

#8 RESOLUTION ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Passed by the Rabbinical Assembly Plenum, April 30, 2007

God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to till it and tend it. (Gen. 2:15)

WHEREAS the Rabbinical Assembly has passed 13 resolutions since 1991 on protecting and enhancing the environment and the quality of life for all God's creatures;

WHEREAS climate change can be attributed to human activity with 90% certainty;*

WHEREAS global warming will cause radical changes in the earth's weather patterns, surface temperature and sea levels, potentially causing massive disruptions in human civilization including millions of environmental refugees, violent conflict over resources, species extinction, reduction of agricultural output and increase in infectious diseases; and

WHEREAS developed countries are the source of the vast majority of greenhouse gases, the major cause of global warming.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Rabbinical Assembly call on its members to become leading proponents in their institutions on the issue of climate change;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the Rabbinical Assembly educate its members on climate change and the Jewish responses to it through the resources available as partners in the work of COEJL;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the Rabbinical Assembly attempt to make their institutions models of environmental action by greening those institutions through the following actions:

- Energy audits of the facilities the institutions occupy;
- Purchase of energy from sustainable sources;
- Implementation of reduction of waste through recycling and limiting the use of disposables;
- Use of non-toxic cleaning, lawn, and garden care products;
- Educational programs in the community teaching the Jewish sources of environmentalism and encouraging members of their community to green their own homes; and
- Encouragement of their constituents to reduce energy use by driving high mileage vehicles, using public transportation and carpooling;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that members of the Rabbinical Assembly urge their local and regional governments to pass legislation establishing specific deadlines for reducing local and regional greenhouse gas output;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Rabbinical Assembly and its members urge the United States government to observe and agree to the Kyoto Protocol on climate change; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all future construction of buildings of institutions in the Conservative movement adhere to the highest possible environmental standards.

*Source: the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a group of over 2,000 climate scientists from around the world charged with evaluating the data on climate change to inform the treaty negotiations (<http://www.ipcc.ch>).