://www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=521>

**The Sound of Many Waters**<sup>90</sup> is an example of how a Catholic city diocese, in Bristol, UK, dedicated a year to celebrate the Living Planet.

**The St Albans Green City Vision**<sup>91</sup>

**The Green Sanctuary Manual**<sup>92</sup>

### 2. Organisations

**Connected Urban Development (CUD):** demonstrates how to reduce carbon emissions by improving the efficiency of urban infrastructure through information and communications technology. The initiative – under the governance and secretariat of The Climate Group – aims to bring together cities, business partners and NGOs into a global industry platform approach for IT in the sustainable city<sup>93</sup>.

**LEED** is an internationally recognised green certification system, run by the US Green Building Council.<sup>94</sup>

**The International Ecotourism Society**<sup>95</sup> started in 1989 as the world's first international non-profit dedicated to ecotourism as a tool for conservation and sustainable development.

**Cities of the Future**<sup>96</sup> is a collaboration between the Norwegian Government and the 13 largest cities in Norway to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make the cities better places to live. It has an inspiring website, showing the efforts each city is making, with an interactive session that gives a vision of what a sustainable city will be like to live in.

### 3. Relevant books by editors and advisors to this handbook

Hilliard, Alison: *Living Stones Pilgrimage: With the Christians of The Holy Land* (Continuum 1999)

Alison Hilliard is deputy Secretary-General of ARC and co-coordinator of the Green Pilgrimage Network. *Living Stones Pilgrimage* introduces pilgrims to the living, worshipping Christian communities in the Holy Land today.

Juniper, Tony, *How Many Light Bulbs Does it Take to Change the Planet?* (Quercus 2007)

Tony Juniper is an independent sustainability advisor, writer and campaigner. *How Many Light Bulbs?* includes a list of 95 ways to “save planet Earth”. The number was inspired by the 95 theses nailed to the door of a church in Wittenberg in 1517 by the German monk Martin Luther. Those theses were not only a direct challenge to the religious orthodoxy, but were also positive, setting out what Luther saw as a better and more decent way.

Palmer, Martin, *Sacred Britain* (Piatkus 1997)

Martin Palmer is the Secretary-General of ARC. His 1997 book, *Sacred Britain*, includes tours of many of the pilgrim paths of Britain, and lists the Seven Stages of Pilgrimage.

Palmer, Martin and Victoria Finlay *Faith in Conservation* (World Bank 2003)

This book tells some of the curious and inspiring stories of the religions and conservation movement since it began in 1986.

#### 4. The seven stages of pilgrimage

In its Sacred Land programme, ARC has drawn together from the experiences of all the major faiths a list of seven separate stages of pilgrimage. These are ideals, not rules, and they explore how any journey can become a pilgrimage.

- 1. Mindfulness** - The first stage involves thinking about being a pilgrim rather than just travelling from A to B.
- 2. Journey** - The second is about recognizing that journeys are entities in themselves and can – if you allow them – take on a life of their own. They are not just a means to an end.
- 3. Companionship** - The third stage of pilgrimage is becoming aware of the people with whom you are travelling and why you are together, discovering what each of you brings as well as being honest about some of the tensions.
- 4. Illumination** - The fourth is about understanding the story that has brought you there: your story.
- 5. Immersion** - In the fifth stage you lose your role as an observer and become part of the landscape and part of someone else’s story.
- 6. Observation** - The sixth stage is to actually look at what you are passing through.
- 7. Metamorphosis** - The seventh and final stage is to recognize that at the end of the journey you should be a different person from the person who set out.

**If every business meeting, every overseas trip, and every project were to use these ideas, they would be so much more effective and enjoyable.**

## 5. Pilgrim Numbers

More than 220 million people go on pilgrimage every year - sometimes for hours, sometimes for days, and some leave home for many months. It is impossible to get fully accurate figures for the number of pilgrims to most sites as records are not necessarily kept. While the major sites have reasonably accurate estimates of annual visitor numbers, many of these are tourist destinations as well as pilgrimage sites which makes it difficult to identify those coming for spiritual purposes. Figures used here are not always for the same time period due to lack of available contemporary statistics. However the numbers quoted below (and especially the total) are likely to be an underestimate, given the enormous numbers of shrines and sacred sites that we have not been able to include.

- 45 million pilgrims - [Ayyappan Saranam](#), India (Hindu)
- 30 million pilgrims – [Tirupati](#), India (Hindu)
- 20 million pilgrims – [Our Lady of Guadalupe](#), Mexico (Christian)
- 13 million pilgrims – Amritsar (Sikh)
- 10 million pilgrims – [Kumbh Mela](#) (takes place every three years, with some festivals attracting 10 million and others 50, 60 or 70 million) (Hindu)
- 15 million pilgrims - [Arba'een, Karbala](#), Iraq (Muslim)
- 10 million pilgrims - [Nanputuo Temple](#), Xiamen, China (Buddhist)
- 10 million pilgrims – [Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Aparecida](#), Brazil (Christian))
- 6 million pilgrims – [Western Wall](#), Jerusalem, Israel (Jewish/Christian)
- 6 million pilgrims – [Vrindavan](#), Braj (Hindu)
- 5 Million pilgrims – Dwarka (Hindu)
- 5 million pilgrims – [Jasna Gora monastery](#), Czestochowa, Poland (Roman Catholic)
- 4-5 million pilgrims – Portugal, Fátima (Christian)
- 4 million pilgrims – [Lourdes](#), France (Christian)
- 3 million pilgrims to the Qadiriyyah shrine in Kano
- 3 million pilgrims – [Hajj](#), Makkah (Mecca), Saudi Arabia (Islamic) (including 1.8 million from overseas)
- 2.1 million pilgrims – Wutai Shan (Daoist)
- 2 million pilgrims – [Kadhmayn](#), Baghdad, Iraq (Islamic)
- 1 million – [World Youth Day](#) (Roman Catholic)

- 1 million pilgrims – Montserrat, Spain
- 1 million pilgrims – [Varanasi](#), Uttar Pradesh, India (Hindu)
- 1 million pilgrims – [El Rocío](#), Cadiz, Spain (Roman Catholic) • 635,000 [Amarnath Cave](#), Kashmir (Hindu)
- Over 500,000 pilgrims – Taishan (Daoist)
- Over 0.3 million pilgrims – Hua Shan (Daoist)
- Around 0.3 million pilgrims – Oingcheng Shan (Daoist)
- 250,000 pilgrims – Emei Shan (Daoist)
- 250,000 pilgrims – Iona (Christian)
- 200,000 pilgrims – [Huzhuan](#), Shandong, China (Roman Catholic)
- 180,000 pilgrims (receiving the compostela – [Santiago de Compostela](#), Galicia, Spain (Christian)
- Over 100,000 pilgrims – [Taizé](#), Burgundy, France (Christian)
- 100,000 pilgrims – St Bishoy Monastery, Wadi El Natroun (Coptic Christian)
- 100,000 pilgrims – [Walsingham Shrine of Our Lady](#) Norfolk, England UK (Christian)
- 43,000 pilgrims – Lumbhini (Buddhist)
- 30,000 pilgrims – [Lough Derg](#), Donegal, Ireland (Roman Catholic)
- 20-25,000 pilgrims – Etchmiadzin (Armenian Apostolic Christian)
- 10,000 pilgrims – [Qufu](#), Shandong, China (Confucianism)
- 2,500 pilgrims – St Albans, UK (Christian)

### Total

There are around 200 million pilgrimages a year to these 38 destinations alone.

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## LINKS AND REFERENCES

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- 34 <http://tinyurl.com/6jugkq2>
- 35 <http://www.footprint-awards.com>
- 36 <http://www.hazon.org> Hazon's *Food For Thought* book has examples of how to involve all generations in reconnecting with food sourcing, preparation and sharing.
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- 39 [http://www.shabkar.org/teachers/tibetanbuddhism/orgyen\\_trinle\\_dorje.htm](http://www.shabkar.org/teachers/tibetanbuddhism/orgyen_trinle_dorje.htm)
- 40 Link to video on Assisi [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xduy5\\_x-eWA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xduy5_x-eWA)
- 41 <http://www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=558>
- 42 <http://www.pilegrim.info/en/>
- 43 <http://www.greenmap.org/>
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- 49 <http://tinyurl.com/3zvaona>
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- 51 <http://www.catholicsocialteaching.org.uk/action/livesimply-parish-award/>
- 52 <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org/resources/>
- 53 Register online for the St Francis Pledge <http://catholicclimatecovenant.org>

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59 See <http://www.montmelian.com>  
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61 <http://tinyurl.com/6cmvttm>  
62 See ICLEI case study 94 from [www.iclei.org](http://www.iclei.org); also [www.stadt-freiburg.de](http://www.stadt-freiburg.de).  
63 <http://tinyurl.com/4tolej> for the ICLEI monthly newsletter.  
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80 <http://www.agreenerfestival.com/>  
81 <http://tinyurl.com/622t5nk>  
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83 <http://www.conventionindustry.org>  
84 <http://www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=521>  
85 In 2010 the pilgrimage path leading to the shrine of Norway's patron saint, St. Olav, in Nidaros Cathedral received the status as European Cultural Route. "The Route of St. Olav Ways" leads to Trondheim through Denmark, Sweden and Norway.  
86 See also Psalms 42 and 122 for evocations of the Temple pilgrimage experience.  
87 Figures from the Jerusalem Municipality, 2011  
88 The Western Wall is the last remaining vestige of the Second Temple, and has been a place of prayer and pilgrimage for Jews for centuries.  
89 <http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/Jewish%20Green%20Pilgrim%20Theology.pdf>  
90 <http://www.soundofmanywaters.org/>  
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### Note on the Green Pilgrimage Network logo

This logo was created by designer Michael Samuel, through Green Maps in the US. Link to [www.greenmap.org](http://www.greenmap.org) Members are free to use it on badges, water bottles, gifts, patches, signposts, pilgrim souvenirs, maps, brochures. Link here <http://www.arcworld.org/news.asp?pageID=543> to download.



**Green Pilgrimage Network**





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