



## **ENVIRONMENTAL CONFLICT AMONG EVANGELICALS**

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## **Introduction:**

In recent years, evangelical Christians in the United States have grown to have considerable power to reach large audiences and affect politics. With as many as 30-35% of Americans describing themselves as “evangelical” or “born-again”, the demographic has the ability to have a profound impact on American society (Institute for the Study of American Evangelicals 2006). While there is a wide range of opinions among them, recently many evangelicals are connecting to the Republican Party and are prioritizing value-based issues, strongly voicing their opposition to abortion and gay marriage. Evangelicals, in general, also tend to promote free-market capitalism, perhaps due to a commitment to a strong work ethic and the belief that governments should not be given authority over what God ultimately controls (Kurtz 2004). The strong alignment of evangelicals on these issues helped secure a Republican victory in recent presidential elections, with George W. Bush receiving up to 78% of the white evangelical vote in 2004 (Pew Research Center 2004). While evangelicals continue to be a political force united on common goals, there is rising awareness and activism on an issue that could serve to split the evangelical vote: the environment.

In 1967, Lynn White’s essay published in *Science*, “The Historical Roots of our Ecological Crisis”, placed a great amount of blame for environmental damage on the Christian religion and its anthropocentric view of the world (White 1967). Since then, many theologians and religious practitioners alike have begun to challenge this criticism, and aim to determine what the Bible really says about humanity’s role in the environment. Many now stress stewardship over dominion, saying humans should not

only utilize the earth for the resources necessary to propel humankind, but that Christians have a moral duty to care for the earth. Evangelicals began to add to the debate about a Christian's role in environmental care in the 1980s and have become increasingly more vocal through the years, especially as global warming has become more present in the nation's consciousness (Beisner 1997). The Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN) was founded in 1993, in order to establish an ethic on Creation Care. The same year, the group released the "Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation", which was signed by hundreds of supporters throughout the religious community (Evangelical Environmental Network 1993). The EEN recently increased awareness of environmental issues through their "What Would Jesus Drive" campaign, which was advertised in a large number of publications and through television (What Would Jesus Drive 2002).

On February 8, 2006, 86 leaders<sup>1</sup> in the evangelical community took a stance specifically on the issue of global warming by writing and signing the Evangelical Climate Initiative (ECI), which called global warming "a moral and spiritual crisis", and declared the groups goal of seeking "national legislation to reduce emissions" (Evangelical Climate Initiative 2006). The ECI broke down into 4 claims: "human-induced climate change is real; the consequences of climate change will be significant, and will hit the poor the hardest; Christian moral convictions demand our response to the climate change problem; and the need to act now is urgent: governments, businesses, churches, and individuals all have a role to play in addressing climate change—starting now" (Evangelical Climate Initiative 2006). The same day the ECI was unveiled, the group also published statistics on evangelicals and environmental action stating that

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<sup>1</sup> There are now over 100 signatories of the ECI. See Appendix 3 for ECI full text.

“three out of four evangelicals tend to support environmental causes such as reducing global warming or protecting wilderness areas from development, including one out of four who tend to support these issues strongly” (ECI 2006). Their polling also showed that 54% of evangelicals “believe that a person's Christian faith should generally encourage them to support environmental issues” (ECI 2006). With these large numbers of evangelicals now supporting environmental causes that may contradict the goals of prominent Republican politicians, there is potential for significant conflict among evangelicals that could serve to split their voting power.

While it seems that evangelicals are becoming more active and aware of environmental issues, there are plenty who are not convinced of the science behind global warming and are warning evangelical leaders to use caution before advancing legislation to lower emissions. The Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship (ICES) and The Interfaith Stewardship Alliance (ISA) are two groups that formed in response to the rise of environmental action among faith communities. These groups work to promote the Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship<sup>2</sup> that emphasizes the dominance of human beings in the natural order, and stresses the economic consequences of action on climate change, which they believe is not human-induced. Any rush to legislation on climate change, they explain, would effectively raise energy prices and place unnecessary stress on the poor. The Cornwall Declaration is signed “by over 1,000 leading clergy, theologians, scholars, and other people of good will”. (Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship 2005). While the ICES and ISA believe that stewardship of creation is important, they stress that, “while passion may energize environmental

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<sup>2</sup> The Cornwall Declaration was written by 25 theologians, economists, environmental scientists, and policy experts who hoped to spark debate on issues of humanity and the environment. See Appendix 4 for full Cornwall Declaration text.

activism, it is reason including sound theology and sound science—that must guide the decision-making process” (ICES 2005). These groups helped to convince the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE), “America's most influential Christian lobbying group representing 59 denominations, 45,000 churches, and 30 million believers”, to not take an official stance on environmental action, as global warming was not a consensus issue among evangelicals (Moyers 2006).

With strong opinions on both sides, activism on environmental concerns like global warming could serve to divide the strong voting base of the Christian right. Politics play a large role in this conflict, largely due to the fact that environmental issues are traditionally taken up by the left. In fact, many evangelicals claim it was a hard choice for them to take on environmental causes, as they would have to go against their conservative base and be accused of coercion by the left. Richard Cizik, the Vice President of Governmental Affairs to the NAE had to overcome his group’s party affiliations to speak out on environmental issues. Prominent conservatives have claimed that he has joined an “unholy alliance” with left-wing environmentalists (Moyers 2006). Meanwhile, the Christians of the ICES and ISA have also withstood attacks from the other side, claiming that they are biased due to affiliations with oil and gas companies (Beisner 2006). With emotions raging on both sides, is it possible to find common ground between these two factions? How can they work together to reach common goals of social justice and proper stewardship? What is at stake if this disagreement continues? What are the roles of politics, theology, science, and economics in resolving this dispute?

### **Conflict Assessment:**

First, what is at stake for each group if they cannot resolve their differences and work together to reach common ground? Both sides have reason to reconcile since “the persistence of disagreement [is] at stake, and that is a sad state among fellow servants of Christ.” (Beisner 2006) For those who side with the signers of the ECI and agree that global warming is an urgent problem, the consequences of not reaching an agreement are large. Thus, their perceived BATNA (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) is low, as it means that cataclysmic events could occur if all evangelicals do not take action immediately to curb climate change (Watkins 2000). The ECI signatories, along with growing ranks of evangelicals, are stressing that environmental concern is a pressing moral issue, and therefore, they should work to find common ground with the ISA so they can work together to reverse global warming trends.

Conversely, the BATNA for the members of the ICES and the ISA is also low. According to Dr. Calvin Beisner, the National Spokesman for the ISA,

“At stake is the ability of evangelicals to speak with a unified voice to this [sic] particular issues of public policy, but there are other issues, too, on which evangelicals disagree. (Some favor more free-market solutions to poverty, some more statist/ redistributivist solutions, for example.) Another matter at stake is the strength and consistency of evangelical support for political candidates who are pro-life, pro-family, pro-free market, and pro-limited government (i.e., conservative), versus those who are pro-abortion, pro-easy divorce, pro-homosexual, pro-government planning in the economy, etc. (i.e., liberal), because, for whatever reasons (and they make an interesting study), people's views on climate change generally (not universally) tend to divide along those lines” (Beisner 2006)

In terms of imminent consequences to prolonging the disagreement, it seems that the ISA may have more reason to end the conflict quickly, as Dr. Beisner acknowledged that the

recent congressional elections may be evidence of the split among evangelicals over this issue (although the Iraq war probably played into it as well). Further evidence of the split among conservative Christians emerged with the announcement that Rev. Joel C. Hunter, President-elect of the Christian Coalition, stepped down from the position on November 27, 2006, due to his disagreement with the organization over broadening their agenda to include social justice and environmental concerns (Banerjee 2006)<sup>3</sup>. By acknowledging the need for an environmental ethic and finding common ground with the signers of the ECI, the ISA and the ICES could prevent the weakening of the evangelical voting base and work to continue promoting causes that most evangelicals agree on.

Besides being concerned about political splits, the ISA is also concerned about the consequences of rushed action by evangelical Christians on curbing carbon emissions and its impact on the economy. They also debate the morality and Biblical basis for action on issues such as global warming. The Cornwall Declaration declares that environmentally minded Christians may be forgetting that Genesis states that man was given dominance over the rest of creation and that man should not be limited by restrictive governmental influence<sup>4</sup>.

“Many people mistakenly view humans as principally consumers and polluters rather than producers and stewards. Consequently, they ignore our potential, as bearers of God's image, to add to the earth's abundance. The increasing realization of this potential has enabled people in societies

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<sup>3</sup> Of course, the split in the voting power of evangelicals could also be of concern to the ECI signatories, but they would be in favor of putting environmental morality and global warming action on the evangelical political agenda. Richard Cizik stated that, for him, political unity must take a backseat to biblically-stated morality. Though Reverend Cizik is a firm believer that global warming is human caused and action should be taken to stop it, he has refrained from signing the ECI due to his position in the NAE, in order to avoid the appearance of a consensus held among all the organization's members (Moyers 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Although many evangelicals promote a free-market economy, they certainly don't think that it should be free of all restrictions. They generally support smaller government interference than more left-leaning individuals, however.

blessed with an advanced economy not only to reduce pollution, while producing more of the goods and services responsible for the great improvements in the human condition, but also to alleviate the negative effects of much past pollution. A clean environment is a costly good; consequently, growing affluence, technological innovation, and the application of human and material capital are integral to environmental improvement. The tendency among some to oppose economic progress in the name of environmental stewardship is often sadly self-defeating” (ICES 2002).

Since they believe that supporting legislation to lower carbon emissions could have drastic consequences on the economies of the world’s nations, which could disproportionately affect the poor, it would also be wise for them to work together with the ECI to determine where the problems lie, and develop solutions that would be amenable to both sides and have the best consequences for the earth and the earth’s inhabitants.

Since both groups should desire actions that bring compromise, it is first important to realize at what points these two factions diverge on the issue of environmental action based on Christian principles. How does the issue of moral exclusion affect the debate on both sides?

### **Moral Exclusion and Conflicting priorities:**

According to Lynn White, the major reason the world is dealing with environmental devastation is due to Christianity’s triumph over paganism in the Middle Ages, resulting in the dominant worldview being anthropocentric in terms of a human’s relationship to the natural world. “Christianity, in absolute contrast to ancient paganism and Asia's religions (except, perhaps, Zoroastrianism), not only established a dualism of man and nature but also insisted that it is God's will that man exploit nature for his proper ends” (White 1967). Essentially, White asserts, Christians have morally excluded

everything in creation besides other humans and have created a culture that follows the same principles. “*Moral exclusion*... rationalizes and justifies harm for those outside, viewing them as expendable, undeserving, exploitable, or irrelevant” (Opotow 2000). With the movement to include an environmental ethic in Christianity, Lynn White’s claim of its anthropocentrism had to be addressed.

For the signers of the ECI, the Bible implicitly stated that while humans were given dominion over creation, they were also asked to be stewards of creation. They feel that climate change, along with other environmental problems, are a result of squandering this responsibility of stewardship, and will have effects on all of creation. “Christians must care about climate change because we love God, the Creator, and Jesus our Lord, through whom, and for whom, the creation was made. This is God's world, and any damage that we do to God's world is an offense against God Himself (Gen. 1; Ps. 24; Col. 1:16).” Thus, the ECI extended their “scope of justice” to include more of creation, as it was also created by God (Opotow 2000). The EEN’s Declaration on the Care of Creation also emphasizes that, “God declares all creation "good" (Gen. 1:31); promises care in a covenant with all creatures (Gen. 9:9-17); delights in creatures which have no human apparent usefulness (Job 39-41); and wills, in Christ, "to reconcile all things to himself (Col.1: 20)” (EEN 2006).

However, the ECI and EEN are certainly not completely biocentric. The ECI differentiates itself from secular environmentalists and their seeming worship of Creation. In fact, EEN leader Ronald Sider cited that a reason the EEN was formed was to establish basis for care of the earth that was based in “Biblical truth” and set themselves apart from those that “are New Age, they worship the earth, mother goddess,

and so on” (Beisner 1997). Caring for non-human elements of creation, without deifying nature, is also one of the best ways to care for humankind, they explain. Both the EEN and the ECI emphasize the effect global warming will have on the world’s people, particularly the disproportionate effect on the poor. This is an important component in influencing Christian opinion, as the Bible’s message is very strong on care for the poor. Christians may always hold true to the belief that humans are in charge of the world and its living beings, but members of the ECI and EEN stress that this does not give humans free reign to destroy creation as they see fit.

While the ECI and the EEN have opened up their “scope of justice” to include those outside the human realm of existence, the ISA and ICES still give moral priority to humans and feel that their opponents are wrong in de-emphasizing man’s dominion. “Humanity alone of all the created order is capable of developing other resources and can thus enrich creation, so it can properly be said that the human person is the most valuable resource on earth” (ICES 2002). While this statement may not be directly contrary to the ECI or EEN’s beliefs on who is within the scope of justice, and while Calvin Beisner, spokesman of the ISA, applauds evangelical environmentalists for separating themselves from earth-worshippers, he still makes a distinction between their view of dominion, and his own. “Evangelical environmentalists rarely acknowledge an important balancing truth: ‘The highest heavens belong to the LORD, but the earth he has given to man<sup>5</sup>’” (Beisner 1997). Thus, it is humans who have rule over the earth and can use it to their benefit. The ISA and ICES believe that while destroying the earth is undesirable, humans have the intrinsic right given by God to use the earth to propel human invention and

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<sup>5</sup> Psalm 115:16

economy. Standing in the way of humanity's utilization of the Earth would mean inhibiting human potential and may lead to suffering. Thus, the Cornwall Declaration and its signers give moral priority<sup>6</sup> to man over the rest of creation in order for man to meet his full potential in making humanity more prosperous.

The ICES and ISA seems to give a biblical foundation to the "wise use" movement, which "asserts the preeminence of humans and values human economic and recreational activity over the well-being of the nonhuman natural environment" (Opotow 2000). While this reading of scripture may imply that the ICES and ISA are moral exclusionists of the rest of creation, it also could be inferred that the signers of the ECI and members of the EEN are morally excluding those in favor of utilizing the earth for economic reasons. This is further evident in evangelical environmentalists' suggestions that dissenters must be swayed by their ties to conservative politics and to the oil industry, without fully acknowledging and addressing their criticisms.

Besides the important role of moral exclusion in this conflict, the parties involved also have divergent priorities. While both sides are arguing from a biblical perspective that lends to a conservationist view of the world, there are important details that have led to their differing opinions. The idea of stewardship is not to say that nature is above or morally equal to human beings, but that nature should be used wisely. The positions of the ECI and EEN border preservationist sentiment (that "although we cannot avoid using nature, nature nevertheless has moral standing independent of its utility for humans"), although they still emphasize the human consequences of not caring for the environment over caring for the environment only for the environment's sake (Schmidtz 2000). All

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<sup>6</sup> While the ICES and ISA are less willing to rethink dominion into including non-human entities, to say that they morally exclude everything non-human may be too harsh. It can be said that they place more emphasis on the moral *priority* of human beings.

parties may agree that “the contrast between anthropocentrism and biocentrism obscures the fact that we increasingly need to be nature-centered to be properly human-centered” or that “on purely anthropocentric grounds we have reason to think biocentrically” (Schmitz 2000). However, the ICES and ISA would probably go further to agree with Schmitz assertion that the converse is true as well, “on purely biocentric grounds, we have reason to think anthropocentrically. We need to be human-centered to be properly nature-centered, for if we do not tend to what is good for people, we will not be tending to what is good for nature either” (Schmitz 2000).

The values of these two opposing factions of the evangelical community seem to be in common, as they are both rooted in biblical foundations. The difference is in their priorities and opinions on how action on global warming could affect the economy that thus impacts the peoples of the world. The problem is that global warming is such a broad, overarching issue that it is hard to determine the direct consequences of action or inaction on the economy or the earth. Therefore, the two groups must rely heavily on economic and scientific experts to inform their opinions, which can lead to further conflict.

### **The Role of Science:**

Science has often been cited as a tool to be utilized in solving conflicts among those with opposing priorities. In modern American culture, science is considered to be the most objective way of defining the natural order, and is often considered a “source of authority” (Ozawa 1996). This positivist view of science has existed for quite some time, and the scientific method was described by philosophers like Francis Bacon as the most sound way to obtain knowledge that is free from “theologically-based distortion and

founded on the observation of reality rather than imagination or fancy” (Ozawa 1996). If the positivist opinion of science is correct, then science could indeed be an invaluable resource in settling conflicts. However, as scientists begin to disagree on findings and add to opposing sides of debate, such as evidence on global warming, the constructivists seems to be more accurate in their view of science. That is, scientists are human beings that are not free of bias and that bias often causes them to interpret findings in divergent ways (Martin 1995). Thus, it becomes very difficult to resolve conflicts when each side has scientific evidence that supports their viewpoint. The role of science in this debate is also especially unique due to the often tumultuous relationship between evangelicals and science.

There is a great abundance of literature on the subject of Christianity and science, and scholars have long debated their relationship. Some claim that Christianity and science have always been in conflict, while others believe that the scientific method could not have existed without the framework of the Christian worldview, which relegated the universe to the orderly wisdom of the Creator (Lindberg 2003). Many now agree that the history of Christianity and science has included both conflict and symbiosis, and the relationship between evangelicals and scientists remains in this bipolar state. For instance, many modern evangelicals are extremely vocal in their distrust and disbelief of evolutionary science, as it goes against the biblical creation described in Genesis. The evolution/creation conflict has created tension between evangelicals and secular scientists that influence their willingness to trust other scientific discoveries. This distrust may have led to the delayed reaction by evangelicals on addressing concerns about global warming, as they were unsure as to the reliability of scientific reports on the subject.

In fact, one of the leaders of the NAE, Richard Cizik, who now supports evangelical activism to curb global warming, attributes his “conversion” to a scientist that was trust-worthy because he was also an evangelical Christian (Moyers 2006). In 2002, Cizik attended a conference designed to bring scientists and religious leaders together in Oxford, England. Evidence presented by Sir James Houghton, a leading climatologist evangelical, led him to believe that global warming is happening and is human-induced. Houghton reportedly told Cizik, “As a fellow follower of Jesus, I'm not spinning you. I'm telling you what is happening. And I trust that God will speak to your heart. The fate of the earth may well depend on how Christians, especially evangelical Christians who take the Bible seriously, respond to the issues of climate change" (Moyers 2006). As one of the leaders of the NAE, Cizik has, no doubt, considerable influence on the opinions of other evangelicals regarding climate change. The evidence originating with an evangelical Christian was enough to convince Cizik to trust the science, and Cizik’s trust may surely be enough to sway more American evangelicals. Evangelicals may not trust secular scientists, as they may be suspicious of their hidden motives to debunk biblical teachings. However, if evangelicals can be convinced that the science is coming from faithful, like-minded individuals, they are more likely to utilize science in resolving conflicts.

While evidence of human-induced climate change coming from evangelical scientists, such as Houghton, may be responsible for greater numbers of evangelicals supporting activism to curb emissions, and may have resulted in more signatures on the ECI, the members of the ICES and ISA are not convinced that the science is conclusive in indicting CO<sub>2</sub>.emissions by human activities as the cause of global warming that will

lead to catastrophic results. The ISA website and newsletters often cite the research of scientists who disagree with Houghton's conclusions and urge evangelicals to not respond with drastic measures until the science becomes more trustworthy and conclusive. Calvin Beisner also takes issue with Richard Cizik being convinced by Houghton because he was an evangelical Christian.

“That is particularly ironic because some of the most outspoken, high-level scientist critics of the hypotheses of catastrophic human-induced global warming and its susceptibility to mitigation by CO2 emission reductions are such evangelical climatologists as John Christy, Roy Spencer, and David Legates, and such evangelical environmental economists as Ross McKittrick and Ken Chilton” (Beisner 2006).

Since the ISA and ICES also have evidence from scientists that share their evangelical Christian values who refute the assertions by Houghton and others that human activism and emissions reduction could help curb global warming, it seems that science may not aid in resolving the conflict among evangelical groups. Still, it is key to understand how each side of the conflict is using science to support their positions. As in Richard Cizik's case, perhaps many evangelicals were unconvinced that environmental issues were worthy of their consideration until they were compelled into rethinking it by scientists such as Houghton, who happened to share their faith. Thus, science plays the role of discoverer for evangelicals, which may have caused them to question their opinions on moral exclusion and Biblical teachings (Ozawa 1996). However, for those evangelical Christians who were already convinced that environmental stewardship and Creation Care were promoted by Biblical teachings, and had already expanded their scope of justice to include non-human entities, the science of global warming may have simply supported their already firm beliefs. Thus global warming science becomes a tool

of persuasion that supports their positions on environmental concern and activism (Ozawa 1996).

For supporters of the ISA or ICES, it could be argued that science is being used as a shield, meaning that since they do not think the ECI's environmental activism is biblically founded and they do not want to act to lower emissions, they are thus choosing to promote only the scientific evidence that disagrees with human-caused global warming predictions (Ozawa 1996). However, it could also be argued that they are using science as a tool of persuasion in that they are sincerely worried about the economic consequences of reacting to "alarmist" predictions, and are convinced that their science will prove as much. While both sides of the debate may be convinced of the reliability of the scientific evidence they support, they are both using that evidence to promote their positions, which may be swayed by political and economic factors as well.

### **Politics and Economics:**

It is important to delve further into the economic and political background that is framing this conflict. As stated previously, one of the largest factors influencing opinions on both sides is the political allegiance that many evangelicals have to the Republic party, which supports a free-market economy and doesn't typically agree with environmentalist sentiments. However, in order to help resolve this conflict, it is important to examine how this political allegiance came about while also exploring the relationship between conservative politics and the environment. Protestantism became polarized into liberal and conservative (often evangelical) camps as early as the seventeenth and eighteenth century and this divide has continued and may be stronger than ever in the United States today (Stoll 1997).

This polarization had a great deal to do with a difference in values among Protestants, with evangelicals extolling the importance of personal morality, which they took on more strongly as a result of the sexual revolution of the 1960s and 70s (Brown 2002). Thus, their conservative attitude on morality coincided with their opinions on the virtues of hard work and the role of the government. “The conservative constellation of attitudes includes religious and political conservatism, empiricism tending towards Biblical literalism, the Protestant ethic, and laissez-faire anti-authoritarianism... Its business-mindedness thus has led it to concentrate on policies which lead to greater production and consumption and to weaken or eliminate policies, like environmental regulation, which seem to hinder economic growth.” (Stoll 1997). The aligning of these conservative values with the Republican party’s platform became especially important to the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980, which led to sweeping reform in economic policy that, in turn, has had a direct impact on environmental and conservation policy.

Reagan’s presidency has had a large impact on the presidencies of both George H.W. Bush and presently, George W. Bush. These administrations worked hard to promote the economy by extolling the virtue of capitalism and promoting consumerism by Americans. This rise in consumerism has also directly led to a great deal of environmental devastation throughout the world. “Social norms and behavior regarding consumption are integrally linked to a smorgasbord of man-made environmental issues including fossil fuel dependence, global warming, the disposal of production-process and household waste, and clean water and skies, to name but a few” (Greenberg 2006). However, conservatives in America have not historically been in favor of the consumer culture prominent today. “American conservatism traditionally espoused core virtues

including conservation, frugality, and stewardship. Political prudence in all endeavors was paramount” (Greenberg 2006).

Furthermore, the endorsement of a consumer-driven, materialist mentality among Americans seems antithetical to Christian theology on coveting, frugality, conservation, and modest living (Greenberg 2006). Despite historical or biblical contradictions, evangelical church leaders rarely speak out against the evils of materialism and consumption. Instead many churches have entered the business arena, setting up coffee shops and gift shops in their lobbies. However, with the call to action on global warming supported by many evangelicals, the issue of over-consumption will have to be addressed before environmental damage can be reversed.

Of course, entire books could be written on the subject of Christianity, politics, and economics, and in fact many have been, but this brief overview is meant to provide a framework for understanding the present-thought of many evangelicals in this country that has, in part, led to the split between green-minded individuals, and those more concerned with what effects environmental actions could have on the American capitalist system. After all, many of the signatories of the ECI were and still are reluctant to equate themselves with secular environmentalists partially due to differences in political alignments. Richard Cizik has stated that

“Environmentalists have a bad reputation among evangelical Christians for four reasons. One, they rely on big-government solutions. Two, their alliance with population-control movement. Three, they keep kooky religious company...[Four], there’s a certain gloom and doom about environmentalists. They tend to prophecies of doom that don’t happen “ (Solomon 2005)”

While Cizik and others now feel that environmental activism or Creation Care is a non-partisan concern, much of this same rhetoric, is used by the ISA and ICES to warn the

evangelical public that people (secular and evangelicals alike) promoting environmental action to curb global warming are not using reasoned thinking and are responding to irrational apocalyptic predictions without examining the consequences of such actions on the free-market economy.

Many of the beliefs and aspirations listed in the Cornwall Declaration include nods to their opinions on economic freedom and limited government control.

“We aspire to a world in which liberty as a condition of moral action is preferred over government-initiated management of the environment as a means to common goals... We aspire to a world in which widespread economic freedom—which is integral to private, market economies—makes sound ecological stewardship available to ever greater numbers” (ICES 2005)

Of course, evangelicals who are taking on environmental causes are not necessarily severing their ties with the political right, but are seeking solutions in a way that still seems to support a pro-business platform.

“In the United States, the most important immediate step that can be taken at the federal level is to pass and implement national legislation requiring sufficient economy-wide reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through cost-effective, market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade program. On June 22, 2005 the Senate passed the Domenici-Bingaman resolution affirming this approach, and a number of major energy companies now acknowledge that this method is best both for the environment and for business.” (ECI 2006)

Though it seems the ECI signatories have thought about economic concerns, they are recommending a solution that requires government intervention, and therefore goes against the typical conservative stance in the modern-day United States.

### **Recommendations for Conflict Resolution:**

Obviously, the conflict between evangelicals on whether or not action is required to address global warming is very complicated, with many factors influencing both sides

of the debate. Unlike some conflicts, both sides of this conflict seem to be pretty well informed and demonstrate reasoned arguments through their declarations, yet they have come to completely different conclusions on what is best for humans and the environment. Depending on how far each groups' influence reaches, this conflict could serve to split evangelicals, which may affect the strength of the Christian Right, a consequence of which may already have been seen in the mid-term elections of 2006. The future of the environment and the economy, and the impacts on the world's poor, is also at stake as those of the ECI and EEN are convinced that global warming will continue to worsen if action isn't taken to lower emissions. Consequently, ICES and ISA members are worried that such action will do more harm than good: action will not curb global warming, but destroy the economy and raise energy costs for everyone.

It is my recommendation that these groups work together to reach common goals, but first they must be found. As stated earlier, one of the regrets by Calvin Beisner is that this conflict is between "fellow servants of Christ", and this commonality could be one of the hallmarks of negotiation. Because the conflicting parties agree on their faith and servitude to the God and Jesus Christ, they may be more willing to keep lines of communication open and do their best not to demonize the individuals on the other side. Calvin Beisner stated his desire to keep the "disagreement" (he preferred this term over conflict) civilized. "I believe it is essential that folks who disagree both treat each other with respect and grace, on the one hand, and appeal to evidence and valid inference rather than merely repeating their conclusions or taking votes, on the other. Persuasion is what's needed, not demonization or polarization" (Beisner 2006).

While persuasion might be Beisner's idea of the best way to solve this conflict, I have my doubts that this will be effective. Of course, persuasion could be used to gather the support of evangelicals who have not yet taken a side on the issues, but I doubt those entrenched in the debate are capable of being persuaded to switch sides. Instead, I feel that the differing factions should come together over common beliefs and goals, and should stop focusing on their differences. Though these differences might seem great at times, there are also many commonalities. The EEN, ECI, ISA, and ICES are all concerned with the well being of the world's poor, and they all try to remain true to the teachings of the Bible. Their main differences have to do almost exclusively with whether or not they believe global warming is human-caused and on a cataclysmic scale.

I recommend that these groups stop focusing solely on the issue of global warming. Obviously, both sides have science that supports their conflicting opinions, and a scientific consensus is unlikely to occur anytime in the near future. Perhaps the only way the ICES and ISA will be absolutely convinced of the danger of global warming would be the occurrence of a disaster that could be directly linked to human-induced climate change. At that point, the opinions of these groups wouldn't matter anymore, as the consequences of ignoring climate science would have already come to fruition. Likewise, perhaps the only way EEN and ECI members will stop being concerned about global warming would be if the dissenting evidence became strong enough that the idea dropped from the nation's consciousness. Calvin Beisner believes that this scenario may occur: "the alarmist scenario finally collapses in a paradigm shift because of the sheer weight of all the contrary data that's been mounting up over the last five years and more...my expectation is that this alarm, like other environmental alarms

in the past, will wither away as the science becomes increasingly clear” (Beisner 2006). Until either of these scenarios happens, which could be many years in the future, these evangelical groups should work to get along by finding areas of environmental action they can agree on.

I initially proposed the finding of common ground on the issue of Peak Oil, a resolution Saleem Ali proposes to climate change debates in an upcoming paper (Ali 2007). That is, instead of focusing on what burning fossil fuels does or does not do to the atmosphere, they should instead focus on finding alternative energy for when oil will run out. I brought this issue up to Calvin Beisner, and he responded by saying that Peak Oil is also contestable, as “there is a growing body of evidence that oil comes from within the earth's mantle and is created there continuously and is therefore renewable--which helps explain why once "played out" fields have been found, five or ten years later, to be full again” (Beisner 2006). So it seems that promoting Peak Oil to support fossil fuel use reduction might lead to the same kind of conflict that rages now about global warming, with groups on every side citing scientists that support their positions. Furthermore, Beisner stated that economic incentives would dictate the implementation of alternative energy and fuel sources better than governmental involvement. “I don't oppose R&D for alternative fuels and alternative processes for more efficient and less polluting uses of current fuels, but economic understanding tells us that entrepreneurs, following market signals of the possibility of profit, will do that as needed when needed, and that legally mandated programs to do it are a misallocation of investments” (Beisner 2006). These same conflicts could also arise from citing evidence of other environmentally-related problems that use of fossil fuels entails, as it is very difficult for science to be conclusive

in correlation studies, as there are so many factors that could influence changes one way or another that can never be fully taken into account.

Thus, my recommendation for resolving this conflict would be that evangelicals of all stripes consider the problems associated with wealth and consumerism in our society, which in many ways has led to environmental destruction, and also involves the withering away of the morality endorsed by the Bible. By tackling the issues of greed and over-consumption, these evangelical groups can work to understand how the economy functions, and what purpose it serves. Is the promotion of a free-market economy actually helping people everywhere, and encouraging them to spread their wealth to other people and nations that are in need? Or does it serve to make some individuals rich off the suffering of others, and lead to the corrupt priorities of a society which is told to consume as much and as often as possible, thus leading to our current nation's wide-spread debt? Obviously, it is of a benefit to most people in our country for our economy to be strong and for people to have good jobs that allow them to be happy and prosperous, but an economy is only so good as its ability to serve the people that live with it. Of course, to figure out a balance that will provide less destruction of environment and values, yet keep the economy thriving, will be a difficult task, and may never be accomplished. But the role of Christianity in this society has often been to guide the morals and choices of individuals, and therefore, the groups involved in the conflict over environmental action should come together to realize how they can best influence the decisions of fellow followers of Christ. If enough people can realize the moral problems created by over-consumption and materialism, then perhaps a great deal of environmental destruction can be reversed and avoided in the future.

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## Appendix 1:

	Priorities	Scope of Justice	Political Alignment	Science	Economics	Consequences of not resolving conflict
Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN)	Founded in 1993 to bring awareness to environmental issues; What Would Jesus Drive Campaign; "Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation".	Stress emphasizing stewardship of the land over human dominance; Doing damage to creation is essentially doing damage to God but warn against the deifying of nature.	May align with other evangelicals on some value-based issues such as abortion and gay rights, but have started to prioritize environmental issues.	Use science as discoverer and tool of persuasion; compelled by scientific evidence of global climate change.	Stress importance of stopping global warming over economic concerns; Want legislation to lower emissions; stress economic impact of global warming on the world's poor.	Environmental concerns will continue to take backseat to other issues thus influencing justice issues, etc. Global warming could bring disastrous consequences if action isn't taken by all people.
Evangelical Climate Initiative (ECI)	Written and signed in Feb. 2006; Calls for legislation to reduce emissions to help curb global warming, which is a "moral and spiritual crisis"	Similar to EEN's beliefs, also emphasize stewardship but emphasize the ill effects to humanity if global warming is not reversed, especially the world's poor.	May align with other evangelicals on some value-based issues such as abortion and gay rights, but have started to prioritize environmental issues, especially curbing global warming	Use science as discoverer and tool of persuasion; compelled by scientific evidence of global climate change, especially when presented by evangelical scientists.	Stress importance of stopping global warming over economic concerns; Want legislation to lower emissions; stress economic impact of global warming on the world's poor.	Environmental concerns will continue to take backseat to other issues thus influencing justice issues, etc. Global warming could bring disastrous consequences if action isn't taken by all people.
Interfaith Council on Environmental Stewardship (ICES) and Interfaith Stewardship Alliance (ISA)	Both groups support the Cornwall Declaration of Environmental Stewardship written in 1999 that calls for reasoned thinking before swift action on environmental issues; Emphasize the dominance of humans over non-human nature.	Give humans moral priority; stress God giving man dominion over the Earth, thus enabling human invention and economic systems.	Probably tend to support conservative candidates; stress limited government involvement, especially in economics.	May use science as a shield; promote scientific evidence that questions cataclysmic human-induced climate change.	Stress free-market capitalism and worry about economic impact of government regulation on emission standards.	Economy could take a hit if action against global warming occurs without conclusive evidence that it will do any good; split of strong evangelical vote for conservative candidates.
National Association of Evangelicals (NAE)	Formed in 1942 to provide a united voice for evangelical Christians in the United States; Represent 60 denominations and about 45,000 churches.	Have not taken official stance on environmental issues as to not alienate certain members of their organization.	Tend to lean conservative and support Republican candidates; promotion of value-based issues such as stopping abortion and gay marriage	No official stance on global warming science; in general, evangelicals may be less trusting of science due to evolution debates.	No official stance on global warming or other environmental issues; many evangelicals are likely to support free-market capitalism.	Split of strong evangelical vote for conservative candidates, who tend to support free-market economies, criminalizing abortion, and banning gay marriage.

## Appendix 2:

Presidential Vote by Religion, 2000-2004					
	2000 VNS Exit Poll		2004 NEP Exit Poll		<i>Bush gain</i>
	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Gore</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Kerry</b>	
	%	%	%	%	
<b>TOTAL</b>	48	48	51	48	+3
Protestant (all)	56	42	59	40	+3
White Protestant	62	35	67	33	+5
Evangelical*	68	30	78	21	+10
Mainline*	53	43	55	45	+2
Catholic (all)	47	50	52	47	+5
White, Non-Hisp. Catholic	52	45	56	43	+4
Hispanic Catholic	33	65	39	58	+6
Black Protestant	7	91	13	86	+6
Jewish	19	79	25	74	+6
Other religion	28	62	23	74	-5
Secular	30	61	31	67	+1
<b>Church Attend</b>					
Protestant					
Weekly or Less often	64	34	66	33	+2
Weekly or Less often	48	49	52	47	+4
Catholic					
Weekly or Less often	53	44	56	43	+3
Weekly or Less often	42	54	49	50	+7
More than 1/wk	63	36	64	35	+1
1/week	57	40	58	41	+1
Few/month	46	51	50	49	+4
Few/year	42	54	45	54	+3
Never	32	61	36	62	+4

\*Evangelical/mainline division in 2000 estimated from Pew pre-election poll. All other estimates based on Voter News Service (VNS) and National Election Pool (NEP) exit polls. Pew trends include Hispanics in its designation of white Protestants, exit poll figures adjusted to fit this definition.

Source: <http://people-press.org/commentary/display.php3?AnalysisID=103>

## **Appendix 3:**

### **Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action**

#### **Preamble**

As American evangelical Christian leaders, we recognize both our opportunity and our responsibility to offer a biblically based moral witness that can help shape public policy in the most powerful nation on earth, and therefore contribute to the well-being of the entire world.<sup>1</sup> Whether we will enter the public square and offer our witness there is no longer an open question. We are in that square, and we will not withdraw.

We are proud of the evangelical community's long-standing commitment to the sanctity of human life. But we also offer moral witness in many venues and on many issues. Sometimes the issues that we have taken on, such as sex trafficking, genocide in the Sudan, and the AIDS epidemic in Africa, have surprised outside observers. While individuals and organizations can be called to concentrate on certain issues, we are not a single-issue movement. We seek to be true to our calling as Christian leaders, and above all faithful to Jesus Christ our Lord. Our attention, therefore, goes to whatever issues our faith requires us to address.

Over the last several years many of us have engaged in study, reflection, and prayer related to the issue of climate change (often called "global warming"). For most of us, until recently this has not been treated as a pressing issue or major priority. Indeed, many of us have required considerable convincing before becoming persuaded that climate change is a real problem and that it ought to matter to us as Christians. But now we have seen and heard enough to offer the following moral argument related to the matter of human-induced climate change. We commend the four simple but urgent claims offered in this document to all who will listen, beginning with our brothers and sisters in the Christian community, and urge all to take the appropriate actions that follow from them.

Claim 1: Human-Induced Climate Change is Real

Since 1995 there has been general agreement among those in the scientific community most seriously engaged with this issue that climate change is happening and is being caused mainly by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels. Evidence gathered since 1995 has only strengthened this conclusion.

Because all religious/moral claims about climate change are relevant only if climate change is real and is mainly human-induced, everything hinges on the scientific data. As evangelicals we have hesitated to speak on this issue until we could be more certain of the science of climate change, but the signatories now believe that the evidence demands action:

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world's most authoritative body of scientists and policy experts on the issue of global warming, has been studying this issue since the late 1980s. (From 1988—2002 the IPCC's assessment of the climate science was Chaired by Sir John Houghton, a devout evangelical Christian.) It has documented the steady rise in global temperatures over the last fifty years, projects that the average global temperature will continue to rise in the coming decades, and attributes "most of the warming" to human activities.

The U.S. National Academy of Sciences, as well as all other G8 country scientific Academies (Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Canada, Italy, and Russia), has concurred with these judgments.

In a 2004 report, and at the 2005 G8 summit, the Bush Administration has also acknowledged the reality of climate change and the likelihood that human activity is the cause of at least some of it.<sup>2</sup>

In the face of the breadth and depth of this scientific and governmental concern, only a small percentage of which is noted here, we are convinced that evangelicals must engage this issue without any further lingering over the basic reality of the problem or humanity's responsibility to address it.

## Claim 2: The Consequences of Climate Change Will Be Significant, and Will Hit the Poor the Hardest

The earth's natural systems are resilient but not infinitely so, and human civilizations are remarkably dependent on ecological stability and well-being. It is easy to forget this until that stability and well-being are threatened.

Even small rises in global temperatures will have such likely impacts as: sea level rise; more frequent heat waves, droughts, and extreme weather events such as torrential rains and floods; increased tropical diseases in now-temperate regions; and hurricanes that are more intense. It could lead to significant reduction in agricultural output, especially in poor countries. Low-lying regions, indeed entire islands, could find themselves under water. (This is not to mention the various negative impacts climate change could have on God's other creatures.)

Each of these impacts increases the likelihood of refugees from flooding or famine, violent conflicts, and international instability, which could lead to more security threats to our nation.

Poor nations and poor individuals have fewer resources available to cope with major challenges and threats. The consequences of global warming will therefore hit the poor the hardest, in part because those areas likely to be significantly affected first are in the poorest regions of the world. Millions of people could die in this century because of climate change, most of them our poorest global neighbors.

## Claim 3: Christian Moral Convictions Demand Our Response to the Climate Change Problem

While we cannot here review the full range of relevant biblical convictions related to care of the creation, we emphasize the following points:

\*Christians must care about climate change because we love God the Creator and Jesus our Lord, through whom and for whom the creation was made. This is God's world, and any damage that we do to God's world is an offense against God Himself (Gen. 1; Ps. 24; Col. 1:16).

\*Christians must care about climate change because we are called to love our neighbors, to do unto others as we would have them do unto us, and to protect and care for the least of these as though each was Jesus Christ himself (Mt. 22:34-40; Mt. 7:12; Mt. 25:31-46).

\*Christians, noting the fact that most of the climate change problem is human induced, are reminded that when God made humanity he commissioned us to exercise stewardship over the earth and its creatures. Climate change is the latest evidence of our failure to exercise proper stewardship, and constitutes a critical opportunity for us to do better (Gen. 1:26-28).

Love of God, love of neighbor, and the demands of stewardship are more than enough reason for evangelical Christians to respond to the climate change problem with moral passion and concrete action.

Claim 4: The need to act now is urgent. Governments, businesses, churches, and individuals all have a role to play in addressing climate change—starting now.

The basic task for all of the world's inhabitants is to find ways now to begin to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels that are the primary cause of human-induced climate change.

There are several reasons for urgency. First, deadly impacts are being experienced now. Second, the oceans only warm slowly, creating a lag in experiencing the consequences. Much of the climate change to which we are already committed will not be realized for several decades. The consequences of the pollution we create now will be visited upon our children and grandchildren. Third, as individuals and as a society we are making long-term decisions today that will determine how much carbon dioxide we will emit in the future, such as whether to purchase energy efficient vehicles and appliances that will last for 10-20 years, or whether to build more coal-burning power plants that last for 50 years rather than investing more in energy efficiency and renewable energy.

In the United States, the most important immediate step that can be taken at the federal level is to pass and implement national legislation requiring sufficient economy-wide reductions in carbon dioxide emissions through cost-effective, market-based mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade program. On June 22, 2005 the Senate passed the Domenici-Bingaman resolution affirming this approach, and a number of major energy companies now acknowledge that this method is best both for the environment and for business.

We commend the Senators who have taken this stand and encourage them to fulfill their pledge. We also applaud the steps taken by such companies as BP, Shell, General Electric, Cinergy, Duke Energy, and DuPont, all of which have moved ahead of the pace of government action through innovative measures implemented within their companies in the U.S. and around the world. In so doing they have offered timely leadership.

Numerous positive actions to prevent and mitigate climate change are being implemented across our society by state and local governments, churches, smaller businesses, and individuals. These commendable efforts focus on such matters as energy efficiency, the use of renewable energy, low CO2 emitting technologies, and the purchase of hybrid vehicles. These efforts can easily be shown to save money, save energy, reduce global warming pollution as well as air pollution that harm human health, and eventually pay for themselves. There is much more to be done, but these pioneers are already helping to show the way forward.

Finally, while we must reduce our global warming pollution to help mitigate the impacts of climate change, as a society and as individuals we must also help the poor adapt to the significant harm that global warming will cause.

Conclusion

We the undersigned pledge to act on the basis of the claims made in this document. We will not only teach the truths communicated here but also seek ways to implement the actions that follow from them. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, we urge all who read this declaration to join us in this effort.

## Appendix 4:

# The Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship



The past millennium brought unprecedented improvements in human health, nutrition, and life expectancy, especially among those most blessed by political and economic liberty and advances in science and technology. At the dawn of a new millennium, the opportunity exists to build on these advances and to extend them to more of the earth's people.

At the same time, many are concerned that liberty, science, and technology are more a threat to the environment than a blessing to humanity and nature. Out of shared reverence for God and His creation and love for our neighbors, we Jews, Catholics, and Protestants, speaking for ourselves and not officially on behalf of our respective communities, joined by others of good will, and committed to justice and compassion, unite in this declaration of our common concerns, beliefs, and aspirations.

### Our Concerns

Human understanding and control of natural processes empower people not only to improve the human condition but also to do great harm to each other, to the earth, and to other creatures. As concerns about the environment have grown in recent decades, the moral necessity of ecological stewardship has become increasingly clear. At the same time, however, certain misconceptions about nature and science, coupled with erroneous theological and anthropological positions, impede the advancement of a sound environmental ethic. In the midst of controversy over such matters, it is critically important to remember that while passion may energize environmental activism, it is reason -- including sound theology and sound science--that must guide the decision-making process. We identify three areas of common misunderstanding:

1. Many people mistakenly view humans as principally consumers and polluters rather than producers and stewards. Consequently, they ignore our potential, as bearers of God's image, to add to the earth's abundance. The increasing realization of this potential has enabled people in societies blessed with an advanced economy not only to reduce pollution, while producing more of the goods and services responsible for the great improvements in the human condition, but also to alleviate the negative effects of much past pollution. A clean environment is a costly good; consequently, growing affluence, technological innovation, and the application of human and material capital are integral to environmental improvement. The tendency among some to oppose economic progress in the name of environmental stewardship is often sadly self-defeating.

2. Many people believe that "nature knows best," or that the earth--untouched by human hands--is the ideal. Such romanticism leads some to deify nature or oppose human dominion over creation. Our position, informed by revelation and confirmed by reason and experience, views human stewardship that unlocks the potential in creation for all the earth's inhabitants as good. Humanity alone of all the created order is capable of developing other resources and can thus enrich creation, so it can properly be said that the human person is the most valuable resource on earth. Human life, therefore, must be cherished and allowed to flourish. The alternative--denying the possibility of beneficial human management of the earth--removes all rationale for environmental stewardship.

3. While some environmental concerns are well founded and serious, others are without foundation or greatly exaggerated. Some well-founded concerns focus on human health problems in the developing world

arising from inadequate sanitation, widespread use of primitive biomass fuels like wood and dung, and primitive agricultural, industrial, and commercial practices; distorted resource consumption patterns driven by perverse economic incentives; and improper disposal of nuclear and other hazardous wastes in nations lacking adequate regulatory and legal safeguards. Some unfounded or undue concerns include fears of destructive manmade global warming, overpopulation, and rampant species loss. The real and merely alleged problems differ in the following ways:

- a. The former are proven and well understood, while the latter tend to be speculative.
- b. The former are often localized, while the latter are said to be global and cataclysmic in scope.
- c. The former are of concern to people in developing nations especially, while the latter are of concern mainly to environmentalists in wealthy nations.
- d. The former are of high and firmly established risk to human life and health, while the latter are of very low and largely hypothetical risk.
- e. Solutions proposed to the former are cost effective and maintain proven benefit, while solutions to the latter are unjustifiably costly and of dubious benefit.

Public policies to combat exaggerated risks can dangerously delay or reverse the economic development necessary to improve not only human life but also human stewardship of the environment. The poor, who are most often citizens of developing nations, are often forced to suffer longer in poverty with its attendant high rates of malnutrition, disease, and mortality; as a consequence, they are often the most injured by such misguided, though well-intended, policies.

### **Our Beliefs**

Our common Judeo-Christian heritage teaches that the following theological and anthropological principles are the foundation of environmental stewardship:

1. God, the Creator of all things, rules over all and deserves our worship and adoration.
2. The earth, and with it all the cosmos, reveals its Creator's wisdom and is sustained and governed by His power and loving kindness.
3. Men and women were created in the image of God, given a privileged place among creatures, and commanded to exercise stewardship over the earth. Human persons are moral agents for whom freedom is an essential condition of responsible action. Sound environmental stewardship must attend both to the demands of human well being and to a divine call for human beings to exercise caring dominion over the earth. It affirms that human well being and the integrity of creation are not only compatible but also dynamically interdependent realities.
4. God's Law—summarized in the Decalogue and the two Great Commandments (to love God and neighbor), which are written on the human heart, thus revealing His own righteous character to the human person—represents God's design for shalom, or peace, and is the supreme rule of all conduct, for which personal or social prejudices must not be substituted.
5. By disobeying God's Law, humankind brought on itself moral and physical corruption as well as divine condemnation in the form of a curse on the earth. Since the fall into sin people have often ignored their Creator, harmed their neighbors, and defiled the good creation.
6. God in His mercy has not abandoned sinful people or the created order but has acted throughout history to restore men and women to fellowship with Him and through their stewardship to enhance the beauty and fertility of the earth.
7. Human beings are called to be fruitful, to bring forth good things from the earth, to join with God in making provision for our temporal well being, and to enhance the beauty and fruitfulness of the rest of the earth. Our call to fruitfulness, therefore, is not contrary to but mutually complementary with our call to steward God's gifts. This call implies a serious commitment to fostering the intellectual, moral, and religious habits and practices needed for free economies and genuine care for the environment.

## **Our Aspirations**

In light of these beliefs and concerns, we declare the following principled aspirations:

1. We aspire to a world in which human beings care wisely and humbly for all creatures, first and foremost for their fellow human beings, recognizing their proper place in the created order.
2. We aspire to a world in which objective moral principles—not personal prejudices—guide moral action.
3. We aspire to a world in which right reason (including sound theology and the careful use of scientific methods) guides the stewardship of human and ecological relationships.
4. We aspire to a world in which liberty as a condition of moral action is preferred over government-initiated management of the environment as a means to common goals.
5. We aspire to a world in which the relationships between stewardship and private property are fully appreciated, allowing people's natural incentive to care for their own property to reduce the need for collective ownership and control of resources and enterprises, and in which collective action, when deemed necessary, takes place at the most local level possible.
6. We aspire to a world in which widespread economic freedom—which is integral to private, market economies—makes sound ecological stewardship available to ever greater numbers.
7. We aspire to a world in which advancements in agriculture, industry, and commerce not only minimize pollution and transform most waste products into efficiently used resources but also improve the material conditions of life for people everywhere.