



Sustainable Sunday

for the Season of Creation 2023

SIMPLIFYING SUSTAINABILITY

Assisting Congregations and Households to Reach Sustainability Targets

1. Find a Carbon Footprint calculator.

Measure your starting position so you can create a clear plan of reduction going forward. There are many available, but often linked to or created by companies that are pushing offsets. Where they are most useful, is to measure your carbon footprint now as a base point and use it to monitor your changes to attain an 8% reduction per annum.

2. Calculate your own consumption

Again, as a starting point use your food, power, transport, and waste costs and then aim at reducing overall consumption by 8% per annum. You may not be able to afford an electric car or have access to charging now, but maybe in 5 years' time, these will be more affordable and accessible, and that change could result in 100% reduction in one year.

3. Good, Better, Best.

Good: Offsets can be a good option when there are limited opportunities. These programs are often linked to a specific company. Ask how they calculate the offset.

Better: Recycling options are improving all the time but can still be fraught to navigate. Labelling and what can be recycling can be misleading. Recycle all you can via curbside bins, Redcycle has stopped but there is hope that this may change shortly. Ask questions eg Opportunity Shops usually take clothes with labels and that are stain free. Ask the question where their discards go. Are they collected and resold as rags, are they sent overseas, if so what happens



to them? All recycling involves transport and other costs. There is an app called 'Recycle Right' which covers most areas in Perth.

Best: Reusing and Reduce items to extend their life is one way of being more sustainable. Many items can be upcycled or repurposed which reduces both cost and production of new items. Buying in bulk and buying local environmentally friendly and organic items reduces costs, packaging, and transport. It also sends a message to retailers that they need to reduce packaging and source more locally produced goods. Reducing the amount of food waste which goes to land fill can trap organic matter which then releases methane, a serious contributor to global warming. Composting, using a FOGO bin where available, worm farms etc all make a difference.

4. Shire or City Councils – a great source of information

Regarding waste disposal and recycling, going to your local council website can be a wealth of information. Each council has different criteria for bin collections and what can be placed in them. They also list what recycling takes place at the local tip.

If your area does not have FOGO bins write and request that they introduce this system. Also look on the website for what they are already implementing to reduce their own carbon footprint in their operations.

Eg. In Margaret River and Melville these bins have been introduced so some households have been able to reduce their organic waste footprint by 100% almost overnight, just by keeping their food waste out of landfill.

5. Write Letters or emails

Advocating for sustainable living and reduction targets continues to send a loud message to all levels of government that consumers and households want to maximize our efforts in all areas of sustainability now. This decade is optimal to reduce global warming before it affects poverty, sea levels and the environment and endangered species.



Suggestions for Planning a Sustainable Path

Area	Measure	Short term	Long term
Power source	Consumption/cost on recent bill	Change to green power where possible or offset. Use LED lighting. *Buy a power usage meter to monitor the efficiency of your appliance. This could also be loaned out to members of the congregation. Turn off at the power point where possible.	Budget for Phasing out gas by replacing with induction and electric heating, heatpump or solar. Budget for replacing old appliances for energy efficient models.
Water	“	Identify where changes can be made. Use waterwise plants. Check retic regularly for leaks, reduce timing.	Plan an edible garden and water saving garden. Budget for installation of rainwater tank and grey water recycling where feasible.
Waste	Audit current waste amounts and disposal. Audit current purchases of cleaning products etc.	Use FOGO & recycling bins where possible. Establish worm farms, identify anyone who has chooks who can use the food scraps. Buy in bulk and items that have a long life with little packaging. Use environmentally	Set up exchange program for excess produce, plants. Support local foodbanks.



	Audit consumable items like tea and coffee.	friendly products. Buy local or Fair trade.	
Electronic	Audit current office practices. Eg paper usage, Ink cartridges	Change to electronic use where possible. Use refillable ink cartridges and recycle used.	
Transport	Audit use		Plan and budget for conversion to electric.

Further information and references

- cleanup.org
- foodwise.com
- asingleleafsouthwest.com.au
- livingsmart.org.au
- www.compostrevolution.com.au
- www.drawdown.org
- www.agric.wa.gov.au
- uniting.church - Uniting Church in Australia – National Assembly
- ecochurcheswa.net – Uniting Church WA

Ecological footprint calculators

- wwf.org.au
- climateactionaustralia.net.au (various recommendations)
- carbonneutral.com.au
- Carbonpositiveaustralia.org.au

