

# # CSI MKD Carbon Neutrality Green Beacon

Church of South India Madhya Kerala Diocese, June 2024

## Carbon Neutral Project Launch



In a pioneering move towards environmental responsibility, the Church of South India (CSI) Madhya Kerala Diocese has launched its ambitious Carbon Neutral Project, signalling a profound shift towards a culture that harmonises human life with nature. Speaking at the inaugural function, Rt. Rev. Dr. Sabu Koshy Cherian, Bishop of the Diocese, emphasised the project as a vital alternative to globalisation and consumer culture.

"The church is advocating for a rhythmic life in harmony with nature," Bishop Cherian declared. "This initiative is our response to climate change, underscoring that our pastoral mission extends beyond Sunday worship and rituals to addressing societal issues."

Bishop Cherian highlighted the church's proactive stance, particularly in supporting vulnerable and financially insecure communities increasingly affected by climate change. He urged local action, stating, "We must act at the local level rather than placing blame solely on developed countries. Terms like mitigation and adaptation are crucial, and there are practical steps the church can undertake."

CSI has adopted a Green Protocol for the Church's mission and ministry. It is the only church in India that has environmental protection enshrined in its constitution. International bodies such as the UNDP and UNESCO have recognised the Church's initiatives.

The Diocese has released a comprehensive booklet outlining energy and water

conservation schemes and waste management schemes. Bishop Cherian urged all congregation members and local communities to undergo self-audits biannually, with parishes printing and distributing audit samples to households. "Each parish should designate a person to document these efforts," he added. The youth, termed the church's 'green ambassadors,' will play a pivotal role, particularly on Environment Sunday, June 9, when environmental protection will be advocated in 400 churches.



Kerala Government Minister V. N. Vasavan praised the diocese's carbon-neutral initiative, particularly its projects on solar energy generation in churches, schools, and homes. The minister inaugurated the program by lighting a lamp and planting a jackfruit sapling, symbolizing the start of planting 100,000 saplings.



Former Bishop Thomas Samuel underscored the spiritual significance of planting saplings, while Minister Vasavan honoured Kottayam CMS College, Mundiapally CSI Church, Kottayam Baker Vidyapeeth, and Kayamkulam Bishop Moore Vidyapeeth for their solar energy projects. Mr Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, MLA, appreciated the diocese's work during his address. Dr T. N. Seema, State Co ordinator of the Green Mission, pledged the Kerala Government's full support for the carbon-neutral project.





Dr. Joseph Mar Dionysius Metropolitan inaugurated the Students' Campaign for Climate Justice and awarded certificates to 110 children who completed the Green Ambassadors course. Minister V.N. Vasavan also released "Gospel for the Earth," a book by Dr. Mathew Koshy Punnakkadu, enhancing the narrative of ecological consciousness within a biblical background.

## Green Ambassadors of CSI



Key speakers at the event included Mr Eby Varghese, Senior Engineer of the Pollution Control Board; Rev. Aniyam K. Paul, Diocesan Secretary; Dr Mathew Koshy Punnakkadu, Director of the diocese's ecological department; Rev. Anil Thomas, Convener of the ecological committee, Dr Nisha Ann Jacob; and Noel V. Adatt. All emphasised the critical intersection of faith and environmental responsibility through mutual custodianship.

## **Journey Towards Carbon Neutrality: A Commitment by CSI Madhya Kerala**

On May 21, the Church of South India (CSI) Madhya Kerala embarked on a transformative journey to convert all 400 parishes and institutions into carbon-neutral entities. This initiative, known as CSI Carbon-Neutral Parishes and Institutions, is a proactive measure to address the potential disasters induced by climate change at a local level.

CSI acknowledges the urgent need for concerted and meaningful action as the impacts of climate change escalate. The gravity of this global crisis is underscored by the alarming rise in global warming, primarily driven by the increase in greenhouse gases. Carbon dioxide, a greenhouse gas with a lifetime spanning hundreds of years, remains in the atmosphere far longer than other gases, contributing to the annual increase in warming. The primary source of carbon dioxide is the combustion of fossil fuels such as petrol and coal. The relentless pursuit of economic growth by developed nations has significantly elevated atmospheric carbon dioxide levels from 280 parts per million (ppm) two centuries ago to a concerning 440 ppm recently, highlighting the situation's urgency.



Dr Mathew Koshy Punnackadu, Commissioner for Climate Justice and Sustainable Development, addressed the commission's meeting in Geneva -March 2024

Despite the efforts of 28 Conference of Parties (COP) meetings aimed at curbing global warming, the reluctance of developed countries to significantly reduce carbon emissions exacerbates the crisis. CSI asserts that developed nations, whose actions have precipitated global warming in pursuit of excessive profits, must re-evaluate their development paradigms. The CSI advocates for developing and disseminating carbon-free technology, particularly to developing countries that bear the brunt of climate change yet contribute minimally to its causes. This shift from a carbon economy to one reliant on solar and hydrogen is essential.

The principle of 'Think Global, Act Local' is not just a guiding principle for the CSI, but a call to action for all. Local churches, including you, play a crucial role in mitigating the effects of climate change by adhering to green practices and policies. Through the collaborative



project 'Net Zero Carbon,' in partnership with the Green Mission of the Government of Kerala, the CSI aims to achieve carbon neutrality at the parish level, empowering you to be a part of this global movement.

A carbon-neutral society seeks to balance carbon dioxide emissions through reduction and offsetting measures. This journey begins with calculating carbon emissions within a specific area and undertaking measures like afforestation to absorb equivalent amounts of carbon dioxide. While precise estimation of carbon emissions can be challenging for parishes, their participation in various carbon offset projects can significantly reduce overall emissions.

Meaningful change starts with the collective efforts of individuals and communities dedicated to a healthy Earth, prioritising sustainable development. The Church's mission includes working towards a world where all living beings coexist in unity and peace. Unique among Indian churches, CSI's constitution explicitly includes environmental protection as a fundamental aspect of its mission. This commitment dates back to 1992, establishing a department dedicated to environmental protection at the Synod level. Today, ecological departments or committees exist in all dioceses as part of this vision.

The Diocese has approved "The Ten Commandments for Carbon-Neutral Parishes and Institutions" to support this mission. These guidelines aim to provide practical steps towards achieving carbon neutrality.

## CSI diocese all set to make its 405 parishes carbon-neutral

Key strategies include extensive solar energy use, planting of one lakh saplings, enhanced water conservation efforts, improved waste management, and a reduction in members' carbon footprint.

**The Hindu Bureau**  
KOTTAYAM

**T**he Church of South India's (CSI) Central Kerala diocese is launching an ambitious plan to achieve carbon neutrality across all its 405 parishes. Cooperation Minister V.N. Vasavan will inaugurate the initiative at a function here on Tuesday, which will be presided over by Bishop Malayil Sabu

Koshy Cherian of the Central Kerala diocese.

Agriculture Minister P. Prasad will kick off a sapling planting project, and Thiruvanchoor Radhakrishnan, MLA, will unveil a home-based solar project. Harita Mission vice-chairperson T.N. Seema will deliver the keynote address.

For schoolchildren Joseph Mar Divanosis Metropolitan will launch the

Schoolchildren's Campaign for Climate Justice. A book titled *Bhoomikkayulla Savishesham*, authored by Mathew Koshi Punnaikkad, will be released on the occasion.

The diocese aims to achieve carbon neutrality within three years through a 15-point programme. Key strategies include extensive solar energy use, the planting of over one lakh saplings, enhanced water

conservation efforts, improved waste management practices, and a reduction in the carbon footprints of church members.

In a bid to raise awareness among schoolchildren, 405 trained students will speak on the importance of environmental conservation and carbon neutrality in each parish on June 9, serving as green ambassadors for the diocese's ecological mission.

# # CSI MKD CARBON NEUTRALITY - TEN COMMANDMENTS

**Embrace God's call to safeguard His unique creations by following these ten commandments for carbon-neutral parishes and institutions."**

**1. You shall conduct a Self-Audit:**

Examine your ways and practices to understand your impact on the earth and strive for improvement.

**2. You shall harness Solar Energy:**

Harness the power of the sun, a freely given gift, to illuminate and energise your dwellings and institutions.

**3. You shall enhance the efficiency of Electrical Equipment:**

Ensure your devices are highly efficient, using less and wasting, not conserving precious resources.

**4. You shall increase the Green Cover of the Earth:**

Plant and nurture trees and plants, the lungs of the earth, providing air and sustenance to all creatures.

**5. You shall practice Water Conservation:**

Use water wisely; it is the essence of life. Let not a drop be wasted, ensuring future generations can also partake. Promote rainwater harvesting.

**6. You shall manage Waste Effectively:**

Recycle, reduce, and reuse to free the land from the burden of waste, allowing the earth to flourish.

**7. You shall avoid water from throwaway Plastic Bottles:**

Avoid plastic bottles that pollute land and water. These cheap bottles often contain harmful chemicals. Choose sustainable alternatives for the planet's health.

**8. You shall use Kitchen Bins for converting Waste into Fertilizer:**

Transform your kitchen waste into a rich fertiliser, giving back to the earth what you have taken and nourishing the soil.

**9. You shall promote an Organic Lifestyle wherever possible:**

Embrace organic living, avoiding harmful chemicals and practices, living in harmony with creation.

**10. You shall encourage Children to be Green Ambassadors:**

Teach and inspire young ones to care for the earth, ensuring a verdant future.

**May these commandments guide you towards a more sustainable and harmonious existence with the world around you.**

**Church of South India - Central Kerala Diocese**

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# Carbon Neutral Projects of Bishop Moore College, Mavelikara 50 KW Solar Plant, Miyawaki Forest, Bamboo park, Biogas, Rainwater harvesting





## Carbon Neutral Projects of CMS College, Kottayam





## Solar Plants on the Church Roof Top Trivandrum Christ Church & CSI Church, Mundiappally



## Afforestation Programme of CSI



**Kodukulanji**



**Mallappally**





**Mundakayam**



**Ponkunnam**



**Punnaveley**



**Vayalathala**



**Trivandrum**



**Punnackadu**

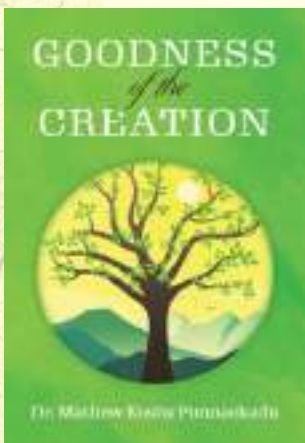






Bishop Dr Malayil Sabu Koshy Cherian inaugurated the diocese's Environmental Day celebration by planting a sapling at the Baker School Campus.

## Books Published



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