



The John Ray Initiative

CHRISTIAN ECOLOGY LINK

CHURCHES EARTH SUMMIT 2002 PROJECT

Origin

Four Christian environmental organisations and projects are working together to develop material to aid the church's response to the World Summit on Sustainable Development meeting in Johannesburg for a fortnight beginning 26th August: A Rocha, Christian Ecology Link, Eco-Congregation and the John Ray Initiative.

Aims

The aim is to inform churches throughout the country about the Summit and encourage them to respond in one or more of the following ways:

- Pray a common prayer in worship on Sunday 25th August
- Hold special services before or during the Summit - and following it - that make celebrating and caring for creation more central to church worship.
- Utilise the material provided so that living sustainably is seen as an essential part of Christian discipleship.
- Establish a local group of Christians to discuss the issues, take practical action, or both!
- Contribute to the public debate on sustainability that will take place during the Summit.
- Undertake an environmental audit of their work and keep a notice board with information about major environmental issues.
- Encourage church groups to take part in environmental activities, such as adopting a local area (e.g. churchyard, green, allotment) to look after.

Briefing sheet

We are producing a briefing sheet with a theological/biblical reflection on issues to be dealt with at the Summit, practical advice about living sustainably, and information about the aims and activities of our organisations. The sheet will include the prayer, for use on the Sunday before the Summit and other occasions, and, we hope, a message from church leaders.

The briefing sheet will be published on a web-site which, we hope, will be accessible through the Churches Together in Britain and Ireland (CTBI) web-site and linked to a multitude of other sites hosted by Christian bodies and organisations concerned with environment and development issues. The sheet will be downloadable. We are planning for information about its availability to reach as many churches as possible through effective use of Email.

Moving on

In the past, churches have been accused of being slow to act on environmental issues. In recent years some have become well informed about sustainability and increasingly responsible in their activities. Even so, much more needs to be done to take good care of God's creation. We hope and pray that our project will add further momentum to this trend.