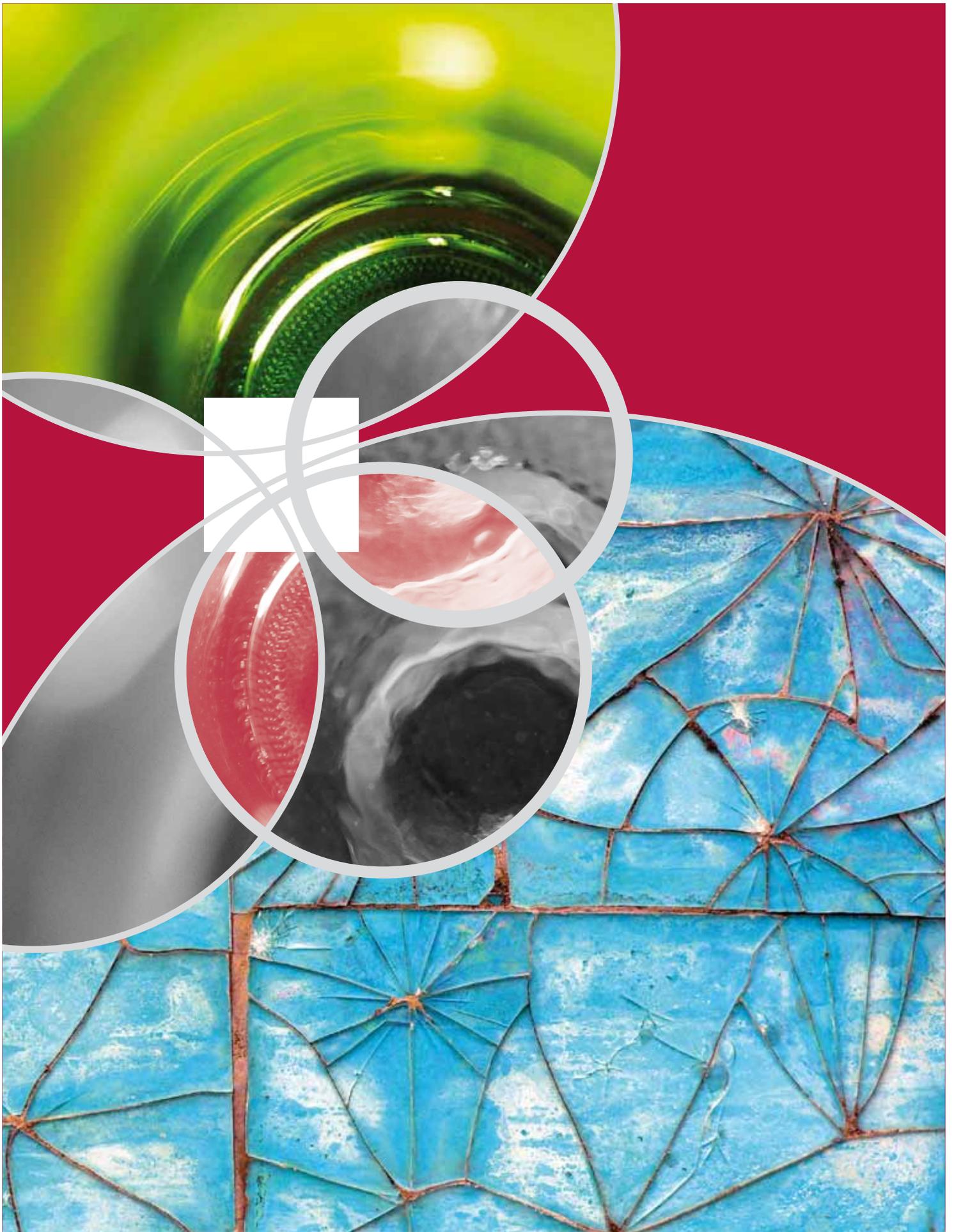


EVANGELICAL WOMEN IN GERMANY

ECUMENICAL PROFILE

POSITION PAPER 2012





Home is "the place where you do not have to explain yourself", according to the philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder. Such a home to many people is their religion; for Christian women it is also their church. It is invaluable to have such a home: it is the ground under ones feet in which the thoughts and feelings and beliefs are rooted, from which a strength grows that carries one through a life, that gives support and guidance. Whoever has such a home does not need to perceive others as a threat, as dangerous strangers who are to be fought – or converted. Those who have found their place where they do not have to explain are free. So free that they can pursue the deep human longing to feel that they are connected to "the others". Unafraid, without fear of losing their own identity, they can encounter them and declare themselves. Believing "that the divine in many forms makes room in our world" (Doris Strahm). Such people are able to join forces in a common concern for all living things, and to dream together. In the words of Rose Ausländer:

"Put my dream
together with yours
they like to be
under the same blanket."

The Evangelical Women in Germany are confident of such a home in their church, and in this certainty have verified their ecumenical profile. Supported by a broad stream of the vivid ecumenical commitment of its member organizations and predecessor organizations, the umbrella association of evangelical women's organizations in Germany has reflected anew on its ecumenical vision and direction, and has agreed, after a two-year opinion-forming process, on the basic principles for future ecumenical action. The landmarks and signposts for concrete ecumenical steps in the coming years in the individual fields of action are thus available to the decision-making bodies of the umbrella association and member organizations. The umbrella organization and the member organizations as well are thereby challenged to prepare their positions – which are formulated here, compressed accordingly with respect to the character of a policy paper – for the educational work among women in the association and to make it fruitful. Not least, the Evangelical Women in Germany bring the results of their reflection on their ecumenical profile in the ecumenical discourse of their church at all levels – convinced that the ecumenical experiences and perspectives of women enrich it.



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And again Jesus said:
“To what should I compare the kingdom of God?
It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with
three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

... Asked by Pharisees,
when the kingdom of God was coming,
he answered:
“... in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.”

• Lk 13,20f; 17,21 •

Live with all humility and gentleness,
with patience, bearing with one another in love,
making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit
in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit ...
one Lord, one faith, one baptism.
God is one, mother and father of all.
God is above all and through all and in all.

• Eph 4,2-6 •

The Association of Evangelical Women in Germany (EFiD) relies on the biblical promise that the kingdom of God has already begun and can and should continue to grow. The prophetesses and prophets of Israel, just as the images of the kingdom of God in the Second Testament, have depicted the shape of the world according to God's standards in great clarity. To contribute to their fulfillment means to work with socio-political commitment for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

*putting the kingdom
of God into practice*

The EFiD is thereby led by the vision of a community of churches, which forms the oikos, the house of God, and which live so that the house is habitable for all the world to live in, a place of life in abundance. This commitment also includes, under present conditions, always a dialog and cooperation with other religions and with all people of good will.

abundant life for all

The admonition to unity for the church in Ephesus can only be read as a constant invitation and call to ecumenical commitment for unity in diversity. Therefore, in their ecumenical orientation, the Evangelical Women in Germany see an indispensable part of self-understanding and no endangerment to their evangelical profile.

unity in diversity

The prayer of Jesus for the unity of believers formulated in the Gospel of John provides a goal for Christian ecumenism, "so that the world may believe" (Jn 17:21). Because the unity mentioned here is a prerequisite for the proclamation of the biblical message, the ecumenical commitment of EFiD is based in reliance on the promised accompanying Spirit of truth. (Jn 14:17)

*... so that the world
believes*

Given the human-made and therefore scandalous disunity of the churches which has been going on for centuries, however, all Christians and their churches are reasonably expected to change their ways in thought and action, as well as taking steps towards reconciliation. Successful reconciliation always remains God's gift – and where it is already succeeding now, it is a sign of hope for the perfect peace of the new heaven and the new earth. But this can not be an excuse for inactive waiting. Longing prayer for the unity of the church includes a passionate commitment to the reconciliation of the churches.

*reconciliation is
to be expected*

<i>feminist theology</i>	A viable ecumenism, which survives even in times of drought in the general ecumenical climate, draws on theological work – especially on the issues that divide the churches, for example the different understandings of the Eucharist, the ministry and the church. EFiD relies in particular on the insights of feminist theology, which have rarely been included in the ecumenically important theological work of the churches, and to the equal participation of women and men to all ministries of the church.
<i>ecumenical spirituality</i>	<p>Spiritual food for the enduring search for unity is provided by the conscious maintenance of an ecumenical spirituality. Such a spiritual attitude manifests itself through the appreciative interest in the religious traditions of other churches as well as in the willingness to incorporate the strengths of each of their own religious traditions and to fight for them.</p> <p>At the same time, however, their limitations are to be perceived. Because "the whole truth" is not possessed by single persons, cultures, religions or even denominations; it remains in the future and unavailable.</p> <p>A great treasure lies in the practice of common prayer and common worship, in which the enriching diversity and the desired unity can now already be experienced.</p> <p>Equally important for the stability of the ecumenical commitment is to share everyday life together. This is why EFiD continually creates opportunities to meet and places to experience together, to talk and to laugh, to argue and to act.</p>
<i>basic texts</i>	EFiD refers to the existing ecumenical basic texts of the World Council of Churches (WCC), the documents of the European Ecumenical Assembly (EEV) since 1989 and the Charta Oecumenica (ChOe) of the European churches.
<i>women's ecumenism</i>	For the structuring of women's ecumenism in Germany, EFiD is committed to the ecumenical principles of the Christian Council of Women (CCW), the ecumenical understanding as Christians, as women, and as Europeans of the Ecumenical Forum of European Christian Women (EFECW) and the guidelines for the World Day of Prayer (WDP).
<i>goal of the umbrella organization</i>	As an umbrella organization, EFiD strengthens the ecumenical commitment of member organizations by providing information on current ecumenical developments and processes. At the same time, EFiD bundles the gender-specific perspectives, experiences and skills of women and brings them into the ecumenical work at a national, European and global level.



*community of
all believers*

EFiD is committed to the unity of the Christian Church as the community of all believers, which is created by the Gospel shining throughout the world.

This commitment encourages ecumenical work not to be bound to social, political or national boundaries. EFiD distinguishes between a national, European and global frame of reference of their own ecumenical commitment, but emphasizes the interconnectedness of the different levels.

reconciled diversity

Convinced that the one Christian church lives in history and around the world in a variety of forms, EFiD is committed to church unity in reconciled diversity of the churches, each with their distinct traditions and characteristics.

*responsibility as land
of the Reformation*

This commitment is motivated by historical awareness. Churches in Germany, as the land of the Reformation, have a special responsibility to pave the way toward a peaceful coexistence of these many forms of church. Because, in addition to its highly valued benefits, the Reformation also stands for one of the large church separations with painful consequences for countless individuals as well as for the fate of entire countries.

2.1 NATIONAL CONTEXT

*overcome violence
against women*

In Germany, the ecumenical commitment of EFiD at all levels of the church has, for many years, been characterized by the cooperation of Christian women to design a gender-equitable society. As a problem that became apparent in the Ecumenical Decade "Churches in Solidarity with Women 1988-1998" of the WCC, the fight against all forms of violence against women is still in the foreground today.

In the subsequent "Decade to Overcome Violence 2001-2010," it was considered necessary to break open a largely "gender-neutral" handling of the topics by the participating churches. The Christian women's organizations in Germany are called to continue this advocacy for women consistently.

criticize prosperity gap

Currently this means that, among other things, the growing disparity of wealth in this society, which is caused by unfair distribution – such as of paid and unpaid work, of health as well as with regard to possibilities of protecting livelihood and retirement – is to be designated as critical. Because, due to the strong and still-existent hierarchical gender relations in Germany, it predominantly affects women.

*co-supporters of
grassroots ecumenism*

The large proportion of Christian women and their organizations involved in the progress of grassroots ecumenism during the last few decades is obvious. Significant for the ecumenical sensitivity and competence, with which women shape ecumenism in their organizations and church communities, was and is the continuous ecumenical training

through the World Day of Prayer movement. This contrasts diametrically with the minor influence of women on the official ecumenical relations of the churches in Germany.

A step in the right direction is the granting of consultative status to the women's church organizations combined in the Christian Council of Women at the general assembly of the Association of Christian Churches in Germany (Arbeitsgemeinschaft Christlicher Kirchen in Deutschland, ACK). EFiD decidedly promotes additional steps so that women can contribute their experiences, perspectives and skills to the ecumenical policies of their respective churches and introduce them together in the ACK and be able to actively participate.

*more shared
participation
of women*



2.2 EUROPEAN CONTEXT

The European continent is characterized by a high degree of political cooperation among its countries. Social, political and religious issues and phenomena formerly limited to national discussion now have a regional or European-wide context, which has now become indispensable. Therefore EFiD considers a European-wide perspective, transgressing EU borders, indispensable for their own work.

*European-wide
perspectives*

At the same time, EFiD advocates the process of European integration towards a United States of Europe, which are committed to the respect of human dignity and the protection of human rights. Such an overriding principle includes resistance against the further development of Europe as "fortress" in the face of migrants from other regions and continents who are fleeing to Europe to escape political persecution or poverty. Isolation of a European island of prosperity against people for whose situations the European countries are responsible is contrary to the self-understanding of European democracies and the Gospel. It must be abandoned – even if large parts of the populations welcome such a policy as a reasonable response to the consequences of economic globalization. To participate in this awareness and opinion-forming is one of the priority tasks in the work of Evangelical Women's associations in the coming years.

*Europe of
human rights*

EFiD ties into a long tradition of cooperation with other European, particularly central eastern European countries. EFiD sees in this ecumenical, cross-border cooperation the chance to live this continuing reconciliation process and to build a common future in a united Europe. Important elements for the structure of the European ecumenical cooperation are the Conference of European Churches (CEC) and the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE). EFiD currently takes part in this official cooperation of the churches especially through the EFECW.

*reconciliation as
continual process*

*advocate
the ordination
of women*

In ecumenical dialog with neighboring churches, EFiD is committed to the empowerment of women in their respective churches. In particular, EFiD advocates the full ordination of women in all churches. Avoiding the contentious issue of women's ordination for the sake of a deceitful ecumenical peace or excluding female church leaders from formal ecumenical dialogs is discriminatory against women, and therefore a false ecumenical way. EFiD expects from the Evangelical Churches in Germany an open discussion on this issue with female representatives of other churches.

2.3 GLOBAL CONTEXT

*hear echoes of
colonial violence*

Global interrelation presents the ecumenical dialog with special challenges. Especially postcolonial feminist theologians of the Tricont countries refer to the centuries-old relations between the so-called "first" world and "third" world shaped by colonial exploitation. As a church women's association, and thus part of a Christian mission history that has contributed causally to colonial exploitation, EFiD considers itself as partially responsible. Mindful of this inter-relatedness (Mercy Amba Oduyoye), it is important to perceive the echo of colonial violence in the present and critically reflect on it. The theological reflection deals with the tension between the contextuality of any theology on the one hand and the transnational claim of a worldwide ecumenical dialog on the other. EFiD is committed to an ecumenism which constantly interrupts, remains unfinished and holds itself open for critical post-colonial interventions.

fight against poverty

EFiD has committed itself to an ecumenical dialog between women of different and at the same time interwoven contexts and also implements this politically; it can draw on a wealth of experience from many years of work in solidarity with the South African anti-apartheid movement. EFiD decidedly works against unfair economic structures, especially through participation in networks and campaigns to combat poverty and its consequences, such as exploitation of women in international labor migration.

*stand up against
discrimination*

Similarly, EFiD positions itself in the European and global context against any discrimination of lesbian women (and gay men). EFiD considers it an important contribution to ecumenism to actively include this position in the dialog with churches of different denominations.



3 CONTENTS

3.1 COMMITTED TO THE

INTER-CHRISTIAN DIALOG

act together

EFiD is committed to its involvement in the task of all Christians to take action which results from the mission of the church. Therefore, the association shall, for its own work, take on the commitment of the European churches in the Charta Oecumenica "to act together at all levels of church life wherever conditions permit and there are no reasons of faith or overriding expediency mitigating against this." (§ 4)

ecumenism versus profile?

Where ecumenical action is not seen as a threat to their own denominational profile but rather as a sign of church action, it must no longer be justified in the individual case why ecumenical action is being performed. The reverse should rather be justified as to why church activities and comments are limited to their own confession.

multilateral ecumenism

This commitment includes the knowledge that successful ecumenism needs the multilateral cooperation of all churches. This challenges churches in a special way where they are in a clear majority position.

EFiD views the situation self-critically that here indeed in recent years exemplary steps have succeeded, but on the whole, the church women's association work is as far from the fulfillment of this ecumenical paradigm shift as the churches in Germany.

EKD

As an umbrella organization, EFiD brings the potential of evangelical women's association work into the ecumenical work of the EKD and campaigns for the ecumenical orientation of their own churches. As a representative of women in the EKD, EFiD calls for adequate participation in ecumenical contexts in which the EKD is present.

women's networks

Outside the member church structures, EFiD is active in various church, scientific, theological and political networks. As the German department of an international network, context-based as well as structure-based networks at the national level often go beyond this (e.g. WGT, ESWTR, EFECW).

The primary intra-German network for EFiD as an umbrella organization is the Christian Council of Women, in which ecumenically active, national women's organizations cooperate with one another, exchange experiences and initiate joint projects.

In such networking, it is important to negotiate and endure the mission statement of reconciled diversity in each specific aspect of the network.

gender equality

Feminist ecumenism is characterized by a passionate struggle for gender equality in the church; it insists on the full likeness to God of women and their full participation in all church ministries.

3.1.1 THEOLOGY

Living ecumenism needs the inter-Christian dialog. It thrives on the longing for unity and suffers from separation. It does not get depleted in diplomatic formulations of the respective minimum consensus in ecumenical conferences. Nonetheless, their results are yet to be noted and implemented in their practical consequences at all levels.

longing for unity

The focus of the theological discussion is the development of the ekklesia. This becomes evident in the debate on the fundamental issues of full church communion and of the understanding of ministry, communion and baptism. Here it is important to actively conduct a respectful dialog with profiled content that respects all parties and to work on the similarities as well as on the remaining differences.

develop ekklesia

EFiD believes an important internal task is to disseminate the results of feminist theological research and to involve it in the ecumenical dialog of the churches.

feminist ecclesiology

EFiD emphasizes here the perspective of feminist ecclesiology, that the church must be formed by all Christians in a common struggle to answer the question of meaning and that the "one church" is fulfilled inside and outside of the various churches. As the three persons of the Trinity – who are one, but not one person – constitute a unity in diversity, and exist only in their commonality and can embrace the whole nature of God, the different churches and denominations form the many ways the kingdom of God can be experienced now on earth.

A feminist ecclesiology also emphasizes the domination critical aspects of a social doctrine of the Trinity as well as the challenges therein for the changing of power hierarchies – even within each of the formal and informal structures in the church. Inspired by such an understanding of the Trinity, the church is a place of God's liberation history that opens up ways to bring about more justice in the present and at the same time clings to the hope of a new creation.

*change power
hierarchies*

In the discussion of ethical and socio-political issues, EFiD seeks the ecumenical dialog and positions itself together with its Christian sisters, wherever this is possible with regard to content. Here in recent years, questions of human influence on the beginning and end of life were central and set new standards.

*common positionings
with Christian sisters*

3.1.2 SPIRITUALITY

cultivate ecumenical spirituality

Trusting in the accompanying Spirit of God, EFiD advocates the deliberate care of ecumenical spirituality. Ecumenical spirituality makes the richness of different religious traditions visible and at the same time makes the common roots noticeable.

seek intercommunion

Supported by an ecumenical attitude of hospitality with respect to each other, EFiD adheres to the aim that this hospitality is also fulfilled in the intercommunion of the Eucharist and the Lord's Supper. On the way there, EFiD participates in the development and dissemination of alternative ecumenical liturgies to draw attention to the scandal of the separation of the churches.

seek all that lives

EFiD stands in the tradition of feminist theologies that develop life-affirming rituals and ceremonies in which the reclaiming of the body as a place of knowledge of God is as important as the mindfulness for all life.

EFiD is committed to a feminist spirituality of life, the expressions of which arise "from the struggle for life and human dignity and strengthen women in their self-affirmation, allowing them to discover their inner strength and freedom, and empower them to form their everyday lives as daughters of God." (Katja Heidemanns)



3.2 COMMITTED TO THE INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOG

An ecumenism that is open to dialog acknowledges people of all religious and non-religious affiliations in its inalienable dignity.

*inalienable
human dignity*

In interreligious dialog, believers are united by the reference to a final, unconditional reality that is called God in many religions.

EFiD understands religious diversity as an enriching and challenging normality.

diversity of religions

This makes a permanent interreligious dialog necessary, one which seeks to recognize and identify that which is common without denying differences – based on an insight that the true, the good and the righteous are never owned by particular people or cultures, but always remain unavailable and in the future.

EFiD knows that it is connected to Judaism in a special way in faith and in accepting traditional historical responsibility. EFiD affirms that Israel is and remains chosen as the first love of God according to biblical witness.

*permanent election
of Israel*

Europe as a whole, and therefore Germany, is mainly dominated by the three religions of the book – Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The assertion that beyond it only a "Christian culture" or "Judeo-Christian tradition" is decisive for Germany and Europe is an ideology. It subjugates the importance of Islam in Europe, especially for the southern and eastern European countries, and hinders inter-religious dialog. Given the growing Islamophobia in German society as in other European countries, it is even more important to distinguish between religiosity and culture-specific expressions and to oppose any generalizing and distorting representation of Islam.

Islam in Europe

EFiD is committed to inter-religious dialog which criticizes the appropriation of religious traditions by patriarchal definition of power as well as the equation of religion with misogyny and backwardness.

religion and women



3.3 COMMITTED TO THE CONCILIAR PROCESS

justice, peace and the integrity of creation

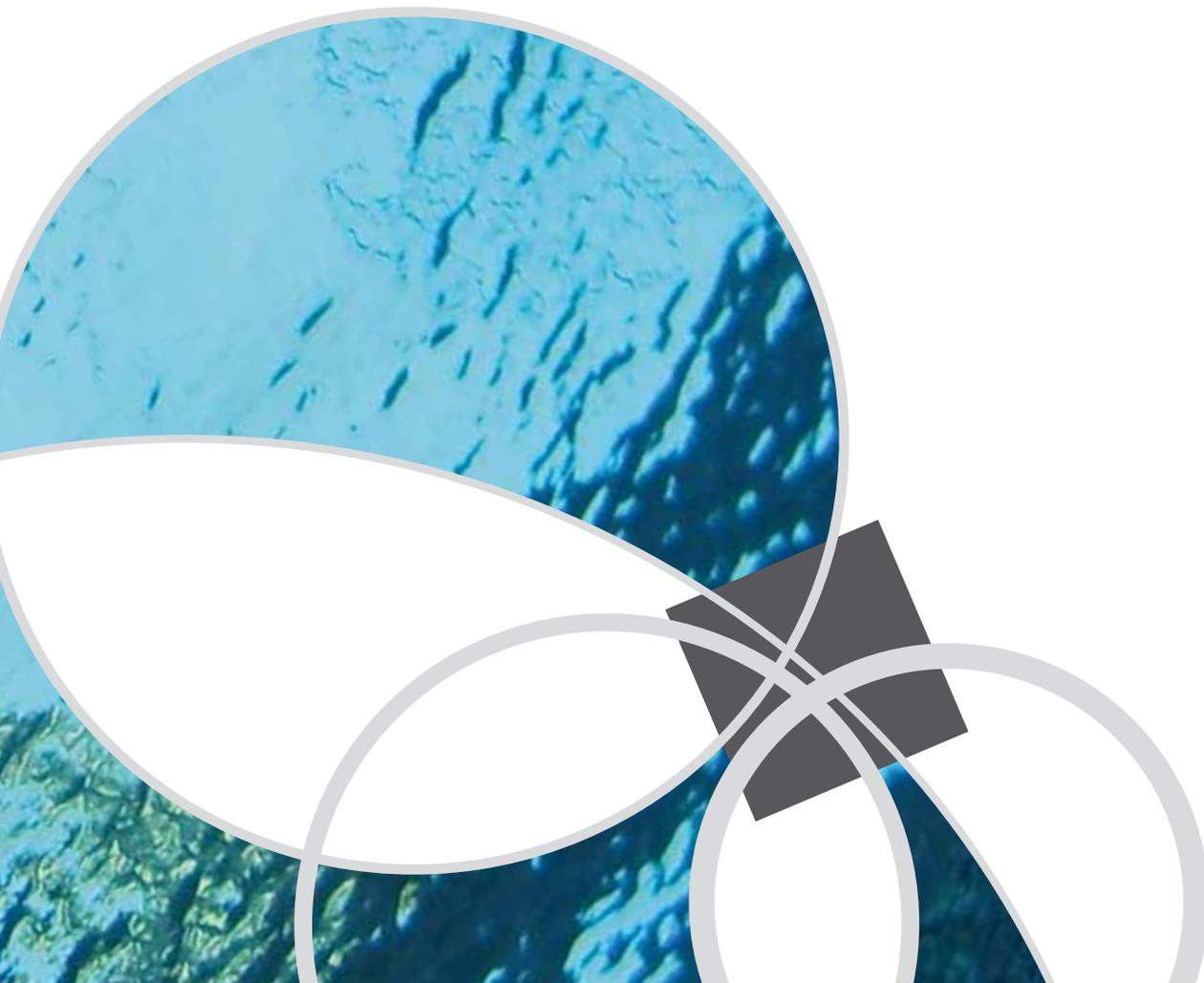
In the vision of a world according to the standards of the kingdom of God, the promised fullness of life is not withheld from any creature. That is why EFiD considers itself jointly responsible for the conciliar process for justice, peace and integrity of creation, which the general assembly of the World Council of Churches set in motion in Vancouver in 1983.

inseparably intertwined

The roots of this process date back to the early 30s of the 20th century, when Dietrich Bonhoeffer invoked for the first time a major Christian peace council. In the second half of the 20th century, the recognition grew worldwide, even in the churches, that justice, peace and the integrity of creation are closely intertwined with each other and one can not be had without the other two.

status confessionis

The denial of justice, lack of peace and destruction of creation are, given their global dimensions, a status confessionis which challenges the clear commitment of the churches to justice, peace and integrity of creation at all levels.



3.3.1 JUSTICE

The biblical message of justice is clear: God is on the side of the socially weakened.

biblical message

For EFiD, justice is connected in particular with gender justice, which is to be considered as a cross-sectional issue in all fields of ecumenical cooperation. Gender justice is thereby aimed at all genders and sexual orientations – not only homosexual, heterosexual and bisexual women and men, but also inter- and transsexuals.

justice for all genders

EFiD decidedly affirms the image of God for all and advocates preserving their physical and moral integrity.

Justice requires sensitivity to the variety of differences and hierarchies of power. Therefore, EFiD acts equally against discrimination on grounds of religion, social origin, ascribed "race", ethnicity, age, lifestyle and physical ability.

*diversity of
power hierarchies*

In times of a capital-dominated market economy that is based on neo-liberal standards, it is necessary for the establishment of world economic justice to have a just and legally binding global economic order, which EFiD advocates.

*just world
economic order*

3.3.2 PEACE

Peace and justice were already inextricably linked in biblical times.

peace and justice

"As long as the Spirit from on high is poured out on us ..., the effect of justice will be peace, and the result of justice will be quietness and trust forever." (Isa 32:15, 17)

With the comprehensive shalom of God, with "Peace – You quietest of all births" (Nelly Sachs) more is meant than the absence of war. Peace also assumes that there is no culture based on violence and respective structures (any more).

God's shalom

Positively understood, peace means both a productive process as well as the willingness and competence to respectfully identify conflicts and resolve them nonviolently and creatively. To avoid violent conflict, unjust economic structures must be eliminated, while at the same time the rule of law and the international network of civil society activities is encouraged.

The process of peacemaking is committed to the principle of nonviolence.

non-violence

This can include acts of civil disobedience and resistance. There can be no just war. EFiD shares the view of the final declaration of the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation of the WCC in Jamaica in 2011, which states: "History, especially in the



witness of the historic peace churches, reminds us of the fact that violence is contrary to the will of God and can never resolve conflicts. It is for this reason that we are moving beyond the doctrine of just war towards a commitment to just peace.

... We continue to struggle with how innocent people can be protected from injustice, war and violence. In this light, we struggle with the concept of the 'responsibility to protect' and its possible misuse." EFiD is challenged by the urgent call of the Peace Convocation to further clarify its position on this issue.

peace education

EFiD is committed to peace education which promotes active nonviolence, as well as for a policy of peace which protects human rights without armed force, and employs the means to effectively implement alternatives.

feminist peace policy

In addition, EFiD represents a feminist peace policy which examines where and how women are affected by violence, where they themselves contribute to violent relationships or support them and what notions of security they have. A feminist peace policy explores the causes of unrest and examines the social conditions for a world without violence. This includes the critical examination of prevailing gender images that legitimize and perpetuate violence and power relations.

involvement of the churches in injustice

For evangelical women, this includes the critical examination of the contribution of their own theologies and churches to the emergence and spread of unjust conditions. Here, the feminist-theological discussion of the so-called atonement theology is particularly important. Feminist theologies emphasize the salvific efficacy of Jesus' life and think of salvation from the experience of the resurrection. They vehemently oppose any theology that stylizes the torture death of Jesus as a sacrificial death of effective healing and thus indirectly determines and legitimizes the suffering of violence as a condition of salvation.

androcentric structures

Similarly, feminist peace work opposes stereotypes of the "natural female peaceableness" or to "women's natural willingness to self-sacrifice". Each commitment to peace must also designate and problematize the androcentric power structures.

eliminate violence

EFiD is committed to peace work at a national and international level, the goal of which is to eliminate violence in the home, in public, at work, in political and economic structures and in the media.

oppose discrimination

This includes a clear position against all homophobic violence against homo-, inter-, trans- and bisexuals, which is also expressed in the form of racism, sexism and xenophobia. EFiD is committed to thematizing this form of violence in the ecumenical context and to demanding that churches stand up against discrimination and violence against homosexuals.

Women around the world are working against war, against women and human rights violations and for the reconciliation of conflicting parties. They contribute significantly to crisis prevention and reconstruction in post-conflict societies. But at the national and international level, the political importance of their peace and reconciliation work is hardly heard. They are largely excluded from key decisions such as ceasefire and peace negotiations – although it is known that "the systematic exclusion of women from formal peace processes ... has harmful effects on the sustainability of peace agreements."

peace work of women

Back in 2000, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1325 – a milestone for a global gender-just policy of peace through their demands for prevention of armed conflict, participation of women in peace and security policy and protection from sexual violence. EFiD strongly supports the demand of the Women's Security Council for the implementation of Resolution 1325 as well as the further resolutions for Germany and the EU as an important sending organization of military intervention forces.

Resolution 1325

3.3.3 INTEGRITY OF CREATION

According to biblical order, people should cultivate and preserve the earth. The dominant Christian interpretation of the creation texts in the Western tradition is characterized by an anthropocentric perspective that sees human beings as the "crown of creation", equipped with the right to rule over animals and plants.

creation mandate

This view became a real threat to the entire creation with the industrialization of increasingly larger parts of the earth and the exploitative use of natural resources that went along with it. Against this power-over-relationship between humans and nature, ecofeminist theology places a power-in-relationship which emphasizes the fundamental reciprocity and interdependence in the network of life.

ecofeminist theology

EFiD can also tie in to a very old female world view that shines out again and again over the centuries – such as with Hildegard of Bingen in the 12th century, in whose cosmic vision of the Four Seasons the people are taken out from the center of creation and (re) integrated into nature created by God and held in life.

*humans integrated
in nature*

The arrogance of Western modernity which elevated humans to "masters of the world" must be overcome, replaced by understanding and affirmation of the mutual dependence of all life. "Our incarnation today lies in the fact that we are made from 'proud and unfortunate gods' (Luther) into humans who accept their vulnerability and mortality and integrate into the community of creation." (Jürgen Moltmann)

*mutual dependence
of all living things*

overcome gender-hierarchical understanding

EFiD decidedly also opposes a gender-hierarchical understanding of creation and redemption, which has shaped the Christian tradition in many areas.

overcome dualism nature-culture

Similarly, the dualism of nature and culture is to be problematized, in which women are assigned to nature and men to culture. Feminist theory recognizes that what is considered "nature" is a socially mediated concept which does not exist other than in social dominance relationships.

nature – not a free resource

EFiD also criticizes an understanding of nature as a perpetual, free resource because it is transferred to gender relations and the evaluation of socially meaningful work. Even today, female re/productive work from childbearing and child-rearing to the care of those in need of assistance is still regarded as a "natural resource" – always available and free.

criticize neo-liberal market

Ecofeminist theology criticizes the neoliberal market based on the logic of delimitation: The exploitation of natural resources and the destruction of the environment for the purpose of profit maximization are limitless. The deregulation of markets and the increasing privatization of public property ignore the fact that biological resources are limited.

ethics of restraint

EFiD places the productivity of interruption against the logic of delimitation: The preservation of Creation, assigned to us by God, finds its goal and its completion in the Sabbath and establishes a recurring border for all actions. EFiD is committed to an "ethic of restraint" according to the Sabbath (Jürgen Ebach), which is not an expression of passivity, but rather includes an active yes to the non-application of, for example, technical options such as nuclear energy. The ethics of restraint is rooted in the Reformation understanding of freedom, which also includes freedom from the works.

The preservation of creation as an important task of ecumenism requires a fundamental reversal – from growth and progress to restraint and interruption as signatures of evangelical freedom.

Such reversal is possible if people understand anew that they are not "masters", but part of this earth which is holy to God. Such understanding inevitably sharpens the senses for injustice and strife – it strengthens the hope and nourishes the passion in advocacy to ensure that "justice and peace will kiss each other". (Ps 85:11)

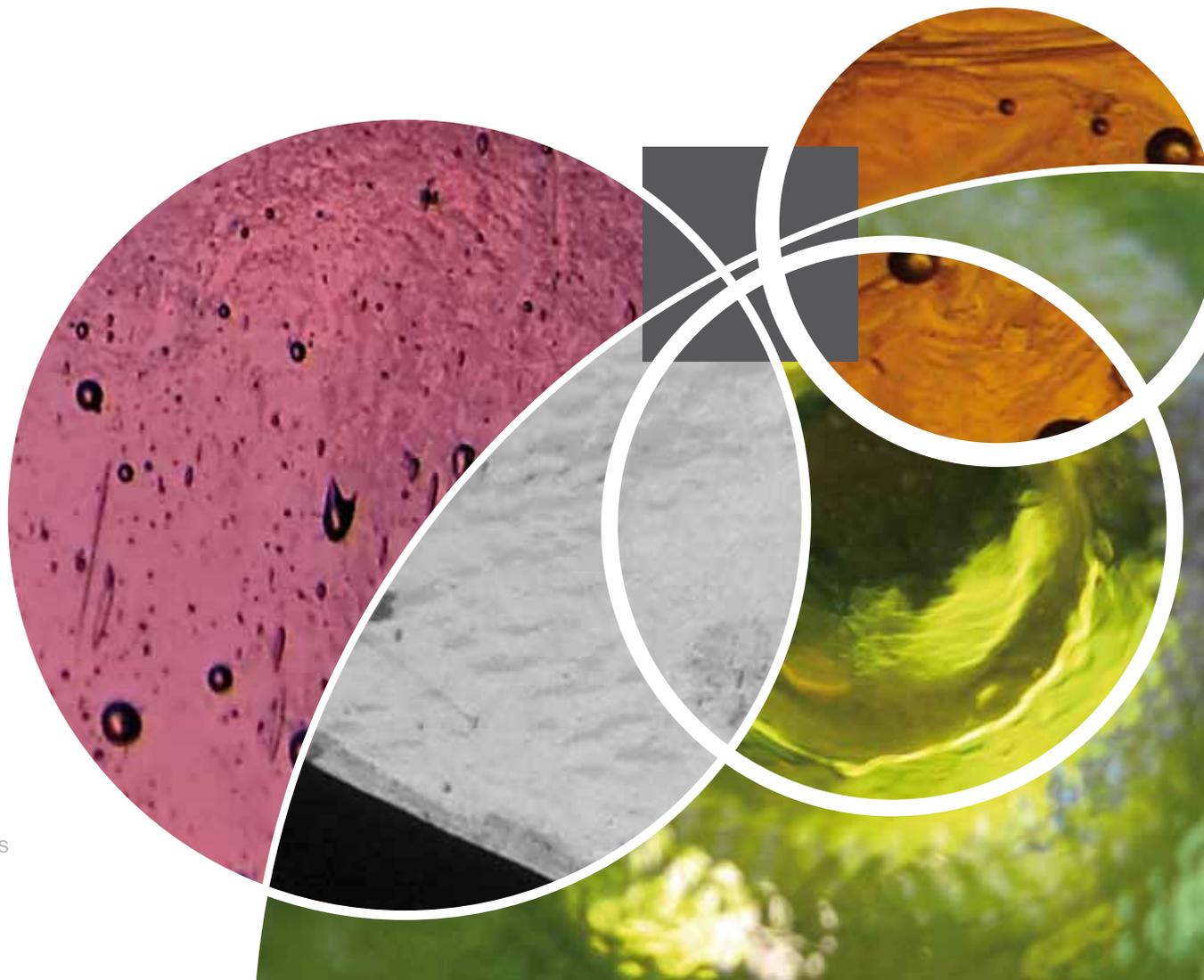
*signatures
of evangelical
freedom*

*not "masters"
but part
of the earth*



CONTENT

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Aus: Dies., Ich höre das Herz des Oleanders.

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TRANSLATION

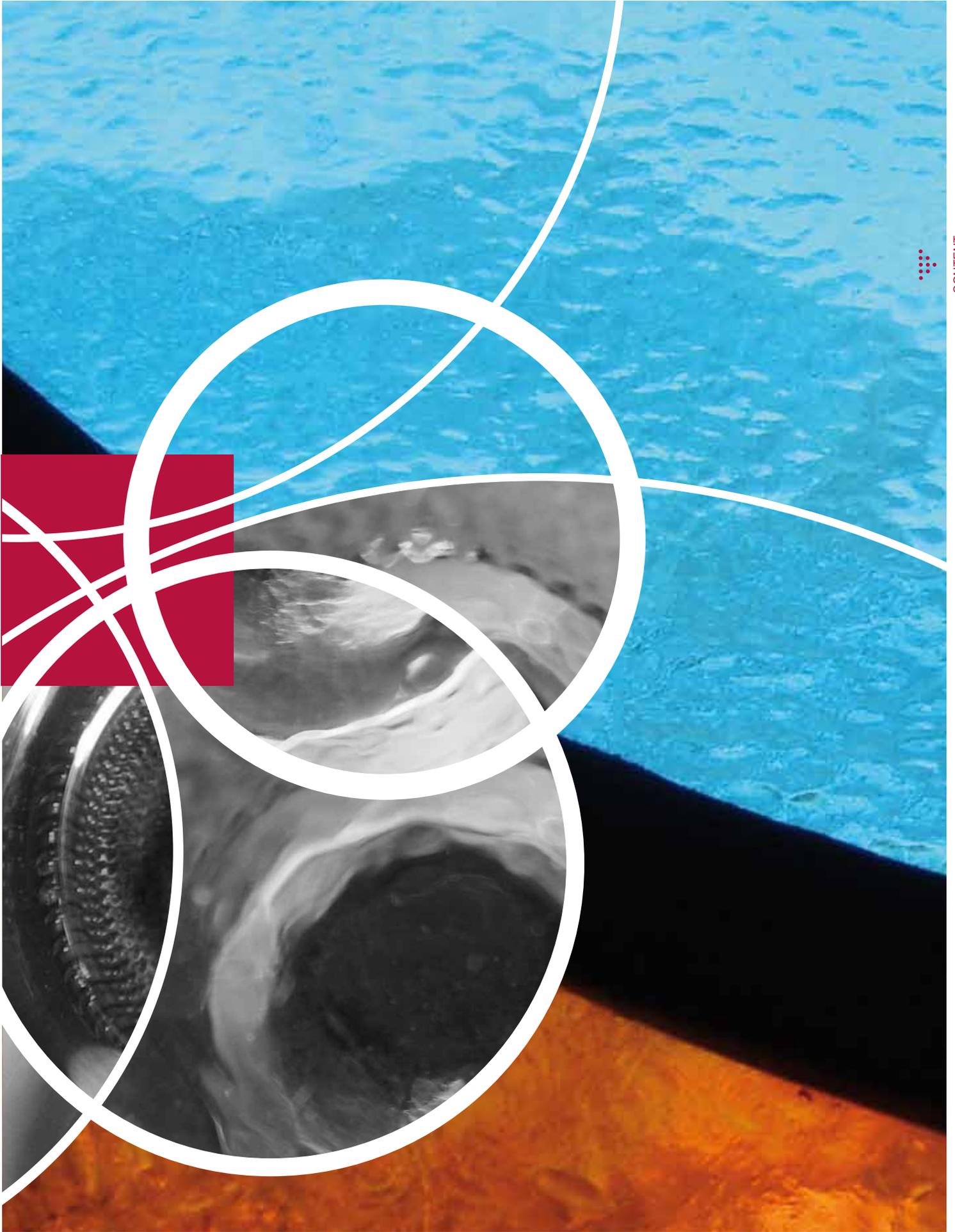
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