



42 promote justice for creation. This includes dialogues around implementing comprehensive  
43 environmental principles, healthy environments, and cooperation between the public and private  
44 sector regarding sustainability.

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46 The 2001 Churchwide Assembly (CA01.07.57)<sup>6</sup> reaffirmed the commitment of this church to the  
47 care of creation, including global warming, as part of the web of complex interwoven  
48 environmental concerns. Previously, the 1999 Churchwide Assembly (CA99.06.30)<sup>7</sup> expressed  
49 great concern about the destructive practice of mountaintop removal coal mining and urged our  
50 church to advocate ending it.

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52 The social statements:

- 53 • “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor” (ELCA, 2007)<sup>8</sup>;
- 54 • “Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All” (ELCA, 1999)<sup>9</sup>; and
- 55 • “Genetics, Faith and Responsibility”<sup>10</sup>

56 as well as social policy resolution:

- 57 • “Genetically Modified Organisms in the Food Supply” (CC04.11.57)<sup>11</sup>
- 58 support this issue paper.

59

### 60 **III. Responses**

61 Good corporate environmental stewardship begins with comprehensive environmental reporting.  
62 This reporting would include articulating a corporate vision, outlining policies, and providing  
63 methods and benchmarks to measure environmental performance. Companies must move from  
64 being compliance-oriented to engaging in best practices in environmental management. In  
65 addition, companies can review their probable risk exposure to financial and competitive  
66 consequences of environmental changes to ensure they have sufficient additional expertise to  
67 make informed decisions and set responsible benchmarks.

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### 69 **IV. Social Criteria Investment Screens**

70 A screen is a framework of principles specific to an issue by which a company’s activities are  
71 evaluated. The environmental social criteria investment screen approved by the ELCA in 1990  
72 and updated in 2007 and in 2014 addresses this issue.<sup>12</sup>

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### 74 **V. Resolutions Guidelines for ELCA – Issue Specific**<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global\\_WarmingSPR01.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Global_WarmingSPR01.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/MiningSPR99.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> <http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/health-and-healthcare.aspx.htm#read>

<sup>9</sup> <http://downloads.elca.org/html/jle/www.elca.org/what-we-believe/social-issues/economic-life.aspx.htm>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Genetics>

<sup>11</sup> [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/GMOs\\_Food\\_SupplySPR04.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/GMOs_Food_SupplySPR04.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment\\_Screen\\_2014.pdf](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Environment_Screen_2014.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> These guidelines may be used in proxy voting as well as to help determine resolutions to file and dialogues to support. Each resolution guideline should be looked at within the context of the entire resolution language and specific company situation.

76 **A. Energy**

- 77 1. We support reports for the gas and oil industry, including: environmental impact assessments  
78 detailing legal, regulatory risks and plans to mitigate these risks; the assumptions made in  
79 deciding to proceed; the possible long-term risks to the finances and operations of  
80 companies; the financial impact of accidents and spills: and the likely and/or actual impact of  
81 hydraulic fracturing operations, including air, water and soil hazards.
- 82 2. We support reports that ask for risk assessments and propose measures to reduce risks of  
83 nuclear storage.
- 84 3. We support reports assessing (a) the impact of mountaintop-removal coal mining by a  
85 company's clients on the environment and (b) the adoption of a policy concerning future  
86 financing of companies engaged in such mining or the construction of new coal-burning  
87 power plants that emit carbon dioxide.
- 88 4. We support reports on a company's efforts, above and beyond legal compliance, to reduce  
89 environmental and health hazards associated with coal combustion waste ponds,  
90 impoundments and mines, and how those efforts reduce the company's financial and  
91 operational risks.
- 92 5. We support requests for reporting on the development of renewable energy sources with  
93 quantitative targets.
- 94 6. We support reports on the effects of power generation facilities on water supplies.

95

96 **B. Environmental Reporting**

- 97 7. We support proposals asking for endorsement of the Ceres Principles,<sup>14</sup> the Carbon  
98 Disclosure Project water, carbon, forest and supply chain guidelines<sup>15</sup> and their use in  
99 preparation of sustainability reports.
- 100 8. We support reports identifying environmental hazards, including waste facilities and their  
101 impact on the communities as well as reports on the development of a company's policy  
102 about such hazards and their work in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas, including  
103 land procurement.
- 104 9. We support reports on accident reduction and mitigation, including a company's progress in  
105 implementing the reforms required under a settlement with the Environmental Protection  
106 Agency (EPA) and the commitments stated in a company's corporate social responsibility  
107 report.
- 108 10. We support reports on the effects of a company's marketing on the purchasing practices of  
109 people living in poverty and what might be done to mitigate harm.
- 110 11. We support reports on the policies and procedures that guide a company's assessment of host  
111 country laws and regulations with respect to their adequacy to protect human health, the  
112 environment and the company's reputation.
- 113 12. We support reports on chemical footprints<sup>16</sup> of operations and the responsible reduction of  
114 pollution from both their operations and the use of their products.
- 115 13. We support reports on actions of the company's board of directors nominations committee to  
116 ensure there is environmental expertise on the company's board of directors, including  
117 calling for a director with environmental expertise.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.ceres.org/about-us/our-history/ceres-principles>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.cdp.net/en-US/Pages/About-Us.aspx>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.chemicalfootprint.org/>

118 14. We support requests that the board compensation committee, when setting senior executive  
119 compensation, include environmental metrics and performance in executive incentive plans.  
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122 **C. Food/Water**

123 15. We support reports regarding antibiotic use in the food-supply chain and labeling foods  
124 treated with antibiotics.

125 16. We support reports regarding long-term sustainability in the growing, procurement and  
126 delivery of food, including seafood and organic products. We also support reports on  
127 consideration of and reporting on efforts to source 100 percent certified sustainable palm oil.

128 17. We support reports on the company's policies on water stewardship and the human right to  
129 water.<sup>17</sup>

130 18. We support reports evaluating the impact of a company's operations on land, water usage,  
131 water resources and waste management, including the potential environmental and public  
132 health impacts of each of its company-owned plants, those of its affiliates, as well as  
133 proposed ventures that extract water from water-scarce areas.

134 19. We support reports on the impact of a company's hydraulic fracturing operations, including  
135 reduction or elimination of hazards to air, water and soil quality from such fracturing.

136 20. We support reports on policy options to respond to the public concerns regarding bottled  
137 water, including, but not limited to, providing additional information to consumers, or further  
138 modifying the production, delivery or sale of bottled water products so as to minimize  
139 environmental and energy impacts.

140 21. We support reports on a company's food product supply chain, including:

141 a) strategies to significantly reduce waste, energy and water use throughout the supply  
142 chain;

143 b) resource conservation programs and pollution prevention measures for the full product  
144 life-cycle;

145 c) labeling products with country of origin;

146 d) internal controls related to potential adverse impacts associated with genetically  
147 engineered organisms;

148 e) safety testing and systems to ensure identity preservation and traceability from  
149 production to consumption;

150 f) respect for and adherence to seed saving rights of traditional agricultural communities;  
151 and the adequacy of the current monitoring systems concerning genetically modified  
152 organism use and plans to provide alternatives should the situation merit.

153 **D. Forests**

154 22. We support reports studying ways for a company to take leadership on the environmental  
155 aspects of paper procurement, including stronger national paper recovery goals, setting goals  
156 for recycled content in its magazines and books, and goals for a majority of its supply chain  
157 to adopt strong forest management certification procedures, and the development of a  
158 sustainable paper purchasing policy. This might include reports on costs and benefits,  
159 greenhouse gas impact, and implementation.

160 23. We support reports on a company's and its supply chain's contribution to deforestation and  
161 plans to mitigate these impacts.

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<sup>17</sup> As defined by the U.N. Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (General Comment 15, para.2).

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**E. Product Safety**

- 24. We support requests for reports or policies on exposure to, the reduction of and/or elimination of toxins, pesticides, and/or radioactive materials in the environment, including product safety or toxicity.
- 25. We support reports on product stewardship policies, including recycling strategies.
- 26. We support reports on the implications of a policy for reducing the potential harm and the number of people in danger from potential catastrophic chemical releases by increasing the inherent security of a company’s facilities through steps including reducing the use, storage and transportation of extremely hazardous substances, re-engineering processes, and locating facilities outside high-population areas.
- 27. We support reports on a company’s policies on the use of nanomaterials and neonicotinoids in its product packaging and product use and educational efforts around these issues.
- 28. We support reports on policy options to reduce consumer exposure to and increase consumer awareness of mercury, Biphenyl A (BpA), polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and any other toxins contained in a company’s products and or packaging. We support reports on a company’s plan to move to safer alternative substitutes for the presence of toxic chemicals in its products.
- 29. We support development of policy and reports asking for mechanisms to recycle electronics safely and prevent the improper export of hazardous e-waste.

**VI. Resolution Guidelines for ELCA – General**

We support practices of good governance, specifically:

- a company having an independent chair or independent lead director;
- reports on policies and procedures for political contributions and expenditures (both direct and indirect made with corporate funds;
- reports on any portion of any dues or similar payments made to any tax exempt organization that is used for an expenditure or contribution that might be deemed political;
- guidelines or policies governing the company’s political contributions and expenditures; and
- reports on diversity for corporate boards and upper-level management.<sup>18</sup>

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*Approved by Church Council November 2003*  
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*Approved by Church Council November 2007*  
*Updated by Advisory Committee on Corporate Social Responsibility, Sept. 10, 2010*  
*Approved by Church Council November 2010*  
*Approved by Church Council CC14.11.52j November 2015*

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[http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non\\_Discrimination\\_In\\_Business\\_Activities\\_Issue\\_Paper.pdf?\\_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Non_Discrimination_In_Business_Activities_Issue_Paper.pdf?_ga=1.121795211.1053029484.1427812820)