

Micah Network Declaration on Creation Stewardship and Climate Change 17 July 2009

We, members of the Micah Network¹, gathering together from 37 countries on all 5 continents, met at Limuru, Kenya from 13–18 July 2009 for its 4th Triennial Global Consultation. On the matter of *Creation Stewardship and Climate Change*, we sought God's wisdom and cried out for the Holy Spirit's guidance as we reflected on the global environmental crisis. As a result of our discussions, reflections and prayers, we make the following declaration:

1. We believe in God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit in community – who is the creator, sustainer and Lord of all. God delights in His creation, and is committed to it.²
2. In the beginning, God established just relationships amongst all of creation. Women and men – as image-bearers of God – are called to serve and love the rest of creation, accountable to God as stewards. Our care for creation is an act of worship and obedience towards the Creator.³
3. We, however, have not always been faithful stewards. Through our ignorance, neglect, arrogance and greed, we have harmed the earth and broken creation's relationships.⁴ Our failure to be faithful stewards has caused the current environmental crisis, leading to climate change, and putting the earth's ecosystems at risk. All creation has been subjected to futility and decay because of our disobedience.⁵
4. Yet God remains faithful.⁶ In Christ's incarnation, life, death and resurrection, God is at work to reconcile all of creation to Himself.⁷ We hear the groaning of creation as in the pains of childbirth. This is the promise that God will act, and is already at work, to renew all things.⁸ This is the hope that sustains us.
5. We confess that we have sinned. We have not cared for the earth with the self-sacrificing and nurturing love of God. Instead, we have exploited, consumed and abused it for our own advantage. We have too often yielded to the idolatry that is greed.⁹ We have embraced false dichotomies of theology and practice, splitting apart the spiritual and material, eternal and temporal, heavenly and earthly. In all these things, we have not acted justly towards each other or towards creation, and we have not honoured God.
6. We acknowledge that industrialization, increased deforestation, intensified agriculture and grazing, along with the unrestrained burning of fossil fuels, have forced the earth's natural systems out of balance. Rapidly increasing greenhouse gas emissions are causing the average global temperature to rise, with devastating impacts already being experienced, especially by the poorest and most marginalized groups. A projected temperature rise of 2°C within the next few decades will significantly alter life on earth and accelerate loss of biodiversity. It will increase the risk and severity of extreme weather events, such as drought, flood, and hurricanes, leading to displacement and hunger. Sea levels will continue to rise, contaminating fresh water supplies and submerging island and coastal communities. We are likely to see mass migration, leading to resource conflicts. Profound changes to rainfall and snowfall, as well as the rapid melting of glaciers, will lead to more water stress and shortages for many millions of people.
7. We repent of our self-serving theology of creation, and our complicity in unjust local and global economic relationships. We repent of those aspects of our individual and corporate life styles that harm creation, and of our lack of political action. We must radically change our lives in response to God's indignation and sorrow for His creation's agony.
8. Before God we commit ourselves, and call on the whole family of faith, to bear witness to God's redemptive purpose for all creation. We will seek appropriate ways to restore and build just relationships among human beings and with the rest of creation. We will strive to live sustainably, rejecting consumerism and the resulting exploitation.¹⁰ We will teach and model care of creation and integral mission. We will intercede before God for those most affected by environmental degradation and climate change, and will act with justice and mercy among, with and on behalf of them.¹¹

9. We join with others to call on local, national, and global leaders to meet their responsibility to address climate change and environmental degradation through the agreed inter-governmental mechanisms and conventions, and to provide the necessary resources to ensure sustainable development. Their meetings through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change process must produce a fair, comprehensive, and adequate climate deal. Leaders must support the efforts of local communities to adapt to climate change, and must act to protect the lives and livelihoods of those most vulnerable to the impact of environmental degradation and climate change. We recognize that among the most affected are women and girls. We call on leaders to invest in the development of new, clean technologies and energy sources and to provide adequate support to enable poor, vulnerable and marginalized groups to use them effectively.

10. There is no more time for delay or denial. We will labour with passion, persistence, prayer and creativity to protect the integrity of all creation, and hand on a safe environment and climate to our children and theirs.

For those with ears to hear, let them hear.¹²

¹ Micah Network is a global network of Christian agencies and churches involved in relief, development & advocacy, and responding to poverty & injustice

² Colossians 1:15–16, Romans 11:36

³ Genesis 1:26–30, Genesis 2:15

⁴ Genesis 3:13–24

⁵ Romans 8:20

⁶ Romans 8:21

⁷ Colossians 1:19–20, Philippians 2:6–8

⁸ Romans 8:22, Revelation 21:5

⁹ Colossians 3:5, Matthew 6:24

¹⁰ Matthew 6:24

¹¹ Micah 6:8

¹² Mark 4:23