



Religion and Ecology

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Introduction

Spiritual or religious ecology refers to attitudes, values, and practices regarding nature within the world's religions and outside of those traditions. Spiritual or religious ecology identifies ways of interacting with nature that inspire human responses of respect, protection, and appropriate uses of nature. This bibliography highlights the literature in an emerging field of study called "religion and ecology." This field is in dialogue with other approaches to environmental studies from the social sciences, such as social ecology, political ecology, cultural ecology, industrial ecology, and ecological economics. This field began with the Harvard conference series on World Religions and Ecology at the Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions from 1996 to 1998. During this period and in the ensuing years, scholars of religion and theologians began a process of retrieving, reevaluating, and reconstructing religious traditions in light of the growing environmental crisis. This humanistic study of ways of valuing nature and of ethically using nature is seen as a complement to the empirical investigation of nature from a scientific perspective. This work has been encouraged by the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University where there is a joint master's program between the School of Forestry and Environmental Studies and the Divinity School. The field of religious or spiritual ecology has several approaches including: (1) identifying theological approaches to nature within the world's religions traditions; (2) intersecting with the earlier field of environmental ethics that arose from within Western philosophy; (3) highlighting practices for religious environmentalism on the ground; (4) responding to specific issues such as climate change, environmental justice, food security, and toxicities; and (5) drawing on the insights of artists and nature writers articulating the complexity of nature. This work in spiritual and religious ecology is opening up the field of religious studies to a broader understanding of what religion is and how it functions beyond Western categories of interpretation. Monotheism in its various Abrahamic forms does not exhaust the nature of religion. Thus we can now see religion through the lens of religious ecology as a way of orienting humans to the universe, grounding them in the community of nature and humans, nurturing them in Earth's fecund processes, and transforming them into their deeper cosmological selves. This gives fresh meaning to the Latin term *religio* "to bind back," which suggests a return to an awareness of and a commitment to the fundamental wellsprings of life.

Encyclopedias

[Jones 2005](#) contains fourteen articles on ecology and religion by leading historians of religion and theologians such as Vasuda Narayanan, Christopher Chapple, Donald Swearer, James Miller, Hava Tirosh-

Samuelson, John Cobb, John Grim, and ethicists such as Baird Callicott. The effort of religious scholars to speak to the challenge of sustainability is the goal of [Jenkins 2009](#), while [Taylor and Kaplan 2008](#) represents many years of effort to draw together researchers and practitioners focused on environmental issues.

- Jenkins, Willis, ed. *The Spirit of Sustainability: Religion, Ethics and Philosophy*. Vol. 3. The Encyclopedia of Sustainability. Great Barrington, MA: Berkshire, 2009.

This encyclopedic collection draws from appropriate religious, philosophical, and ethical resources to engage the theme of “sustainability.” In collaboration with the Forum on Religion and Ecology, manifold scholars address issues related to ecological integrity, economics, value theory, social justice, and more.

- Jones, Lindsay, ed. *Encyclopedia of Religion*. 2d ed. New York: Macmillan, 2005.

This fifteen-volume encyclopedia, originally edited by Mircea Eliade, is the definitive work in the field of religious studies. The Forum on Religion and Ecology was invited to organize a new section for the second edition on ecology and religion marking the coming of age of this field as a scholarly discipline. In addition to an overview, these articles covered the ecological worldviews and practices of the Abrahamic traditions, the Asian religions, and indigenous traditions. They also included articles on: environmental ethics; science, religion, and ecology; and ecology and nature religions.

- Taylor, Bron, and Jeffrey Kaplan, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*. 2 vols. New York: Continuum, 2008.

This landmark resource covers a vast and impressively interdisciplinary range of topics related to religion and ecology. *The Encyclopedia of Nature and Religion* is an essential reference for scholars in the field and contains introductory entries covering an incredible scope of religious traditions, environmental movements, and key thinkers related to the field of religion and ecology.

Journals

[Tucker and Grim 2001](#) represents one of the earliest intersections of scholars of religion with ethicists, educators, scientists, and policymakers. [Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology](#) was the first journal in the field of religion and ecology and has emphasized the contributions of the world religions to an environmental awareness. It has also drawn on the history of religions and theology. [Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture](#) has emphasized movements beyond the world’s religions, such as the spiritual nature of environmentalism and environmental movements. It has relied on the social sciences, especially anthropology and psychology. These two journals have had somewhat different readerships, but both have encouraged the broadening of the field of spiritual ecology to include voices from around the world.

- [Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture](#).

This journal, previously *Ecotheology*, publishes articles on social scientific and cultural studies, natural science studies, and constructive and normative studies related to religion and human-environment relations. Its goal is to explore what constitutes as an ethically appropriate relationship between the human species and the natural worlds we inhabit.

- Tucker, Mary Evelyn, and John Grim, eds. [Special Issue: Religion and Ecology: Can the Climate Change?](#) *Daedalus* 130.4 (Fall 2001).

This special issue of *Daedalus* contains formative essays in the field of religion and ecology. The contributors bring diverse perspectives on the world's religions to identify the symbolic, scriptural, historical, and ethical dimensions of contemporary environmental problems. This edition also contains contributions from scientific, public policy, and ethics perspectives.

- [Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology](#).

Worldviews is an academic journal dedicated to research on the relationship between religion, culture, and ecology on an international scale. The journal addresses both the influence of the world's religions on environmental attitudes and actions as well as the impact of culture and the environment on religion.

Websites and Organizations

The field of religion and ecology has benefitted from various organizations doing outreach work internationally and nationally with the world religions. This includes the [Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale \(FORE\)](#) and the [Alliance for Religion and Conservation \(ARC\)](#), based in England. The [National Religious Partnership for the Environment \(NRPE\)](#) includes organizations representing the Jewish and Christian traditions in the United States. The [South African Faith Communities' Environment Institute \(SAFCEI\)](#) is an interreligious effort to organize religions in Africa and beyond. The [Web of Creation](#) is one of the first Christian websites advocating care for the environment. The [Green Seminary Initiative \(GSI\)](#) is encouraging Christian Seminaries in the United States to incorporate environmental concerns in their curriculum, liturgies, building practices, and lifestyles. The [International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture \(ISSRNC\)](#) organizes bi-annual conferences and publishes a journal. And lastly, the [Earth Charter Initiative](#) website hosts the Earth Charter, a widely recognized and unique soft law document promoting ecology, justice, and peace.

- [Alliance of Religions and Conservation \(ARC\)](#).

The Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) is a secular body that helps the major religions of the world to develop their own environmental programs, based on their own core teachings, beliefs, and practices. ARC helps religions link with key environmental organizations to create alliances between faith communities and conservation groups.

- [Earth Charter Initiative](#).

A declaration of ecological interdependence and widely recognized soft law document that focuses on the transition to sustainable development by means of three integrated principles of ecology, justice, and peace. It was formed through a decade-long, inclusive, and highly participatory global drafting process.

- [Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale \(FORE\)](#).

Co-founded and co-directed by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. The objective of the Forum is to create and foster an academic field of study dedicated to religion and the environment. The Forum hosts conferences, publishes books and articles, and hosts a comprehensive website on religion and ecology. It fosters dialogue between scholars of religion with scholars and practitioners in diverse fields such as science, economics, education, and public policy on matters concerning global and local environmental problems.

- [Green Seminary Initiative \(GSI\)](#).

The Green Seminary Initiative exists to equip religious leaders to meet the pressing ecological challenges of our day. It especially aids efforts by theological schools and seminaries to incorporate responsible Earth-care into their institutional mission.

- [International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture](#).

The ISSRNC is a community of scholars engaged in exploring humans' relationships with their natural environments through the study of religious beliefs and practices. Facilitating scholarly collaboration and research, the ISSRNC publishes research findings in the affiliated *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture*.

- [National Religious Partnership for the Environment \(NRPE\)](#).

An association of independent faith groups across a broad spectrum: the US Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Council of Churches USA, the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life, and the Evangelical Environmental Network. Together, they offer resources of religious life and moral vision to a shared effort to protect Earth, humankind's common home.

- [Southern African Faith Communities' Environment Institute \(SAFCEI\)](#).

Through collaboration, networking, research, and action, SAFCEI aims to raise environmental awareness, facilitate environmental responsibility and action, confront environmental injustice, and support environmental training and education, particularly within faith communities. Holding to the core principles of the Earth Charter, SAFCEI supports faith communities in fulfilling their environmental and socioeconomic responsibilities.

- [Web of Creation](#).

Connects, provides, and inspires ideas and resources to foster the movement for ecological transformation in faith communities and wider society. It is maintained by the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. Web of Creation also specializes in providing information and resources for theology students interested in environmental ministry.

Religion and Ecology

In recent years a number of textbooks and introductory texts on the topic of religion and ecology have emerged as scholars have strived to both define the field of study and generate teaching resources for introductory courses on the topic. Early comprehensive texts established interreligious, multidisciplinary approaches to understanding the relationship between religion and ecology, such as [Callicott 1997](#). Continuing in this multivalent tradition, others such as [Gottlieb 2006](#) combine points of view from a variety of world religions with topical essays that transcend religious traditions while others, such as [Swearer 2009](#), provide broad interdisciplinary contributions from across the humanities. In recent years, several introductory textbooks on religion and ecology have been published, such as [Bauman, et al. 2011a](#), while [Bauman, et al. 2011b](#) explores potential future developments in the field. [Weeramantry 2009](#) offers a wide range of analyses on religion and ecology such as surveys on environmental protection and the world religions, and [Spretnak 1991](#) provides postmodern, religiously plural ruminations on ecology and spirituality.

- Bauman, Whitney A., Richard R. Bohannon II, and Kevin J. O'Brien, eds. *Grounding Religion: A Field Guide to the Study of Religion and Ecology*. New York: Routledge, 2011a.

The first introductory textbook in the field of religion and ecology, *Grounding Religion* introduces students to the questions and key concepts of the field through case studies, analytical essays, and dialogical scholarship. It also provides a narrative overview of the emergence of scholarship and activism in the field.

- Bauman, Whitney A., Richard R. Bohannon II, and Kevin J. O'Brien, eds. *Inherited Land: The Changing Grounds of Religion and Ecology*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011b.

Reviews the development of scholarship in the field of religion and ecology while simultaneously unearthing critical inquiries, reflecting on key concerns, and introducing new conversation partners that will be crucial to the next generation of scholarship.

- Callicott, J. Baird. *Earth's Insights: A Multicultural Survey of Ecological Ethics from the Mediterranean Basin to the Australian Outback*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997.

One of the earliest treatments of the world's religions and their ecological implications on environmental ethics. As a single-author volume, this is a tour de force for its broad coverage and depth of analysis. The author raises the question of how such diverse traditions can be the source of a global ethic and explores a position he calls an "orchestral approach."

- Gottlieb, Roger, ed. *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

This seminal work on views of nature in religious traditions brings together theologians and historians of religions from the world religions. Gottlieb's volume not only presents key positions in the new field of religion and ecology but also explores attitudes in the religions toward the environmental crisis. Three sections focus on traditional religious concepts of and attitudes toward nature and how these have been shaped by the environmental crisis. The book also covers larger conceptual issues that transcend individual traditions and religious participation in environmental politics.

- Spretnak, Charlene. *States of Grace: The Recovery of Meaning in the Postmodern Age*. New York: HarperCollins, 1991.

Beginning with the findings of modern science and the insights of the "wisdom traditions," *States of Grace* is a classic rumination on ecology, modernism, and deconstructive postmodernism. Spretnak considers Goddess spirituality, Buddhism, Native American spirituality, and the spirituality within the Abrahamic traditions.

- Swearer, Donald K., ed. *Ecology and the Environment: Perspectives from the Humanities*. Cambridge, MA: Center for the Study of World Religions, 2009.

With contributions from Donald Worster, Mary Evelyn Tucker, and others, this edited volume brings together a diverse set of thinkers to explore the environmental crisis from the perspectives of religion, philosophy, history, literature, environmental ethics, and anthropology. Contains debates on the scientific, political, and economic policy aspects of ecology.

- Weeramantry, C. G. *Tread Lightly on the Earth: Religion, the Environment and the Human Future*. Pannipitiya, Sri Lanka: Stamford Lake, 2009.

Written by a distinguished international lawyer who is also a Supreme Court judge in Sri Lanka. It surveys the contributions of the world's religions to the cause of environmental protection, namely, Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism.

Foundational Works

Emerging over the course of several decades, the field of religion and ecology has developed into a robust and interdisciplinary field. While no bibliography can reasonably capture the full range of issues, methodologies, and voices that have led to the concretizing of the field in its present state, a handful of texts can be identified as key milestones along the way. Volumes such as [Kinsley 1995](#) and [Nasr 1997](#) capture early developments in the field as it began to coalesce from a disparate assemblage of inquiries into the relationship between religion and the environment and become the present-day field of study known as “religion and ecology.” Religion and ecology in its present state encompasses subfields such as ecotheology, environmental ethics, and ecological philosophies. Key moments and conferences in the creation of the field, such as the “Spirit and Nature” conference at Middlebury College, featured in [Rockefeller and Elder 1992](#), are also captured and described in the volumes listed here. Several anthologies have attempted to capture the field as it has unfolded such as [Foltz 2003](#), which is a collection of classic texts and analytical essays and [Gottlieb 2004](#), an extensive and masterfully assembled anthology on major issues and approaches in the field. Included here are other key developments, such as [Barnhill and Gottlieb 2001](#), a now-classic text that draws together conversations between the eco-philosophy known as deep ecology and the world religions. Also included in this section are two works by the co-founders and co-directors of the Forum on Religion and Ecology. The first of these, [Tucker and Grim 1994](#), is an assemblage of introductory essays on religion and ecology. In [Tucker 2003](#) the movement of the world religions into their “ecological phase” is described, as members of the emerging “Earth community” come together to prevent the ecological crisis and to establish human ways of being that encourage ecological flourishing.

- Barnhill, David Landis, and Roger S. Gottlieb, eds. *Deep Ecology and World Religions: New Essays on Sacred Ground*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001.

This text draws together thirteen essays on the relationship between the environmental philosophy of deep ecology and the world religions. The essays explore the moral, political, and spiritual intersections and differences between this complex environmental philosophy and religions as diverse as Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and more.

- Foltz, Richard, ed. *Worldviews, Religion and the Environment: A Global Anthology*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson, 2003.

This comprehensive anthology combines carefully selected classic texts on the intersection of religion and ecology with a wide array of essays from the perspectives of the world religions and with a variety of essays on ecofeminism, ecojustice, and radical environmentalism. This volume is well suited as a textbook for introductory classes on religion and environment.

- Gottlieb, Roger, ed. *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment*. New York: Routledge, 2004.

This comprehensive anthology both surveys traditional religious perspectives on nature and provides perspectives on how contemporary theologians, nature writers, spiritual teachers, activists, and religious institutions are responding to the environmental crisis. The resources in this book are extensive, furnishing the reader with a global introduction to the myriad ways that environmentalism is engaged today.

- Kinsley, David. *Ecology and Religion: Ecological Spirituality in Cross-cultural Perspective*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1995.

One of the first books in this emerging field of ecological spirituality, the author addresses the world religions including four indigenous traditions as well as background and contemporary issues and personalities in ecology and religion.

- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*. Chicago: Kazi, 1997.

This foundational text in the study of religion and ecology provides a history of the environmental crisis, arguing that humanity's spiritual bankruptcy has contributed to our dire ecological circumstances. *Man and Nature* is one of the earliest writings on the link between human spirituality and the natural world.

- Rockefeller, Stephen C., and John C. Elder, eds. *Spirit and Nature: Why the Environment Is a Religious Issue: An Interfaith Dialogue*. Boston: Beacon, 1992.

This collection of essays reflects a variety of religious traditions and their unique concerns over the present-day environmental crisis. Contributors discuss the significant ways such traditions can dialogue regarding the political and ethical possibilities for meeting our environmental challenges. *Spirit and Nature* arose from a conference at Middlebury College that was filmed by Bill Moyers and helped to launch the field of religion and ecology.

- Tucker, Mary Evelyn. *Worldly Wonder: Religions Enter Their Ecological Phase*. Chicago: Open Court, 2003.

Tucker argues that as religions move into their "ecological phase," their new role should be to challenge societies to envision our place in the cosmos. Through the themes of reverence, respect, responsibility, restraint, and redistribution, Tucker says religions can help to reinvent humans' niche as members of an emerging Earth community.

- Tucker, Mary Evelyn, and John Grim. *Worldviews and Ecology: Religion, Philosophy, and the Environment*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1994.

Provides introductory essays on the role of religious worldviews in responding to the ecological challenge. Contains essays on a wide range of religions such as Hinduism, Jainism, Christianity, Taoism, Confucianism, and indigenous traditions. Other essay topics include ecofeminism, deep ecology, cosmology and ethics, and much more.

Review Essays

The diversity of methodologies, religious traditions, and modes of engaging with scientific knowledge and environmental insights in the field of religion and ecology is noteworthy. After several decades of development, the field has grown to include contributions from scholars in disciplines as distinct as anthropology, history, religious studies, theology, ethics, sociology, literature, geology, cosmology, biology, and more. While some scholars have attempted to understand how religious ideas and values have shaped environmental attitudes and actions historically or even empirically through the social sciences, others have searched for potential and previously overlooked ecological insights in existing religious traditions, and still others have explored new ways of understanding the complex relationship between religion and ecology. Yet, the field as a whole can also be regarded as a composite whole made up of a diverse set of similarly oriented research projects. Commonalities and evolving lines of inquiry can be traced throughout this broad expanse of approaches. [Jenkins 2009](#) and [Jenkins and Chapple 2011](#) are two recent articles that survey developments in the field and highlight the main theoretical threads, methodological debates, key thinkers, and ecological issues that have shaped and defined the field. These

two works represent efforts to both map out the development of the field, as well as attempt to catalogue and investigate the underlying theoretical framework that is unique to the study of religion and ecology.

- Jenkins, Willis. "Religion and Ecology: A Review Essay on the Field." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 77.1 (March 2009): 187–197.

Jenkins analyzes four paradigmatic religion and ecology anthologies in order to represent and bring clarity to the four main ways of constructing the field. Between these anthologies there are divergent views on the role of religions in social change, the role of socially engaged scholarship, and the place of theology within the contemporary academy.

- Jenkins, Willis, and Christopher Key Chapple. "Religion and Environment." *Annual Review of Environmental Resources* 36 (1 August 2011): 441–463.

Introduces major approaches to the field of religion and environmental studies and the key questions it raises, a field wherein methodological debates are myriad and the diversity of research projects continues to expand.

Environmental Ethics

Environmental ethics, generally speaking, is a philosophical discipline that explores the moral dimension of human beings' relationship to nonhuman life. In 1949 Aldo Leopold virtually inaugurated the field as a topic of academic discourse in his posthumously published *A Sandy County Almanac*, which has gone on to influence countless environmental ethicists and nature writers alike, and its ethical arguments continue to be defended, as we see in [Callicott 1989](#). Since the 1960s the field has blossomed beyond the challenge it initially posed to anthropocentric ethics through utilitarian, deontological, and virtue ethical modalities—as demonstrated in [Jamieson 2008](#)—to include feminist, political, and literary theory. [Nash 1989](#) and [Rolston 2012](#) provide helpful overviews, demonstrating the variegated philosophical approaches within the field. Environmental ethics has also accommodated a variety of religion-based perspectives, which often focus upon the value and moral status of the environment and its nonhuman contents. [Jenkins 2009](#) shows how traditional religious approaches to environmental ethics have been affected by Lynn White Jr.'s famous cosmological critique, as well as the myriad practical strategies inherent to religions' potential moral responses to the environmental crisis. [Sideris 2003](#) provides a significant survey and critique of religious-based environmental ethical perspectives, and moreover challenges the field on its competency in evolutionary theory. [Singer 2002](#) and other recent works in environmental ethics delve deeper into issues related to globalization, and [Bergmann and Eaton 2011](#) explores the theological, cosmological, and sociological implications of religion's contribution to environmental ethics.

- Bergmann, Sigurd, and Heather Eaton. *Ecological Awareness: Exploring Religion, Ethics and Aesthetics*. Berlin: Lit, 2011.

Explores the ways in which religious scholars have begun to engage ecological challenges through theological, biological, sociological, and philosophical avenues. Essays consider aspects of ecological awareness in order to examine the significant ways belief systems can provide foundations for new worldviews, ethical concepts, and philosophical principles in light of the contemporary environmental crisis.

- Callicott, J. Baird. *In Defense of the Land: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

Drawing on Aldo Leopold's seminal essay on a "land ethic" from *Sand County Almanac*, Callicott moves through and beyond an environmental philosophy approach to explore the spiritual

implications of a land ethic. This is an extensionist approach that brings ethical considerations beyond the human to a holistic view of biotic communities and ecosystems.

- Jamieson, Dale. *Ethics and the Environment: An Introduction*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

An introduction to the ethical issues involved in aesthetics and political philosophy related to the environment, human morality, meta-ethics, normative ethics, humans and other animals, the value of nature, and nature's future. The discussion is accessible and illustrated with examples. The book is helpful for students taking courses in environmental philosophy, and for those interested in ethics, practical ethics, and environmental studies.

- Jenkins, Willis. "After Lynn White: Religious Ethics and Environmental Problems." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37 (2009): 283–309.

Examining Lynn White's critiques of religious ethics and the environment, as well as the generative legacy of such critiques, Jenkins presents a pluralist alternative to White's cosmologically based critique that emphasizes the contextual, practical strategies of faith communities as they engage environmental problems.

- Nash, Roderick. *The Rights of Nature: A History of Environmental Ethics*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989.

Focuses on the expansion of rights to include both humans and nature. It is a comprehensive intellectual history of this movement covering the development of environmental ethics in history, philosophy, science, and religion. It includes not only leading intellectual figures but also movements such as Greenpeace, the Animal Liberation Front, and EarthFirst!

- Rolston, Holmes. *A New Environmental Ethics: The Next Millennium for Life on Earth*. London and New York: Routledge, 2012.

An overview of environmental ethics from one of the founders of the field. The work brings Rolston's unparalleled knowledge and experience to an exploration of approaches and critical views of future questions in this field. Central to much of his thinking is an ongoing inquiry into the fact-value relationship in science and the humanities. His insights into the responsibilities of global citizenship and of residents of a landscape are striking.

- Sideris, Lisa. *Environmental Ethics, Ecological Theology, and Natural Selection*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2003.

Argues that contemporary approaches within ecological theology are deficient in their treatment of evolutionary theory, placing too much emphasis upon Romantic, pre-Darwinian notions of the natural world. She provides sustained critiques of Sallie McFague, Rosemary Radford Ruether, Tom Regan, and John Cobb as she forms her own scientifically adept position.

- Singer, Peter. *One World: The Ethics of Globalization*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.

One of the world's most influential philosophers considers the ethical issues surrounding globalization, showing how a global ethic rather than a nationalistic approach can provide a way forward for our planetary community. He integrates perspectives from the environment, economics, law, and politics.

Ecofeminism and Gender

Ecofeminism recognizes the overlapping domination and impoverishment of women and the natural world. [Adams 1993](#) is dedicated to the intersection of ecofeminism and spirituality and examines the links between sexism, classism, racism, and heterosexism. [Ruether 2005](#), on globalization and ecofeminism, sheds light on the effects of globalization on issues as diverse as water ethics, climate change, and the role of the world religions in answering the dual domination of women and nature. Approaching ecofeminism from a theological perspective, [Eaton 2005](#) discusses the theological challenges presented to theology presented by ecofeminism along with a concise overview and analysis of ecofeminist theology. Two other classic ecofeminist theological texts are [Gebara 1999](#) and [Ruether 1994](#). The former combines ecofeminist insights with liberation theology to reassess Christian faith in relation to poor women in Brazil and the global South while the latter utilizes the tools of ecofeminism to trace the historical lineage of Western culture and to imagine new ways of envisioning healing between humans, God, and the Earth. Other important inroads to the study of ecofeminism include [Spencer 1996](#), a seminal book on gay and lesbian perspectives on religion and ecology, [Page 2007](#), an insightful critique of ecofeminism that suggests that gender analysis is in need of further scholarly attention, and [Baker-Fletcher 1998](#), a study of theology and womanist thought.

- Adams, Carol, ed. *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*. New York: Continuum, 1993.

The first anthology devoted entirely to the issue of ecofeminism and spirituality, this volume communicates the diversity of ecofeminisms through the themes of interrelationship, solidarity, transformation, and embodiment. Scholars examine the issues of sexism, racism, classism, and heterosexism as they relate to the oppression of the natural world, as well as link spiritual experience with purposive action and ecological responsibility.

- Baker-Fletcher, Karen. *Sisters of Dust, Sisters of Spirit: Womanist Wordings on God and Creation*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.

Baker-Fletcher explores the relationship between theology and environmental justice, particularly as it relates to communities of color. By re-envisioning the idea of the “abundant life” through harmonious relationships with God, one another, and the planet, she envisages an embodied theology wherein people overcome their modern alienation from one another and the Earth through a renewed commitment to the land.

- Eaton, Heather. *Introducing Ecofeminist Theologies*. London: T&T Clark, 2005.

Connecting feminist studies, theology, biology, and evolutionary history, Eaton explores ecofeminism in cultural understandings of the natural world, as well as some of the larger challenges ecofeminism presents to Christian theology. She also focuses on the ways ecofeminist theory can contribute to preventing the domination of life on Earth.

- Gebara, Ivone. *Longing for Running Water: Ecofeminism and Liberation*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999.

Gebara melds the fields of feminism, liberation theology, and ecotheology to reimagine some central doctrines of the Christian faith. In her exploration of areas such as epistemology, anthropology, the Trinity, and Christology, Gebara constructs a “lived” theology on the basis of doing theology amid the garbage and noise of the underdeveloped world.

- Page, Tovis. “Has Ecofeminism Cornered the Market? Gender Analysis in the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture.” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* 1.3 (2007): 293–319.

Surveys and evaluates the ways in which gender has been used to analyze the intersection of religion and nature. Page argues that the early focus on ecofeminism in the field of religion and ecology has inadvertently led to the underdevelopment of other modes of gender analysis.

- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing*. New York: Harper One, 1994.

Gaia and God is Ruether's influential text that critiques the historical lineage of Western culture from an ecofeminist perspective. While Western forms of religion have legitimized social and environmental domination, she argues, Ruether believes that within these same religious traditions are the tools for re-envisioning—as well as healing—humans' relationships with God and the Earth.

- Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Integrating Ecofeminism, Globalization, and World Religions*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005.

Ruether knits together the three concerns of corporate globalization, interfaith ecological theology, and ecofeminism to examine the interrelationships between the effects of globalization, the greening of world religions, ecofeminist theologies and ethics, and alternatives to corporate globalization. Topics such as climate change, industrial agriculture, the privatization of water, and apocalyptic messianic nationalism are treated.

- Spencer, Daniel T. *Gay and Gaia: Ethics, Ecology, and the Erotic*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 1996.

In this seminal book, Spencer critiques Christian ecological theology, ethics, and ecofeminism and argues for an ecological theology rooted in gay and lesbian liberationist perspectives. The author looks at the environmental practices of gay and lesbian communities and highlights the necessity of integrating sexuality, environmentalism, and spirituality.

Ecology and Justice

Different fields constellate around the themes of “ecology” and “justice,” the chief ones being “environmental justice” and “ecojustice.” Environmental justice emerged in the 1980s as, on the one hand, an academic discipline exploring theories of justice, race, and politics in relation to environmental law, sustainability, and sociology and, on the other hand, as a social movement focusing upon the fair distribution of environmental benefits and burdens. Each is exemplified in [Bullard 2005](#), which examines environmental injustices, racism, and human rights, and in texts such as [Pellow 2007](#) that investigate the way particular issues such as pollution adversely affect communities of color. Ecojustice considers the linkages between ecology, justice, and religion, often connecting such linkages to sociological and economic theory. [Boff 1997](#) shows the spiritual dimensions of environmental health, including the resources that religion brings to the struggle for environmental justice. [Peterson 2005](#) explores the ways particular human communities flourish by connecting justice issues to land health. Correlating ecojustice to environmental justice, [Rasmussen 2004](#) provides an important perspective on the inherent relationality between the two fields. The [Ecology and Justice Series](#) also includes works that provide in-depth analyses of environmental justice issues as related to the world's religious traditions.

- Boff, Leonardo. *Cry of the Earth, Cry of the Poor*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1997.

Boff connects the cause of oppressed peoples to Earth health and ecojustice. By utilizing the themes of pantheism, connectedness, and cosmic Christology, he argues that an embrace of the Earth is indeed an embrace of the God of the Abrahamic and Noachic covenants. He also defends an eco-spirituality informed by the liberation movement of the global South.

- Bullard, Robert, ed. *The Quest of Environmental Justice: Human Rights and the Politics of Pollution*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 2005.

This second book from Robert Bullard, a founding figure in the struggle for environmental justice, describes the injustices faced by communities of color around the globe as they struggle for equal protection from pollution. Bullard offers a concise history of the struggle against environmental racism as well as a plethora of insightful case studies.

- Pellow, David Naguib. *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007.

In *Resisting Global Toxics*, Pellow documents the growing transnational environmental justice movement and tracks environmental inequalities on a global scale. Pellow demonstrates the connection between the creation of toxic waste in the “global North” and traces its paths and effects as it is exported to the “global South.”

- Peterson, Anna L. *Seeds of the Kingdom: Utopian Communities in the Americas*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Through her study of the Amish and Salvadorean communities, which challenge contemporary ethical and economic norms of industrialized society, Peterson shows that through a deep commitment to the land and the flourishing of all its inhabitants, such communities succeed in achieving ecological sustainability and social justice.

- Rasmussen, Larry. “Environmental Racism and Environmental Justice: Moral Theory in the Making?” *Journal for the Society of Christian Ethics* 24 (2004): 3–28.

Rasmussen argues that the environmental justice movement directs the field of Christian ethics to expand the boundaries of moral community to give moral standing to all of creation. He provides substantive reflections on the nature of environmental injustice and the ways the environmental justice movement advances paradigms for social transformation.

- Tucker, Mary Evelyn, John Grim, Leonardo Boff, and Sean McDonagh, eds. [Ecology and Justice Series](#). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis.

Seeks to integrate an understanding of the Earth as an interconnected life system with concerns for just and sustainable systems that benefit the entire planetary community. Viewing the present moment as a time for responsible creativity, this series asks authors to speak to ecojustice concerns from the Christian community, from the world’s other religious traditions, from secular and scientific circles, and from new paradigms of thought and action.

New Cosmology and Thomas Berry

Cosmological perspectives in the field of religion and ecology consider the historical unfolding of the cosmos, and the human place in it, as both an empirically observable phenomena and as a resource for spiritual and ecological insights. Cultural historian and “geologist” Thomas Berry, who was profoundly influenced by the thought of Giambattista Vico and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, imagines this epic saga of cosmic evolution as a “new story.” In this new story, humanity becomes conscious of itself as a disruptive ecological force and works to transform itself into a benign presence on the Earth. In [Berry 1999](#) he identifies this transition as the “Great Work” of our time. This nuanced retelling of history and humanity’s place in it was first introduced to a wide audience in [Berry 1988](#) and is continued and expanded, along with other groundbreaking insights, in [Berry 2006](#) and [Berry 2009](#). Berry also worked collaboratively with Brian

Swimme to tell the comprehensive narrative of the universe and to reimagine human-Earth relations in the “ecozoic era” in [Swimme and Berry 1992](#). Swimme continues in this tradition in [Swimme 1999](#). And, more recently, Brian Swimme and Mary Evelyn Tucker, along with John Grim, collaborated to create the *Journey of the Universe* book ([Swimme and Tucker 2011](#)), film, and educational DVD series, a multimedia project. Here, cosmic evolution is woven together with humanistic and ecological insights to reveal feelings of wonder and appreciation for the creativity and interdependence inherent in the development of the cosmos. Also included in this portion of the bibliography is [Fox 1991](#). Fox combines Christian mysticism with the new story to envision alternative ways of caring for the planet.

- Berry, Thomas. *The Dream of the Earth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 1988.

This foundational ecological text introduces Berry’s poetic, scientifically rooted spiritual vision for bringing forth mutually beneficial human-Earth relations. Here, through the “new story,” Berry reimagines human religious, economic, and political activity in terms of planetary well-being and in relation to the evolving cosmos.

- Berry, Thomas. *The Great Work: Our Way to the Future*. New York: Bell Tower, 1999.

Cultural historian and “geologist” Thomas Berry observes that humanity is at a defining moment in history. The human transition from being a disruptive ecological force to a benign presence on Earth is the “Great Work” of our time. In this text, Berry reimagines education, politics, economics, and ethics.

- Berry, Thomas. *Evening Thoughts: Reflecting on Earth as Sacred Community*. Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 2006.

Expands and deepens ideas of Berry’s earlier writings and also breaks new ground. Applying his formidable erudition in cultural history, science, and comparative religions, Berry forges a compelling narrative of creation and communion that reconciles modern evolutionary thinking and traditional religious insights concerning our integral role in the Earth community.

- Berry, Thomas. *The Sacred Universe: Earth, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Covers Berry’s thought on alienation, religious experience, and the sacred dimensions of the “new story.” His unique vision encompasses both the common origins of all aspects of reality in the evolutionary development of the universe as well as the recognition that humanity has a shared future with the Earth community.

- Fox, Matthew. *Creation Spirituality: Liberating Gifts for the People of the Earth*. New York: HarperCollins, 1991.

Exposes the long-hidden creation spirituality inherent in the Christian mystic tradition while also bringing awareness to the contemporary struggle for justice. Armed with the new cosmology and a renewed sense of the wisdom of creation spirituality, Fox says people can both appreciate the creation’s wonder and begin to protect the world.

- Swimme, Brian. *Hidden Heart of the Cosmos: Humanity and the New Story*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1999.

Opens the human to creative energies in the universe and the Earth. It brings readers into the regeneration of human communities and enveloping life systems. Swimme analyzes the devastation of planetary life related to underlying causes of human alienation, consumerism,

militarism, androcentrism, and unsustainable modes of life. He draws from philosophical and religious wisdom together with scientific insights to bring forth a striking vision of a vibrant planet.

- Swimme, Brian, and Thomas Berry. *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Forth to the Ecozoic Era: A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992.

Explains the comprehensive story of the universe and the place of the human within it. In this classic text, Swimme and Berry use contemporary scientific knowledge and humanistic insights to reimagine human-Earth relations and the integral role of the human in the emerging “ecozoic era.”

- Swimme, Brian, and Mary Evelyn Tucker. *Journey of the Universe*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011.

Tells the epic story of the universe in a way that weaves together modern science and the enduring wisdom found in the humanistic traditions of the West, China, India, and indigenous peoples. This exploration of cosmic evolution is part of a larger project and film series that emphasizes wonder, creativity, and interdependence as integral parts of human and ecological flourishing.

World Religions

In the context of religion and ecology, the study of world religions has moved from earlier models asserting the universality of certain religions to the more pluralistic study of religious perspectives on the surrounding world. Several approaches have emerged, including spirituality, politics, sustainability, and ethics. One of the early thinkers in the area of religion and ecology, [Nasr 1996](#), has been foregrounding the sacredness of nature. Others such as [Mische and Merkling 2001](#) are focused on the study of global governance, world religions and environmental concerns; [Palmer and Finlay 2003](#) and [Gardner 2006](#) cover sustainability, ethics, and religions. The creative contributions of religion, philosophy, and ecofeminism to a more equitable globalization are explored in [Eaton and Lorentzen 2003](#), and an interdisciplinary perspective for an Earth ethics is covered in [Kearns and Keller 2007](#). Also of note are attempts to underscore not only how religious communities are shaped by their natural histories and environment but also the building of bridges between religious studies, literary ecocriticism, and the broader field of religion and ecology as can be seen in [McFarland 2007](#). Finally, writings of religious leaders, scholars, and nature writers have been gathered for guidance and inspiration by the Sierra Club in [Moseley 2008](#).

- Eaton, Heather, and Lois Lorentzen. *Ecofeminism and Globalization: Exploring Culture, Context, and Religion*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003.

These essays consider the intersection of religion, globalization, and ecofeminism. Topics include, but are not limited to: international case studies of concrete action, economic globalization, and gender.

- Gardner, Gary T. *Inspiring Progress: Religions' Contributions to Sustainable Development*. New York: Norton, 2006.

Explores environmental issues and religious values in relation to the notion of progress. Gardner asserts that religion can make a vital contribution to the debate over societal advancement and in shaping humanity's ecological future in the 21st century.

- Kearns, Laurel, and Catherine Keller, eds. *Ecospirit: Religions and Philosophies for the Earth*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2007.

Ecospirit brings together original, transdisciplinary essays that explore the interstices of ecology, religion and ecotheology, philosophy, and postmodernism. It approaches ecology and spirituality from a wide array of perspectives and covers topics including, but not limited to, the study of place, gender and ecofeminism, science and theology, process thought, and much more.

- McFarland, Sarah. “What If Religions Had Ecologies? The Case for Reinhabiting Religious Studies.” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* 1.1 (2007): 129–138.

Connections between literary ecocriticism and religious studies must be forged, and moreover attention should be paid to the ways religious communities are shaped by their natural histories and environments. When the environment receives more attention in academic inquiry, Taylor says, it ceases to become the mere backdrop to human agency, but is recognized as an integral facet of religious inquiry.

- Mische, Patricia, and Melissa Merklung, eds. *Toward a Global Civilization? The Contribution of Religions*. New York: Peter Lang, 2001.

Features a wide range of authors from history of religions and theology to discuss particular religions in the context of global governance and environmental concerns. Using the “dialogue of religions” as an initial entry they ask the authors to discuss the world-order thinking inherent in religious traditions and the ways in which religions have participated and encouraged historical transformations.

- Moseley, Lyndsay, ed. *Holy Ground: A Gathering of Voices on Caring for Creation*. San Francisco: Sierra Club, 2008.

Holy Ground is a collection of writings on caring for the environment by prominent religious leaders such as the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew and Pope Benedict XVI, as well as writers such as Wendell Berry and Gary Snyder, and more. Essays in this text share personal stories, explore religious values, and consider the sacredness of the Earth.

- Nasr, Seyyed Hossein. *Religions and the Order of Nature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Critiques the historical orientations of various world religions and modern scientific thought for the way they are apt to reduce nature to a mere quantity. Nasr then draws from the world religions to present an alternative view of the natural world: one that reimagines nature as sacred.

- Palmer, Martin, and Victoria Finlay. *Faith in Conservation: New Approaches to Religions and the Environment*. Washington, DC: World Bank, 2003.

There are important roles for the world’s religions to fill on the issue of environmental sustainability. *Faith in Conservation*, through an exploration of stories, myths, advocacy, and land management, demonstrates how the world’s major faiths are beginning to respond to today’s most pressing ecological challenges.

Abrahamic Traditions

The Abrahamic traditions—namely Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—have been both creative and capacious in their response to the ecological crisis. Whether discussing and rethinking sacred texts such as the Torah and the New Testament or else reimagining theology and tradition, scholars of the Christian and Jewish traditions have been at the forefront of thought on issues as diverse as climate change, species

extinction, and agriculture and food. Ecotheology, in particular, has emerged as a robust and lively subfield as thinkers have applied themselves to assessing theologies both old and new. Included here are also Evangelical, Mormon, Greek Orthodox Christianity, and more. Scholars of Islamic religious thought and Muslim leaders and activists have also responded to the call to rethink theology, sacred texts, and daily religious life in response to the ecological crisis.

Biblical Approaches

Biblical hermeneutics and criticism on the topic of ecology has become an important locus of scholarly debate in recent years. Scholars typically focus upon the ways past modes of interpretation have been undergirded by anthropocentric biases; they moreover apply rehabilitative readings to biblical texts that deal specifically in matters of environmental import. [Habel and Trudinger 2008](#) and [Horrell 2010](#) each demonstrate this hermeneutical enterprise in fresh and innovative interpretations of biblical scholarship. [Habel 2000](#) is a seven-volume collection that concentrates on the Earth as an active character in biblical texts, thereby providing an important contribution to contemporary ecotheological biblical interpretation. Other projects within the field of biblical scholarship highlight the inherently interconnected world the Bible indicates, such as [Bauckham 2010](#) and [Fretheim 2005](#), significant contributions on the biblical creation's inherent relationality. [Davis 2008](#) shifts the conversation to what can be learned from putting biblical texts into conversation with contemporary agrarian writers, making for an interesting exploration of biblical social traditions as they relate to the politics of land health.

- Bauckham, Richard. *The Bible and Ecology*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010.

Bauckham argues that the Bible exhibits the notion that all creatures are interconnected, and are moreover related in their common dependence upon God. Further, he writes that modern exegetes must expand the biblical interpretation of humans' role in the world beyond the outmoded themes of "dominion" and "stewardship."

- Davis, Ellen F. *Scripture, Culture, and Agriculture: An Agrarian Reading of the Bible*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Davis places the theology and ethics of land use in conversation with contemporary agrarian writers, all in the light of her critical biblical exegesis. She considers social structures and religious traditions of ancient Israel with an eye to modern practices that control contemporary food production, animal husbandry, and land use policy.

- Fretheim, Terence. *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005.

Fretheim illustrates how the creation is understood to be an open-ended process that is deeply interconnected. By analyzing God's creative capacities, the ongoing creativity of the natural world, and the human role in the creation, he suggests further consideration should be paid to the theme of creation in biblical studies.

- Habel, Norman, ed. *The Earth Bible Series*. 7 vols. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2000.

Reflects planetary moral concern as writers reinterpret biblical texts so as to discern whether the Bible supports ecojustice. Essays in this collection attempt to move beyond a focus on ecological themes to a process of listening to and identifying with the Earth as an active character in the biblical text.

- Habel, Norman, and Peter Trudinger, eds. *Exploring Ecological Hermeneutics*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008.

This collection focuses upon (1) a suspicion that past interpreters of the biblical text have been explicitly or unconsciously anthropocentric in their approach; (2) recognizing that humans are inhabitants of Earth, and moreover a part of the Earth community; or (3) retrieving possibilities to discern the neglected role of Earth in the biblical narrative.

- Horrell, David G., ed. *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical, and Theological Perspectives*. London and New York: T&T Clark, 2010.

Aims to bring biblical and theological perspectives into closer dialogue through ecologically oriented, hermeneutically informed reflection on the Bible; and to learn from the history of interpretation, recognizing that earlier interpreters did not share contemporary ecological concerns and awareness.

Judaism

As with all of the Abrahamic religions, historical changes present daunting challenges for assessing religion and ecology. Yet comprehensive volumes such as [Tirosh-Samuelson 2002](#) and [Benstein 2008](#) have been produced that provide understanding of Judaism and ecology as well as historical insight into Jewish life and environmental concerns. Early formative Israelite histories, covenants, and scriptures call for some of the most intense scrutiny by scholars, especially in relation to the understanding of “dominion” versus “stewardship” of creation, as can be seen in [Hiebert 2008](#) and [Bernstein 2005](#). [Hillel 2007](#) shows how, as Israel came into the promised land, that varied bioregion itself is understood as having influenced the formation of Judaism. As Judaism has branched into a manifold tradition, interpretations of Jewish ecological thought and environmental ethics have also accommodated those cultural changes, as can be seen in [Yaffe 2001](#). Diverse as Judaism is, and has been over the centuries of its journey, [Waskow 2000](#) shows how core teachings from *Torah*/Hebrew Scriptures continue to connect this religion to environmental awareness.

- Benstein, Jeremy. *The Way into Judaism and the Environment*. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2008.

An introductory account of central concepts of Jewish environmentalism and ways of understanding the natural world from within Judaism. It explores a broad sampling of environmental issues alongside examples of activism, interpretations of sacred texts, and contemporary Jewish theology.

- Bernstein, Ellen. *The Splendor of Creation: A Biblical Ecology*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 2005.

Seeks a more intimate Jewish understanding of creation and the environment. Bernstein explores biblical texts—with a special focus on Genesis—and argues for a heightened sense of connectedness, value, and holiness in relation to the natural world.

- Hiebert, Theodore. *The Yahwist's Landscape: Nature and Religion in Early Israel*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.

Hiebert argues that the paradigmatic human being, as suggested in the Yahwist narrative of the Hebrew Bible, is a farmer, and moreover that human salvation is ineluctably caught up in a healthy relationship with the land. This book additionally provides robust engagements with contrasting biblical visions of the sometimes ambiguous relationship between nature and culture.

- Hillel, Daniel. *The Natural History of the Bible: An Environmental Exploration of the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.

Through an examination of nature's varied manifestations in the Hebrew Scriptures, Hillel argues that the Israelites of the Bible found much in their experience of the natural world to ground their monotheistic faith. Hillel, moreover, brings his scientific expertise to bear on his analysis of the ways natural history factors into the political and ethical development of Israel's identity.

- Tirosh-Samuelson, Hava, ed. *Judaism and Ecology: Created World and Revealed World*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 2002.

This collection of essays is part of the book series Religions of the World and Ecology. It provides a comprehensive overview of the relationship between Judaism and ecology and contains a supplemental bibliography. As one of the most significant works in this field it explores Biblical sources, Rabbinic commentaries, ethical questions, and contemporary norms in Jewish environmentalism.

- Waskow, Arthur, ed. *Torah of the Earth: Exploring 4,000 Years of Ecology in Jewish Thought*. 2 vols. Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2000.

Featured in this exhaustive two-volume work are myriad studies of the relationship between Judaism and the natural world. Many of the essays highlight the ways that humans and Earth are interconnected, as well as the idea that Judaism's perspective on environmental issues over its long history has been largely positive.

- Yaffe, Martin D., ed. *Judaism and Environmental Ethics: A Reader*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2001.

Addresses the issue of dominion and the role of the human in causing, and responding to, the environmental crisis. The authors in this text explore sacred texts, Jewish teachings, and ecological thought in relation to history, philosophy, and ethics.

Christianity

Scholars of Christianity have been on the vanguard of engaging environmental issues within the academic community since the 1960s. As a result, contributions to the conversation on the topic of Christian theology and environmental problems are particularly robust. [Hessel and Ruether 2000](#) is a particularly apt example as *Christianity and Ecology*—which is the outcome of a conference that was part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology—provides in-depth analyses of Christianity and its potential for contributing to the discussion of contemporary environmental dilemmas. [Berry 2009](#) also gives an important Christian interpretation of the sanctity of the universe, as well as Christianity's prospects for flourishing within an ecological age. His work, which has influenced many, serves as a helpful overview of the conversations on the intersection of Christianity and ecology that he helped to create. Other authors, such as [Jenkins 2008](#), have engaged multiple perspectives within Christianity (e.g., Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant) in order to analyze the environmental ethical valence inherent to the faith.

- Berry, Thomas. *The Christian Future and the Fate of the Earth*. Edited by Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2009.

“Geologian” Thomas Berry presents a compelling Christian interpretation of the sacredness of the universe story. Berry brings together theological insights from Thomas Aquinas and Teilhard de Chardin to generate a prophetic cosmology and vision for an emerging Earth community.

- Hessel, Dieter, and Rosemary Radford Ruether, eds. *Christianity and Ecology: Seeking the Well-Being of Earth and Humans*. Cambridge, MA: Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 2000.

Part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology. It comprises twenty-eight papers and responses that discuss how Christianity might contribute to the movement to found more environmentally sustainable practices, as well as how current environmental problems demand revisions to Christian theology, liturgical practice, and Christian ethical perspectives.

- Jenkins, Willis. *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Jenkins reflects upon three distinct approaches to environmental issues in Christian thought: the ecojustice movement, the concept of stewardship, and various forms of ecological spirituality. He gives particular attention to the thought of Karl Barth, Thomas Aquinas, and Sergei Bulgakov, and also provides a comprehensive survey of the field of environmental ethics, including its intersection with Christian theology.

Foundational Works in Ecotheology

“Ecotheology” refers to the constructive branch of Christian theology that deals with the theological and ethical dimension of humans’ relationship to nonhuman creation. As a theological subdiscipline, the field was virtually inaugurated in [Cobb 1995](#), which discussed the ecologically deleterious effects of industrial economies and potential ethical models Christian theology could use to respond. [Santmire 1985](#) provides an important historical study of the ways Christian theology has often been ambiguous on the topic of ecological morality. [Kaufman 1995](#), [Kaufman 2004](#), [McFague 1993](#), [Gustafson 1994](#), and [Moltmann 1993](#) are creative cornerstones within the field.

- Cobb, John B., Jr. *Is It Too Late? A Theology of Ecology*. Denton, TX: Environmental Ethics, 1995.

Originally published in 1972, this is one of the first works on environmental theology. It reconsiders ways in which Christian theology engages pressing environmental concerns. Cobb succinctly outlines the reasons Christianity is presently inadequate to believers’ modern needs, and develops an imaginative approach to ecotheology in conversation with the process thought of Alfred North Whitehead.

- Gustafson, James. *A Sense of the Divine: The Natural Environment from a Theocentric Perspective*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim, 1994.

Gustafson, who self-identifies with the Reformed theological tradition, argues that while humans are interactive participants in the ordering of the natural world, we are not located at the center of the world’s value despite various theological affirmations to the contrary. This idea forms the basis of Gustafson’s careful treatment of issues related to ethics and contemporary environmental problems.

- Kaufman, Gordon. *In the Face of Mystery: A Constructive Theology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995.

Presents a bio-historical theology for contemporary humans. Kaufman embraces an understanding of the divine as “serendipitous creativity” within the unfolding processes of life. He suggests

innovative language for articulating his perspective on Christianity as a system of symbols that has relevance.

- Kaufman, Gordon. *In the Beginning . . . Creativity*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004.

Kaufman begins with the concept of creativity as providing an approach to the contemporary dialogue of religion and science. Creativity for Kaufman is especially evident from the emergence of the universe, evolutionary processes, and in human symbolic knowing. Rather than fixated on human welfare, Kaufman situates divine activity in the power of the universe and on Earth in natural processes.

- McFague, Sallie. *The Body of God: An Ecological Theology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

McFague analyzes a range of major theological issues through the imaginative paradigm of the world as God's body. Such a paradigm, she says, provides Christian thinkers with a helpful critique of traditional theological models that subordinate the immanence of God in the created world. McFague posits reimagined doctrines of humanity, sin, and evil.

- Moltmann, Jürgen. *God in Creation*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.

The God who is present in creation through the Holy Spirit is also the God who can reconcile human beings to the natural world. Moltmann's renowned systematic ecological theology thus argues that the goal of creation is God's eternal Sabbath rest, which encompasses humanity's irenic indwelling of the Earth's natural systems.

- Santmire, H. Paul. *The Travail of Nature: The Ambiguous Ecological Promise of Christian Theology*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.

In this influential work, Santmire surveys and analyzes the historically ambiguous ecological promise of Christian theology, noting both the ecologically astute and adverse perspectives in Christian writers such as Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Luther, Calvin, and others. The Christian tradition, Santmire argues, is much more dynamic on topics related to ecology than previously recognized.

Contemporary Ecotheology

Contemporary ecotheology engages a multitude of issues—from environmental virtue to hope, agriculture to science. [Kearns 2004](#) provides a helpful, concise survey of the ways the field has recently developed, especially in the United States. [Deane-Drummond 2008](#) gives a more comprehensive exploration of various methodological approaches within ecotheology, analyzing the ways the field engages issues of biblical, Christological, theodical, and scientific import. [Scharper 1997](#) also provides a valuable survey and analysis of the field, concentrating on the significant political implications of ecotheology. Other works demonstrate alternative methods being applied in the field. [Bouma-Prediger 2001](#), for instance, highlights a Christian vision of ecological responsibility; desire is the focus of [Lane 2011](#), an ecotheological study of the Reformed tradition; [Wallace 2005](#) shows how ecotheology can utilize postmodern deconstructive interpretive frameworks; and [Wirzba 2007](#) provides a fresh perspective on the ways the Bible gives voice to humans' relationship with land and agriculture. [Dalton and Simmons 2010](#) look to the ways Christian theology ultimately supplies a hopeful message within an ecological context, even in an age of environmental crisis.

- Bouma-Prediger, Steven. *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.

Putting Christian theology and ecology into dialogue, Bouma-Prediger argues that Christian faith requires ecological responsibility. He additionally aims at illuminating the various options Christians have on issues such as the Bible's ecological resources, the environmental virtues pertinent to Christian character, and the theological comprehension of humans' place in the cosmos.

- Dalton, Anne Marie, and Henry C. Simmons. *Ecotheology and the Practice of Hope*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2010.

Brings together two realities that are increasingly in tension: ecological crises and hope. Using the evidence of changing social imaginaries, the authors claim that ecotheology has helped reimagine a world in which all beings matter and in so doing enables us to live in hope.

- Deane-Drummond, Celia. *Eco-theology*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008.

Deane-Drummond provides a comprehensive survey of the myriad forms of environmental theology, including biblical, Christological, theodical, eschatological, and justice-oriented approaches to the field. Focusing not on ethical or spiritual concerns but rather upon the Christian engagement with contemporary environmental issues, the author also provides critical explorations of global responses to ecotheological debates.

- Kearns, Laurel. "The Context of Eco-theology." In *The Blackwell Companion to Modern Theology*. Edited by Gareth Jones. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004.

Kearns examines the historical and contemporary contexts that give shape to what has become a robust and multifaceted ecotheological conversation. She primarily focuses upon the field's development in the United States, and furthermore upon the ways Christianity has served as a principal locus in its maturation.

- Lane, Belden. *Ravished by Beauty: The Surprising Legacy of Reformed Spirituality*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Lane argues that the Reformed theological tradition seeks to nurture the incurable human longing for God. Lifting up a hidden tradition in Reformed piety, he advances an earthy spirituality that few might initially recognize as Calvinist. The book thus works to substantiate its claim for a new and revitalized reading of Reformed spirituality, rich in ecological sensitivity.

- Scharper, Stephen. *Redeeming the Time: A Political Theology of the Environment*. New York: Continuum, 1997.

Summarizes the main positions of Christian environmental theologies. Affirming social justice concerns in Christianity, the author joins them with ecojustice issues and explores the "groaning" of the Earth as a biblical metaphor for these connected realities.

- Wallace, Mark I. *Finding God in the Singing River: Christianity, Spirit, Nature*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.

Wallace provides a pneumatological account of the significance of creation. Utilizing myriad metaphors for the spirit inherent in the natural world, such as that of a mother bird or wounded spirit, he argues that the divine is immanently related to the material world. Wallace incorporates topics such as deep ecology, environmental ethics, deconstruction, and feminist theory.

- Wirzba, Norman. *The Paradise of God: Renewing Religion in an Ecological Age*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Wirzba argues that reclaiming humanity's servant status is the solution to rehabilitating our deleterious relationship with the Earth. Wirzba additionally provides practical examples on how humanity can redevelop community and its commitment to land health through our renewed responsibility as servants of the creation.

Process and Liberation Theology

Process theology is rooted in the thought of Alfred North Whitehead, the late-19th- and 20th-century philosopher and metaphysician who developed the idea that God is fully affected and involved in temporal processes of becoming. Its connection to liberation theology, which began as an academic discipline in the 1960s as a Catholic theological movement to interpret the New Testament teachings of Jesus in light of the liberating impact they could have on oppressive economic and social institutions (especially in Latin America) came about through a mutual emphasis upon God's active involvement in the processes of history. Scholars have utilized both process and liberation methods to argue for the liberation of not only oppressed peoples but also oppressed nonhuman life, as can be seen in [Hathaway and Boff 2009](#). Others such as [Birch and Cobb 1981](#) have taken a broader approach, applying liberation and process themes in moral, economic, and agricultural frameworks, as well as in ethical and spiritual interreligious dialogue on the topic of environmental justice and sustainability (see [Birch, et al. 1990](#)). Christian theology has also made use of process and liberation approaches to ecological concern, and [McDaniel 1995](#) focuses upon God's unfolding creativity as it is demonstrated in the natural world.

- Birch, Charles, and John Cobb. *The Liberation of Life: From the Cell to the Community*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

Birch and Cobb argue for the twofold liberation of life from its objectified character in the modern sciences as well as in the social structures of humans' manipulation of Earth. The book develops an alternative "ecological model," informed by insights of modern biology and philosophy, to challenge conventional approaches to morality, sustainability, economics, agriculture, and more.

- Birch, Charles, William Eakin, and Jay B. McDaniel, eds. *Liberating Life: Contemporary Approaches to Ecological Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1990.

Covers the themes of scripture and sacramental tradition, ethical perspectives, spirituality, and interreligious dialogue as they concern the connections between justice and environmental sustainability. Each essay contains the theme that liberation is significant to all facets of contemporary approaches to ecological theology.

- Hathaway, Mark, and Leonardo Boff. *The Tao of Liberation: Exploring the Ecology of Transformation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2009.

Draws upon insights from economics, psychology, science, and spirituality to establish a path toward liberating transformation for all life on Earth. In particular, the book marries themes of liberation theology and the new cosmology to diagnose the environmental problems of today, as well as elucidate a transformative vision for holistic change.

- McDaniel, Jay B. *With Roots and Wings: Christianity in an Age of Ecology and Dialogue*. New York: Orbis, 1995.

McDaniel imagines the ways Christianity envisions a new sense of spiritual well-being that is in touch with the health of the environment and God's perpetually unfolding creativity. He believes Christianity provides a way to connect with God and the natural world. In addition to his work on Christianity, McDaniel also writes on selected environmental lessons from other religions.

Catholic

Catholic theological explorations of the environment and humans' relationship to the larger creation are varied but generally focus their energies upon sacramental visions of the cosmos, as well as the important ethical implications that inhere in natural theologies. [Hart 2006](#) gives a representative Catholic theological account of the sacramental qualities of humans' respect for nonhuman life. [Edwards 2006](#) also gives an exposition of ecological communion, though it does so by drawing upon doctrines of creation and the Trinity. [Schaefer 2009](#) provides an important historical analysis of the ways Patristic and medieval theologies have contributed to the chief inquiries of contemporary environmental ethics. [Christiansen and Grazer 1996](#) demonstrates different Catholic perspectives on environmental issues that touch upon virtue ethics, cosmology, eschatology, and the religion/science debate. Perspectives within the Catholic faith have also shown themselves to be quite amenable to evolutionary worldviews and the new cosmology of Thomas Berry, such as [O'Murchu 2002](#) and [Conlon 1994](#). The [Catholic Coalition on Climate Change](#) additionally provides resources for churches to reduce their carbon emissions and is undergirded by theological commitments to care for creation and the poor.

- [Catholic Coalition on Climate Change](#).

After decades of steady progress in reclaiming and advancing the Catholic Church's efforts to embrace an ethic of environmental stewardship, the Catholic Coalition on Climate Change launched the Catholic Climate Covenant, to take responsibility for human contributions to climate change and especially the negative effect on the poor.

- Christiansen, Drew, and Walter Grazer, eds. *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996.

Explores the theological foundations of a Catholic approach to questions of environmental import. Scholars such as John Haught, David Toolan, Hugh Feiss, Kevin Irwin, and more examine issues related to liturgy and sacrament, virtue ethics, eschatology, religious cosmology, and the religion/science debate, among many others.

- Conlon, James. *Earth Story, Sacred Story*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-Third, 1994.

Using cosmology, Earth spirituality, and story, Conlon urges readers to adapt to a lifestyle more in sync with the needs of our planet. He is conversant with the teachings of modern theologians in regard to Earth spirituality: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, Thomas Berry, Gregory Baum, and Dom Helder Camara.

- Edwards, Denis. *Ecology at the Heart of Faith*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006.

Edwards argues that the heart of faith can be found in the ecological communion that pervades all life in the cosmos. Writing from a Catholic perspective, he aims not to bypass central theological claims of the Christian faith, but to deepen them by arguing that the Christian heritage is profoundly connected to creation.

- Hart, John. *Sacramental Commons: Christian Ecological Ethics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006.

Explores the Catholic concept of sacrament to suggest that local settings and natural communities require humans' respect. Hart provides insights into themes such as divine immanence and humans' responsibility for creation. The book extends the concept of "natural rights" beyond humans to include all of nature, and moreover affirms intrinsic value in ecosystems.

- O'Murchu, Diarmuid. *Evolutionary Faith: Rediscovering God in Our Great Story*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2002.

This work brings together the insights of evolutionary science and the convictions of environmentalism from an innovative Catholic perspective. O'Murchu suggests that humanity's next evolution will unite with the ecological life of the planet bringing humans closer to God.

- Schaefer, Jame. *Theological Foundations for Environmental Ethics: Reconstructing Patristic and Medieval Concepts*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2009.

Schaefer explores the ideas of the church fathers and medieval theologians (St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, most notably) for how their ideas may provide a foundation for the principles that animate contemporary environmental ethics. Such principles include value, reverence, and respect.

Protestant

Protestant scholars, from the second half of the 20th century onward, have contributed important perspectives on issues related to Christian theology and the environment. [Sittler 2004](#) was one of the first to provide a theological treatment of environmental issues. As [Fowler 1995](#) shows, "green" Protestant theologies were quite widespread in the late 20th century. [Nash 1991](#) gave one of the first ethical analyses of Christian environmental ethics, concentrating on the Christian theme of love. [Rasmussen 1996](#) and [Rasmussen 2012](#) set Christianity within a global context of environmental crisis, arguing that while Christian theology has undoubtedly contributed to present-day environmental problems, it nevertheless has the resources to become Earth honoring. [Martin-Schramm and Stivers 2003](#) provides a multitude of case studies to illustrate Christianity's potential ethical efficacy for dealing with issues related to the contemporary environmental crisis.

- Fowler, Robert. *The Greening of Protestant Thought*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

Addresses the variegated ways Protestant theologians and activists have formulated different concepts of "green" theology. Fowler provides a survey of the history and status of environmentalism within Protestantism, as well as an analysis of themes such as biblical interpretation, stewardship theology, process theology, ecofeminism, and ethical perspectives as they relate to environmental thought within Protestantism.

- Martin-Schramm, James B., and Robert L. Stivers. *Christian Environmental Ethics: A Case Method Approach*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003.

Uses a case-method approach to explore Christian ethical reflection on environmental issues. Case studies include consumption, endangered species, toxic waste, genetically modified foods, and more.

- Nash, James. *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1991.

In this seminal early work on the intersection of Christian ethics and environmental thought, Nash argues that Christian doctrine provides a firm foundation for engaging in conversation with ecology, and especially the present day environmental crisis. He also develops a rights-based approach to moral regard for nonhuman individuals and species.

- Rasmussen, Larry. *Earth Community, Earth Ethics*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996.

Rasmussen melds scientific cosmology and theological insights to form an environmental ethic that regards all life as comprising a planetary community. He also provides a social ethic that privileges justice and critiques contemporary systems of economic and environmental domination. Rasmussen is optimistic regarding the prospects for Christianity's contribution to sustainable ethical practices.

- Rasmussen, Larry. *Earth-Honoring Faith: Religious Ethics in a New Key*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Rasmussen pulls from religions' deep traditions of mysticism, prophetic practice, sacramentalism, and asceticism to advocate for an alliance between spirituality and ecology that moves human culture beyond consumption-based economies to an ecological age. Such an age, he says, values all forms of life and learns to live into a new vision of abundance.

- Sittler, Joseph. *The Care of the Earth*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2004.

Sittler was one of the earliest theologians to recognize the environmental crisis and to call for a response from the Christian churches. These prescient sermons, essays, and other writings represent some of his reflections on a sacramental concern for the natural world.

Orthodox

In the Orthodox tradition, generally speaking, creation is an epiphany of God and human beings are a link between Creator and creation. [Chryssavgis 2003](#) demonstrates this through the writings of the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholemew, the "Green" Patriarch. [Theokritoff 2009](#) also provides an exploration of Orthodox environmental theology by drawing upon Orthodox biblical interpretation, Patristic teachings, and liturgical texts.

- Chryssavgis, John, ed. *Cosmic Grace, Humble Prayer: Ecological Vision of the Green Patriarch Bartholemew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003.

Contains representative selections of the "green" perspective of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholemew (the Archbishop of Constantinople) on ecological and theological issues. Included are letters, religious addresses, theological statements, various writings, and interviews. John Chryssavgis also provides an extensive introductory essay on Patriarch Bartholemew's ecotheology and the posture of the Orthodox Church concerning the environmental crisis.

- Theokritoff, Elizabeth. *Living in God's Creation: Orthodox Perspectives on Ecology*. Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 2009.

Provides a clear exposition of Christian Orthodoxy's teaching on contemporary environmental issues. Drawing upon biblical resources, teachings of the Church Fathers, and Orthodox liturgical texts, the author argues for a vision of the creation as an epiphany of the Creator.

Evangelical

Evangelical ethical approaches to such environmental issues as climate change and species loss are typically steeped in biblical awareness and a conscious devotedness to following Christ. Both books listed in this section incorporate each of these elements. [DeWitt 1998](#) emphasizes the theme of environmental stewardship through imitating Christ's obedience to God. [Wilkinson 2012](#), through interviews and careful analyses of Evangelical ethical responses to the climate crisis, focuses on the myriad ways evangelical communities are engaging environmental issues. The [Evangelical Environmental Network](#) provides resources for greening Christian institutions and churches.

- DeWitt, Calvin B. *Caring for Creation: Responsible Stewardship of God's Handiwork*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998.

DeWitt presents a biblical approach to the concept of stewardship, as well as justification for its intrinsic importance to the Christian ethical life. Representative of an evangelical approach to creation care, the thrust of DeWitt's thesis is that humans must model Christ's obedience in order to serve and honor the well-being of the whole creation.

- [Evangelical Environmental Network](#).

The Evangelical Environmental Network (EEN) is a ministry dedicated to caring for creation based on Evangelical values and biblical scriptures. The EEN provides resources for greening churches, blog posts, Bible study guides, videos, and a number of articles and guides on creation care.

- Wilkinson, Katharine. *Between God and Green: How Evangelicals Are Cultivating a Middle Ground on Climate Change*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.

Describes the growing concern among evangelical Christians in America to respond to care for creation especially as it is being affected by climate change. She draws on focus groups, textual research, and interviews to demonstrate how evangelical communities have been able to gain support for engaging with climate issues.

Mormon

Mormon approaches to spiritual ecology connect family and faith to landscape, specifically the American West, which has done much to shape Mormonism in the United States. Both [Handley 2010](#) and [Williams, et al. 1998](#) have a majestic sense of the West's topography, as well as how it affects their faith commitments. [Handley 2010](#) specifically meditates on the Provo River watershed, arguing that the Mormon faith enriches an experience of the "home waters" of Utah, as well as animates his sense to protect them. [Williams, et al. 1998](#), on the other hand, is a collection that asserts elements of Mormonism that will help people reconnect to their ecological heritage through the Mormon faith.

- Handley, George B. *Home Waters: A Year of Recompenses on the Provo River*. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 2010.

Handley weaves together Mormon theology, environmental history, and personal experiences in this meditation on the Provo River watershed. He argues that a sense of place and the environmental ethics that accompanies it requires a deeper level of awareness and commitment to time, community, and the land.

- Williams, Terry Tempest, William B. Smart, and Gibbs M. Smith, eds. *New Genesis: A Mormon Reader on Land and Community*. Salt Lake City, UT: G. Smith, 1998.

Asserts the connection between land, family, and faith in the traditions of the Mormon Church. While the authors note the Mormon Church's present "policy of inaction" on environmental matters, they also express optimism at the prospect for Mormons to reclaim their ecological heritage through personal experiences and stories of the Western American landscape.

Liturgy

Works on Christian liturgy and ecology concentrate on the ways creation can be sacramentalized within Christian ritual traditions. Doing so helps faith communities to recognize the sacred standing of all forms of created life and being. [Lathrop 2009](#) engages Christian liturgy by reimagining Christian liturgical symbols through the prism of cosmology. He aims to spur conversation on how ritual can both engage and commemorate the severity of the contemporary planetary crisis. Similarly, [Santmire 2008](#) argues that Christian liturgies possess the symbols, rituals, and traditions to accommodate a sense of the awe, wonder, and beauty of the universe that can lead to environmentally friendly church practice.

- Lathrop, Gordon. *Holy Ground: A Liturgical Cosmology*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.

Consists of reflections on the ways in which Christian worship may help to imagine, understand, care for, and live in the world. Lathrop's argument is that the central symbols of Christian liturgy can encourage helpful dialogue on the need for a cosmology that acknowledges the severity of the planetary crisis.

- Santmire, H. Paul. *Ritualizing Nature: Renewing Christian Liturgy in a Time of Crisis*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.

Building from his study in *The Travail of Nature*, Santmire contends that the resources are available within the Christian tradition to cultivate a robust and vital approach to the natural world, one that is full of awe, wonder, and beauty. Christian ritual has much within it to support environmentally friendly religious practice.

Islam

Drawing on teachings from the Qur'an and Hadith such as *mizan*/balance, *khalifah*/trusteeship, and *tawhid*/unity Islamic scholars, such as [Izzi Dien 2000](#) and [Foltz, et al. 2003](#), have begun to create an impressive body of commentary focused on environmental issues. Moreover, as an intercultural religion with adherents from strikingly different bioregions, [Abdul-Matin 2010](#) shows how Islam provides unique contributions to religion and ecology. While Sharia law gives some traditional guidance for Muslim communities regarding on-the-ground environmental issues, Islamic ecological thought and Muslim religious environmentalism are themselves bringing forward creative interpretations of the tradition, as can be seen in [Foltz 2005](#). As Islamic communities confront questions of environmental degradation, new technologies are being developed and mitigating projects are being reported (see [IFEES](#)). Moreover, [Johnston 2010](#) shows how unique perspectives on the integration of Islamic politics, social justice, and ecojustice are emerging in both Sunni and Shi'i Islam.

- Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim. *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches about Protecting the Planet*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 2010.

Abdul-Matin examines Islamic environmental principles and builds a case for cooperative interfaith participation in the environmental movement. Woven throughout this text are stories of Muslim Americans who are engaged in environmental activism in four areas: water, waste, energy, and food.

- Foltz, Richard, ed. *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*. New York: Nova Science, 2005.

Analyzes the successes and failures of diverse Muslim environmental activists across the globe. Essays cover issues ranging from Islamic environmental ethics to saving rivers and forests.

- Foltz, Richard C., Frederick M. Denny, and Azizan Baharuddin, eds. *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003.

Contains twenty-three essays on sustainability, justice, conceptions of God and nature, gardens and notions of paradise. It draws on the Qur'an and Hadith texts and locates environmental perspectives in Sharia law.

- [Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences \(IFEES\)](#).

A Britain-based Islamic organization that provides coverage of environmental activities throughout much of the world of Islam. It provides a newsletter discussing Islamic environmentalism especially as it relates to specific events and activities in diverse Islamic settings.

- Izzi Dien, Mawil. *The Environmental Dimensions of Islam*. Cambridge, UK: Lutterworth, 2000.

Following from the Earth Summit of 1992, this work explores Islamic positions on environmental issues from historical, theological, philosophical, legal, and ethical perspectives. The author examines Qur'anic doctrines regarding creation, human responsibility, community law, and the actions of governments.

- Johnston, David L. *Earth, Empire and Sacred Text: Muslims and Christians as Trustees of Creation*. London: Equinox, 2010.

Johnston draws on theology, philosophy, ethics, hermeneutics, the social sciences, and critical theory in this attempt to construct a Muslim-Christian theological discourse for human trusteeship of nature. Johnston highlights not just ecological justice, but also social justice and peacemaking.

Asian Traditions

[Callicott and Ames 1989](#) shows how the Asian traditions have rich resources for environmental ethics, as is evident in the study of nature in comparative philosophy. Moreover, the intricate and differentiated understandings of worldviews and practices throughout India and Southeast Asia are discussed regarding sacred trees in [Nugteren 2005](#) and broad issues of social justice and gender in [Gosling 2001](#).

- Callicott, J. Baird, and Roger T. Ames, eds. *Nature in Asian Traditions of Thought: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

Focuses on Indian, Chinese, and Japanese religious thought by assessing each through the lens of environmental philosophy. The authors in this volume draw together perspectives from Western and Asian comparative philosophy.

- Gosling, David L. *Religion and Ecology in India and Southeast Asia*. New York: Routledge, 2001.

Gosling examines ecological problems in South and Southeast Asia (particularly India and Thailand) through the lens of historical and contemporary Hinduism and Buddhism. Emphasis is

given to analysis and critiques of the attention paid to social justice issues, particularly those related to gender and poverty.

- Nugteren, Albertina. *Belief, Bounty, and Beauty: Rituals around Sacred Trees in India*. Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2005.

Nugteren shows how tree worship, Hinduism, Buddhism, and contemporary ecological issues overlap and are linked together in India. Nugteren sifts through the Vedas, the Dharma Shastras, and sacred Buddhist texts and references contemporary examples of tree worship and ecological activism in this unique examination of the protective and destructive aspects of Indian religiosity.

Hinduism and Jainism

Studies in religion and ecology in South Asia are facilitated by such categories as Hinduism and Jainism, yet, they may mask the diversity and energy coming from these religions regarding India's environment. [Chapple and Tucker 2000](#) from the Harvard series on World Religions and Ecology provides both basic introductory essays as well as scholarly, in-depth considerations of particular religious thinkers, concepts, and environmental challenges for this multiform tradition. Questions of transcendence and immanence have long been themes for the study of Hinduism, but with the emergence of religion and ecology in the past two decades, these questions have been addressed in relation to the natural world in [Nelson 1998](#). Similarly, the ecological degradation of the sacred river goddesses, Yamunaji and Gangaji, has become a major focus for questions regarding the relationships of purity and pollution in Hinduism in [Haberman 2006](#). There is thus a renewed concern for on-the-ground religious environmentalism in India that can be seen in [Jain 2011](#), and [Sanford 2011](#) shows how modernity challenges older agricultural practices that continue to be transmitted in traditional stories. [Chapple 2009](#) illustrates the recovery of ecological dimensions within diverse yogic traditions that has spread from India throughout the world. In addition, Jain teachings of ahimsa/nonviolence and jiva/soul-force have resonance with environmental justice and environmental ethics, as seen in [Chapple 2002](#).

- Chapple, Christopher Key, ed. *Jainism and Ecology: Nonviolence in the Web of Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 2002.

This collection of essays is part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology. It provides a comprehensive overview of the relationship between Jainism and ecology. The various discussions of *ahimsa* and *jiva* especially provide insights into Jain religious ecologies.

- Chapple, Christopher Key, ed. *Yoga and Ecology: Dharma for the Earth: Proceedings of Two of the Sessions at the Fourth DANAM Conference, held on site at the American Academy of Religion, Washington, DC, 17–19 November 2006*. Hampton, VA: Deepak Herit, 2009.

Gathers together essays on Earth-honoring and environmentally friendly aspects present in the Vedic tradition, in Patanjali's Yoga Sutra, and in Tantra. It also explores the impact of the Bhagavad Gita on Naess's deep ecology, models of Yogic environmentalism, and more.

- Chapple, Christopher Key, and Mary Evelyn Tucker, eds. *Hinduism and Ecology: The Intersection of Earth, Sky and Water*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 2000.

Provides a comprehensive overview of the relationships between Hinduism and ecology. Discussed are the ecological spirituality of classical texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, and the Puranas and contemporary ecological issues such as the pollution of the Yamuna and Ganges rivers and the damming of the Narmada. Also discussed is the non-violent resistance from the Gandhian and Chipko movements.

- Haberman, David L. *River of Love in an Age of Pollution: The Yamuna River of Northern India*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.

Haberman follows the path of the Yamuna River, conceived of as both a natural feature of the landscape and as a goddess, and documents the pollution and revitalization of its waters. Haberman interviews local religious practitioners, observes rituals and devotions, and interprets sacred text in his attempt to understand the relationship between religion and the river.

- Jain, Pankaj. *Dharma and Ecology of Hindu Communities: Sustenance and Sustainability*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011.

Jain's study of the religious traditions of Indic communities highlights the ecological aspects of Indian practices and theologies. In this text, he examines the tree-planting initiatives of the Swadhyaya movement, highlights the animal protection practices of Bishnois, and interprets the relationship between Bhil communities and their Sacred Groves.

- Nelson, Lance E., ed. *Purifying the Earthly Body of God: Religion and Ecology in Hindu India*. SUNY Series in Religious Studies. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998.

An early and important collection of essays on Hinduism and ecological concern, this volume contains contributions from an international, interdisciplinary group of scholars. Topics include the religious and ecological implications of Goddess theologies, pilgrimage, ritual practice, sacred texts, and sacred geography.

- Sanford, Whitney. *Stories from India: Religion and the Fate of Agriculture*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2011.

Explores how Hindu narratives provide the foundation to expand the ecological imagination to rethink agricultural practice. The author bases this work on field studies in India examining stories and practices related to the deity, Balaram, who is closely associated with agriculture.

Buddhism

Buddhism is a tradition that many have extolled as being environmentally friendly. Foremost among the discussions of Buddhism and ecology is [Tucker and Williams 1997](#), which presents both introductory essays and in-depth studies of particular thinkers, texts, historical changes, and environmental issues. Complementing that volume is [Kaza and Kraft 2000](#), which not only draws on the scriptural literature in this tradition but also presents statements from contemporary American Buddhist teachers and case studies of American Buddhist environmentalism. Insight into engaged Buddhism is one of the more significant dimensions of this tradition today, as seen in [Kraft 1999](#). An interesting project related to engaged Buddhism is the effort to nuance these on-the-ground concerns with some of the fundamental texts of early Buddhism such as the Jataka Tales in [Sahni 2008](#). Some Buddhist teachings such as *pratyasamutpada*/dependent origination have been related to contemporary quantum physics, and in [Callicott 2008](#) scientific ecology and its analysis of the flux in nature are being related to Buddhist thought.

- Callicott, J. Baird. "The New New (Buddhist?) Ecology." *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 2.2 (2008): 166–182.

Callicott argues that scientific conceptions of nature have changed dramatically since the "balance-of-nature" paradigm and have been replaced by the "flux-of-nature" model. Callicott contends that ecotheology should be informed by the most up-to-date science and that Buddhism in particular is well suited to environmental thought and science.

- Kaza, Stephanie, and Kenneth Kraft, eds. *Dharma Rain: Sources of Buddhist Environmentalism*. Boston: Shambhala, 2000.

Integrates essays on the ecological themes present in Buddhist scriptures and calls attention to the environmental views of contemporary Buddhist practitioners such as Thich Nhat Hanh, Gary Snyder, Joanna Macy, and William LaFleur. Includes essays from practitioners and scholars and also provides a wide sampling of ecologically friendly Buddhist texts.

- Kraft, Kenneth. *The Wheel of Engaged Buddhism: A New Map of the Path*. New York: Weatherhill, 1999.

One of the leaders of engaged Buddhism in America analyzes the Buddhist tradition as a source for social and environmental transformation. His structure in this book is to create a handbook that moves through a mandala of engagement with themes of cultivating awareness, embracing family, participating in politics, and caring for the Earth.

- Sahni, Pragati. *Environmental Ethics in Buddhism: A Virtues Approach*. New York: Routledge, 2008.

Sahni investigates virtue ethics and concepts of environmental virtues in early and contemporary Buddhism. In this text, the author looks at Jātaka tales as a source of environmental virtue ethics and also considers conservationist analyses and cosmological approaches.

- Tucker, Mary Evelyn, and Duncan Williams, eds. *Buddhism and Ecology: The Interconnection of Dharma and Deeds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 1997.

Part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology. It provides a comprehensive overview of the relationships between Buddhism and ecology in Theravada and Mahayana schools of thought in India, Southeast Asia, China, and Japan. It also presents views of nature in American Zen Buddhism and its application for such issues as global ethics, population, and nuclear waste.

Chinese Traditions

The Chinese traditions have rich resources for valuing nature and interacting with Earth's ecosystems. The Confucian tradition has a long history of managing agriculture and food distribution as well as statecraft for sustainability. [Tucker and Berthrong 1998](#) shows how this is evident in systems of social ethics, political theory, moral cultivation, and educational practice from China to Korea and Japan. Moreover, [Tu and Tucker 2003–2004](#) shows how the Confucian spiritual tradition from Antiquity to the present has texts and traditions that encourage the cultivation of the individual and the community for a larger public good. [Miller 2003](#) illustrates how Daoism, which complements Confucianism, also emphasizes cultivation of the body and the mind for harmony with nature. This tradition has developed rituals and philosophies that have sustained Chinese people and places historically and at present, as seen in [Girardot, et al. 2001](#). [Anderson 1996](#) discusses the folk traditions of China and the syncretism of traditions in on-the-ground practices of environmental management, such as feng-shui/geomancy, and care of the body in traditional Chinese medicine and exercises based on qi/matter-energy.

- Anderson, Eugene. *Ecologies of the Heart: Emotion, Belief, and the Environment*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996.

A study of the ways in which traditional folk knowledge in China has managed the landscape through ritual and religion. The author explores the sociocultural dimensions of environmental decision making especially regarding economics, information processing, and institutional

development. In all of these aspects he determines that law and enforcement agencies do not assist in environmental management as successfully as ethical and moral codes embedded in the human heart.

- Girardot, Norman. J., James Miller, and Liu Xiaogan, eds. *Daoism and Ecology: Ways within a Cosmic Landscape*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 2001.

Part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology. Provides a comprehensive overview of the relationships between Daoism and ecology in such classical texts as the *Dao De Jing* and *Zhuang zi* as well as later texts such as *Visualizing Highest Clarity*. The text also includes commentaries on the papers as well as discussions of modern Daoist practices related to the environment.

- Miller, James. *Daoism: A Short Introduction*. Oxford: One World, 2003.

Gives an overview of the major concepts in Daoism. Miller is a specialist in Daoism who also understands the environmental implications of this tradition, especially feng-shui, taiji, traditional Chinese medicine, and meditational practices.

- Tu Weiming, and Mary Evelyn Tucker, eds. *Confucian Spirituality*. 2 vols. New York: Crossroad, 2003–2004.

These two volumes represent the work of many of the leading Confucian scholars in the West. They reflect on the spiritual dimension of Confucianism, which have clear implications for an ecological ethic. The volumes begin with overview chapters and range across Chinese history the classical period, to the Han Empire, to the Neo-Confucian revival, and into the modern period. There are also chapters on Korean and Japanese Confucian thinkers.

- Tucker, Mary Evelyn, and John Berthrong, eds. *Confucianism and Ecology: The Interrelations of Heaven, Earth and Humans*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 1998.

Part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology. It provides a comprehensive overview of the relationships between Confucianism and ecology in the classical period, the Neo-Confucian era, as well as contemporary considerations. It includes articles on China, Korea, and Japan by leading scholars in the field.

Indigenous

The lifeways and traditions of indigenous peoples have long been studied for their unique insights into ecology, for the endurance of their culture and subsistence practices and for their distinct ability to respond anew to shifting ecological problems. Included here is a set of entries encompassing a wide range of topics such as traditional ecological knowledge, indigenous thought on kinship and animism, and studies on landscape and storytelling from indigenous cultures around the globe. Also included are texts on Native American traditions and ecological thought as well as a section on contemporary pagan and pantheistic worldviews.

Traditional Knowledge

Assessing the traditional knowledge of over 500 million indigenous peoples on Earth is challenging, but several themes begin to be apparent. For example, [Grim 2001](#) explores the worldviews, or lifeways, in

which indigenous ecological knowledge and kinship systems, ritual practices, and economies closely function in relation to one another. [Selin 2003](#) moves beyond seeing indigenous traditions as simply “the other” to more penetrating and appreciative presentations of indigenous views of nature. [Berkes 2012](#) focuses on traditional ecological knowledge, co-management possibilities, and climate change observation. And [Menzies 2006](#) cites resource management and traditional sustainability in light of challenges from outside extractive industries. [Daneel 2001](#) shows how dramatic changes mark every indigenous community today, which is especially evident in Africa. Yet, the endurance of indigenous worldviews and practices has prompted [Bird-David 1999](#) and [Harvey 2005](#) to reassess the significance for ecological understanding of concepts such as “animism” and prompted [Nelson 2008](#) to look at traditional practices of storytelling as “original instructions” for maintaining the vitality of indigenous communities and landscapes.

- Berkes, Fikret. *Sacred Ecology: Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Resource Management*. 3d ed. New York: Routledge, 2012.

Provides an overview of the indigenous body of knowledge known as “traditional ecological knowledge” (TEK). Here, Berkes explores the political, scientific, and cultural significance of TEK as both a local, culturally specific way of knowing as well as an alternative to Western scientific resource management.

- Bird-David, Nurit. “‘Animism’ Revisited: Personhood, Environment, and Relational Epistemology.” *Current Anthropology* 40 (February 1999): S67–S91.

This seminal study revisits the colonial concept of animism and positions it within indigenous understandings among *adivasi* peoples of India as relational knowledge of “persons” in the landscape. The author’s intention is not expressly to explore spiritual ecology, but striking insights emerge in this work into communal ways of knowing among indigenous peoples.

- Daneel, Marthinus L. *African Earthkeepers: Wholistic Interfaith Mission*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001.

A study of interfaith Earth-keeping missions aimed at renewing the religious and ecological landscape of Sub-Saharan Africa. *African Earthkeepers* looks at religious-inspired environmental action in both African Initiated Churches and in traditionalist African religions.

- Grim, John, ed. *Indigenous Traditions and Ecology: The Interbeing of Cosmology and Community*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Center for the Study of World Religions and Harvard University Press, 2001.

Part of the Harvard series on Religions of the World and Ecology. It brings together indigenous and non-native scholars and elders in a discussion of diverse ways of symbolic knowing related to local ecosystems. It presents insights into indigenous societies’ lifeways and provides an overview of the impacts of colonial encounters on both native cultures and ecosystems.

- Harvey, Graham. *Animism: Respecting the Living World*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

An ethnographic study of contemporary and historical animistic beliefs and practices, this book sheds light on the ecological and religious aspects of animism and culture in the lives of Aboriginal Australians, Native Americans, eco-pagans, and the Maori.

- Menzies, Charles R., ed. *Traditional Ecological Knowledge and Natural Resource Management*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006.

Expands upon understandings of the relationship between traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), resource management, and environmental attitudes and actions. The focus of this text is primarily on native groups in the Pacific Northwest.

- Nelson, Melissa K., ed. *Original Instructions: Indigenous Teachings for a Sustainable Future*. Rochester, VT: Bear, 2008.

Stems from presentations at the annual Bioneers conference and includes essays from more than thirty contemporary indigenous leaders. The ecological aspects of topics such as kinship, gratitude, and indigenous storytelling are considered through the theme of “original instructions.”

- Selin, Helaine, ed. *Nature across Cultures: Views of Nature and the Environment in Non-Western Cultures*. Boston: Kluwer Academic, 2003.

This study of the interconnections between religions and nature presents case studies from cultures often considered marginal and thus rarely discussed in anthologies. The variety of approaches to perspectives on nature also makes this an invaluable collection, as questions of “the other” stand side-by-side with hybridization, marine worldviews, and harmony in East Asia. While eclectic in content, the essays are substantive and probing in their investigations of views of nature.

Native American

The stereotypes of the ecological Indian or romantic noble savage are now being replaced by a significant body of scholarly and ethnographic works that enrich the field of religion and ecology, such as [Krech 1999](#) and [Harkin and Lewis 2007](#). Native scholars such as [Weaver 1996](#) are focusing on issues of loss of land, sovereignty, and environmental justice. For example, they are addressing the degrading extraction on Native American homelands from the standpoints of native resistance and regeneration. [LaDuke 1999](#) illustrates the realization of a holistic lifeway in which kinship provides one of the most meaningful expressions of indigenous relationships with the natural world. Similarly, the turn in anthropology from being a subversive ethnography to a scholarly endeavor that is supportive of Native American cultural existence can be seen in [Basso 1996](#) and the other place-based analyses of oral cultures. [Grim 1983](#) has also attempted to move beyond imposed patterns to more complex biocultural understandings of the interactions of native healers with the local life of plants and animals, stars, and rocks. Many of the early studies of American Indian environmental knowledge, such as [Vecsey and Venables 1980](#) and [Nelson 1983](#), prepared audiences for insightful studies of indigenous conservation and indigenous knowledge.

- Basso, Keith. *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996.

Basso’s anthropologic study of the Western Apache people provides a unique, narrative-rich understanding of the moral character of place and place names in Apache culture and language. A “sense of place,” Basso reveals, can be simultaneously historical, mythical, ethically grounding, geographically descriptive, and a compelling source of personal and cultural identity.

- Grim, John A. *The Shaman: Patterns of Religious Healing among the Ojibway Indians*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983.

Grim discusses the healing and sustaining power of Ojibway shamans. He focuses on the interrelation between humans, cosmology, and the natural world as shamans draw upon primordial Earth processes to heal and sustain. Although highly interdisciplinary, Grim mainly utilizes his perspective as a historian of religions and ethnology to portray and interpret shamanic practitioners and practices.

- Harkin, Michael E., and David Rich Lewis, eds. *Native Americans and the Environment: Perspectives on the Ecological Indian*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007.

Prompted by Shepard Krech's *The Ecological Indian*, this interdisciplinary collection of essays examines and challenges the existing historical and contemporary ecological practices and perceptions of Native Americans. Topics include the Pleistocene extinction, buffalo hunting, fishing practices, the storage of nuclear waste, and more.

- Krech, Shepard, III. *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. New York: Norton, 1999.

Krech's highly controversial text questions the myth that Native Americans lived in harmony with nature by pointing out the numerous historical instances where indigenous hunting and farming practices have led to species extinction, soil degradation, and ecosystem failure.

- LaDuke, Winona. *All Our Relations: Native Struggles for Land and Life*. Cambridge, MA: South End, 1999.

This is LaDuke's non-fiction debut and an account of native environmental activism. The author's writing provides in-depth glimpses into the ways different native peoples are resisting environmental destruction and reimagining their community's identity through new modes of self-determination grounded in their experience of the land.

- Nelson, Richard K. *Make Prayers to the Raven: A Koyukon View of the Northern Forest*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.

A blend of ethnography, personal reflection, and natural history that demonstrates the compelling ways the Koyukon people's worldview, conservation practices, and tribal history are each intimately wrapped up in their relationship with the land and the animals that populate it.

- Vecsey, Christopher, and Robert Venables, eds. *American Indian Environments: Ecological Issues in Native American History*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1980.

This early discussion of American Indian environmental perspectives presents both an historical overview and contemporary voices such as the Haudenosaunee Faithkeeper Oren Lyons.

- Weaver, Jace, ed. *Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996.

Incorporates Native American voices and addresses the justice issues faced by indigenous peoples as environmental destruction takes its toll on people and the land. In this exploration of environmental racism, the authors recount their own experience as activists, and they affirm Native American spiritual values and theology.

Pagan and Pantheistic

Studies in pagan and pantheistic religions have been important for identifying spiritual perceptions and practices related to local place among non-native participants. While focused often on material reality as the embodied presence of the sacred, many of these pagan and pantheistic traditions have also opened innovative pathways for transcendence, as seen in [Harvey 2011](#). Extending the discussion of dark green religion into other narrative forms, [Taylor 2009](#) explores spirituality outside overt religiosity. Thus, science, sports, or experiences in nature are investigated as wellsprings of an ecological consciousness.

- Harvey, Graham. *Contemporary Paganism: Religions of the Earth from Druids and Witches to Heathens and Ecofeminists*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

In a sympathetic treatment of religious perspectives often misunderstood, this book provides one of the most comprehensive discussions of Western pagan movements. Harvey both challenges and extends the debates in paganism especially regarding transcendence. His sense of embodied living leaves open the possibility of a transcendent mysticism.

- Taylor, Bron. *Dark Green Religion: Nature, Spirituality and the Planetary Future*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

Taylor's innovative text underscores non-traditional spiritual practices and beliefs from around the globe that hold nature and scientific narratives as sacred. "Dark green religions," in Taylor's view, are religious ideas that are simultaneously ecologically oriented and potentially sources of violence.

Engaged Projects

As religion and ecology, or spiritual ecology, has developed academically so have engaged projects emerged within each of the world religions as well as beyond the institutional religions. The movement of spiritual ecology is varied and growing, and works such as [Sponsel 2012](#) interweave religion, nature, art, and politics. [Carroll 2004](#) shows how the challenge of sustainability has given rise to a spiritual response grounded in eco-learning centers and projects across the United States. [Taylor 2007](#) illustrates how the Catholic nuns, largely inspired by Thomas Berry, have created a range of land-based eco-centers as well as community supported agricultural projects. [Devall and Sessions 1985](#) discusses one of the early inspirations for engaged environmentalism, the philosophical perspective of "deep ecology" that affirms the small self of the individual as participation in the great self of the Earth community. In [Gottlieb 2006](#), the varied engaged movements in North America and around the world are expanding to respond to the challenges of sustainability. And in [Bergmann, et al. 2009](#) the interactions of humans with both nature and cities as sacred space provide innovative ways for understanding the increased complexity of biocultural modernity.

- Bergmann, Sigurd, P. M. Scott, M. Jansdotter Samuelsson, and H. Bedford-Strohm, eds. *Nature, Space and the Sacred: Transdisciplinary Perspectives*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2009.

Contains a diverse set of essays investigating the interactions between geography, architecture, and religion and spirituality. It is innovative in that it engages with spatiality as a religious context for encountering the sacred, as a grounding for human cultural experience, and as a conceptual tool for experiencing and understanding nature.

- Carroll, John. *Sustainability and Spirituality*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004.

Carroll posits that efforts to attain sustainability, if they are to be successful, must be intimately linked to spirituality. Carroll draws on the work of Thomas Berry, various Catholic orders, and Native American spirituality and ecological knowledge to suggest that efficiency, technology, and economics must be supplemented with spiritual discernment.

- Devall, Bill, and George Sessions. *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered*. Salt Lake City, UT: Peregrine Smith, 1985.

Explores the philosophical, psychological, and sociological roots of the contemporary environmental movement. Encouraging introspective analyses of society's dominant concepts of

nature, the book especially aims to reawaken our understanding of Earth wisdom, which, as Devall and Sessions argue, provides us with ecological, philosophical, and spiritual approaches for dealing with the present-day environmental crisis.

- Gottlieb, Roger S. *A Greener Faith: Religious Environmentalism and Our Planet's Future*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Surveys the successes and significance of religiously and spiritually inspired environmentalism. Gottlieb provides an interdisciplinary, interfaith look into the intersection of religious issues and political life and asserts that the environmental movement is an indispensable part of a just and sustainable world.

- Sponsel, Leslie. *Spiritual Ecology: A Quiet Revolution*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Praeger, 2012.

This is an overview of major figures and movements, both historical and contemporary, which have contributed to an emerging field of spiritual ecology. Leslie Sponsel has been researching this for many years and has brought together seminal resources for exploring the varied expressions of spiritual ecology in the world religions and beyond.

- Taylor, Sarah McFarland. *Green Sisters: A Spiritual Ecology*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.

Chronicles the sustainable spiritual practices of environmentally mindful Catholic nuns around the globe. Particular attention is paid to the intersection of Catholic theology and ecological concern, sustainable agricultural practice, alternative lifestyle choices, nature-minded ritual, and Thomas Berry's influence upon contemporary Catholic monasticism.

Climate Change

Anthropogenic climate change, considered broadly within the field of religion and ecology, is not only an environmental issue to be addressed by religion but also a context for considering broader questions such as human flourishing, social justice, animal ethics, sense of place, and more. Although far from monolithic in their approach and analysis, Christian ecotheologians have been at the forefront of addressing climate change. [Keller 1999](#), for instance, grapples with apocalyptic biblical texts while [McFague 2008](#) draws attention to the ways in which a changing planet generates a new context for theology. Taking a creative approach, [Primavesi 2009](#) steps back and reimagines the world as a series of "gift events." Also included in this section is [Robb 2010](#) with a focus on New Testament texts and climate change, [Northcott 2007](#), a Christian ethical analysis of climate change, and [McDuff 2012](#), a study of how churches and people of faith are working to respond to climate change and other environmental issues. Lastly, [Bergmann and Gerten 2010](#) contains transdisciplinary entries considering the link between religion, climate change, and sustainability.

- Bergmann, Sigurd, and Dieter Gerten. *Religion and Dangerous Environmental Change: Transdisciplinary Perspectives on the Ethics of Climate and Sustainability*. Berlin: Lit, 2010.

Proceeds from the idea that religion is an apposite microcosm of cultural response to modern environmental dilemmas. By aggregating writers from such diverse disciplines as hydrology, religious studies, theology, ethnography, and philosophy, essays seek to illustrate how religion can contribute to solving such menacing problems as climate change and ecological sustainability.

- Keller, Catherine. “The Heat Is On: Apocalyptic Rhetoric and Climate Change.” *Ecotheology* 7 (July 1999): 40–58.

Apocalypse is part of the US religious context, Keller says. As we struggle with a warming climate, mainline Christianity must learn to deal with apocalyptic biblical texts in ways that do not affirm cosmic dualism, determinism, and divine vengeance, but rather emphasize their import for a cosmo-ethical vision of the consequences of humans’ short-sighted choices.

- McDuff, Mallory. *Sacred Acts: How Churches Are Working to Protect Earth’s Climate*. Gabriolla Island, BC: New Society, 2012.

McDuff documents the stories and strategies of people of faith working to define a new environmental movement, where honoring the Creator means protecting the planet. This anthology celebrates the diverse actions taken by churches to address climate change through stewardship, spirituality, advocacy, and justice.

- McFague, Sallie. *A New Climate for Theology: God, the World, and Global Warming*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.

Explores the current climate crisis as an instrument for spurring an imaginative, new approach to doing Christian theology. Climate change, she argues, can show us who we are and how we should live in the world, and it also encourages Christians to think through issues such as hope and despair as they relate to ecotheology.

- Northcott, Michael. *A Moral Climate: The Ethics of Global Warming*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2007.

Drawing on economic, biblical, scientific, theological, and political resources, Northcott inveighs against the modern predominance of exploitative political and economic institutions. Such institutions not only lead to social injustice but also perpetuate modern-day climate issues. By discussing alternative options for human flourishing, Northcott provides theologically astute ethical options for confronting the problem of our changing climate.

- Primavesi, Anne. *Gaia and Climate Change: A Theology of Gift Events*. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Primavesi imagines a shift away from a theology that emphasizes a violent, imperialistic notion of God to an ecological theology of “gift events.” Drawing upon theology, philosophy, and history, she envisions the ecological crisis of climate change in terms of gift-giving and James Lovelock’s Gaia hypothesis.

- Robb, Carol S. *Wind, Sun, Soil, Spirit: Biblical Ethics and Climate Change*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010.

Robb brings together dimensions of economic theory, environmental policy, and New Testament studies in order to discuss the ethical implications of climate change for Christianity. By relating Jesus’ ministry, teaching, and death, as well as Paul’s ethical writings, to policy on climate change, Robb argues that the wisdom of ancient texts matters to contemporary ethics on climate.

Food and Water

Whether used in ritual, ensconced in myth and narrative, or symbolized in art and verse, water has long been an important facet of religious life in the world's major religious traditions. In recent years, water has also become a critical environmental concern for scholars drawn to ecological and social justice issues. [Alley 2002](#) considers sacred rivers and water use in India, while [Rademacher 2011](#) looks at similar issues in Nepal. [Chamberlain 2008](#) surveys water use and conservation from the standpoint of religious ethics, and [Varner 2004](#) investigates folklore and mythology for conceptions of sacred water. [Smith 2004](#) shows how food also plays an important role in historical and contemporary religious life. And [Wirzba 2011](#) is an encyclopedic overview of food in American religious life and a theological analysis of food and eating in contemporary Christianity.

- Alley, Kelly. *On the Banks of the Ganga: When Wastewater Meets a Sacred River*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002.

In this rich ethnographic study, Kelly Alley sheds light on debates about water uses, wastewater management, and the meanings of waste and sacred power. This book analyzes the human predicaments that result from the accumulation and disposal of waste by tracing how citizens of India interpret the impact of wastewater flows on a sacred river and on their own cultural practices.

- Chamberlain, Gary. *Troubled Waters: Religion, Ethics, and the Global Water Crisis*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2008.

Chamberlain surveys traditions and rituals from religions around the world and seeks out new ways of responding to the worldwide water crisis. The book is interdisciplinary and combines perspectives from the social sciences, history, hydrology, cosmology, ethics, and the study of world religions.

- Rademacher, Anne M. *Reigning the River: Urban Ecologies and Political Transformation in Kathmandu*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011.

An anthropological examination of urban river ecologies, this volume assesses the meeting of local religion and political life in Nepal. Rademacher explores the complexities and contested nature of river restoration and life along the riverbed in the midst of social, ecological, and religious flux.

- Smith, Andrew F., ed. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

This overview work presents essays on the history of food in America from First Nation indigenous peoples to the early 21st century. The contributions of ethnic, religious, cultural, and racial groups to American culinary life are investigated in essays such as Jewish dietary laws and Native American foods—spiritual and social connections. Also includes essays focused on specific foods, such as corn.

- Varner, Gary. *Water of Life – Water of Death: The Folklore and Mythology of Sacred Waters*. Baltimore: PublishAmerica, 2004.

An exploration of the folklore and mythology of sacred water found throughout the world. This book investigates the sacredness associated with water and folklore and religious themes. Blending personal exploration with archaeology, folklore, and ancient traditions, this work explores lakes, hot springs, and rivers in search of the spirit helpers, demons, faeries, and the gods and goddesses found in water sources.

- Wirzba, Norman. *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Provides a comprehensive theological framework for how our eating habits can honor both creation and Creator. Wirzba argues that eating has a profound sacramental quality, which should be recognized for its robust economic, moral, and theological significance.

History

The contributions of historians to the field of religion and ecology have long been central to understanding the relationship between religious ideas and values and environmental attitudes and actions. [Albanese 1990](#) is a study of “nature religion” in American culture, [Gatta 2004](#) is an analysis of the quest for “natural revelation,” and [Merchant 1983](#) is a groundbreaking feminist assessment of the overlap between women, science, and nature, but all of these works shed light on religion and ecology in the past and also provide essential frameworks for scholars attempting to unearth how religion impacts environmental concern today. Included here is [White 1967](#), which is largely regarded as a cornerstone text in the field of religion and ecology.

- Albanese, Catherine L. *Nature Religion in America: From the Algonkian Indians to the New Age*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990.

Albanese’s breakthrough text explores a disparate and previously unacknowledged set of religious beliefs at the heart of American culture. Using historical examples, she sheds light on “nature religion” as she sifts through the disparate, yet unexpectedly linked, moral and spiritual encounters of Americans with nature.

- Gatta, John. *Making Nature Sacred: Literature, Religion, and Environment in America from the Puritans to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

In this study of environmental history, Gatta traces the quest for “natural revelation” in American literature and intellectual history. *Making Nature Sacred* focuses on Christian traditions, but also includes accounts from the Transcendentalists and from Native American, African American, and Buddhist forms of religion and spirituality.

- Merchant, Carolyn. *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983.

Widely considered an innovative study for its time, Merchant’s *Death of Nature* reinterprets the Scientific Revolution of 1500–1700 through critical feminist and ecological perspectives. By challenging the period’s mechanistic worldview, she shows how nature came to be seen as both dead and passive matter, fit for human domination.

- White, Lynn, Jr. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis.” *Science* 155 (1967): 1203–1207.

White’s assertion that the ecological crisis is rooted in religious values and ideas inspired the early development of ecotheology, environmental ethics, and the ecological philosophy known as deep ecology. White argues that if the ecological crisis is rooted in religious values and ideas, then so too must the solution be.

Religion and Science

Studies in science and religion have been invaluable in building bridges between scholarship on religion on the one hand and activist and scientific understandings of ecology on the other. Some have sought to describe the ways in which scientific understandings of nature can elicit feelings of awe and wonder. [Goodenough 1998](#) (written by a biologist and theologian) and [McGrath 2002](#) (written by a theologian), for instance, make the case that scientific knowledge can lead to appreciation for the sacred in nature. [Haught 1993](#), written by a Catholic theologian, contributes to the dialogue between religion and science by arguing that Christian theology can make an important contribution to the environmental movement. Similarly, but working from an ecumenical approach, [Oelschlaeger 1994](#) looks for ways in which religions can contribute to creation care. [Kellert and Farnham 2002](#) examines the overlap between science and spirituality, and [Lodge and Hamlin 2006](#) explores how scientific understandings of nature can support and inform religious worldviews. Lastly, [Clingerman and Dixon 2001](#) stresses the notion of “place” as it pertains to science and religion, and [Drees 2009](#) discusses the complex questions and controversies that arise when technology, science, and ecology meet.

- Clingerman, Forrest, and Mark Dixon, eds. *Placing Nature on the Borders of Religion, Philosophy, and Ethics*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001.

Using the concepts to recreate, to replace and to restore, the editors of this collection reflect on ways in which humans both think about and act on their surroundings. This book questions conceptual divisions between nature and culture, science and religion, and human and environment. Stressing “place,” this book brings together environmental philosophy, environmental theology, and religion and ecology.

- Drees, Willem, ed. *Technology, Trust and Religion: Roles of Religions in Controversies over Ecology and the Modification of Life*. Amsterdam: Leiden University Press, 2009.

Scholars consider the intersection of technology, ecology, and religion to explore the complex interstices where biotechnology, scientific expertise, communication, and defining the human meet in the modern ecological crisis.

- Goodenough, Ursula. *The Sacred Depths of Nature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Goodenough aims to outline a planetary ethic that both informs global concerns while orienting our daily lives. She provides an accessible account of our scientific understanding of nature in order to animate our ethical reflections on the simple imperative that life on Earth, despite our recent misdeeds, must continue.

- Haught, John. *The Promise of Nature: Ecology and Cosmic Purpose*. New York: Paulist, 1993.

Haught explores what Christian theology has to contribute to our current ecological predicament. He examines scientific skepticism, modern critics of religion, constructive ecological theologies, and the connection between human destiny and the larger universe story. Haught also argues that there is much within Christian thought to significantly contribute to establishing solutions to the present-day environmental crisis.

- Kellert, Stephen, and Timothy Farnham, eds. *The Good in Nature and Humanity: Connecting Science and Spirituality with the Natural World*. Washington, DC: Island, 2002.

Pursues an ethic of right relation between nature and humanity, seeking to balance theory with practice and relate each to the challenge of transforming the relationship between humans and the natural world. Theologians, scientists, nature writers, and wildlife managers each speak to the prospects for harmonizing human life and the environment.

- Lodge, David, and Christopher Hamlin, eds. *Religion and the New Ecology: Environmental Responsibility in a World in Flux*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.

The contributors to *Religion and the New Ecology* approach historical, cultural, and ethical studies of ecology from the perspective of nature's inherent dynamism. As such, the essays in this collection provide in-depth analyses on how our scientific understanding of the environment might be reintegrated into contemporary ethical, ecotheological, and axiological frameworks.

- McGrath, Alister E. *The Reenchantment of Nature: The Denial of Religion and the Ecological Crisis*. New York: Doubleday, 2002.

We are in need, McGrath argues, of a reawakening to the awe, beauty, and wonder of the natural world as an irreplaceable gift of the God who created it. He thus constructs a framework for the debate between religion and science, contending that these two seemingly disparate fields can be integrated.

- Oelschlaeger, Max. *Caring for Creation: An Ecumenical Approach to the Environmental Crisis*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994.

Explores the problems and promises of religions regarding the environmental crisis. It gives definition to the statement that regarding a transformative turn into a more sustainable lifestyle the religions are necessary but not sufficient. Using a sociolinguistic approach the author investigates creation stories in a variety of religions. He separates out biodiversity, pollution, and population as specific areas in which religions can make contributions that are not trapped in special-interest politics.

Animals and Plants

Emerging out of a variety of disciplines, most notably from environmental discourse found in the broader field of religion and ecology and out of the ongoing animal ethics dialogue, the study of religion and animals is a rapidly growing field of study. This is evidenced not only in the creation of the Animals and Religion Group at the American Academy of Religion but also in such texts as the landmark volume [Waldau and Patton 2006](#) and in [Hobgood-Oster 2010](#), an exploration of Christianity and companion animals. Another nascent area of scholarly interest is the study of plants and religion. Here, [Findly 2008](#) looks closely at understandings of plants as sentient beings in Hindu, Jain, Vedic, and Buddhist traditions and [Hall 2011](#) takes an interreligious approach to investigate conceptions of plants as person.

- Findly, Ellison Banks. *Plant Lives: Borderline Beings in Indian Traditions*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2008.

Beginning with texts from the Hindu, Jain, Vedic, and Buddhist traditions, Findly surveys a diversity of thought and practice that holds plants to be living, sentient beings that are bearers of karma and individual consciousness. Findly then examines these concepts in relation to current environmental practice and religious thought.

- Hall, Matthew. *Plants as Persons: A Philosophical Botany*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2011.

Considers the moral standing of plants in various religious traditions. Hall describes plants as other-than-human-persons and points out their massive presence in the biomass of the planet. Assessing the ethical positioning of plants at the bottom of the Western ontological hierarchy, he

explores traditions in which plants are understood as intelligent, powerful persons capable of agency and in need of care and respect.

- Hobgood-Oster, Laura. *The Friends We Keep: Unleashing Christianity's Compassion for Animals*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010.

This wonderful volume presents stories from Christianity in which animals are the companions of saints, prisoners in the Roman arenas along with the martyrs, conveyors of wisdom teachings, and teachers of compassion. This book develops materials for discussion of the more central roles of animals in Christianity.

- Waldau, Paul, and Kimberley Patton, eds. *A Communion of Subjects: Animals in Religion, Science, and Ethics*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

A landmark text, this edited volume is the first comparative and interdisciplinary study of human's conceptualization of animals in world religions. A wide range of essays organized around Thomas Berry's assertion that "the world is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects" touch upon diverse topics such as cognitive ethology, biology, theology, and ethics.

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[back to top](#)

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