



ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE

LAUDATO SÍ ACTION PLAN (A Vision for Ecological Harmony)

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Genesis 2:4

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

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Genesis 2:15

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.

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SPC Ecological Mission Statement

Inspired by Edmund Rice and St Francis of Assisi we strive to actively cultivate a sustainable relationship with all of God's creation, planting the seed of change within the community to ensure a better world for all now and into the future.

Positional Statements

(from EREA Climate Crisis Response, 2022, * are adapted for SPC community context)

Inspired by the charisma of Edmund Rice, the four Touchstones challenge the EREA network to commit to the following positional statements in response to the climate crisis:

1. Acting to protect the earth is central to our

Catholic identity: Living our vocation to be protectors of God's handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. (Laudato si' 2015, n. 217)

2. We have much to learn: We listen to and uphold the wisdom of First Nations Peoples as we learn to live on the lands for which they have cared, for tens of thousands of years. Genuine connections and partnership made with Traditional Owners of the Country/s where each school and office reside will foster respect, opportunity and recognition, as well as greater understanding of Caring for Country.

3. The climate crisis is a justice issue: The climate crisis is one of the greatest injustices of our time. The people who have done the least to cause it are suffering the most. It is the single biggest challenge to reducing poverty and ensuring a sustainable future for all. (Caritas Australia 2015, 2016 & 2019)

4. We believe the science: The overwhelming consensus is that current human impact on the environment is unsustainable and must change – we are now certain of this, we have finished debating the need for action. While we know acting to protect the environment fulfils our identity as Catholic schools, we will use the scientific data on matters such as carbon, waste, recycling and pollution to inform, guide and inspire our strategies.

5. The status quo has caused the problem: Change is essential and urgently required. We cannot continue with any business as usual when it comes to how we live. This includes disconnection from place, unlimited consumption and our throwaway culture. We are called to minimise harm and maximise healing.

6. This will not be free – it will be worth it:

We will need to allocate resources to a range of new strategies. These costs are in fact the belated acceptance of the true cost of operating in a sustainable way. Strategies with little or no net cost alone will not suffice.*

7. Activism and advocacy for change: We will find creative ways to draw attention to unmet needs and unmet rights. We will listen to those who will be affected most by the decisions taken and those who hold different opinions. We will speak out publicly to engage with people and groups that have the power to make the changes we seek.

8. Everyone must be involved: This cannot be left to a few people or to a few designated roles. Every single person within the College will need to make changes and to play their part – the Advisory Council, School Leadership team, staff, young people and parents. Collaboration within and across the community is key.*

9. Leadership must be creative, bold and strategic:

Such leadership is required that looks beyond the current processes and mandates changes in practices and allocation of resources through strategic planning processes.

10. Better is better than best: Our earth needs everyone to do their part, however imperfect that may be. Across the College, we will be implementing new strategies and practices. We will work together to do whatever we can.*

11. We will make a difference: We are optimistic that our efforts will not only significantly reduce the ecological footprint of St Patrick's College, we are also confident our endeavours will light the way for others who share our care for our common home.*

St Patrick's College, Strathfield Action Plan

The Goals are the Seven *Laudato si* Goals

GOALS	
1. Cry of the Earth	
<i>We have forgotten that we ourselves are dust of the earth (cf. Gen 2:7); our very bodies are made up of her elements, we breathe her air and we receive life and refreshment from her waters.</i> (LS, 2)	
1.1	Gardening staff to identify native species and other plants which are suitable for use in the grounds of the College, and which can survive with minimal watering especially in the dry months.
1.2	Purchase hybrid vehicles.
1.3	Develop and implement an holistic recycling program in food, packaging, waste, paper, stationary, clothing, building materials and more.
1.4	Implement recycling bins in all classrooms, staffrooms and office spaces across the College, plus a method for collection.
1.5	Reduce printing and maintain electronic items for extended use.
1.6	Consider how we use air conditioning, lighting and other resources. Replace gas with electricity. Use sensor lighting with less time remaining on.
1.7	Work with Canteen to compost / use worm farm and reduce packaging and/or provide alternative recyclable packaging.
1.8	Ensure each new build is sustainably approved, including refurbishments with regard to materials and practices.
1.9	Develop a checklist for all new College initiatives in they need to meet a criteria that responds to the cry of the poor.
1.10	Install charging stations for electric vehicles driven by staff.
1.11	Installation of bee hives for the greater good of the Earth in help keep pollination alive to keep food production possible.
2. Cry of the Poor	
<i>We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.</i> (LS, 139)	
2.1	All ecological decisions need consultation with a First Nations voice / wisdom.
2.2	Education on how the effects of climate change impact the poor and marginalised the most ie AI, technology, homes, weather events, refugees
2.3	Ensure Night Patrol Sandwich Making, Hospitality classes, Canteen and catering follow a criteria for the use of and disposal of food and waste.
2.4	Learn from our Fiji Immersion and look at ways at improving our knowledge of the impact on the marginalised in more sustainable ways.
2.5	Investigate opportunities to work in community gardens and the like and continue to develop the College's sustainable gardens.
2.6	Look into possibilities of connecting with local government schools with whom we can share resources and pass on use textbooks and the like.
2.7	Encourage the use of and promote <i>Sustainable School Shop</i> - www.sustainableschoolshop.com.au
2.8	Consider the role of Modern Slavery in our purchasing as a College, as a community and as individuals. This includes using Fair Trade and ensuring supply chains are free from exploitation and unsustainable practices.

3. Ecological Economics (the root word for both words means *to care and community*)

The economy is a sub-system of human society, which itself is embedded within the biosphere – our common home.

“Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act.” (LS 206)

3.1	Insulate buildings to reduce the need for air conditioning and heating.
3.2	Ensuring the College purchases Fair Trade in all areas and learns about the implications of human slavery and unsustainable practices across all supply chains so that we make change for the better, and inform our choices.
3.3	Reuse and/or dispose of resources appropriately eg older technology, old uniforms
3.4	Consider where our finances are distributed, ensuring we use sustainable supply chains and providers.
3.5	Promote online conferencing rather than travel.
3.6	Ensure LED lights are used across the College.
3.7	Promote career paths centred around caring for the Earth, which is ultimately caring for humanity. Subsequently, subject offerings need to support the need for these different careers into the future.
3.8	Create and promote a recyclable store at the College for students to swap / donate / take books, clothes, bikes and other reasonable items.

4. Sustainable Lifestyle

“The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all.” (LS 23)

4.1	Families using Kiss & Ride are encouraged to carpool (incentives may be applied); reduction of Year 12 students driving to school.
4.2	Incentives for students who walk, cycle or use public transport.
4.3	Sell sustainable products to enable the growth of nude lunches.
4.4	Expand and embed current recycling programs such as Terracycle, across the whole College community.
4.5	Expand the Return and Earn Recycling scheme through implementation of increased bins and engaging other services such as CityReturn
4.6	Booklists need to be limited to not simply promote the latest edition causing people to purchase excess books.
4.7	End of year clean up to include textbook drop, collection of reusable items and correct disposal of rubbish.
4.8	Reduction of plastics in the College supply chain; from uniform to food, electronics and sports equipment. This will not only be better for the health of the planet but also for the health of the people.
4.9	Laminating of items is to be limited – must be used for more than 18 months to be laminated, and to be collected in one place for repurposing.
4.10	Run a Sustainability Expo at the College demonstrating alternatives and offering solutions for families, staff and friends of the College.

5. Ecological Education

“Speak to the earth, and it will instruct you.” (Job 12:8)

5.1	Educating staff, students and families about reduction, reuse and recycling, and having the community buy-in and implement appropriate actions.
5.2	Display artworks of varying styles around the College that highlight the consequences of poor ecological choices eg drain artwork.
5.3	Debunk myths around climate change and ecological action.
5.4	Showcase the science of climate change.

5.5	Include examples of ecological change and practice across all faculty areas in programs. Embed more explicit curricular links to sustainability, particularly across Religion, Geography and Science faculties.
5.6	Gather wisdom from our families who live sustainable lifestyles.
5.7	Improve the knowledge of College staff on climate change, encouraging them to embed change in their actions and activities.
5.8	Promote initiatives and actions across 'Springtember' coinciding with the Season of Creation.
5.9	Incentives offered for sustainable practice through the SOL Service program.
5.10	Laudato Si' Awards given to stand out eco-warriors
5.11	Film Competition developed to show different ideas on how to live with sustainable alternatives.
5.12	Earth & Environmental Science to be promoted for Years 11 and 12. Ensure modules are based around climate change.

6. Ecological Spirituality

"Yet we are called to be instruments of God our Father, so that our planet might be what he desired when he created it and correspond with his plan for peace, beauty and fullness." (LS 53)

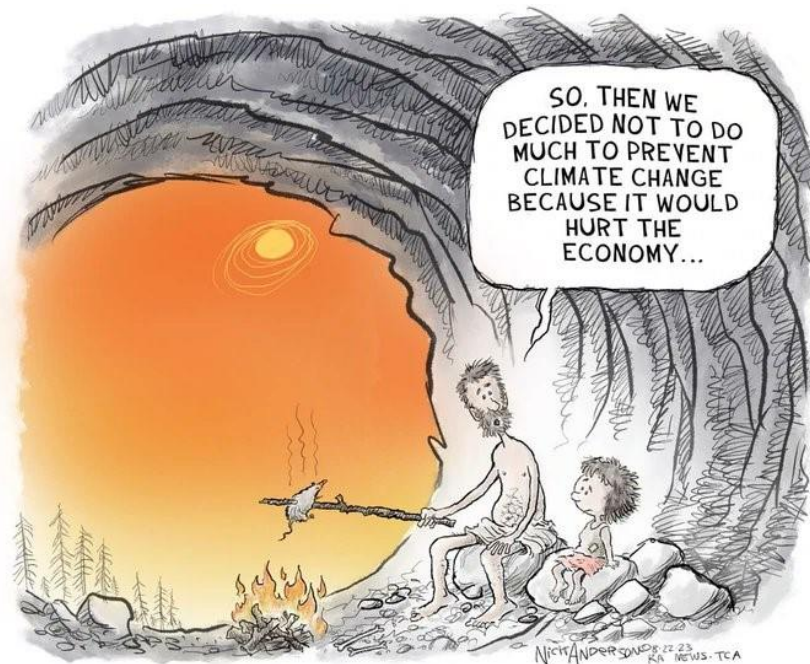
6.1	Produce prayer and reflection resources to promote a celebration of the Earth, as well as ecological conversion
6.2	Dedicate the first week of Spring each year to awareness raising for the Earth, connected to the universal ecumenical celebration of the Season of Creation.
6.3	Ensure that formation programs include a celebration of creation i Year 6 Reflection Day, Year 9 Integral Justice & Reflection Day, and Staff Spirituality Days.
6.4	Dedicate various liturgical celebrations to the pursuit of being stewards of God's creation.
6.5	Publish reflections on the Earth and our ecological obligation in the Especean and other publications.

7. Community Engagement

"An integral ecology is also made up of simple daily gestures which break with the logic of violence, exploitation and selfishness." (LS 230) "Bring the whole human family together for we know that things can change." (LS 13)

7.1	Foster initiatives for participation in Clean Up Australia Day, Earth Hour, Laudato si' Week, Season of Creation.
7.2	Engage with other partners to ensure integral ecology and conversion for the sake of our common home eg Caritas Australia through Catholic Earthcare.
7.3	Organise and present a Sustainability Fair which includes selling of products to be used for the future year's school lunches.
7.4	Advocacy campaigns to promote sustainable practice across the broader community, including letter writing to politicians and big business.
7.5	Appoints students from each year level to be Eco-Champions who lead by example and foster a mindset of change among students.
7.6	Promote ecological actions through posters showcasing this document and other similar infographics, within each learning space.

Impact on the Community

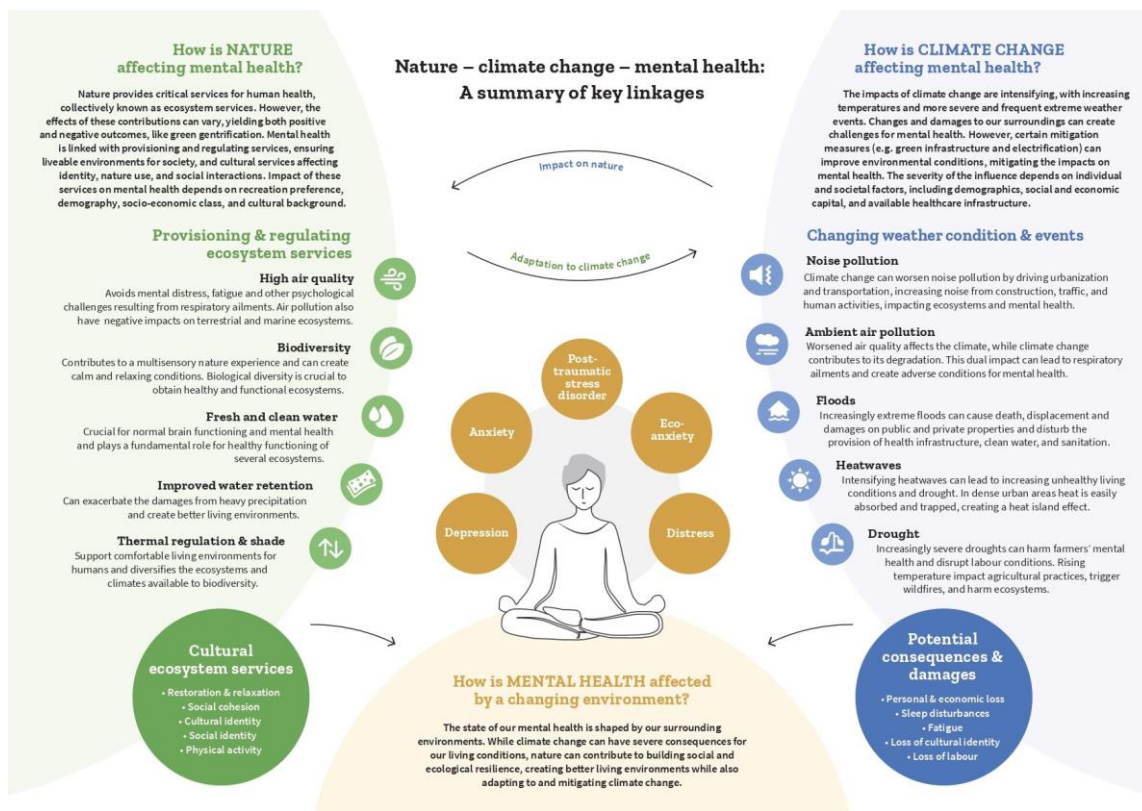


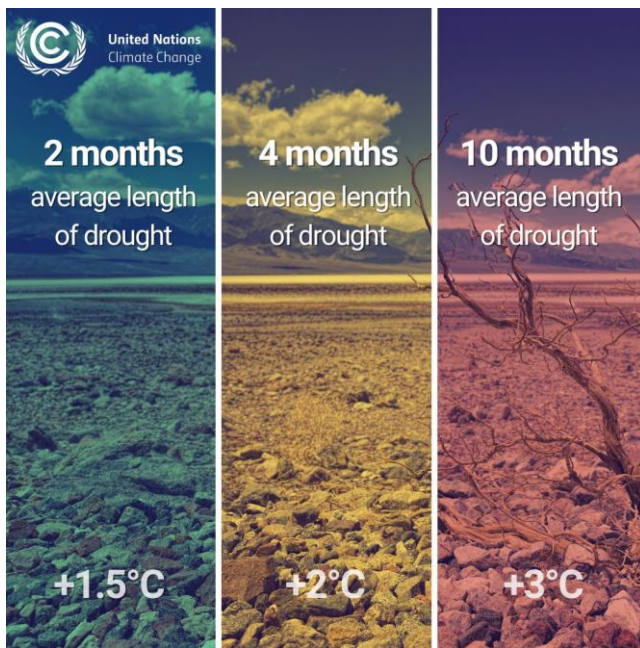
Financial i we will be better off in the long run, and what cost the planet?

The cost of living today is being impacted by climate change. Thi includes insurance and food. If we do nothing it will only get worse.

The words economy and ecology come from the same root words *oikos* and *community*

Wellbeing i whether young people and adults realise it or not their wellbeing is impacted by climate change; creating a loss of hope rather than a positive future (sits in the background of their minds), causes worry and futilism, increasing selfishness rather than a desire to work as community to improve the world.





Food

Global food shortages will become part of our future if we do not address matters related to climate change.

Sport

The playing of sport will be impacted enormously as a result of rising temperatures, the loss and repair of fields after extreme weather, greater health problems from climate change, increased extreme weather events preventing play and more.

And many more impacts on life as we have known it

Climate Change and Sustainability

Climate Change looks at the increasing global temperatures and the impact these have on every part of the natural world. We aim to not exceed 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius increase from prior to Industrialisation. It is more likely to be 2-3 degrees increase at present because we have not acted quickly enough to prevent using our carbon budget.

Sustainability is about ensuring we do not take too many resources from the Earth, thus just taking what we need. It is about regeneration, preventing waste, reducing landfill and ensuring the beauty and life-giving elements of creation are present for many generations to come.

Carbon Footprint and Solutions

The only way to lower our carbon footprint, individually and collectively, is to reduce and remove the use of fossil fuels, while increasing our carbon sinks such as trees. While other solutions through science are being developed we will have no impact if we do not change the status quo. We need to change our lifestyles to prevent more difficult lives for our descendants.

Some of the areas that cause the most problems in terms of both climate change and sustainability that we can change in our lives includes clothing/fashion, plastics, air-conditioning, food waste and transport.

All the science agrees with the impact of climate change, but as Christians our primary purpose for being sustainable and caring for the Earth is because God told us to.

Key Documents and Voices

Pope Francis, *Laudato si'*, 2015; [Laudato si' \(24 May 2015\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

Pope Francis, *Laudato Deum*, 2024; ["Laudate Deum": Apostolic Exhortation to all people of good will on the climate crisis \(4 October 2023\) | Francis \(vatican.va\)](#)

EREA Climate Crisis Statement, 2021; [EREA Climate Crisis Statement 2021 - Edmund Rice Education Australia](#)

Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, *Laudato si' Action Plan, 2023 to 2025*; [Laudato Si Action Plan \(catholic.au\)](#)

Laudato si' Movement, *Season Creation*, [Season of Creation](#) (Global ecumenical movement)

Caritas, *Earthcare School Action Planner* resources, 2024

Chris Hill, Environmental Sustainability Manager for Christian Brothers Oceania Province

Richard Rohr's Daily Meditations

Climate change is one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day (Laudato si' 25).

Sustainable Transport

Sustainable transport solutions help to make cities work better for everyone - economically, socially and environmentally, and there are many easy ways you can be part of the sustainable transport revolution:

- Ride or walk where you can
- Take public transport
- Car pool and plan routes
- Reduce the amount you fly
- Choose local adventures
- Upgrade to an electric vehicle + green power

Car, Top Range EV (Grid Power), Dual Occupancy Car, Motorcycle, Train/Tram, Bus, Top Range EV (Green Power), Bike, Walking

the Coal Loader CENTRE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

North Sydney Council has introduced a range of sustainable transport initiatives including increased cycleways and electric vehicle charging stations. For more information head to: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/lightenyourimpact

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Job 12:7-10

**Just ask the animals, and they will teach you.
Ask the birds of the sky, and they will tell you.**

Speak to the earth, and it will instruct you.

Let the fish in the sea speak to you.

For they all know

that my disaster has come from the hand of the Lord.

For the life of every living thing is in his hand,

and the breath of every human being.

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Genesis 1:28

God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

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Revelation 22:1-2

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

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