

Towards Earth-Cosmic Wholeness

This resource group is a sub-committee of the Institute Mission Team. Margaret Endicott is our liaison person with the Team. The people who were asked to be part of the group were Maryanne Casanova, Patricia Fox, Patricia Powell, Anne Ryan and Mary Tinney. We met face to face once on 4 December, 2013. At that meeting we decided on these actions, and a comment on the state of play is inserted in red.

- To invite Maryanne Casanova to join the group. Maryanne is the new Coordinator of Rahamim Ecological Learning Centre in Bathurst, which is a ministry of ISMAPNG. **Maryanne has accepted this invitation.**
- Ask the IMT to ensure that an ecological vision is visible during the planning and implementation of the regional mission gatherings. **The planning for this event is pretty much out of our hands. Mary met recently with Margaret Endicott to discuss how we could best contribute to these events. It is her understanding that they will be a process driven, and our best contributions will be from within the process. There may be some ways that we can contribute to the material in the pre-gathering booklet and towards resources used on the day to set the wider context for Mercy mission.**
- Give greater visibility to the members of the Ecological Conversion online group in the lead up to regional gatherings, on the understanding that there will be an opportunity for us to exercise leadership during those gatherings if we so wish. One of the suggestions was to talk with Anne McMillan about how to profile the members of that group, perhaps in a way similar to the way that Chapter Delegates were profiled before the last Chapter. **Contributions with an “ecological” bent have been included in editions of *just Mercy* eg Earth Hour 2014 (Save the Barrier Reef) , Lenten Prayer in the Heart of Australia, National Day of Climate Action, Australian Earth Laws Conference, an article from Rahamim. *Mercy e-news* which comes from Mercy International Association has also featured articles from ISMAPNG with an ecological slant eg Earth Day, Earth Hour, Lobbying about climate change at Federal Parliament House**
- Ask IMT to speak with the Mercy Ethos Team re integration of an ecological vision into their programmes. Their support and involvement in the shaping and implementation of the sabbatical programme to be developed by and at Rahamim would also be very important. **I understand that this conversation has taken place.**
- Explore the most appropriate way for ISMAPNG to be part of the National Energy Efficiency Network (NEEN) being developed by Catholic Earth Care. **Conversations with NEEN personnel indicate that residential energy efficiency is not on their agenda; Material about this initiative was sent to Annette Schneider for forwarding to the Executive Officer for Mercy ministries. No sure if that went anywhere. If NEEN is developing tools for auditing they could be very helpful. They have launched their programme in Melbourne and the Brisbane launch is in the middle of June.**

Related initiatives

During 2013, Patricia Powell and Mary Tinney invited interested Sisters to be part of an online conversation group called Ecological Conversion. There are currently about 60 people who receive these emails and contribute to the conversation. It has been a rich source of articles about ecospirituality, ecojustice, and campaigns that people are passionate about. One can join by contacting patricia.powell@mercy.org.au and Patricia takes it from there with the IT Team. A few actions have arisen in that context.

- **Divestment from Fossil Fuel industries.** About 10 Sisters signed a letter to the ISMAPNG Finance Advisory Committee requesting consideration of this issue in conjunction with 350.org, and the Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC). We were advised that it would be taken into consideration in conjunction with the review of the Investment Policy. We have not heard any response from their April meeting.
- **Mercy plane travel offset scheme.** Elizabeth Young crafted a letter to the ILT requesting that a financial amount be calculated for carbon emissions for flights paid for by Mercy Support Services. That letter was signed by several members of the Ecological Conversion group. Ian Hobbs calculated an amount of \$6,000 using an estimate based on that indicated by one of the airlines. As requested in that letter, the ILT approved the payment of that amount from ISMAPNG funds to
 - *Mercyworks: Emmaus Farm and Eaglewood Plantation, Kiunga PNG.* This farm teaches local youths who have dropped out of school how to grow a range of produce: from fruit and vegetables to establishing a fish farm. This eaglewood plantation is being developed as a sustainable resource designed to help fund projects in the Diocese of Kiunga. The saplings for the plantation are grown on Emmaus Farm.
 - *Rahamim Inc Environmental Fund* Donations made to the Rahamim Inc Environmental Fund are tax deductible. Help us with our work of Eco-Education and Environmental Restoration by donating to this fund.

I understand that it is intended that further work be done on this issue and that it be a policy in its own right (or perhaps integrated into a broader ISMAPNG policy?)

- **Sustainability Policy in conjunction with the other Australian Mercy Congregations.** There was some excitement generated when a Sustainability Policy of the Irish Sisters of Mercy was circulated to the members of the Ecological Conversion group (which is open to any Sisters of Mercy, regardless of Congregation). At their meeting in April the leaders agreed to collaborate if Mary Tinney was willing to take the lead. I have asked the other leaders for a nominee and have heard only from Cath Reuter with a request for more information. (Perhaps an ISMAPNG Position paper in this area could form the preamble to either a policy or a plan that is all encompassing of mission, spirituality, lifestyle, finance and property.

- **Mercy International Association** has an online Cosmology/Ecojustice Group which met regularly over the last year or so. It works in conjunction with Aine O'Connor from Mercy Global Action whose desk is in New York in close proximity to the United Nations. The groups has been in abeyance as Denise Boyle in Dublin settles into her role. A call has been scheduled for 6 June. I anticipate a drive for a global effort about Global Anti- Fracking Day (22 September). Patricia Powell and Mary Tinney represent ISMAPNG on this group. Deirdre Gardiner was involved last time in the group dedicated to anti-fracking, but is not currently involved.

Would be a good idea to clarify Siobhan links to the Ecological Conversion group and the MIA conversation groups.

This round of energy is grinding down which is fair enough with the mission gatherings on the horizon. Would be good to talk after them to see what we are hearing around this area and the implications for this resource group.

All the very best, Siobhan from Mary Tinney on behalf of the group.