

Chapter 1 : 15 Current Environmental Problems That Our World is Facing - Conserve Energy Future

Development and the Environmental Crisis: Red or Green Alternatives [Michael Redcliff] on calendrierdelascience.com
**FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. First published in , Michael Redcliff's book makes the global environmental crisis a central concern of political economy and its structural causes a central concern of environmentalism. Michael.*

Marc Williams Introduction Environmental considerations have played an increasingly important role in the global political economy since the s. Since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio in focused attention on the relationship between environmental degradation, poverty, development, social justice and trade, governmental and non-governmental organisations have promoted sustainability as a key goal. The relationship between aid and the environment is arguably complicated. On one hand, many economists argue that aid has an essential role to play in the promotion of economic development, and can be helpful in promoting principles of sustainability. On the other hand, not only have many critics doubted the efficacy of aid but many have detailed the environmentally damaging consequences of many aid projects. This paper is not intended as an empirical evaluation of recent trends in the allocation and distribution of foreign aid. It is, rather, an examination of the theoretical presuppositions and logical coherence of an ostensible new approach to development finance The impetus for a redefinition of the foreign aid strategy in the s comes from changes in the global political economy and global political system. A new approach to development-sustainable development-has mirrored these changes. Sustainable development is presented as a new approach to development which while promoting development also responds to the growing environmental crisis. The aim of the paper is to see how foreign aid, one of the core economic practices of the post-war era, has been forced to respond to a shift in the development paradigm. In other words, this paper examines changes in the aid regime in the s occasioned by a move to the framework of sustainable development. First, the paper will attempt to clarify the contours of the development discourse that originated after the Second World War. The next part of the paper will interrogate the concept of sustainable development and argue that sustainable development fails to provide a convincing alternative to the dominant theory of development It will then situate the theory and practice of aid within the dominant development discourse. The paper will then reflect on the shift in aid policy in the era of sustainable development. The central question thus concerns the extent to which adoption of the sustainable development paradigm has transformed the aid regime. Regime Theory and Discourse Analysis For over a decade, regime theory, in either its liberal or realist variants, has been the dominant approach to international co-operation. The promise of regime theory lies in its recognition of the diverse channels connecting national societies and its stress on the importance of institutional factors in the determination of outcomes in world politics. Regimes matter because ideas, principles, and norms are important in a sociological account of international relations. Regimes also provide a means of examining both the outcome of self-interested behavior and the results of institutionalised behavior which cannot be linked to self-interested action in the narrow manner of realism. Nevertheless, there are a number of inherent limitations in the regime approach. First, regime theory rarely provides convincing explanations for the origins of regimes. Secondly, much of the regime literature tends to view regimes in consensual terms thus underestimating the role of power in the construction and maintenance of regimes. Instead of thinking of norms in consensual terms it is closer to reality to define them in terms of dominance-"the dominant standards of behavior that apply to a specific issue-area" Uvin, Contemporary regime theory, despite its promise, is unable to provide a satisfactory understanding of the politics of development assistance. The marginalisation of aid recipients is taken as a given and the role of power considerations in the construction of aid policy rendered unproblematic. The relationship between transformations in the global political economy and changes in institutions, norms and principles necessitates a conceptual framework which draws attention to the relationship between knowledge and power. The relationship between power and knowledge has been explored through discourse analysis. Knowledge is no longer an objective absolute but part of a socially constructed narrative linked to power relations. Exploration of the relationship between power, knowledge and the creation of discourses involves a politicisation and

deconstruction of these concepts. Michel Foucault, through diverse investigations of, among other things, madness and sexuality in Western society, came to the conclusion that notions of objective truth and knowledge are used as methods of exclusion—ways of dismissing other truths and narratives. What are its claims to legitimacy based on? Through what processes does it deconstruct and normalise its subjects? In what ways do these processes exclude other narratives?? Development as Discourse Development has emerged as a powerful set of theories and practices which has influenced the post-war evolution of the developing world. It is instructive to note that a focus on economic and social development has always assumed that the advanced industrial countries have attained a stage in which considerations of development are absent. To examine development as discourse means to understand why so many countries started to see themselves as underdeveloped in the post-war period, how development became a fundamental problem and how whole fields of knowledge and endless strategies were devoted to this task. For Foucault, discourses constitute ways of specifying knowledge and truth. To be more precise, we must not think of a world of discourse divided between accepted discourse and excluded discourse, or between the dominated discourse and the dominated one; but as a multiplicity of discursive elements that come into play in various strategies. In other words, knowledge is institutionalised through the creation of discourse, a "conceptual terrain in which knowledge is formed and produced" Foucault, The rules and practices surrounding discourse delimit and define the legitimate mode of thought and perception of the thinker; one therefore cannot think outside a limited field of knowledge. Thus external forms of knowledge are dominated by being excluded. In short, "to know involves acts of power" Hobart, Discourse as used here does not refer solely to the production of ideologies. Positivist thinking has reduced discourse to the opposite of the real or merely its reflection and assumes, on the one hand, the existence of an objective world independent of any discursive mediation and, on the other, discourse structures which are pure expressions of thought, unrelated to materiality. However, it must be recognised that discourse partakes of fundamental materiality; it involves a series of material elements and processes which articulates it on a domain of things, through which the production of truth is organised. Discourse determines ways of doing things where the real is given shape by those who conceptualise and manage it. An approach to development as discourse recognises the reality behind poverty and underdevelopment, but its concern is with understanding how these conditions have been constructed as underdevelopment, and what have been the consequences of doing so. In other words, how are conditions in the Third World integrated into an institutional field to be solved through private capital, foreign aid, industrialisation, etc. Escobar has argued that the development discourse created after the Second World War was aimed at a total restructuring of the underdeveloped societies. From early modernisation theories onwards, the main preoccupation of theorists and politicians was the kinds of development that needed to be pursued to solve the economic and social problems of the Third World. The result was that, despite criticisms of any given approach and proposed modifications, development itself was never questioned. Governments and multilateral institutions continue to design and implement development plans and programmes with the aid of development experts. In sum, the development discourse had colonised reality. The development discourse is hierarchically constituted; "it privileges certain kinds of information scientific, positivist over others local, experiential and certain kinds of knowers neutral, detached over others committed, involved" Kabeer, This is equally true of knowledge in international relations. He argues that "Orientalism can be discussed and analysed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient. As in the orientalist discourses examined by Said, development or developmentalism has functioned as a mechanism for the production and management of the Third World in the post-war period. This was achieved through the systematic elaboration of fields of knowledge and institutions which made possible the establishment of forms of power through which individuals, government officials, and occasionally whole communities recognised themselves as underdeveloped, or to put it another way, as unfinished manifestations of the Western ideal. These fields of knowledge covered entire domains related to southern economies, societies and cultures. They constituted a system for organising the production of truth about the Third World. The knowledge that was produced in this effort made possible the exercise of power in novel ways. The specific model of international development being promoted was essentially the entrance into the global capitalist market through industrialisation and specialisation of agriculture. A discourse such as

development can be characterised by the fact that the regime of formation of statements is carefully regulated. As a result, only a relatively limited number of things can be said within a given discourse. Development was characterised from the outset by certain basic statements relating a few variables such as capital, technology and resources. Industrialisation, population control, technical change in agriculture etc. All repeat in different ways the same set of statements. However, the continuity is difficult to see as the discourse creates endless prescriptions, views, institutions and programmes. Thus an impression of development as a learning process is created. But development as a grand theory providing solutions to the problems of global poverty has failed to deliver on its promises. The failures of development theory, especially increased environmental degradation led to the search for a new approach such as sustainable development. Sustainable Development Sustainable development as an idea and practice is the latest in a long line of major approaches to economic development. Whether sustainable development is the major paradigm in contemporary debates on development or one approach among many is a moot point. It is, in its various guises, the dominant solution to the problems of environmental degradation and poverty in the South. Sustainable development represents a new justification for intervention in the developing world. The terrain for intervention has been extended to include governance, the role of civil society and the stewardship of environmental resources. If earlier versions of development theory were formed in the context of the Cold War sustainable development has been articulated, for the most part, in the post-Cold War era. The geo-political context is neither accidental nor irrelevant. The emergence of different forms of conditionality is linked to considerations of global power. Intervention, in the guise of concern for environmental degradation, becomes yet another incursion by Western interests in the domination and subjugation of non-western peoples. The upsurge of interest in the environment on the part of development theorists and practitioners is the result of a myriad of factors. It is partly connected to a new awareness of ecological processes and of the necessity to reorient the development process. It is also related to a modification in certain practices, for example, assessing the environmental impact of development projects, obtaining knowledge at the local level, and small-scale development assistance by non-governmental organisations NGOs. New social situations created by the failure of top-down development projects, the social and ecological problems associated with these failures and new forms of protest have also had an influence on the increased interest in sustainable development. Finally, new economic and technological processes on a global scale that have resulted in heightened awareness of global processes Escobar, The problem with the use of the term sustainable development is its vagueness. It has proved very difficult to formulate a definition that is comprehensible, while retaining analytical precision. Sustainable development has been the subject of diverse definitions from a number of commentators Pearce, Markandya, and Barbier, As a result, it has come to mean very different things to ecologists, economists, planners and politicians. In its favour is the positive connotation implicit in the term. It is unlikely that any person or organisation would willingly endorse unsustainable development. Sustainable development is not necessarily identified with increased consumption and production but with an improved quality of life where the state of the natural environment is taken into consideration. One of the sources of conceptual confusion surrounding the term is that no agreement exists regarding what exactly is to be sustained. The goal of sustainability sometimes refers to the resource base itself, and sometimes to the livelihoods which are derived from it. Some commentators refer to sustaining levels of production, while others emphasise sustaining levels of consumption. The difference is important since development at the global level has become unsustainable, largely due to patterns of overconsumption in the advanced industrial countries. However, policies for sustainable development that have been put forward, to date, are essentially production-oriented. Nevertheless, it is possible to discern several core assumptions in the various definitions of sustainable development. First, sustainable development appears to require an inescapable commitment to equity, specifically inter-generational equity.

Chapter 2 : China's Environmental Crisis: A Billion Dollar Opportunity | HuffPost

I became convinced that the development community's response falls short of what is needed to address the global environmental crisis while increasingly efficient tools are now available to meet the colossal challenges at hand.

There is no denying that. However, as our environment changes, so does the need to become increasingly aware of the problems that surround it. With a massive influx of natural disasters, warming and cooling periods, different types of weather patterns and much more, people need to be aware of what types of environmental problems our planet is facing. Global warming has become an undisputed fact about our current livelihoods; our planet is warming up and we are definitely part of the problem. All across the world, people are facing a wealth of new and challenging environmental problems every day. Some of them are small and only affect a few ecosystems, but others are drastically changing the landscape of what we already know. Our planet is poised at the brink of a severe environmental crisis. Current environmental problems make us vulnerable to disasters and tragedies, now and in the future. We are in a state of planetary emergency, with environmental problems piling up high around us. Unless we address the various issues prudently and seriously we are surely doomed for disaster. Current environmental problems require urgent attention. Pollution of air, water and soil require millions of years to recoup. Industry and motor vehicle exhaust are the number one pollutants. Heavy metals, nitrates and plastic are toxins responsible for pollution. While water pollution is caused by oil spill, acid rain, urban runoff; air pollution is caused by various gases and toxins released by industries and factories and combustion of fossil fuels; soil pollution is majorly caused by industrial waste that deprives soil from essential nutrients. Climate changes like global warming is the result of human practices like emission of Greenhouse gases. The population of the planet is reaching unsustainable levels as it faces shortage of resources like water, fuel and food. Population explosion in less developed and developing countries is straining the already scarce resources. Intensive agriculture practiced to produce food damages the environment through use of chemical fertilizer, pesticides and insecticides. Overpopulation is one of the crucial current environmental problem. Natural resource depletion is another crucial current environmental problems. Fossil fuel consumption results in emission of Greenhouse gases, which is responsible for global warming and climate change. Globally, people are taking efforts to shift to renewable sources of energy like solar, wind, biogas and geothermal energy. The cost of installing the infrastructure and maintaining these sources has plummeted in the recent years. The over consumption of resources and creation of plastics are creating a global crisis of waste disposal. Developed countries are notorious for producing an excessive amount of waste or garbage and dumping their waste in the oceans and, less developed countries. Nuclear waste disposal has tremendous health hazards associated with it. Plastic, fast food, packaging and cheap electronic wastes threaten the well being of humans. Waste disposal is one of urgent current environmental problem. Climate change is yet another environmental problem that has surfaced in last couple of decades. It occurs due to rise in global warming which occurs due to increase in temperature of atmosphere by burning of fossil fuels and release of harmful gases by industries. Climate change has various harmful effects but not limited to melting of polar ice, change in seasons, occurrence of new diseases, frequent occurrence of floods and change in overall weather scenario. Human activity is leading to the extinction of species and habitats and and loss of bio-diversity. Eco systems, which took millions of years to perfect, are in danger when any species population is decimating. Balance of natural processes like pollination is crucial to the survival of the eco-system and human activity threatens the same. Another example is the destruction of coral reefs in the various oceans, which support the rich marine life. Our forests are natural sinks of carbon dioxide and produce fresh oxygen as well as helps in regulating temperature and rainfall. Deforestation simply means clearing of green cover and make that land available for residential, industrial or commercial purpose. It is a direct impact of excessive production of CO₂. The main impact is on shellfish and plankton in the same way as human osteoporosis. Once these toxic gases reach the upper atmosphere, they cause a hole in the ozone layer, the biggest of which is above the Antarctic. Ozone layer is valuable because it prevents harmful UV radiation from reaching the earth. This is one of the most important current environmental problem. Acid rain

occurs due to the presence of certain pollutants in the atmosphere. Clean drinking water is becoming a rare commodity. Water is becoming an economic and political issue as the human population fights for this resource. One of the options suggested is using the process of desalinization. Industrial development is filling our rivers seas and oceans with toxic pollutants which are a major threat to human health. Urban sprawl refers to migration of population from high density urban areas to low density rural areas which results in spreading of city over more and more rural land. Urban sprawl results in land degradation, increased traffic, environmental issues and health issues. The ever growing demand of land displaces natural environment consisting of flora and fauna instead of being replaced. The current environmental problems pose a lot of risk to health of humans, and animals. Dirty water is the biggest health risk of the world and poses threat to the quality of life and public health. Run-off to rivers carries along toxins, chemicals and disease carrying organisms. Pollutants cause respiratory disease like Asthma and cardiac-vascular problems. High temperatures encourage the spread of infectious diseases like Dengue. Genetic modification of food using biotechnology is called genetic engineering. Genetic modification of food results in increased toxins and diseases as genes from an allergic plant can transfer to target plant. Genetically modified crops can cause serious environmental problems as an engineered gene may prove toxic to wildlife. Another drawback is that increased use of toxins to make insect resistant plant can cause resultant organisms to become resistant to antibiotics. The need for change in our daily lives and the movements of our government is growing. If humans continue moving forward in such a harmful way towards the future, then there will be no future to consider. By raising awareness in your local community and within your families about these issues, you can help contribute to a more environmentally conscious and friendly place for you to live.

Chapter 3 : The environmental crisis

AID, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS Marc Williams Introduction. Environmental considerations have played an increasingly important role in the global political economy since the s.

The world is facing a very serious environmental crisis. Key environmental problems include air pollution, the destruction of the ozone layer, vast quantities of toxic waste, massive levels of soil erosion, the possible exhaustion of key natural resources such as oil and coal, and the extinction of plants and animals on a scale not seen since the death of the dinosaurs 60 million years ago. We think that this crisis is likely to have catastrophic effects in the future. Even today, the negative effects of the crisis are evident in the form of growing deserts, increased rates of cancer, and the loss of plant species which could hold out cures for diseases for diseases such as AIDS etc. What caused the crisis? We disagree with those environmentalists who blame the crisis on modern machine production. Many dangerous, environmentally destructive technologies and substances for example, coal power stations, non-degradable plastics which do not rot in the ground can be replaced with safer and sustainable industrial technologies for example, solar technology, starch-based plastics. We think that modern forms of production have many potential advantages over small-scale craft production. Such as greatly increasing the number of essential products like bricks produced, and freeing people from unpleasant toil. Most goods consumed in the world are consumed by the middle class and ruling class. Instead, the real blame for the environmental crisis must be laid at the door of capitalism and the State. These structures create massive levels of inequality which are responsible for much ecological devastation. The accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of the few is associated with excessive and unjustifiable high levels of consumption by the ruling elite. The poverty caused by the system also creates environmental problems. For example, by forcing the poor to cut down trees for firewood, exhaust the tiny bits of farm land that they own in a desperate attempt to provide food, pollute rivers because they lack proper plumbing facilities etc. Capitalists also build many goods to break as soon as possible forcing people to buy replacements , thus resulting in unnecessary waste. Many goods that are produced are deliberately destroyed in order to keep prices up, such as the million tons of grain stockpiled world-wide in Capitalists have developed safe, alternative technologies, which can replace environmentally destructive processes and substances. But they do not want to install these new technologies, or even proper safety and monitoring equipment, because this costs money and cuts into profits. They prefer to leave ordinary people to suffer pollution. Capitalists also promote inefficient and resource-wasting products in place of those which are more suited to sustaining the environment. For example, they promote private car ownership which consumes massive amounts of petrol per person , in place of public transport systems which minimise fuel consumption. The State defends and supports these practices. It does not want to impose strong environmental protection laws in case this hampers profit-making. In addition, the military activities of the State are a major cause of the environmental crisis. Massive amounts of resources are wasted on the building the repressive arm of the State: Weapons such as nuclear bombs have been developed which are capable of destroying all life on earth. Often, the knowledge acquired in making these weapons is applied to industry, resulting in very dangerous technologies such as nuclear power from research on nuclear bombs , and pesticides from research on chemical weapons. Working people, unions and the environment We think that environmental issues are directly relevant to working class, poor and working peasant people. These oppressed classes are the main victims of the environmental crisis. It is the workers who have to work in the factories that spew out toxic waste, who have to spray the pesticides which poison the land and water. It is the communities of the poor which are built next to the polluting industrial areas. It is the working peasantry whose land is destroyed by soil erosion. The environment is not just the veld and the wild animals, it is also where people live and work. A safe environment is thus a basic need for the masses. Only the masses have a direct and immediate interest in fighting against the environmental crisis: We therefore think that the way the environmental crisis must be dealt with in a class-struggle manner. Clearly, capitalism and the State are by their very nature destructive of the environment, and are thus a potential threat to the very survival of life on Earth. It is only the working masses,

who are the main victims of the crisis, and who are the only force capable of defeating the ruling class, which can halt the environmental crisis. In fact, because most environmental damage takes place at the point of production for example due to dangerous technologies, poor plant maintenance, hazardous operating procedures, and poor worker training, the powerful trade unions can play the key role in fighting for the environment in the here-and-now. We have already seen in this in South Africa where the Chemical Workers Industrial Union organised against the importation of toxic waste by Thor Chemicals. In the long-term, the trade unions can move beyond just defending the environment to saving it, by taking over the factories, farms and mines and introducing safe technologies. A worker-peasant revolution will help the environment in several ways. It will remove capitalism and the State, the main cause of the problems. It will eliminate the wasteful and excessive consumption of the rich. It will redistribute the land and end poverty. It will restructure production in an environmentally sustainable manner. In the immediate term, the Workers Solidarity Federation argues for workers in polluting factories to enforce safety rules and monitor pollution. We support actions by workers and communities to reduce and stop pollution. Where factories cannot be made safe, they should be closed down, but their workers should get re-employed at the same pay and skill levels in the same area. The environmental question needs to be related to the issue of land redistribution by pointing to how the legacy of racist land allocation in South Africa has resulted in the ecological devastation of the homelands. While we think that nature reserves should be retained, we recognise that such reserves were often set up under Apartheid at the cost of poor communities, resulting in much bitterness. Therefore we call for these communities to have some access to grazing, dry wood and other resources. We call for the unionisation of workers at such facilities. We oppose all testing of atomic, biological and chemical weapons in all circumstances and support direct action and union campaigns against these tests. We oppose the testing of medicines and other products on animals. These practices are unnecessarily cruel, and scientifically flawed as results obtained on one species e. It is the oppressed classes who suffer the effects of exposure to unsafe medicines. This preserves both jobs and the environment. We call on unions to establish their own environmental monitoring systems, and to publicise and organise actions against companies that expose workers and the community at large to toxic substances, pollution etc. Within unions, we raise the issue of pressurising industry to use recycled products where necessary and to find alternatives for products or by-products that harm the environment. This should be backed by industrial action.

Chapter 4 : Environmental Crisis Essay

These questions, the global environmental crisis and its impact on Africa, are central to our agenda of radical political and economic transformation on the continent. The workshop in Accra significantly contributed to these debates.

Definitions[edit] Environmentalism denotes a social movement that seeks to influence the political process by lobbying, activism, and education in order to protect natural resources and ecosystems. An environmentalist is a person who may speak out about our natural environment and the sustainable management of its resources through changes in public policy or individual behavior. This may include supporting practices such as informed consumption, conservation initiatives, investment in renewable resources , improved efficiencies in the materials economy, transitioning to new accounting paradigms such as Ecological economics , renewing and revitalizing our connections with non-human life or even opting to have one less child to reduce consumption and pressure on resources. In various ways for example, grassroots activism and protests , environmentalists and environmental organizations seek to give the natural world a stronger voice in human affairs. In its recognition of humanity as a participant in ecosystems, the movement is centered around ecology , health , and human rights. Conservation movement and Timeline of history of environmentalism Lord Mahavira , the last Jain Tirthankar is also considered to be a great environmentalist. The earliest ideas of environment protectionism can be traced in Jainism , which was revived by Mahavira in 6th century BC in ancient India. Jainism offers a view that may seem readily compatible with core values associated with environmental activism, i. Their works covered a number of subjects related to pollution, such as air pollution, water pollution , soil contamination , municipal solid waste mishandling, and environmental impact assessments of certain localities. At the advent of steam and electricity the muse of history holds her nose and shuts her eyes H. The emergence of great factories and the concomitant immense growth in coal consumption gave rise to an unprecedented level of air pollution in industrial centers; after the large volume of industrial chemical discharges added to the growing load of untreated human waste. An Alkali inspector and four sub-inspectors were appointed to curb this pollution. The responsibilities of the inspectorate were gradually expanded, culminating in the Alkali Order which placed all major heavy industries that emitted smoke , grit, dust and fumes under supervision. In industrial cities local experts and reformers, especially after , took the lead in identifying environmental degradation and pollution, and initiating grass-roots movements to demand and achieve reforms. It was founded by artist Sir William Blake Richmond , frustrated with the pall cast by coal smoke. Although there were earlier pieces of legislation, the Public Health Act required all furnaces and fireplaces to consume their own smoke. It also provided for sanctions against factories that emitted large amounts of black smoke. The provisions of this law were extended in with the Smoke Abatement Act to include other emissions, such as soot, ash and gritty particles and to empower local authorities to impose their own regulations. During the Spanish Revolution , anarchist controlled territories undertook several environmental reforms which were possibly the largest in the world at the time. Daniel Guerin notes that anarchist territories would diversify crops, extend irrigation , initiate reforestation , start tree nurseries and helped establish nudist colonies. Financial incentives were offered to householders to replace open coal fires with alternatives such as installing gas fires , or for those who preferred, to burn coke instead a byproduct of town gas production which produces minimal smoke. His advocacy for legislation to protect animals from hunting during the mating season led to the formation of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and influenced the passage of the Sea Birds Preservation Act in as the first nature protection law in the world. The poet William Wordsworth travelled extensively in the Lake District and wrote that it is a "sort of national property in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy". Systematic efforts on behalf of the environment only began in the late 19th century; it grew out of the amenity movement in Britain in the s, which was a reaction to industrialization , the growth of cities, and worsening air and water pollution. Starting with the formation of the Commons Preservation Society in , the movement championed rural preservation against the encroachments of industrialisation. Robert Hunter , solicitor for the society, worked with Hardwicke Rawnsley , Octavia Hill , and John Ruskin to lead a successful campaign to

prevent the construction of railways to carry slate from the quarries, which would have ruined the unspoilt valleys of Newlands and Ennerdale. He observed in Swiss and Siberian glaciers that they had been slowly melting since the dawn of the industrial revolution, possibly making him one of the first predictors for climate change. He also observed the damage done from deforestation and hunting. In Hill, Hunter and Rawnsley agreed to set up a national body to coordinate environmental conservation efforts across the country; the "National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty" was formally inaugurated in 1895. Idealists championed the rural life as a mythical Utopia and advocated a return to it. John Ruskin argued that people should return to a small piece of English ground, beautiful, peaceful, and fruitful. We will have no steam engines upon it. By 1864, public support for the organisation had grown, and it had over 25,000 members. The Garden city movement incorporated many environmental concerns into its urban planning manifesto; the Socialist League and The Clarion movement also began to advocate measures of nature conservation. The movement in the United States began in the late 19th century, out of concerns for protecting the natural resources of the West, with individuals such as John Muir and Henry David Thoreau making key philosophical contributions. He published his experiences in the book *Walden*, which argues that people should become intimately close with nature. He successfully lobbied congress to form Yosemite National Park and went on to set up the Sierra Club in 1892. The conservationist principles as well as the belief in an inherent right of nature were to become the bedrock of modern environmentalism. In the 20th century, environmental ideas continued to grow in popularity and recognition. Efforts were starting to be made to save some wildlife, particularly the American bison. The death of the last passenger pigeon as well as the endangerment of the American bison helped to focus the minds of conservationists and popularize their concerns. The Forestry Commission was set up in Britain to increase the amount of woodland in Britain by buying land for afforestation and reforestation. The commission was also tasked with promoting forestry and the production of timber for trade. By 1906, the Forestry Commission was the largest landowner in Britain. The concept of the *Dauerwald* best translated as the "perpetual forest" which included concepts such as forest management and protection was promoted and efforts were also made to curb air pollution. The book is sometimes called the most influential book on conservation. Throughout the 18th, 19th, 20th and beyond, photography was used to enhance public awareness of the need for protecting land and recruiting members to environmental organizations. David Brower, Ansel Adams and Nancy Newhall created the Sierra Club Exhibit Format Series, which helped raise public environmental awareness and brought a rapidly increasing flood of new members to the Sierra Club and to the environmental movement in general. The powerful use of photography in addition to the written word for conservation dated back to the creation of Yosemite National Park, when photographs persuaded Abraham Lincoln to preserve the beautiful glacier carved landscape for all time. The Sierra Club Exhibit Format Series galvanized public opposition to building dams in the Grand Canyon and protected many other national treasures. The Sierra Club often led a coalition of many environmental groups including the Wilderness Society and many others. After a focus on preserving wilderness in the 18th and 19th centuries, the Sierra Club and other groups broadened their focus to include such issues as air and water pollution, population concern, and curbing the exploitation of natural resources. The book cataloged the environmental impacts of the indiscriminate spraying of DDT in the US and questioned the logic of releasing large amounts of chemicals into the environment without fully understanding their effects on human health and ecology. The book suggested that DDT and other pesticides may cause cancer and that their agricultural use was a threat to wildlife, particularly birds. The limited use of DDT in disease vector control continues to this day in certain parts of the world and remains controversial. With this new interest in environment came interest in problems such as air pollution and petroleum spills, and environmental interest grew. New pressure groups formed, notably Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth US, as well as notable local organizations such as the Wyoming Outdoor Council, which was founded in 1972. In the 1960s, the environmental movement gained rapid speed around the world as a productive outgrowth of the counterculture movement. Protection of the environment also became important in the developing world; the Chipko movement was formed in India under the influence of Mohandas Gandhi and they set up peaceful resistance to deforestation by literally hugging trees leading to the term "tree huggers". Their peaceful methods of protest and slogan "ecology is permanent economy" were very influential. Another milestone in

the movement was the creation of Earth Day. Earth Day was first observed in San Francisco and other cities on March 21, , the first day of spring. It was created to give awareness to environmental issues. On March 21, , United Nations Secretary-General U Thant spoke of a spaceship Earth on Earth Day, hereby referring to the ecosystem services the earth supplies to us, and hence our obligation to protect it and with it, ourselves. Earth Day is now coordinated globally by the Earth Day Network , [43] and is celebrated in more than countries every year. It marked a turning point in the development of international environmental politics. The Back-to-the-land movement started to form and ideas of environmental ethics joined with anti-Vietnam War sentiments and other political issues. These individuals lived outside normal society and started to take on some of the more radical environmental theories such as deep ecology. Around this time more mainstream environmentalism was starting to show force with the signing of the Endangered Species Act in and the formation of CITES in A new look at life on Earth, which put forth the Gaia hypothesis ; it proposes that life on earth can be understood as a single organism. This became an important part of the Deep Green ideology. Throughout the rest of the history of environmentalism there has been debate and argument between more radical followers of this Deep Green ideology and more mainstream environmentalists. Since , the percentage of Americans agreeing that the environment should be given priority over economic growth has dropped 10 points, in contrast, those feeling that growth should be given priority "even if the environment suffers to some extent" has risen 12 percent. They have also set up corn and coffee worker cooperatives and built schools and hospitals to help the local populations. They have also created a network of autonomous community radio stations to educate people about dangers to the environment and inform the surrounding communities about new industrial projects that would destroy more land.

Chapter 5 : Environmentalism - Wikipedia

The development strategies based on the experiences and interests of Western capitalist countries fail to recognise that environmental degradation in the South is a product of inequalities in both global and local economic relations and cannot be solved simply by applying solutions borrowed from environmentalism in the North.

A Billion Dollar Opportunity China is embarking on the most ambitious environmental reform program in history -- by necessity. Only 16 of the cities monitored met the national standards of urban air quality in Environmental protests are the major cause of social unrest across the country -- even edging out official graft. This amounts to a 60 percent increase over the last Five-Year Plan. But, the Chinese government can fund only 15 percent of this initiative. In fact, financing from the private sector -- either directly or in public private partnerships -- will bring new technologies to China, spur innovative solutions and create jobs in environmental reform, a growing field. China is trying to do its part. What China needs now is support from private sector environmental investors. The Goldman Sachs study has identified five key opportunities for companies in the clean tech sector: According to the Goldman report, heavy metal contamination affects 12 million tons of grain. This means 24 million people -- or the population of Australia -- will be impacted by contaminated grain. It is expected that the soil clean up will account for 56 percent of the total environmental investment by the Chinese government. Solid and hazardous waste management: Waste management is a small, untapped but rapidly growing sector in China. The growth potential in "waste" -- municipal, industrial, electronic and hazardous -- is significant. Hazardous waste, the negative by-product of strong industrial growth, increased by almost 15 percent while it actually decreased over the same time period in the US. Companies providing solutions in cleaning wastewater, new irrigation methods and other related methods will find significant opportunities. During a recent visit to Portland by a delegation of about 20 mayors from Zhejiang province organized by the Paulson Institute, they specifically asked to see the latest in wastewater technologies as they were actively shopping for new options. China is expected to maintain its position for the foreseeable future as the largest builder of nuclear plants with 27 currently under construction; the largest installer of solar; and wind energy capacity will increase almost ten fold. Foreign service providers in this area, as well as equipment manufacturers, will see many opportunities for sales in this field. In order to reduce pollution, China must understand its source, as well as able able to track its progression. One of the key areas of opportunity in China is equipment that can be used to do this job. The industry is expected to growth by 20 percent in the next few years. To be sure, it is tragic that the environmental situation has reached such a crisis state in China and there will be no quick fixes. But the political will to right the ship is presenting new opportunities for the private sector, which could be a bright spot for the global economy.

Chapter 6 : The Environmental Crisis | The Anarchist Library

First published in , Michael Redcliff's book makes the global environmental crisis a central concern of political economy and its structural causes a central concern of environmentalism.

What Customers Say Samuel I found out that some of my classmates purchase papers from you and decided to give you a try. At that time, I had to work on a research essay. I registered on your website and placed an order. In a day, I got a notification that my paper was ready. You helped me pass this class! I am very happy to cooperate with professionals! Michael I used to spend days and weeks in the library, searching for appropriate sources for my essays and research papers. Being very tired, I decided to order an essay at Essaywritingstore. To my surprise, you sent me an excellent paper with great ideas. Now I will definitely order more papers from you. Sophia You completed my research paper very fast. I used your paper as the basis of my further research project. I am very thankful for your support and everything you have done for me! Dwain I was constantly writing messages to my writer because I was very nervous about my research project. However, I got a perfect paper in the end. It is just what I wanted. Jack I purchased a couple of essays from two writing companies, who cheated and sent my fully plagiarized papers. I found your company and read a couple of reviews. I was shocked to see such a well structured and well written paper! Steven My best wishes to your writers! I am so thankful that I do not know even how to express my emotions. My teacher always gave me very low grades with comments that I am overlooking some instructions. Your writer sent me a research paper and I got an A! I am more than pleased with your online services! All papers were delivered on time. I did not have any recommendations or suggestions how to improve the paper because the content was great. Thank you so much. Larry I like to compose essays, but sometimes my part-time job makes me devastated and exhausted that I do not have time to sleep. My friend told me that students can purchase papers online. I was a bit afraid to do it, but your company sent me the best paper! Will surely order more papers because your prices are really cheap! James I guess other students need to know that your company is very professional and efficient in terms of academic writing services. Your writers are definitely well-versed and skillful. I sent some assignments to your writers and have always received what I wanted. Aiden For me, academic writing is the biggest obstacle on my way. I can pass all kinds of tests and exams. However, writing essays and other assignments is very time-consuming and daunting. I found a company that offers affordable prices for academic papers. Thank you for assisting me with all my home assignments. Your writers are genius! Lily I did not know how to start writing my thesis proposal. Your writers carried out research and surprised my professor with incredible ideas. Ryan My paper was so well written that I had nothing to add. I simply submitted the essay and got an A. Thanks for your work! Mia I had to write an admission essay to get a grant in one of the local colleges. I thought it was impossible because my writing skills are very poor. I placed an order and got a perfect essay! My classmate told that he orders most of home assignments at Essaywritingstore. I totally changed my attitude towards writing companies when you sent me my coursework. Your writer helped me a lot! I wish I had found your service long time ago! Thanks for the excellent work! Your company was among the most discussed in those reviews. Your competent and diligent writers sent me the paper on time. Supreme assistance and fair prices! Ryan I had a surgery and could not study for a long time. I missed many tests, exams, quizzes, and did not submit writing assignments on time. I thought I would fail every class, but then I found your website. I was wondering if you specialize in all subjects and your support team assured me that every single piece of writing can be completed by writers. Failing the paper means failing the whole course. I was depressed because my previous assignments were graded rather lowly. Your company helped me solve the issue. Thank you so much for that! I handed in a good research paper and got a favorable feedback! Logan I am very thankful to your writers who are very professional and punctual. They have never missed my deadline. I have dealt with a couple of writers and did not face any essays. You are seriously the best writing service! Emery I thought that I would never manage to complete my essay on time. There were only a couple of hours left and your company agreed to help. I only sent instructions and your writer did everything for me. I did not face late submission and got a good grade.

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Chapter 7 : Aid, Sustainable Development and the Environmental Crisis - Marc Williams

The environmental crisis An unprecedented crisis. One of the most compelling reasons for studying environmental science and management is the fact that, in the view of many leading authorities, we are now experiencing an environmental crisis; indeed, many authors have claimed that the present environmental crisis is unprecedented in its magnitude, pace and severity (Park).

Unit 1 The Earth System and its Components 1. Yet, while all of these problems have physical environmental manifestations, their causes - and their potential solutions - are invariably bound up with human attitudes, beliefs, values, needs, desires, expectations, and behaviours. Main features of the environmental crisis At this point, a very brief overview of the environmental crisis may be helpful. It is important to emphasise that a wide range of views about the nature and severity of the current environmental crisis exists, and some of the issues are highly controversial. Nevertheless, there is broad agreement that the environmental crisis encompasses the following main issues. It occurs largely as a result of the combustion of fossil fuels, emissions from agriculture and pastoralism, and land-use changes that accompany the destruction, clearance and burning of forests. Climate change already has observable ecological and social effects, and its projected impacts could potentially result in profound changes in global mean surface temperature, sea level, ocean circulation, precipitation patterns, climatic zones, species distributions and ecosystem function. Many air pollutants are responsible for the degradation of air quality, but some key pollutants include particulate matter such as soot, tropospheric ozone, oxides of nitrogen, oxides of sulphur, lead and various aromatic compounds such as benzene. Many air pollutants may cause or aggravate respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses; some are known carcinogens; and some can cause damage to vegetation and, in turn, produce a range of ecological effects. A major source of water pollution is the terrestrial run-off to inshore waters that occurs in many coastal locations; such run-off may contain significantly elevated levels of nitrogen and phosphorus from agricultural land and from human settlements. Many other human activities lead to water pollution, including mining and industrial processes, which may create toxic effluent. Oil spills, accumulation of plastics and the bioaccumulation of persistent organic chemicals are some of the other causes of serious degradation of the marine environment. Scarcity of fresh water: For instance, the over-abstraction of water from rivers results in water shortages and problems of salinisation downstream. Irrigation practices may also be responsible for the depletion of local water sources and the salinisation of irrigated land. Vast differences in water security exist at the global scale, reflecting both demand for fresh water and the scale of public and private investment in water supplies, treatment and distribution. Land contamination may cause profound ecological effects and it presents severe constraints to development, since contaminated land must typically be rehabilitated before it is safe to use for agriculture, construction or recreation. Deforestation occurs for a variety of reasons, but the majority of deforestation now occurs when tropical forests are cleared for agriculture and pastoralism; other reasons include the destruction of trees for charcoal production and the selective logging of forests for timber. Soil erosion and degradation: Whilst analyses of the problems of soil erosion and degradation have become more sophisticated, recently, it is clear that these problems continue to have important consequences for agricultural and pastoral productivity as well as for the functioning of natural ecosystems. Land use change and habitat loss: The impact of land use change on forest and grassland environments is depicted in 1. Threats to biodiversity are not confined to terrestrial ecosystems; serious concerns have been raised about the future of marine and coastal wildlife species as a result of the pollution, over-exploitation and acidification of ocean and seas. They encompass a range of economic, social, political and technological issues. Achieving the first one billion of human population took most of human history, whilst the most recent increase of one billion was achieved in little more than a decade. However, recent declines in the rate of growth of population have occurred in many parts of the world, and in some countries populations are now declining. The total human population was around 5. Significant differences exist in cultural attitudes to the issues of human population size and the rate of population growth. Urbanisation is often associated with a range of social and environmental problems including overcrowding, congestion, pollution, public health issues, shortages of

water for drinking, and inadequate sanitation. Urbanisation is also related to another issue: However, the average values conceal enormous differences in the distribution and quality of food, and the lack of food security remains a profound challenge in many parts of the world. Debates about food production raise important environmental issues such as the use of genetically modified GM and genetically engineered GE seeds and produce. Large differences occur in the responses of human societies to diseases, reflecting vast inequalities in health care spending and in funding for pharmaceutical and medical research. Peak oil and energy security: Some estimates suggest that peak oil will occur - or has already occurred - early in the 21st century, with the implication that alternative energy sources will need to be developed in sufficient time to serve as a substitute for oil. For instance, the use of depleted uranium munitions causes significant land contamination, whilst the effects of the displacement of large numbers of people from zones of conflict can exert pressures on adjacent ecosystems. Displacement of people does not occur only in response to violence; globally, the effects of climate change are projected to result in the displacement of as many as million environmental refugees. Natural disasters Whilst not necessarily part of the environmental crisis, human populations are also faced with ongoing threats due to the occurrence of natural disasters such as earthquakes, landslides, floods, tsunamis and wildfires. Yet whilst these hazards may be natural in origin, it is important to acknowledge that human vulnerability to natural disasters is generally increasing, not least because human populations and settlements are growing in many marginal and dangerous areas, such as floodplains. Hence unsustainable practices - such as the construction of settlements on floodplains, or the intensive cultivation of marginal hill slope lands - may greatly increase the impacts of natural disasters on human societies and economies. The causes of the environmental crisis The causes of the environmental crisis have been the subject of considerable debate. However, in general, its main causes are now acknowledged to be: List the main issues that comprise the environmental crisis. As far as possible, categorise those issues according to a spatial scale; b time scale; and c the prospects for finding effective technological or policy solutions.

The time is thus propitious for further investigation of the potential contributions of particular religions toward mitigating the environmental crisis, especially by developing more comprehensive environmental ethics for the earth community.

While the particular causes and solutions of this crisis are being debated by scientists, economists, and policymakers, the facts of widespread destruction are causing alarm in many quarters. Indeed, from some perspectives the future of human life itself appears threatened. This is aggravated by population explosion, industrial growth, technological manipulation, and military proliferation heretofore unknown by the human community. From many accounts the basic elements which sustain life—sufficient water, clean air, and arable land—are at risk. The challenges are formidable and well documented. The solutions, however, are more elusive and complex. Clearly, this crisis has economic, political, and social dimensions which require more detailed analysis than we can provide here. Suffice it to say, however, as did the Global Report: By formulating adequate plans for dealing with these large-scale problems, we will be laying the foundation for peace and prosperity in the future; by ignoring them, drifting passively while attending to what may seem more urgent, personal priorities, we are courting disaster. It is also a moral and spiritual crisis which, in order to be addressed, will require broader philosophical and religious understandings of ourselves as creatures of nature, embedded in life cycles and dependent on ecosystems. Religions, thus, need to be re-examined in light of the current environmental crisis. This is because religions help to shape our attitudes toward nature in both conscious and unconscious ways. Religions provide basic interpretive stories of who we are, what nature is, where we have come from, and where we are going. This comprises a worldview of a society. Religions also suggest how we should treat other humans and how we should relate to nature. These values make up the ethical orientation of a society. Religions thus generate worldviews and ethics which underlie fundamental attitudes and values of different cultures and societies. Human ecology is deeply conditioned by beliefs about our nature and destiny—that is, by religion. Our feeling of alienation in the modern period has extended beyond the human community and its patterns of material exchanges to our interaction with nature itself. Especially in technologically sophisticated urban societies, we have become removed from the recognition of our dependence on nature. We no longer know who we are as earthlings; we no longer see the earth as sacred. Thomas Berry suggests that we have become autistic in our interactions with the natural world. In other words, we are unable to value the life and beauty of nature because we are locked in our own egocentric perspectives and shortsighted needs. He suggests that we need a new cosmology, cultural coding, and motivating energy to overcome this deprivation. Indeed, he speaks of evolution as a new story of the universe, namely, as a vast cosmological perspective that will resituate human meaning and direction in the context of four and a half billion years of earth history. It is here that the religions of the world may have a role to play in cooperation with other individuals, institutions, and initiatives that have been engaged with environmental issues for a considerable period of time. Despite their lateness in addressing the crisis, religions are beginning to respond in remarkably creative ways. They are not only rethinking their theologies but are also reorienting their sustainable practices and long-term environmental commitments. In so doing, the very nature of religion and of ethics is being challenged and changed. This is true because the reexamination of other worldviews created by religious beliefs and practices may be critical to our recovery of sufficiently comprehensive cosmologies, broad conceptual frameworks, and effective environmental ethics for the twenty-first century. While in the past none of the religions of the world have had to face an environmental crisis such as we are now confronting, they remain key instruments in shaping attitudes toward nature. The unintended consequences of the modern industrial drive for unlimited economic growth and resource development have led us to an impasse regarding the survival of many life-forms and appropriate management of varied ecosystems. The religious traditions may indeed be critical in helping to reimagine the viable conditions and long-range strategies for fostering mutually enhancing human-earth relations. Coordinated by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, the conferences involved some scholars, graduate students, religious leaders, and environmental activists over a period of three years. The collaborative nature of the project is intentional. Such

collaboration maximizes the opportunity for dialogical reflection on this issue of enormous complexity and accentuates the diversity of local manifestations of ecologically sustainable alternatives. This series is intended to serve as initial exploration of the emerging field of religion and ecology while pointing toward areas for further research. We are not unaware of the difficulties of engaging in such a task, yet we have been encouraged by the enthusiastic response to the conferences within the academic community, by the larger interest they have generated beyond academia, and by the probing examinations gathered in the volumes. We trust that this series and these volumes will be useful not only for scholars of religion but also for those shaping seminary education and institutional religious practices, as well as for those involved in environmental public policy. While, clearly, there are major methodological issues involved in utilizing traditional philosophical and religious ideas for contemporary concerns, there are also compelling reasons to support such efforts, however modest they may be. Indeed, despite their limitations, historically they have provided comprehensive cosmologies for interpretive direction, moral foundations for social cohesion, spiritual guidance for cultural expression, and ritual celebrations for meaningful life. In our search for more comprehensive ecological worldviews and more effective environmental ethics, it is inevitable that we will draw from the symbolic and conceptual resources of the religious traditions of the world. The effort to do this is not without precedent or problems, some of which will be signaled below. With this volume and with this series we hope the field of reflection and discussion regarding religion and ecology will begin to broaden, deepen, and complexify.

Qualifications and Goals

The Problems and Promise of Religions

These volumes, then, are built on the premise that the religions of the world may be instrumental in addressing the moral dilemmas created by the environmental crisis. At the same time we recognize the limitations of such efforts on the part of religions. We also acknowledge that the complexity of the problem requires interlocking approaches from such fields as science, economics, politics, health, and public policy. As the human community struggles to formulate different attitudes toward nature and to articulate broader conceptions of ethics embracing species and ecosystems, religions may thus be a necessary, though only contributing, part of this multidisciplinary approach. It is becoming increasingly evident that abundant scientific knowledge of the crisis is available and numerous political and economic statements have been formulated that reflect this concern. Yet we seem to lack the political, economic, and scientific leadership to make necessary changes. Moreover, what is still lacking is the religious commitment, moral imagination, and ethical engagement to transform the environmental crisis from an issue on paper to one of effective policy, from rhetoric in print to realism in action. Have issues of personal salvation superseded all others? Have divine-human relations been primary? Have anthropocentric ethics been all-consuming? Has the material world of nature been devalued by religion? Does the search for otherworldly rewards override commitment to this world? Did the religions simply surrender their natural theologies and concerns with exploring purpose in nature to positivistic scientific cosmologies? The reasons may not be readily apparent, but clearly they require further exploration and explanation. In discussing the involvement of religions in this issue, it is also appropriate to acknowledge the dark side of religion in both its institutional expressions and dogmatic forms. In addition to their oversight with regard to the environment, religions have been the source of enormous manipulation of power in fostering wars, in ignoring racial and social injustice, and in promoting unequal gender relations, to name only a few abuses. The problems are too vast and complex for unqualified optimism. Yet there is a growing consensus that religions may now have a significant role to play, just as in the past they have sustained individuals and cultures in the face of internal and external threats. A final caveat is the inevitable gap that arises between theories and practices in religions. As has been noted, even societies with religious traditions which appear sympathetic to the environment have in the past often misused resources. This disjunction of theory and practice is present within all philosophies and religions and is frequently the source of disillusionment, skepticism, and cynicism. A more realistic observation might be made, however, that this disjunction should not automatically invalidate the complex worldviews and rich cosmologies embedded in traditional religions. Rather, it is our task to explore these conceptual resources so as to broaden and expand our own perspectives in challenging and fruitful ways. In summary, we recognize that religions have elements which are both prophetic and transformative as well as conservative and constraining. These elements are

continually in tension, a condition which creates the great variety of thought and interpretation within religious traditions. To recognize these various tensions and limits, however, is not to lessen the urgency of the overall goals of this project. Rather, it is to circumscribe our efforts with healthy skepticism, cautious optimism, and modest ambitions. It is to suggest that this is a beginning in a new field of study which will affect both religion and ecology. On the one hand, this process of reflection will inevitably change how religions conceive of their own roles, missions, and identities, for such reflections demand a new sense of the sacred as not divorced from the earth itself. On the other hand, environmental studies can recognize that religions have helped to shape attitudes toward nature. Thus, as religions themselves evolve they may be indispensable in fostering a more expansive appreciation for the complexity and beauty of the natural world. At the same time as religions foster awe and reverence for nature, they may provide the transforming energies for ethical practices to protect endangered ecosystems, threatened species, and diminishing resources.

Methodological Concerns It is important to acknowledge that there are, inevitably, challenging methodological issues involved in such a project as we are undertaking in this emerging field of religion and ecology. With regard to time, it is necessary to recognize the vast historical complexity of each religious tradition, which cannot be easily condensed in these conferences or volumes. With respect to place, we need to signal the diverse cultural contexts in which these religions have developed. With regard to space, we recognize the varied frameworks of institutions and traditions in which these religions unfold. Finally, with respect to positionality, we acknowledge our own historical situatedness at the end of the twentieth century with distinctive contemporary concerns. Not only is each religious tradition historically complex and culturally diverse, but its beliefs, scriptures, and institutions have themselves been subject to vast commentaries and revisions over time. Thus, we recognize the radical diversity that exists within and among religious traditions which cannot be encompassed in any single volume. We acknowledge also that distortions may arise as we examine earlier historical traditions in light of contemporary issues. Nonetheless, environmental ethics philosopher J. Moreover, we cannot simply expect to borrow or adopt ideas and place them from one tradition directly into another. Even efforts to formulate global environmental ethics need to be sensitive to cultural particularity and diversity. We do not aim at creating a simple bricolage or bland fusion of perspectives. To do so will help to reveal certain commonalities among traditions, as well as limitations within traditions, as they begin to converge around this challenge presented by the environmental crisis. We need to identify our concerns, then, as embedded in the constraints of our own perspectival limits at the same time as we seek common ground. In describing various attitudes toward nature historically, we are aiming at critical understanding of the complexity, contexts, and frameworks in which these religions articulate such views. In addition, we are striving for empathetic appreciation for the traditions without idealizing their ecological potential or ignoring their environmental oversights. Finally, we are aiming at the creative revisioning of mutually enhancing human-earth relations. This revisioning may be assisted by highlighting the multi-perspectival attitudes toward nature which these traditions disclose. The prismatic effect of examining such attitudes and relationships may provide some necessary clarification and symbolic resources for reimagining our own situation and shared concerns at the end of the twentieth century. It will also be sharpened by identifying the multilayered symbol systems in world religions which have traditionally oriented humans in establishing relational resonances between the microcosm of the self and the macrocosm of the social and natural orders. In short, religious traditions may help to supply both creative resources of symbols, rituals, and texts as well as inspiring visions for reimagining ourselves as part of, not apart from, the natural world.

Aims The methodological issues outlined above were implied in the overall goals of the conferences, which were described as follows: To identify and evaluate the distinctive ecological attitudes, values, and practices of diverse religious traditions, making clear their links to intellectual, political, and other resources associated with these distinctive traditions.