SAFCEI
Strategic Plan 2021 – 2023

MOVING TO ‘HOW’ - Strengthening and developing community amongst Earthkeepers of faith
Contents

1. Introduction
2. Reading our current context, in community
3. SAFCEI’s Identity and values:
   Multi-faith, Faith Leaders, Earthkeepers and Community
   Working in and through community
4. Our strategic commitments
5. SAFCEI’s approach and core process
6. Priorities 2021 – 2023:
   Developing community and cultivating our capacity to respond
   Deepen our strategy for engaging faith communities
   Developing a learning organisation
   Developing our ability to gauge our impact
1. Introduction

What is the right action as SAFCEI emerges out of the immediate COVID-crisis, into the COVID-era, within the larger looming context of climate crisis?

SAFCEI is committed to inclusion, a broad and progressive view of spirituality and faith; commitment to eco-justice for all; and commitment to integration of care for the earth as essential to faith-based spiritual practice.

Its strategy is determined with reference to these principles...

... requiring continuous building of internal and consultative organisational processes that enable responsive reading of constituency and context.
2. Reading our current context, in community

Faith leaders seek to make sense of COVID as an environmental disaster.

The effect of lockdown, including a rise in corruption and poor governance, has compromised faith leaders’ grassroots reach to faith-communities.

The possible effects of this on environmental is a cause of concern.
On the ground, increase in the need for greater **food security** and **increased vulnerability** and reduced status of women and girls.

A greater **role for faith leaders** in mediating public education and science messaging around COVID causes, transmission and vaccine, and in relation to death and loss in community.

**Practical initiatives** that SAFCEI might support on, like sustainable food gardening, are seen to be essential and highly valued.
3. SAFCEI’s Identity and values -
Multi-faith, Faith Leaders, Earthkeepers and Community
A multi-faith approach seeks to reach all people of faith – Earthkeepers - who share a concern for the well-being of the planet.

This approach values a diversity of faiths and voices from those who play leadership roles in their communities whether in formal institutions of organised religion, or less formal faith-based initiatives.

SAFCEI seeks also to nurture leadership, including of women, on environmental matters amongst members of faith congregations who play a leadership role in faith communities - ‘community eco-champions’.
... SAFCEI’s Identity and values –

Working in and through community

SAFCEI builds and supports **compassionate relationships**.

Goodwill, clarity of purpose and mutuality across the network of earth-keeping faith communities and leaders enables greater and improved relationship to the whole of the Earth community.

This will be done through

- building a deeper spiritual understanding of compassionate relationship,
- inculcating responsivity to felt and expressed needs and realities,
- enabling SAFCEI to work with the outcomes of its own previous efforts

And will include **challenging and combating** unethical and unscrupulous behaviour and actions, in community.

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4. Our strategic commitments

The **Johannesburg Declaration**, formulated from 5-7 November 2019, gave consensus regarding SAFCEI’s concerns, commitment and response to six broad environmental issues:

- Animal Justice
- Biodiversity Loss
- Consumerism and Waste
- Energy and Climate Justice
- Food and Climate Justice
- Land and Water Justice
Our strategic commitments

SAFCEI is realistic and strategic about what it can achieve with limited resources and currently focuses primarily in -

Energy and Climate Justice,
Food and Climate Justice
Animal Justice.

This is especially relevant given the enhanced emphasis on food security and energy that has emerged out of the contextual reflection on 2020.

A growing focus on all areas is desirable for the long-term.
5. SAFCEI’s approach and core process

To facilitate **capacity building, knowledge creation and formulation of plans and ethical eco-action** that ultimately will result in the formation of eco-communities.

**Enabling faith leaders** (in and of faith based eco-communities and amongst those in the formal institutional hierarchy) to articulate and advocate a view of the world that cares for Earth and the earth community.

Done in such a way that **nurtures resilience and is sustainable**.
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**expanding community**, community organisation and influence within community.

**navigating** from the grassroots base, reaching to and influencing institutional hierarchies, through to policy and governance/administration.

**working skilfully** with community and institutions, including working with tensions between faith communities and faith leaders; between bottom-up and top-down approaches; even between science and faith.

**acknowledging** different knowledge systems and valuing the wisdom from cultural and indigenous systems.

**working collaboratively** and across silos, as a staff-team.
6. Priorities 2021 – 2023:

Developing community and cultivating our capacity to respond
... priorities 2021 – 2023 ...

Deepen our strategy for engaging faith communities:

- Revisiting and extending our reflection/audit of existing communities and relationships
- Revisiting SAFCEI’s strategy for youth
- Use this to revisit existing projects
- Create a systematic approach to FLEAT follow-up
... priorities 2021 – 2023 ... 

Deepen our strategy for engaging faith communities:

- Continue work in partnership with existing allies and congregations on an Earthkeeper agenda
- Work in partnership on food and climate justice
- Strengthen the prophetic voice on climate change
- Review strategy around accessing more senior levels of faith leadership
... priorities 2021 – 2023 ...

Developing a learning organisation:

- Create more space for continuous contextual reading with community, members, and fellow staff members.
- Continue to seek opportunities to work collaboratively and across silos.
- Continue to support staff wellness, particularly through the COVID period.
- Documentation and deepening of a distinctively ‘SAFCEI faith community engagement practice’.
... priorities 2021 – 2023 ...

Developing a learning organisation:

- Link learning from engagements and work to adjustments in strategy and practice.
- Tracking and monitoring all of this, enabling accountability to donors, members and the broader community; providing the data-rationale for adjustments as they emerge; and undertaking adaptive management of people and project commitments.
- Undertaking all of this in a way that builds SAFCEI’s resilience as a team.
... priorities 2021 – 2023 ...  
Developing our ability to gauge our impact:

- Behaviour change of those we are working with.
- When faith leaders promote ethical actions and preach sermons and make statements that reflect on eco-justice issues.
- Organised action in and by communities.
- Participants replicating the work in their communities
... priorities 2021 – 2023 ...
Developing our ability to gauge our impact:

- Multi-faith network building

- Communities and faith leaders attend to high level meetings and share messages for their own work with knowledge/information from SAFCEI.

- Knowledge network - information spreading.

- When SAFCEI is no longer needed.