



Friends Responses to Global Change

OVERVIEW OF THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

An FWCC Worldwide Consultation among Friends

BACKGROUND:

Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC) invites you to participate in a worldwide Friends Consultation. We are asking how God's love, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation can be made visible through Friends' responses to changes and challenges facing the world today.

The purpose of this Consultation is discernment of how Friends respond to global change. In this process, we ask ourselves how we are affected by change, how our faith sustains us, how our lives may be contributing to the causes of positive and adverse changes in the world today, and to discern what special message Friends have to offer to each other and to the world at large.

The foundation of our Consultation is the understanding that as the Lord keeps and sustains us, so must we keep and sustain our Lord's creation. Here, we understand "keep" to mean a caring, loving action to sustain all people and creation in full beauty and vitality, as in the prayer, "the Lord bless you and keep you."

Separately we have prepared information on the background of this initiative, a guide on how to establish and run a Cluster, and the six queries, which are the basis of the Cluster process. To participate in the Consultation process, please contact Samuel Mahaffy by post at our address below or at samuel@fwccglobalchange.org or go to our website www.fwccglobalchange.org.

THE GLOBAL CHANGE CONSULTATION PROCESS:

FWCC's global change Consultation is a process of listening to Friends' discernment from around the world on global change. We invite you as individual Friends and as Friends Meetings and Friends churches to join in this worldwide process of worshipful discernment of Friends' voice on global change.

The Consultation process has four steps. These are:

1. Local and Regional Cluster Meetings to be held in 2010 and 2011
2. Cluster Deepening late 2010 to 2011
3. World Consultation late 2011
4. Friends World Conference, Kenya, mid-2012

1. Cluster Meetings, 2010 – 2011

a) Establishing a cluster

We invite you to form face-to-face local and regional meetings of concerned Friends to discuss, consider and worshipfully discern your views of global change and your vision of Friends' voice and message to the rest of Friends and to the wider world. We call these local and regional meetings 'Cluster Meetings'. The outcomes of these meetings are to be recorded and sent to FWCC where they form part of the Cluster Deepening process and the Consultation process.

b) Six queries and cluster materials

To give focus to Clusters' discussions and discernment we provide background materials and a set of six Queries. We are distributing the Queries to all Friends worldwide. They form the backbone of the

Consultation process. We hope to receive responses to as many Queries as possible from each Cluster. Your response to the six Queries is a very important part of the discernment process for Friends worldwide.

c) Cluster structure

The structure of Cluster meetings is that each Cluster has its own Clerk, Facilitator or Convener who convenes the gathering and ensures it stays focused. The Clerk or Facilitator may also keep written records or Minutes of the Meeting. Alternatively, there may be a separate Recording Clerk or Recorder to keep written records. We hope that you will also have a Recorder who will make an audio-visual record of the Cluster's proceedings.

d) Cluster records

Unanimity within a Cluster is not essential. What is needed is a record of experiences and views. Where Minutes are recorded, it is expected that all attending the Cluster agree to them. If there is not agreement, we trust that the record reflects the variety of views.

e) Continuity of concern

Some local meetings and churches have established earth-care or global change committees. In some yearly meetings, for example Australia Yearly Meeting, this concern has given rise to an active standing yearly meeting committee, which meets regularly, and which helps the Yearly Meeting map out its approach to these matters. In some Sections of FWCC, such as Asia West Pacific Section, this concern has given rise to a Section Committee on Global Change, which meets monthly by telephone conference for a virtual Meeting for Worship with a Concern for Global Change to map out action and direction for the Section on global change. We invite each Cluster to consider continuing its activities beyond this specific task and evolving into a local committee with a concern for global change. In addition, there will be on-line study and group opportunities in various languages. The voice of the Cluster Gatherings is an essential part of the Consultation and will be included through Cluster representatives at the world Consultation and through sharing Clusters' voices in a virtual, video, and print format

2. Deepening and integration of cluster outcomes - late 2010 - 2011:

The process of deepening and integrating Cluster outcomes is a discernment and dialogue process by the Listening Committee that follows on from the Clusters. It seeks to discern the essential messages of each Cluster and discern and integrate the common threads and themes that may emerge from the Clusters or from groups of Clusters. These will be compiled as a document for the Consultation and may also be published on the FWCC website for further response and comment on an "open space" forum on the website.

3. Friends World Consultation on Global Change, late 2011

a) Who will attend the Consultation?

Representatives of Clusters will be selected to attend the Consultation, along with Friends-at-large and a FWCC team. Representatives of Clusters will be invited on a Section basis to ensure that all Friends' traditions and regions are represented as not every Cluster can be represented. Friends-at-large will be composed of specialist Friends, including theologians and Friends who are experts in areas of scholarship connected with this Concern. The FWCC Team will consist of the FWCC Global Change Steering Committee which enables this process and a support team including translators.

b) When and where will the Consultation be held?

The Consultation will be held in late 2011. We have not yet decided on the location but will be considering issues such as accessibility and convenience. Let us know if you have a suggestion.

c) Purpose of the Consultation

The purpose of the Consultation shall be to discern, if possible, what Friends voice worldwide on global change may be and, if possible, to arrive at unity on a document to submit to the Friends World Conference in Kenya in 2012.

Prepared February 2010