

Church of South India

Green Protocol –Guidelines

(CSI Synod requests all the Dioceses to give publicity for the Green Protocol and encourage all to follow the Guidelines in all their activities . Approved by CSI Synod Executive held on 20th and 21st November 2018 at CSI Synod Centre, Chennai.)

The Church of South India (hereafter CSI), the only Church in India which has mentioned Ecology as a mission in its Constitution and in its Mission statement, emphasizes the message that Christians have a duty to protect God's creation. In the life and ministry of the Church, the CSI would like to promote sustainable development practices and to build power for change. Hence, the CSI Synod publishes the '# GPGD 12 Points: Green Protocol for Green Discipleship - A Guideline of 12 Points for the CSI Dioceses to develop Green Congregations'. We hope and pray that all the parishes in the CSI would abide by this Green Protocol and would thus effectively participate in the 'Green-Discipleship' of our Church.

As the CSI is committed to protect the integrity of the creation, we do believe that the Green protocol should reflect in the life and ministry of the Church. We do believe that the Church should respond prophetically or lament like Jeremiah when people exploit natural resources and consequently crucifying God's creation, the flora and the fauna. The CSI expresses her solidarity with our groaning creation, eagerly waiting for redemption. God the Creator designed the universe as interdependent and as a living organism and therefore her redemption is possible only by preserving (in some cases, retrieving) her dynamic and harmonious balance.

1. # GPGD1: Development according to the Church of South India

The CSI supports any development that fulfils the requirement of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. The CSI does believe that the present development paradigm promoted by the 'developed' countries is responsible for the global ecological crisis, and thus 'Climate Injustice'. We demand the 'developed' countries to change their present development paradigm which exploit the fossil fuels resulting in the Climate change.

2. # GPGD2: Energy Conservation

- a. Reduce using electric lamps in churches during day time when there is enough light from the Sun
- b. Use LED light system in Church and in its buildings
- c. Use Solar energy, in the churches and all the institutions owned by the Church
- d. Use biogas wherever possible.
- e. Encourage people to depend on energy conservation methods like solar system and biogas plant

3. # GPGD 3: Water Conservation

- a. Harvest the rain water from roof top of all the churches and the buildings of the CSI
- b. Encourage people to harvest rain water from their roof tops and make rain pits on the land, for water recharge.
- c. Avoid leakage of the water taps.
- d. Propagate and plant Vetiver which will enhance ground water recharge and avoid soil erosion.

4. # GPGD 4: Do not throw away Plastic

- a. Make our churches plastic- free. Avoid throwing away polythene bags and other plastic material completely during the activities in the day today life of church.
- b. Use steel tumblers and steel plates for Church functions. Serve food on banana leaves or Oil papers over the steel plates which will reduce the use of water and soap during cleaning it. Encourage the participants to clean their own plates after use.
- c. Arrange discussions at local level on how to reduce the use of plastic in your locality.

- d. Always carry a paper bag or a cloth bag, while going to buy provisions from a shop or a super market.

5. # GPGD 5: Planting

- a. Plant a sapling in the Church Campus during important functions. Also plant a sapling commemorating the visit of important personalities.
- b. After Wedding Services, the newly wedded couple shall be encouraged to plant together a sapling. Saplings could also be planted in memory of a member who died.
- c. Encourage planting of fruit bearing plants in public places which will be used by other creatures of that area. The CSI has been promoting biodiversity. Our slogan is “Plant fruit bearing plants outside your boundaries and nurture it”, highlighting our spirituality of caring for all.
- d. Ensure that the saplings planted are watered and manured well.

6. # GPGD 6: Constructions

- a. Use materials which are made in a sustainable way. Use locally-made goods wherever possible. Also take into account the lifetime costs of materials while repairing, altering or rebuilding premises.
- b. Utilise opportunities to conserve and enhance the natural and built environment, promote and encourage eco friendly constructions.
- c. Construct Churches with the right motive to worship God and not to show our glory. The size of the church should be proportional to the average Sunday worshippers. Maintenance will become a big problem in future, like the churches in the west selling their churches as they cannot maintain the big structure. We have to avoid the depletion of natural resources as far as possible. The CSI is against the construction of huge luxurious church buildings. Construct simple, environment-friendly churches to accommodate the maximum expected number of people. Use minimum quantity of non-renewable resources.
- d. Sharing of Church buildings with other denominations is a good example not only for the sake of ecumenism but also for the sake of ecology, since that promotes effective and efficient utilization of resources.
- e. Conduct necessary discussions before commencing any construction projects. Make sure that the construction is done in an eco-friendly manner.

7. # GPGD 7: Fellowship Lunch, Dinner & Tea

- a. Try to arrange Lunch, Dinner & Tea by pooling the resources from the members instead of handing over to caterers. This will facilitate Christian value of sharing and a small initiative to counter the trends in globalisation.

Good Practices: An NGO, organises District and area level programmes by collecting lunch packets from the public. The volunteers visit the houses and tell the people residing near the venue of the meeting to give one or two vegetarian lunch packets for giving to their delegates. The volunteers visit the houses around 11am and collect all the lunch packets. The Vicar of a CSI Church arranged a district level conference. The vicar collected 60 lunch packets from the parish members and distributed to 60 delegates who attended the programme. The Vicar invited locally available experts. The vicar conducted an area level programme without spending any money of the Church. Everybody appreciated the programme.

8. # GPGD 8: Waste Management

- a. Our slogan is “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Refuse”. Therefore,
 - i. Reduce the waste as far as possible.
 - ii. Reuse waste by composting.
 - iii. Refuse waste coming from corporate lobbies.
 - iv. Do not receive second hand equipments coming from developed countries or corporate lobbies.
- b. Electronic waste is a serious problem as it contains fatal ingredients; hence throwing it on land and in water will eventually reach our human body. There are recycling and processing unit in some areas, whose facilities could be used, with the help of government agencies.
- c. Do not burn plastic materials which produce carcinogenic material called dioxin that can cause cancer and other serious health problems. Further, do not throw them on the land, water and

forests, since that would cause environmental problems. Reduce the use. Do not mix it with other wastes.

9. # GPGD 9: Functions

- a. Burial Services
 - i. Encourage people to plant saplings in connection with memorial services.
 - ii. Reduce the number of wreaths as far as possible. One wreath, representing all organisations, is sufficient.
- b. Wedding
 - i. Instead of giving plastic water bottles to individuals, make arrangements to serve water in glasses.
 - ii. Encourage the newly wedded couple to jointly plant a sapling along with / instead of lighting the lamp. Make necessary arrangements to place it in a suitable place and nurture it.
- c. Conventions & Meetings
 - i. Use box type amplifiers to avoid noise pollutions
 - ii. Never use flex and minimize decorations.
 - iii. Welcome the guests not with bouquet or shawls, but with a sapling

10. # GPGD 10: Farming

- a. Do not use any kind of Chemical Pesticides in the church campus
- b. Make use of the government policies that encourage agriculture. For example, avail insurances that are granted for agricultural crops. Promote farmers to save seeds from their own farms for the coming year.
- c. Encourage churches to set apart a Sunday to honour local farmers; Services giving importance to agriculture. Extend financial help to poor farmers during Christmas season
- d. Encourage people to make vegetable gardens and give awareness about the farming methods using grow bags and also on the land.
- e. Kindly note that our wrong agricultural practices are responsible for many diseases, malnutrition, poverty etc. The CSI promotes organic cultivation and is against the cultivation of Genetically Modified Crops
- f. Promote bee-keeping in the farms for facilitating better cross pollination and also a source of income.

11. # GPGD 11: Transportation

- a. Encourage the people to use public transportation for going to church, at least once in a month. Whenever possible, encourage people to accommodate another family in their private vehicles so as to reduce the use of private vehicles.
- b. During travel, we have to make every effort to reduce air pollution and energy consumption.
- c. Support the expansion of good quality public transport, the provision of improved facilities for cyclists and pedestrians

12. # GPGD 12: Printing

- a. Publish the church newsletter once in two months, rather than on all months.
- b. Reuse the plain side of printed notices and other papers.
- c. Encourage the use of reusable postal covers.
- d. Use cloth banners
- e. Digital media than print media to share news

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