

Green Religion vs. the Greening of Religion: a case study of Christian Environmental Stewardship.

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Abstract

Human relationships to the non-human world around us have always been a matter of interest. Such relationships have received a varying amount of attention, and been considered, to varying degrees, the center of human purpose on earth. A resurgence of concern over such relationships with the environmental movement of late 20th century led to both the “greening” of traditional religious theology through a process of expositing long-held normative beliefs, and, to the creation of new “green” religions by defining newly formed sets of beliefs as normative. It is the purpose of this paper to explore the greening of traditional religion by using the theological backdrop of Evangelical Christianity and the present Christian Environmental Stewardship movement as a case study. Specific references will also be made to Jewish and Muslim ideas of environmental stewardship.

Keywords: Christian Environmental Stewardship, Religion

Introduction

Environmentalism is often, rightfully or wrongfully, characterized from the outside as a reactionary movement with a gloom and doom prophetic view of reality. However, human beings have always wondered about our personal and corporate relationship to the world around us. Human contemplation on that relationship has, to varying degrees, placed our service to the rest of the world as the center of human purpose on earth, or, placed the world and its service to us as the nature of that relationship. For the purpose of this paper I will define Green Religions as philosophical beliefs and resultant practices that place human service to the rest of the non-human world as the central focus of our existence on earth. And, I will define Utilitarian Religions as those philosophical beliefs and resultant practices that place service of humanity by the non-human world as the central focus to our existence on earth.

Forestry, as a discipline, sits frustrated at the cross-roads between the extreme utilitarian demand for forest products and the Green Religion of secular environmentalism. This is especially disconcerting to foresters since it was the overuse and resultant decimation of our forests that led to the establishment of Forestry as a discipline but, the present concern for the trees seems to have run a-muck, threatening to derail responsible use of the resource protected and enhanced through the practice of forestry.

It is precisely in the midst of this frustration that I offer a contrast position; Christian Environmental Stewardship. Much human religious practice centers on neither extreme utilitarianism nor the subordination of all human endeavors to the rest of the creation. Rather it centers on human relationship to a Creator God and to the philosophical beliefs and resultant practices of how we should thus live in right relationship with that God. And, because of our relationship to that God, how we should live in right relationship to the human and non-human elements of creation. Such religions have long contained elements that would be at home in Green Religions today. However, these elements spring first from human relationship to the Creator rather than the creation. These elements have persisted within the normal, orthodox theology and praxis of such religions to the present. Yet, such “green” elements have been out of central focus of such religions until the environmental crisis of the late twentieth century when they were re-discovered in a process that I will call the Greening of Religions.

Consider the Greening of Christianity. Christianity has always contained an element of God-commanded concern for the created world, as have Judaism and Islam. Indeed, throughout the Old Testament there is no word for “nature” as an entity separate from humanity such the word Nature is used today (DeWitt 2005), nor can humans be fully understood apart from the land (Habel 1995, Kraftson-Hogue 1998, Bruggerman 1977). Indeed, the very name *Adam* is to *adamah* (the ground or soil) as *Human* is to *humus*. An important human relationship to the earth is further reflected in Genesis with commands for Adam (and Eve) to keep the garden and tend to its fruitfulness, to live in shalom (Genesis 2:15) with all creation (human and non-human). The Psalmists sing praise for the earth being the Lord’s, not man’s (Psalm 24:1). Judeo-Christian tradition also

embodies the concept of human sin affecting the land and God's redemption healing it (2 Chronicles 36:20-21).

Foundational concern for all creation continues to be mentioned in the New Testament with Christ's redemptive purpose on earth, coming for all things (Greek- *ta panta*) not just humans (Colossians 1:16-20). Concern for the created world as part of the kingdom of God is further reflected in Paul's cautionary notes against the Gnostic idea that God was not incarnate in the world (1 Corinthians 15:12-16). It is also explicit in the wording of the Lord's prayer "your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). Consider also Mark 16:15 "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation."

Such earthly elements of theology have remained within the Christian church even to the present. They are not new such as Mathew Fox's thoroughly modern environmental mysticism (Boulton 1990), not old and abandoned doctrines such as Old Testament polygamy, but have been there all along as foundational theological beliefs waiting to be rediscovered. I now present certain persistent "green" elements of Christian tradition in chronological order for the reader's consideration.

Consider the mutuality of human and non-human creatures embodied in the modern hymn "All creatures of our God and King" by Francis of Assisi (1225). These following lines are translated from his original work ca. 1225 AD:

All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing,
Alleluia! Alleluia!
O brother sun with golden beam,
O sister moon with silver gleam,
O praise ye!, O praise ye!
Alleluia! Alleluia!

O brother wind, air, clouds, and rain,
by which all creatures ye sustain,
O praise ye! Alleluia!
Thou rising morn in praise rejoice,
ye lights of evening, find a voice!
O praise ye!, O praise ye!
Alleluia! Alleluia!

Consider the creaturely purpose of revealing the Creator God as pointed out by Calvin DeWitt (1994) from *Article II, Beligic Confession of Faith*, based on Romans 1:20, written in 1561. This confession poses the question "By what means is God made known to us?". It answers:

First by the creation, preservation, and governance of the universe.
since that universe is before our eyes as a most elegant book,

in which all creatures, great and small,
are as letters
to make us ponder
the invisible things of God:
his eternal power and his divinity,
as the Apostle Paul says in Romans 1:20, all things are sufficient to convince men
and leave them without excuse.

Consider John Calvin, in 1554 he summarized that the custody of Eden was given to man, not that he should destroy it, but that he should frugally use it's produce and leave it in better cultivation, more fruitful, than when he received that custody. Thus its fruits would serve humans and human labor would serve and enhance the garden (Sheldon 1992). This idea is one that DeWitt refers to as con-servation, or con-servancy. The "con" of these words means with; thus con-servation in which the human and non-human creatures serve each other as ordained by their mutual Creator (DeWitt 2005).

Consider the imperative for praise given to all creatures, human and non-human alike in The Doxology, (Ken 1674)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise him all creatures here below,
Praise him above ye heavenly hosts,
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost,
AMEN

And later, in 1719, Isaac Watts' hymn Jesus Shall Reign echoes the Psalmist (Psalm 72)

Let every creature arise and bring
Peculiar honours to our king,
Angels descend with songs again,
And earth repeats the loud Amen.

Consider the first two stanzas of Folliot Pierpont's (1864) wildly sung hymn For the Beauty of the Earth (following). It indicates a subtle shift in Christian attitudes towards the non-human Creation; the non-human around is acknowledged as beautiful and directing the observer to praise the Creator, but, the mutuality of creatureliness, expressed in the Biblical narratives and by Francis of Assisi, has been exchanged for a subtle objectification of the non-human creatures.

For the beauty of the earth,
for the glory of the skies,
for the which from our birth,
over and around us lies;
Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

For the beauty of each hour
of the day and of the night,
hill and vale, and tree and flower,
sun and moon, and starts of light;
Lord of all, to thee we raise
this our hymn of grateful praise.

Consider the first two stanzas of the worship staple by Maltbie Babcock (1901) “This is My Father’s World” where Maltbie restores the mutual creatureliness as both human and non-human creatures raise their praise of the Creator:

This is my Father’s world,
and to my listening ears,
all nature sings and ‘round me rings
the music of the spheres.
This is my Father’s world: I rest me in the thought
of rocks and trees, of skies and seas;
his hands the wonders wrought.

This is my Father’s world,
the birds their carols raise,
the morning light, the lilies white,
declare their maker’s praise.
This is my Father’s world: he shine sin all that’s fair;
in the rustling grass I hear him pass;
he speaks to me everywhere.

Consider also the following written in 1915 by forester and hydrologist, Lowdermilk (see Sheldon 1992, Nash 1991). As per Sheldon (1992), Lowdermilk suggested if God had foreseen the results of human degradation of the earth, perhaps there would have been an Eleventh Commandment:

Thou shalt inherit the holy earth as a faithful steward, conserving its resources and productivity from generation to generation. Thou shalt safeguard thy fields from soil erosion, thy living waters from drying up, thy forests from desolation, and protect the hills from overgrazing by the herds, that thy descendants may have abundance forever. If any shall fail in this stewardship of the land, thy fruitful fields shall become sterile and stony ground and wasting gullies, and thy descendants shall live in poverty or perish from the earth.

Despite such thoughts on conservation, throughout the industrial revolution the focus of Christian thinking and publications was on the God-human, human-human relationships. This is clarified by the emphasis on conservation in Lowdermilk’s words; Christian thought about the non-human world had shifted from mutually creatureliness and praise to objectification of the non-human creatures through the industrial revolution. Neighbors became resources and labor. The church responded strongly to the human cost of such

objectification (see Johnson 1990, who describes Adam Smith's third portion in his treatise on Market Economy. Smith comes to say therein that the market cannot work justly unless its participants be necessarily Christian towards one another. See also Sheldon 1989, 1992). Indeed, before 1950, Sheldon (1989) reports that there were only nine Christian publications that deal specifically with the human relationship to non-human creation.

The church did not respond directly to the plight of non-human creatures until after three monumental events. What sparked the change?

First, a transition occurred in the American mindset from use to conservation of resources. By the early Twentieth Century the destructive consequences of resource over-use were obvious. Over-hunting had driven many animals to near extinction, over-harvest had leveled the forests of the eastern United States, and extractive farming practices threatened to destroy the very capacity of our soil to produce food. Out of this chaos sprung the American Conservation movement. This movement focused on wise use of resources. Game Management, Scientific Forestry, and Soil Conservation sought to reverse this trend. Indeed, it was this very attitude of resource protection and wise use that gave rise to Forestry as a discipline. And, during this time the American Conservation began to set aside new sacred places that seemed untouched by human hands. Such places were National Parks and later Wilderness Areas. These were Eden without Adam. Objectification of non-human creatures became deeply entrenched in the American mind. "Lord told Noah to build him an arky, arky, build it out of barky, barky children of the Lord" was a children's song, not a lesson in the Creator's care that commanded the adult Noah to spend a tremendous amount of time, resources, and personal reputation to build a very large boat on a very dry land and save the non-human creatures by his personal sacrifice (DeWitt 1989).

Secondly, Rachel Carson (1962) lambasted the industrialized world with her publication of Silent Spring. This book is the watershed that marked the beginning of the environmental era in America (Sheldon 1992). Though she was immediately attacked as "anti-American" and "anti-progress", the simple power of her message carried forth. That message was if the consequences of industrialized pollution could silence the spring chorus of birds in our front yards, then it is likely it can also likely silence the human chorus of our children's voices next. Carson's message touched off a wave of environmental concern, concern for the non-human world around us. This concern spawned the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts of 1970 because concern for the environment also benefits people. The Endangered Species Act in 1973 expanded this concern to species for their own sake. The church did not respond immediately to even these messages.

Thirdly, Lynn White (1967) attacked the church for its apparent lack of concern over the environment in his historic paper published in *Science*. That paper was entitled "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis". White blamed the church and the idea of dominion (Genesis 2:9) over the creation as the root of the environmental crisis in the Western World (see also Sheldon 1989). White's exegesis of the scriptural idea of dominion was incomplete as was his understanding of the "green" elements of

Christianity, as was directing the blame totally on the church (Sheldon 1992, Van Dyke et al. 1996). However, his paper was widely taken up by critic and friend alike. It touched of a maelstrom of Christian Response, with publications from 1900-1950 numbering less than 10 and growing exponentially White (Sheldon 1989).

Post-White “Greening” of Christianity contrasted to creating a new green religion because it: 1.) focused on historically accepted normative beliefs and practices; 2.) sees human & non-human creaturely relationships as con-servancy, each serving each other as God ordained rather than one primarily serving the other; 3.) arose primarily in response to Lynn White’s (1967) blaming of the ecologic crisis on Christianity and the subsequent reexamination of the faith from within; and, 2.) it includes a tri-lateral relationship emphasis with human-God, human- non-human, and, God- non-human creature relationships.

The Christian response to the environmental crisis began to emerge as Christian Environmental Stewardship by the 1980’s. Calvin DeWitt has been the principle US architect of this greening of religion movement (see , Wilkinson et al. 1980; DeWitt 1989, 1991, 1994, 2003, 2004, 2005) with formative contributions during the same time period by Sheldon (1989, 1992), Nash (1991), Granberg-Michaelson (1987, 1988), (1991, 2003), Van Dyke et al. (1994), Bouma-Prediger (1998), Santmire (1988) amongst others (See Sheldon 1992 for a complete listing). These authors iterate various facets of Christian Environmental Stewardship, each highlighted from within traditionally accepted Christian normative beliefs and practices.

The basic premises of Christian Environmental Stewardship listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Principles of Christian Environmental Stewardship

1. Earth is the Lord’s.
2. Fruitfulness a blessing for all creatures not to be destroyed because of human sin.
3. Stewardship is the dominion of keeping and serving human and non-human Creation.
4. Environmental consequences of sin are real.
5. Reconciliation and Redemption of all Creation is God’s Providence
6. Sabbath rest is holy; to remember God as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer of all.

These ideals have been widely applied serving as the foundational ideals for a number of environmental organizations

Principle 1- The Earth is the Lord’s

Contrary to the common conception that God gave the Earth to humans to do with as we please, this foundational principle holds the Earth is the Lord’s (Psalm 24:1) and we are to hold it in trust as stewards for the Creator. The earth has ascribed value because its Creator said it is good (Genesis 1:9, 18, 21, 25, 31). All creatures upon the Earth also praise the Lord (Psalm 19- Heavens Declare the Glory, Psalm 148, Isaiah 55:12- all the trees of the field will clap their hands, Job 12:7-9, ask the animals... and they will teach you). And, God upholds the creation to the present day (Heb. Hebrews 1:3 “sustaining all

things by his powerful word, Job 12:10- in his hand is the life of every living thing). Further, God answers Job (Job 40, 41) that the hippo and the Nile crocodile are the first of His works, to be respected not out of their value to Job (indeed they are both very dangerous with hippo's killing more people in Africa today than any other animal) but because God made them and pronounced them good.

Principle 2- Fruitfulness is a blessing for all creatures; not to be destroyed because of human sin.

This idea of fruitfulness as God's blessing for all has its roots in Genesis (vs.1:22-28) where animals are first blessed to full the earth then God gives that blessing to other creatures. It is further developed in God's commands to Noah to build an ark and his subsequent covenant with all creatures to never again destroy the earth because of human sin (Genesis 9). DeWitt has termed this "the first endangered species act" (DeWitt 1989).

Principle 3- Stewardship is the dominion of keeping and serving human and non-human Creation.

This principle is the foundational concept of the Christian Environmental Stewardship movement. Genesis 1:28 gives humans dominion over the earth. The Hebrew in this passage is *kabesh* and *redah*; very strongly interpreted this would seem to grant absolute power. Yet this is tempered by Genesis 2:15 where the Hebrew *abad* and *shamar* are used which mean dominion is a tilling and keeping like one keeps and prunes an already established orchard tree to make it more fruitful (see also Joshua 24:15; Numbers 6:24). As the first steward Adam is Namer (Genesis 2:19-20), implying that knowledge of each kind and each kind's true identity is necessary for Adam to accurately name his fellow creatures. Christ is further developed throughout the Bible as the exemplar King of Kings (see Van Dyke et al. 1996).

4. Environmental consequences of sin are real.

We know this empirically (Sheldon and Foster 2003, DeWitt 2003, Wilkinson et al. 1980, 1991). Biblical admonition against elimination of other creatures is found in Isaiah 5:8- "woe unto you who join house unto house and field unto field until you live alone in the land." God's covenantal relationship with Creation is eluded to in Isaiah 24:4-6 (the covenant is probably that referred to in Genesis 9); Hosea 4:3 decries the results of our disobedience of God's laws; Jeremiah 2:7, 12:4 give the negative consequences of our disobedience; Ezekiel 34:18 gives strong admonishment not to pollute & destroy the sustainability of Creation; cultural and social degradation are linked with environmental degradation in Leviticus 25:17, 23, 28; Jeremiah 8:7, Isaiah 24:4-5; Deuteronomy 30:19-20 (see also DeWitt 2004); and lastly, Revelation 11:18 states the destroyers of the earth will be destroyed.

5. Reconciliation and Redemption of all Creation is God's Providence

Even in the Old Testament, healing of the land is connected with the healing of the people's relationship with the Creator God. (2 Chronicles 36:20-21). In the New Testament John 3:16 says God's love is for the whole world as the Greek used there is *kosmos* for all things. Colossians 1:16-20 states that Christ is the redeemer and reconciler of all things (Greek is *ta panta*, all things) while Romans 8:18-28 states that all Creation waits in eager expectation for redemption of the sons of men and the subsequent service of redeemed humanity to the rest of creation. Revelation 21-22- the redeemed Creation includes plants, water in city of light

6. Sabbath rest is holy; to remember God as Creator, Sustainer, and Redeemer of all.

More than an antiquated religious idea, the Sabbath is central to the creatures of Creation. God created on the first six days, calling them good. But, on the seventh day he rested and called it Holy (Genesis 5:1, 26:14, 32, 35). It helps humans function better, takes the burden off of creation for forcing it to meet our whims (DeWitt 1994, 1991; Van Dyke et al. 1996). The Sabbath and Jubilee are for the benefit of all creatures (Exodus 23:6, Leviticus 25:1, 26:14, 32, 35). Sabbath rest is probably one of the most ignored of all stewardship ideas today.

Proponents of Christian Environmental Stewardship see these six tenets, phrased in various fashions, as central organizing principles to their lives on earth. Criticism launched from inside the movement (Santmire 2003) has called for decentralization of these principles; of movement of them from the center of one's beliefs and processes to part and parcel of a larger call for Christians to focus on God's kingdom (Santmire 2003) with piety and service to other people being virtues (Bouma-Prediger 1998).

Though evangelicals have been involved in environmental stewardship (Wilson 1998, Ball 1998), it is the expansionist critique from within that has drawn more conservative evangelical leaders into a distinctly Christian view of environmentalism, placing humans' relationship to the Creator and Redeemer clearly at the center of our relationships to both humans and non-human creation. That "Greening of Evangelicals" is what is referred to by Harden (2005) and is an extension of the Greening of Religion idea that I have referred to. In part, acknowledgement of this shift in the movement has led to the signing of the Evangelical Call to Civic Responsibility by the National Association of Evangelicals; representing 50,000 member churches and over 30 million evangelicals. Signatories of this include evangelicals such James Dobson and Billy Graham. Harden (2005) writes

"The environment is a values issue," said the Rev. Ted Haggard, president of the 30 million-member National Association of Evangelicals. "There are significant and compelling theological reasons why it should be a banner issue for the Christian right."

In October, the association's leaders adopted an "Evangelical Call to Civic Responsibility" that, for the first time, emphasized every Christian's duty to care for the planet and the role of government in safeguarding a sustainable environment.

"We affirm that God-given dominion is a sacred responsibility to steward the earth and not a license to abuse the creation of which we are a part," said the statement, which has been distributed to 50,000 member churches. "Because clean air, pure water, and adequate resources are crucial to public health and civic order, government has an obligation to protect its citizens from the effects of environmental degradation."

Several other Christian organizations have environmental stewardship or creation keeping as their central focus. They include Evangelical Environmental Network, Academy of Evangelical Ethicists and Scientists, Creation Care Studies Program, Restoring Eden, Educational Concerns for Hunger, and, Au Sable Institute for Environmental Studies. Weblinks follow the reference section of this article.

Christian Critics outside the movement have missed the Biblical call for stewardship (Wright 1995). Their attempts to co-opt the movement's momentum and re-craft its messages based solely on human good. Calvin Beisner is chief among those seeking to "un-green" stewardship. His website for the Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (see below for link) speaks for itself in misunderstanding the links between environmental degradation, such as global warming, and the degradation of the poor. Fortunately such co-opting voices are in the minority.

"Yet for some time, a growing chorus of voices has been attempting to redefine traditional Judeo-Christian teachings on stewardship, and ultimately, our duties as responsible human beings.

These advocates are passionate about the environment. Unfortunately, their passion is often based on a romantic view of nature, a misguided distrust of science and technology, and an intense focus on problems that are highly speculative and largely irrelevant to meeting our obligations to the world's poor."

Other faith traditions have also re-discovered their own "green elements", seeing environmental stewardship as a command from God (Deen 2004). Links to these sites follow at the end of this article. And an excellent survey can be found at the Harvard Divinity School Center for Study of World Religions, Ecology site summarizing papers presented there over the course of three years from 1996-1998. A classic quote describing the re-discovery of such ideas is expressed on the Coalition on Environment and Jewish Life's website (see link after article)

"PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IS A MITZVAH!

Protecting human health and the diversity of life is a value emphasized in Torah, Talmud, and rabbinic literature throughout the ages—beginning with the commandment in Genesis for Adam and Eve to serve and protect the Garden of Eden.

I'm Jewish—why haven't I ever heard about a connection between Judaism and the environment?

Many Jews haven't. Despite the richness of Jewish teachings related to our responsibility to protect the environment, few Jews have been introduced to them."

Interfaith coalitions have also grown in scope and importance. Amongst the newest is the NOAH alliance and Prince Phillip's ARC (Alliance on Religion and Conservation). Amongst the most longstanding is the National Religious Environment. From their website (link below):

"In the late 1980's and early 1990's, interest in addressing the environmental crisis began to grow exponentially within diverse fields of religious life.

Senior religious leaders met throughout 1991 and 1992 amid increasingly urgent concern about environmental conditions. Appreciation for what could be a distinctively religious contribution also grew as ancient teachings were seen to have powerful relevance to contemporary challenges.

Establishment of the Partnership was approved at the highest levels of denominational governance in late 1992. Rarely had agreement been reached across so broad a spectrum on so specific a program. And in October 1993, with staff based at national offices of participating faith groups, the Partnership set about its work."

Conclusion

In conclusion, elements of environmental concern, better understood as "stewardship of" and "commands to care for" the non-human creation, have long existed in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. These traditions have re-discovered such ideas of stewardship from their own scriptures and traditions in the last twenty years. But these re-discovered ideas have proven a strong basis for understanding how humans have called to participate in the creation. They have also served as powerful motivators for interfaith coalitions with care of God's creation. These traditions call not for wise use out of enlightened self-interest, or preservation of creation apart from human presence. Instead they call for a God-commanded "con-servacy" of stewardship in which humans serve all of creation and the rest of creation in turn serves us. It is this religious concept that holds substantial promise for Forestry as we approach the forests of tomorrow.

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Organizations

The Following are a series of faith-based environmental organizations. Textual descriptions following their web site address are quoted from their own web pages. My intention is that this list shows the larger inter-faith partnerships first, the evangelical Christian coalitions and Jewish coalitions second, and, the larger academic educational organizations last. These sites feature many links to other organizations. I have excluded traditional faith related colleges and their environmental educational programs only in the interest of space. Many such programs can be found at the institutions referenced by the coalition educational organizations following.

Interfaith Partnerships

Alliance of Religions and Conservation

<http://www.arcworld.org/>

ARC is a secular body that helps the major religions of the world to develop their own environmental programmes, based on their own core teachings, beliefs and practices. We help the religions link with key environmental organisations – creating powerful alliances between faith communities and conservation groups. ARC was founded in 1995 by HRH Prince Philip. We now work with 11 major faiths through the key traditions within each faith.

National Religious Partnership for the Environment

<http://www.nrpe.org/>

Guided by biblical teaching, the Partnership seeks to encourage people of faith to weave values and programs of care for God's creation throughout the entire fabric of religious life:

- Liturgy, worship and prayer;
- Theological study, the education of future clergy, and of the young;
- The stewardship of our homes, lands and resources;
- Protecting the lives of our communities and health of our children;
- Our social ministry to the poor and vulnerable who have first and preferential claim on our conscience; and
- Bringing the perspectives of moral values and social justice before public policymakers.

We worship and obey our loving God by serving God's good creation in neighborly love and in the assurance of God's covenant "between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations" (Genesis 9:12). Finally, we seek as well to offer and will eagerly discuss the insights of scripture, moral teaching and social values, especially as they have come from sustained social struggle and solidarity with those who have reached fresh freedom to serve the common good.

Noah Alliance

<http://www.noahalliance.org/>

The Noah Alliance is a new collaboration of Jewish, Evangelical, Protestant, and other religious community organizations, and individual people of faith, that are concerned about the protection of endangered species and biological diversity.

Academy of Evangelical Ethicists and Scientists

see <http://www.noahalliance.org/>

Among its nearly 70 members, the Academy of Evangelical Scientists and Ethicists includes scientists and ethicists that have been consulted by evangelical leaders, other Christian leaders, and leaders of Jewish and other religions over three decades.

Membership in the Academy is restricted to evangelical scientists and ethicists who have



earned the highest degrees in their disciplines and who are actively engaged in their fields of expertise in research, college and university teaching, and public service. The Academy also contains a Council of professional scientists and ethicists that are distinguished by having made very substantial contributions to the professional primary refereed literature.

Evangelical and Jewish Coalitions

Evangelical Environmental Network

<http://www.creationcare.org/>

EEN is a unique evangelical ministry whose purpose is to "declare the Lordship of Christ over all creation" (Col. 1:15-20). EEN was formed because we recognize many "environmental" problems are fundamentally spiritual problems. EEN's flagship publication, Creation Care magazine, provides you with biblically informed and timely articles on topics ranging from how to protect your loved ones against environmental threats to how you can more fully praise the Creator for the wonder of His creation.

Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life

<http://www.coejl.org/index.php>

Protecting human health and the diversity of life is a value emphasized in Torah, Talmud, and rabbinic literature throughout the ages—beginning with the commandment in Genesis for Adam and Eve to serve and protect the Garden of Eden.

COEJL seeks to expand the contemporary understanding of such Jewish values as *tikkun olam* (repairing the world) and *tzedek* (justice) to include the protection of both people and other species from environmental degradation. COEJL seeks to extend such traditions as social action and *g'milut hasadim* (performing deeds of loving kindness) to environmental action and advocacy. And *shalom* (peace or wholeness), which is at the very core of Jewish aspirations, is in its full sense harmony in all creation.

Restoring Eden

<http://www.restoringeden.org/>

Restoring Eden makes hearts bigger, hands dirtier and voices stronger by encouraging Christians to learn to love, serve and protect God's creation.

Restoring Eden is not a traditional ministry - we are less about membership and programs, and more about a conversation and a community that lives out the biblical mandate to "speak out for those who cannot speak for themselves" (Proverbs 31:8) as advocates for natural habitats, wild species and indigenous subsistence cultures.

International Educational Organizations

Au Sable Institute for Environmental Studies

<http://www.ausable.org>

Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies provides university-level courses with transferable credits to over 50 colleges and universities, the framework and services for sustainable community-building, environmental education and restoration for school children and adults, facilities for community and environmental organizations, community and regional conferences and retreats, and outreach services. We do this in the [Great Lakes Forest](#) of northern Michigan, Puget Sound in the [Pacific Northwest](#), north of the [Everglades](#), [East Africa](#), and [South India](#).

Creation Care Studies Program

<http://www.creationcsp.org/index.html>

The Creation Care Study Program is a high-caliber academic semester abroad connecting Christian faith with the most complex, urgent global issues of the coming decades. Two programs during both fall and spring semesters: one in Belize, Central America and one in the South Pacific (New Zealand and Samoa).

Educational Concerns for Hunger Organization (ECHO)

<http://www.echonet.org/>

A Not-for-profit Christian organization located on a demonstration farm in North Fort Myers, Florida. Our vision is to bring glory to God and a blessing to mankind by using science and technology to help the poor. We strive to provide ideas, training, information, and seeds critical to those working in agricultural development in third world countries.

Other Religions

Harvard Divinity School Center for Study of World Religions, Ecology

<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/research/ecology/index.html>

The Religions of the World and Ecology conference series, hosted by the Center for the Study of World Religions, was the result of research conducted at the Center over a three-year period (1996-1998). Conferences involved the direct participation and collaboration of some seven hundred scholars, religious leaders and environmental specialists from around the world.

These conferences were organized by the Center for the Study of World Religions and cosponsored by Bucknell University and the Center for Respect of Life and Environment of the Humane Society of the United States.

Islam, Science, Environment, and Technology.

<http://www.islamset.com/env/index.html>

from SECTION ONE: A General Introduction to Islam's Attitude Toward the Universe, Natural Resources, and the Relation Between Man and Nature

The approach of Islam toward the use and development of the earth's resources was put thus by 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, the fourth Caliph, to a man who had developed and reclaimed abandoned land: "Partake of it gladly, so long as you are a benefactor, not a despoiler; a cultivator, not a destroyer."¹⁶

This positive attitude involves taking measures to improve all aspects of life: health, nutrition, and the psychological and spiritual dimensions, for man's benefit and the maintenance of his welfare, as well as for the betterment of life for all future generations.

[T]he aim of both the conservation and development of the environment in Islam is the universal good of all created beings.

Harvard Forum on Islam and Ecology

<http://www.hds.harvard.edu/cswr/research/ecology/>

Excerpt from Plenary Address by Seyyed Hossein Nasr at Harvard Divinity School, Center for Study of World Religions' conference on Islam and Ecology, May 7-10, 1998

Although there is an environmental crisis in the Islamic world today as a result of the onslaught of modernization, Islam as a religion teaches a view of the environment based upon the harmony between humans as God's vice regent on earth and nature as a reflection of God's Wisdom. Classical Islamic civilization demonstrated on many levels this harmony based on Qur'anic teachings which need to be resuscitated in light of present day needs to encounter the frightful effects of the environmental crisis.

Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences

<http://www.ifees.org>

IFEES networks world-wide with NGOs, international organisations, academic bodies and grass roots organisations and invites collaboration from organisations and individuals from all persuasions who are also dedicated to the maintenance of the Earth as a healthy habitat for future generations of humankind as well as other living beings.