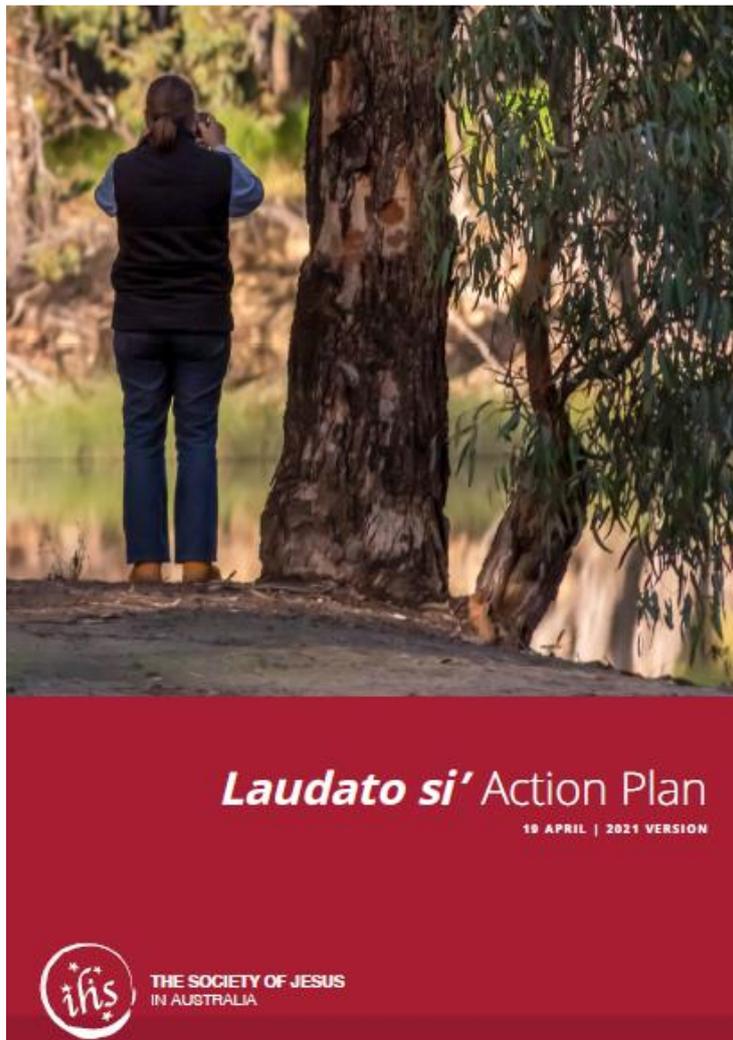




The Society of Jesus in Australia Ltd

# Ministries Engagement with Care for Our Common Home Summary Progress Report 20<sup>th</sup> February 2022



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The Society of Jesus in Australia Ltd: Reconciliation with Creation Committee

## ***Executive Summary***

The Society of Jesus in Australia Ltd (SOJA) has encouraged its ministries to take action to care for our common home.<sup>1</sup> The SOJA Care for Our Common Home Committee provides 22 SOJA ministries<sup>2</sup> with the support, resources and coordination that they need for this priority.

Many SOJA ministries have for a long time had a strong and self-directed response to the call to care for our common home.

The words and actions of Jesuit leadership and the Care for Our Common Home Committee over the past year have sought to enthuse and support those whose action in this area was lacking in consistent energy or strategic focus.

The Care for Our Common Home Committee developed an Action Plan Framework to assist SOJA ministries to plan and implement their actions to Care for Our Common Home. Adoption of this Framework is optional for SOJA ministries.

The Society of Jesus Universal Apostolic Preferences and the Australian Province of Society of Jesus Apostolic Plan expect that all ministries will Care for Our Common Home. The Care for Our Common Home Committee message to SOJA ministries is that (1) they must each decide if/how they will take action and (2) they must report on their actions.

This is the first annual progress report on SOJA ministries' actions to Care for Our Common Home as required by SOJA. The SOJA [Laudato si' Action Plan Framework](#) was only launched in June 2021 and this report found that in just six months:

- ☑ 91% of SOJA ministries have a person designated as a contact for the SOJA RWC Committee (*two parishes are yet to do so*);
- ☑ 68% of SOJA ministries have a team to plan and implement their care for our common home (*parishes are the least likely to have a team*);
- ☑ 41% have a plan that details how they will care for our common home; and
- ☑ 36% of ministries are currently using the SOJA *Laudato si'* Action Plan Framework (*55% have not indicated whether they will use the Framework*).

The ministries that are taking longest to develop and implement a plan are generally those with fewer resources – especially staff/volunteers. Many ministries reported that the prolonged COVID restrictions of 2021 have also hampered their ability to develop and implement a plan to care for our common home.

The data on what actions SOJA ministries are taking is incomplete as not all Action Plans were available. Future annual reports will outline the nature of actions planned and outcomes achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> SOJA and the Society of Jesus have used various terms to refer to our relationship with the rest of creation. This report will use the term “Care for Our Common Home” as it is more readily understood by the public and is the term used in *Laudato si'*, Society of Jesus UAP and Australian Province of the Society of Jesus Apostolic Plan

<sup>2</sup> SOJA ministries include: 5 Schools; 3 Young adult ministries; 7 Parishes; 3 Social Ministries, Ignatian Spirituality and Communications & Development

## ***Development of the SOJA's Approach to Care For Our Common Home***

The importance of environmental sustainability for Jesuit ministries is grounded in:

1. The Society of Jesus Universal Apostolic Preferences 2019-2029<sup>3</sup>;
2. The Australian Jesuit Province Apostolic Plan 2019-2024<sup>4</sup>; and
3. Pope Francis' Encyclical *Laudato si'* (*On Care For Our Common Home*)<sup>5</sup>.

In 2020, the Ministries Commission asked the Reconciliation with Creation (RwC) Committee<sup>6</sup> to develop an annual Reconciliation with Creation Action Plan template and supporting resources for Jesuit ministries. The goal was to assist Jesuit ministries embed the Reconciliation with Creation/Care for Our Common Home into their normal operations. RWC Committee developed the Action Plan template in 2020 but delayed further work due to the dislocation of the COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns.

Two of the Ministries Commission's 2021 priorities for the RWC Committee were:

1. Launching the Ecological Framework/Plan (maybe in May 2021 (24 May is the anniversary of *Laudato si'* and the Ignatian Year begins May 2021)
2. Helping ministries adopt the Ecological Framework/Plan

Actions over 2021:

- ✓ 30 April, Ministries Commission receive a rehearsal of the Framework presentation to be made to ministry leaders;
- ✓ late May and early June 2021, the RWC Committee consult with Heads of Ministries and their key leaders to seek their support and suggestions for a *Laudato si'* Action Planning Framework for Province ministries. (see Appendix 1)
- ✓ late June, Heads of Ministries receive the [Laudato si' Action Planning Framework](#) (Framework) which incorporated their suggested changes. A list of Frequently Asked Questions was also sent with a letter accompanying the Framework (see Appendix 2)
- ✓ 25 June, Province introduced to the Framework via a Jesuit News story and post on [Province website](#);
- ✓ July and ongoing, RWC Project Officer assists ministries discern and plan their *Laudato si'* response;
- ✓ 16 August (in response to the ACBC Social Justice Statement), the Provincial wrote to ministries stating the complementary nature of the Framework and the Apostolic See's *Laudato si'* Action Platform (see Appendix 3)
- ✓ A discernment guide distributed to ministries to assist them engage with the Framework (2 versions developed by RWC Committee member and JSS staff member, Claire Thomas (schools/parishes and a more secular language version)
- ✓ 16 August, RWC Committee present Framework to JCAP ministries via webinar; and
- ✓ Early December, RWC Project Officer consults with ministries regarding their progress.

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<sup>3</sup> [https://www.jesuits.global/sj\\_files/2020/05/2019-06\\_19feb19\\_eng.pdf](https://www.jesuits.global/sj_files/2020/05/2019-06_19feb19_eng.pdf) also echoing the 2008 Decree 3 of General Congregation (GC) 35 which encouraged Jesuits to: "establish right relationships with God, with one another, and with creation"

<sup>4</sup> <https://jesuit.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019-Apostolic-Plan.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html)

<sup>6</sup> now known as the Care for Our Common Home Committee