

## References for Overture by Mr. P. Roeda

In their deliberations, I would urge Synod to faithfully utilize the gifts, wisdom and experience of the following Christian experts on the topic of global warming:

- Dr. Adel Abadeer Associate Professor of Economics, Calvin College
- Dr. E. Calvin Beisner Founder of the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation  
Pastor at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church  
Former professor at Knox Theological Seminary  
Former professor at Covenant College
- Dr. John R. Christy Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric Science  
Director of the Earth System Science Center  
University of Alabama in Huntsville
- Dr. Neil Frank Meteorologist  
Former Director of the National Hurricane Center
- Dr. Raymond Gunnink Retired physicist with the Lawrence Livermore Laboratories  
Member of Lakeside Community CRC, Alto, MI
- Mr. Craig James Respected Christian West Michigan meteorologist
- Dr. David R. Legates Delaware State Climatologist  
Associate professor at the University of Delaware
- Dr. Jay Richards Director of Acton Media  
Research Fellow at the Acton Institute  
Apologetics Faculty of Biola University  
Graduate of Calvin Theological Seminary
- Dr. Hugh Ross Astrophysicist  
President and Founder of Reasons to Believe
- Dr. Roy Spencer Research scientist for the University of Alabama  
Former senior scientist for climate studies at  
NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center
- Mr. Bill Steffen Respected Christian West Michigan meteorologist
- Dr. G. C. vanKooten Professor and Canada Research Chair  
Department of Economics at University of Victoria

- Dr. Jeffrey Zweerink Faculty research astrophysicist at UCLA  
Staff apologist with Reasons to Believe

## Resources:

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## ClimateGate

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*Without energy, life is brutal and short. **Proposed ‘do-something about-global-warming’ initiatives will not detectably alter whatever the climate is going to do.** And making energy more expensive is a regressive tax and stops economic development.... You hear a lot of talk about sustainability.... If something is not economically sustainable, it is not sustainable....*

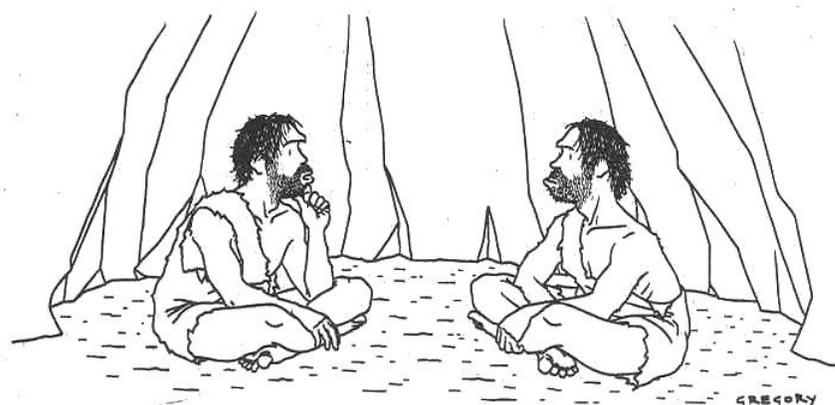
*Two cavemen are talking: ‘Something’s just not right – our air is clean, our water is pure, we all get plenty of exercise, everything we eat is organic and free-range, and yet nobody lives past thirty.’ And I want to say that on a very somber note. **Because as someone like me who has lived in Africa, I’ve seen what happens when people do not have energy. They die.** Children die when that occurs.*

*Now, I’m a grandparent.... There is nothing better than when that little kid comes up and grabs you around the knees and says, ‘I love you grandpa.’ That is an experience of life you and I can have these days; 100 years ago we could not. The average American lived to be only 47 years old. But energy technology and all the benefits that came about have brought us to this level of life experience that could not have happened otherwise.*

*So my point there is, you be very, very careful when you start talking about, ‘Oh, I think we might do this for energy, so that we’ll do something maybe about the climate,’ when, in fact, it has real impacts on people, especially the poorest among us. **When we start making energy more expensive, that will have negative impacts on the human existence and on human life.** That is something we have to be very careful and cautious about as we go forward.*

Excerpts from a speech given at Auburn University on February 15, 2010, entitled “Global Warming – Where’s the Alarm?” by John R. Christy, Ph.D., Atmospheric Sciences

Dr. John R. Christy is Professor of Atmospheric Science and Director of the Earth System Science Center at the University of Alabama in Huntsville



*Something's just not right -- our air is clean, our water is pure, we all get plenty of exercise, everything we eat is organic and free-range, and yet nobody lives past thirty.*

Attached:

- *From Climate Control to Population Control: Troubling Background on the “Evangelical Climate Initiative”* by the Institute on Religion and Democracy and the Acton Institute
- *An Open Letter to Signers of “Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action” and Others Concerned About Global Warming* by the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation
- *Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming* by The Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation
- *A Call to Truth, Prudence, and Protection of the Poor: An Evangelical Response to Global Warming* by the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation
- *The Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship* by the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation
- *The Cornwall Stewardship Agenda* by the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation
- *The New World Religion* by Regis Nicoll
- *The End of the IPCC* by S. Fred Singer



**Cornwall  
Alliance**

*For The Stewardship Of Creation*

**An Open Letter to the Signers of  
“Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action”  
and Others Concerned About Global Warming**

*“They only asked us to remember the poor—the very thing I was eager to do.”  
—The Apostle Paul, Galatians 2:10*

Widespread media reports tell of a scientific consensus that:

- the world is presently experiencing unprecedented global warming;
- the main cause of it is rising atmospheric carbon dioxide because of human use of fossil fuels for energy; and
- the consequences of continuing this pattern will include (1) rising sea levels that could inundate highly populated and often poor low-lying lands, (2) more frequent deadly heat waves, droughts, and other extreme weather events, (3) increased tropical diseases in warming temperate regions, and (4) more frequent and intense hurricanes.

Recently eighty-six evangelical pastors, college presidents, mission heads, and other leaders signed “Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action,” under the auspices of the Evangelical Climate Initiative. The document calls on the federal government to pass national legislation requiring sufficient reductions in carbon dioxide emissions to fight global warming and argues that these are necessary to protect the poor from its harmful effects.

In light of all this, many people are puzzled by the Interfaith Stewardship Alliance’s opposition to such calls. Do we not *care* about the prospect of catastrophic global warming? Do we not *care* that with rising temperatures the polar ice caps will melt, and the sea will inundate low island countries and coastal regions? Do we not *care* that the world’s poor might be most hurt by these things?

Yes, we care. But we also believe, with economist Walter Williams, that “truly compassionate policy requires dispassionate analysis.” That is the very motive for our opposing drastic steps to prevent global warming. In short, we have the same motive proclaimed by the Evangelical Climate Initiative in its “Call to Action.”

But motive and reason are not the same thing. It matters little how well we mean, if what we do actually harms those we intend to help.

That is why we take the positions we do. In the accompanying document, “**A Call to Truth, Prudence,**

**and Protection of the Poor: An Evangelical Response to Global Warming,”** we present extensive evidence and argument against the extent, the significance, and perhaps the existence of the much-touted scientific consensus on catastrophic human-induced global warming. Further, good science—like truth—is not about counting votes but about empirical evidence and valid arguments. Therefore we also present data, arguments, and sources favoring a different perspective:

- Foreseeable global warming will have moderate and mixed (not only harmful but also helpful), not catastrophic, consequences for humanity—including the poor—and the rest of the world’s inhabitants.
- Natural causes may account for a large part, perhaps the majority, of the global warming in both the last thirty and the last one hundred fifty years, which together constitute an episode in the natural rising and falling cycles of global average temperature. Human emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases are probably a minor and possibly an insignificant contributor to its causes.
- Reducing carbon dioxide emissions would have at most an insignificant impact on the quantity and duration of global warming and would not significantly reduce alleged harmful effects.
- Government-mandated carbon dioxide emissions reductions not only would not significantly curtail global warming or reduce its harmful effects but also would cause greater harm than good to humanity—especially the poor—while offering virtually no benefit to the rest of the world’s inhabitants.
- In light of all the above, the most prudent response is not to try (almost certainly unsuccessfully and at enormous cost) to prevent or reduce whatever slight warming might really occur. It is instead to prepare to adapt by fostering means that will effectively protect humanity—especially the poor—not only from whatever harms might be anticipated from global warming but also from harms that might be fostered by other types of catastrophes, natural or manmade.

We believe the harm caused by mandated reductions in energy consumption in the quixotic quest to reduce global warming will far exceed its benefits. Reducing energy consumption will require significantly increasing the costs of energy—whether through taxation or by restricting supplies. Because energy is a vital component in producing all goods and services people need, raising its costs means raising other prices, too. For wealthy people, this might require some adjustments in consumption patterns—inconvenient and disappointing, perhaps, but not devastating. But for the world’s two billion or more poor people, who can barely afford sufficient food, clothing, and shelter to sustain life, and who are without electricity and the refrigeration, cooking, light, heat, and air conditioning it can provide, it can mean the difference between life and death.

Along with all the benefits we derive from economic use of energy, another consideration—a Biblical/theological one—points in the same direction. The stewardship God gave to human beings over the earth—to cultivate and guard the garden (Genesis 2:15) and to fill, subdue, and rule the whole earth (Genesis 1:28)—strongly suggests that caring for human needs is compatible with caring for the earth. As theologian Wayne Grudem put it, “It does not seem likely to me that God would set up the world to work in such a way that human beings would eventually destroy the earth by doing such ordinary and morally good and necessary things as breathing, building a fire to cook or keep warm, burning fuel to travel, or using energy for a refrigerator to preserve food.”

Whether or not global warming is largely natural, (1) human efforts to stop it are largely futile; (2) whatever efforts we undertake to stem our small contributions to it would needlessly divert resources from much more beneficial uses; and (3) adaptation strategies for whatever slight warming does occur are much more sensible than costly but futile prevention strategies. Therefore, we believe it is far wiser to promote economic growth, partly through keeping energy inexpensive, than to fight against potential global warming and thus slow economic growth. And there is a side benefit, too: wealthier societies are better able and more willing to spend to protect and improve the natural environment than poorer societies. Our policy, therefore, is better not only for humanity but also for the rest of the planet.

We recognize that reasonable people can disagree with our understanding of the science and economics. But this is indeed our understanding.

Please join us in endorsing **“A Call to Truth, Prudence, and Protection of the Poor: An Evangelical Response to Global Warming”** ([http://www.cornwallalliance.org/docs/Call to Truth.pdf](http://www.cornwallalliance.org/docs/Call%20to%20Truth.pdf)). To do so, send an e-mail with your name, degree(s) (with subject, level, and granting institution), professional title, professional affiliation (for identification purposes only), mailing address, e-mail address, and (for verification) phone number to [Stewards@CornwallAlliance.org](mailto:Stewards@CornwallAlliance.org). If you have questions, please e-mail the same address.

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(Updated April 15, 2009)

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# The Cornwall Stewardship Agenda

## Executive Summary

God calls us to steward creation, but presently much environmental advocacy and activism contradict sound theology and sound science. In response to this, a diverse task force representing a wide range of the theological, scientific and economic disciplines has been brought together to craft the Cornwall Stewardship Agenda. This agenda is designed to flesh out the broad principles of the 2000 *Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship* (endorsed by over 1,500 clergy, religious leaders, and other people of faith), **and answer the practical question of what public policy principles religious leaders and policymakers should support in their desire to achieve Biblically balanced stewardship.**

The Cornwall Agenda will address a variety of stewardship issues, the first of which are “*poverty and development*” and “*climate and energy*.” This Introduction lays the philosophical groundwork for the rest of the document. In summary:

- Mankind has a divinely ordained responsibility to exercise faithful stewardship. Because we and our neighbors are created in God’s image, Scripturally sound stewardship honors God’s emphasis on meeting human needs (particularly those of the poor), cultivating human creativity and helping people flourish. Therefore, **environmental policies should harness human creative potential by expanding political and economic freedom**, instead of imposing draconian restrictions or seeking to reduce the “human burden” on the natural world. Suppressing human liberty and productivity in the name of environmental protection is antithetical to the principles of stewardship and counterproductive to the environment.
- When addressing environmental problems, **we should respond first to firmly established risks in ways that are cost-effective and have proven benefit.** Prudent stewardship will avoid siren calls to action on speculative problems that are based on politicized science or media-driven hype, focusing instead on well-understood and well-argued evidence. In the world of policy priorities, arguments that millions *may* die in the next century (due, for example, to poorly-understood and wildly exaggerated claims about climate change) must yield primacy of place to well-understood problems (like unsafe drinking water, dirty fuels like wood and dung, and malarial mosquitoes) that cause some 4-5 million deaths annually and that could be solved for a fraction of the proposed cost.
- Because of its emphasis on human productivity and the priority of people in God’s created order, supporters of the Cornwall Agenda are frequently mischaracterized as not caring at all about environmental stewardship. Many seek to create an artificial paradigm in which a person either embraces the idea that there are too many people on the planet causing all manner of environmental devastation (including catastrophic man-made global warming), or he is written off as simply unconcerned about “creation care.” That paradigm, however, is false: **Cornwall supporters believe the best way to care for both people AND the planet is through policies that allow increasing numbers of people around the world to fulfill their role as stewards of God’s good creation.**

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# The Cornwall Stewardship Agenda

## Introduction

Secularist thought provides no rational basis for a stewardship ethic, for according to it humans are simply a product of random causes in a random universe. Some modern environmentalists take an even more extreme view of humans, seeing such a limitless obligation to nature as to make the existence and prosperity of humanity a curse on the world. In this view, untouched nature is the ideal and virtually all human activity results in degradation. Thus, the ethical ideal is not to tend nature wisely but to restrict most human activity.

The Bible, in contrast, places humanity both within and above nature. We are created out of the dust of the Earth and are commanded to be fruitful, yet we have stewardship over the Earth and all its creatures. Thus, humans are not merely a part of nature; we have obligations towards nature. As Biblical Christians, we reject the secular extremes in favor of the balanced Biblical picture: God has made humans for his eternal purpose and has given us an earthly home to tend and care for and to be sustained by for a time. As a consequence, Biblical revelation provides a sound basis for humane creation stewardship, particularly as it relates to energy supply and climate change.

Consistent with these observations, the *Cornwall Declaration* proclaims that human beings are created in the image of God, given a privileged place among creatures, and commanded to exercise stewardship over the Earth. God's law, outlined in the Decalogue given to Moses and summarized by Jesus as loving God and loving our neighbors as ourselves (Exodus 20; Mark 12:31), provides the framework for the proper exercise of the stewardship with which humans have been charged.

A fundamental principle of the *Cornwall Declaration* is, "Human persons are moral agents for whom freedom is an essential condition of responsible action." The *Declaration* also declares, "Sound environmental stewardship must attend both to the demands of human well-being and to a divine call for human beings to exercise caring dominion over the Earth."

These insights imply that advancing human political and economic freedom and harnessing human creative potential in scientific and technological knowledge are vital in order for mankind to respond fully to God's charge to be fruitful and bring forth good things from the Earth (Genesis 1:26-30). Consequently, policies should further both of those ends. Widespread disease, malnutrition, pollution, and mismanagement of the Earth and its resources are among the byproducts of man's sin, and policies that exacerbate these problems violate God's two great commandments mentioned above.

Some mistakenly believe that humanity has become so corrupt and tainted that mankind must minimize activities that impact the natural world. Under such a pessimistic viewpoint, which

denies even the potential for responsible environmental stewardship, mankind must withdraw from the Earth in order to save it.

Others have issued dire warnings of impending ecological doom, not warranted by the evidence, to frighten people into following drastic policy prescriptions they claim are necessary to save the planet, including policies that require individuals to needlessly alter their lifestyles while empowering government officials with greater regulatory authority. This viewpoint, too, devalues human beings created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27).

In contrast, signatories to the *Cornwall Declaration* believe that good stewardship policy begins with a proper perspective of God's Word, or "rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15), particularly as it centers on the individual. Proper policy should be designed to empower individuals both to be wise stewards of the natural world and to liberate themselves from poverty and oppression and other unfruitful practices, and to enjoy the material and spiritual benefits of their labor. As the *Cornwall Declaration* states, "human well-being and the integrity of creation are not only compatible but also dynamically interdependent realities."

*Cornwall* signatories also believe that representative governments have a responsibility to secure the blessings of liberty for their own citizens and to encourage the peaceful development of liberty throughout the world. For this reason, the Cornwall Alliance has created this Stewardship Agenda, which outlines specific actions we believe will foster wise environmental stewardship and the freedom upon which it depends—focusing on governmental actions that will undergird and complement personal and cooperative outreach efforts.

A fundamental principle underlying this Agenda is the encouragement of individuals to serve one another in ways that will unleash the power of the human spirit and contribute to reversing the results of past disobedience that started in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3)—disobedience that has left many poor, sick, or dead, has led to much environmental devastation, and, worst, has alienated men, women, and children from God their Creator.

*Cornwall* signatories recognize the importance of addressing environmental concerns in ways that are cost effective and bring about improvements in human life and health and in the Earth itself. A critical element in achieving these goals is achieving political, economic, and spiritual liberty so as to unlock people's creativity and potential for responsible stewardship. Because human political and economic freedom, within the boundaries of God's moral law, is not only a God-given right but also critically important to economic development, *Cornwall* signatories argue that suppressing it in the name of environmental protection is both antithetical to the principles of stewardship and counterproductive for the environment.

The *Cornwall Declaration* recognizes that achieving a clean environment while providing for the needs of current and future generations requires strategies that employ human and material capital to encourage technological innovation and reduce high and firmly established risks to human life and health in ways that are cost effective and maintain proven benefit.

Such strategies must first address the need for basic infrastructure—access to running water, water purification, roads, communications, housing, sanitation, and hospitals, among other things. But

equally important is spreading the understanding that economic development and human freedom are integrally interrelated, in the hope that governments may increasingly make the benefits of infrastructure construction and other forms of economic development available to all levels of a society. *Cornwall* signatories recognize that expanding access to private property and business ownership for ordinary citizens is crucial to ending poverty and thus providing a solid foundation for long-term environmental stewardship.

It is for these reasons that the Cornwall Stewardship Agenda addresses, as its first area of critical concern, the reduction of poverty through economic development and expanding human freedom. The primary focus in this first segment of the Agenda is on the developing world, with an eye to strategies that have been used successfully to expand human freedom and economic opportunity in the developed world.

**A key factor in assessing the potential of an individual policy is whether it leads to ownership of the solutions by those it seeks to help.** History has demonstrated that only when they are able to assert ownership will people have the incentive to acquire and transmit the knowledge of how to maintain infrastructure and the wise use of property—and to build on what they have already achieved to provide for the needs of their progeny.

Underlying all efforts at economic development, however, is securing and maintaining inexpensive access to adequate sources of energy to operate the infrastructure and everyday tools that keep a society up and running. While energy development may be seen as just one element in economic development, the future use of certain sources of energy (fossil fuels, nuclear energy, and even hydropower) is under assault by well-meaning people who fear that the use of these fuels is a threat to the environment and even to the future of all life on the planet.

The Cornwall Stewardship Agenda, therefore, addresses energy policy as a second special category in light of concerns about climate change and other concerns raised in the name of environmental protection. The Cornwall assessment will begin with the assertion that supplying sufficient energy for alleviating poverty in the developing world is a very clear and real challenge of the utmost importance that cannot be subverted or delayed by speculative claims about future impacts that might well be mitigated through adaptation should they prove to have scientific and real-world merit.



# **The Cornwall Stewardship Agenda**

## **Chapter 1: Poverty and Development**

The 1,500 signatories to the *Cornwall Declaration* state that they “aspire to a world in which advancements in agriculture, industry, and commerce not only minimize pollution and transform most waste products into efficiently used resources but also improve the material conditions of life for people everywhere.” This language speaks directly to the responsibility of those blessed by modern improvements in human health, nutrition, and life expectancy, as well as by other benefits of advances in science and technology, to make those benefits available to increasing numbers of people around the globe. *Cornwall* signatories recognize that the best way to accomplish this goal is to empower the poorest peoples in the world to be free to choose to seek those benefits for themselves.

The billions of people who today are at the bottom of the world economic pyramid typically lack access to essential services, including electric power, which is necessary to operate lights, refrigerators, stoves, and heaters in homes or to construct and operate sanitation, medical, and other facilities that provide the essential infrastructure for modern societies. They also lack access to credit and other financial services, cannot utilize the value of their lands and property to invest in their futures, and often have no access to educational opportunities that would prepare them to advance in today’s society.

Recent history provides numerous examples of government-led efforts to end poverty. Four decades ago President Lyndon B. Johnson launched what was perhaps the most noteworthy of these efforts with his massive “war on poverty,” which focused on providing direct assistance through government bureaucracies. The huge sums spent under these mostly redistributivist programs have been matched over the past decades by foreign aid to developing countries that, for the most part, was directed through governments in those nations. The broad failure of all of these top-down anti-poverty initiatives, many with no accountability mechanisms, is well documented.

Poverty reduction depends largely on economic development and growth. Economic theory and history teach that economic growth is the product of the development of the division of labor, capital accumulation, technological advance, and wise entrepreneurship, with efficient allocation of resources guided by freely floating prices reflecting supply and demand. Consequently, any effort to achieve sustainable economic prosperity and reduce poverty must include initiating and maintaining the social institution that makes such catalysts for growth possible: a free market (in both products and labor) based on the rights to own, invest, and freely exchange private property at voluntarily agreed prices.

For that reason, unlocking the potential of the world’s poor through private initiatives is a better solution to the problem of poverty and the related challenge of human and environmental health

than government-led, redistributivist programs. Wealth creation is more effective at eliminating poverty than wealth redistribution. In 2006, the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh and its founder Muhammad Yunus were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their 30-year campaign to create economic and social development through micro-loans to the entrepreneurial poor. Grameen's approach also focuses on advancing democracy and human rights, including the rights of women and others who had lacked access to formal society. These small loans, however, provide only marginal opportunities and benefits. Investment by multinational corporations has also employed millions of poor people in developing countries and increased their incomes.

Corporate strategist C. K. Prahalad has long championed the idea that large-scale entrepreneurship can and should be a driver of economic development for the world's poor. In *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid* Prahalad called upon large firms to invest their capital in partnerships with non-governmental organizations (including faith-based groups) to empower people in poor communities to start businesses and create new products that are affordable to poor consumers, so as to create locally based economic growth. Prahalad, too, sees economic development as linked to human freedom and social transformation, including the empowerment of women. This is consistent with many studies showing that a country's index of economic freedom and its economic growth and development are positively correlated.

Government also has a role to play in eradicating poverty, but its most vital roles are to eliminate barriers to economic growth; establish legal and economic systems that foster and encourage business formation, entrepreneurship, trade, innovation and patents, banking, and the construction of roads, power generators, and other essential facilities; encourage freedom of contract and equal opportunity; maintain sound money; ensure improved public health; and prosecute corruption that often involves disbursing public monies for private personal gain. Donor governments, as well as other lending and charitable institutions, must incorporate accountability by the recipients of aid as a condition for continuing aid and as a cause for taking action against those who knowingly misuse aid monies.

Governmental pressure has been exercised prudently in expanding the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria in sub-Saharan Africa, where those diseases kill millions every year and leave many times that number unable to work, often for extended periods of time. Responding to a private petition campaign, the U.S. Agency for International Development wisely reversed its longstanding policy against the use of the pesticide DDT as a weapon in the fight against malaria; other international bodies soon followed suit, though this battle is far from over. Government-led campaigns promoting sexual mores to minimize the spread of AIDS are also proving successful, as are programs to provide education and modern drugs for the fight against tuberculosis (TB)—which will be reduced significantly as countries develop electricity generating capacity so that their people can have modern appliances in their homes and cease burning wood and animal dung, which is the primary cause of TB in developing countries.

Perhaps the greatest impact in reducing poverty can be made by those who live among the world's poor and actively desire to help them achieve both temporal and spiritual rewards. Faith-based institutions (missions, in particular) and faith-driven individuals (whether in the private or public sector) who have earned the trust of their poor neighbors have opportunities to bring together like-minded individuals with needed skills and access to capital.

In 2005, *World* editor Marvin Olasky reported on how a Maryland church provided nearly \$300,000 to purchase a 99-year lease on 10,000 acres of developed property in Zambia, where they have helped local residents build an elementary school, an orphanage, and homes for students and teachers, and provide assistance to farmers who participate in a 3-year Bible study program. In Nicaragua, another group is raising \$120,000 to build a prototype orphanage that will also host a greenhouse to grow crops for revenue to pay back the loan (so that the money can be reused at other locations) and make the facility financially self-sufficient over time.

The common thread in these and many other efforts to reduce poverty and improve human well-being in developing nations is the fundamental belief, expressed in the *Cornwall Declaration*, that human beings have great potential, as bearers of God's image, to add to the Earth's abundance. As these efforts increase prosperity, improve human health, and enhance humanity's access to technology and abundance, they will improve the ability of the poor to safeguard the environment, because they will no longer have to focus on mere survival and will have the technological and financial resources to reduce pollution and their impact on ecological resources.

Prahalad's entire framework for poverty alleviation is based on the proposition that, "If we stop thinking of the poor as victims or as a burden and start recognizing them as resilient and creative entrepreneurs and value-conscious consumers, a whole new world of opportunity will open up." To Yunus, the solution for overcoming poverty is to concentrate on promoting the will to survive and the courage to rely on "the first and most essential element of the economic cycle—man" and what the late economist Julian Simon called "the ultimate resource," human ingenuity.

In summary, the Cornwall Stewardship Agenda for alleviating poverty and improving the health and well-being of the poorest among us begins with the recognition that human beings are the crown of creation (Psalm 8:5) and the natural stewards of their environment (Genesis 1:28). Liberating people from poverty and providing them with the essential tools for creating wealth and making wise personal choices is far more effective than treating the poor as dependents who have neither the ability nor the will to manage their own affairs.

The United States Declaration of Independence rightly asserts that governments are instituted among men in order to secure such fundamental human rights as those to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. By extension or implication, this includes the right to own and utilize private property, as the source of the financial and natural resources needed to generate wealth, health, technology, personal fulfillment, and happiness. *Cornwall* signatories believe this obligation goes beyond national borders and should apply to all economic, environmental, trade, and aid policies set by national governments.

The Cornwall Alliance therefore proposes the following items for alleviating poverty and improving human health and the health of the environment.

## Food and Agriculture

- The Cornwall Alliance strongly supports the use of high-yield, pest- and disease-resistant food crops that provide increased yields and lower the price of staples in poor nations plagued by hunger. The Cornwall Alliance concurs with the assessment of John Wafula of the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute that “The use of high-yielding, disease-resistant and pest-resistant crops would have a direct bearing on improved food security, poverty alleviation and environmental conservation in Africa.” By making it possible to increase food production without using more land, high-yield varieties also play a vital role in preserving the rest of nature.
- The Cornwall Alliance calls for caution in the use of the “precautionary principle” to label biotechnology a threat to biodiversity and impose rigid procedures on trade in bioengineered products. With a regulatory framework in which people can have confidence and safeguards against monopolistic practices, bioengineering of some livestock and crops may contribute greatly to reducing hunger and thus should not be ruled out categorically.
- The Cornwall Alliance calls for the phased removal of prohibitory tariffs on the importation of agricultural products grown in developing nations, but calls for the continuance of fair-minded, health-based standards for agricultural products from seed to shipping. The Cornwall Alliance recognizes that developing nations must also remove protective tariffs on certain goods they import to foster good will and free trade, but under a timetable that does not inordinately disrupt their local economies.
- The Cornwall Alliance calls for an expanded effort to assess farming practices in developing nations and to encourage more efficient, less polluting, and less environmentally detrimental farming practices. The Cornwall Alliance applauds efforts such as those in Niger, where farmers ended the traditional practice of clearing saplings from their fields before planting, an activity that had led both to deforestation and to loss of topsoil and reduced ability of soil to hold water. The key to this change was a governmental action that allowed farmers for the first time to claim ownership of the trees on the lands they were farming so that they could earn money from selling branches, pods, fruit, and bark. Similar programs that rely on private initiative should be pursued.
- The Cornwall Alliance calls for peaceful privatization and formal ownership of real property, in a way that is consistent with existing informal rights, to further encourage more efficient use of land resources on a worldwide basis. Such policies, according to economist Hernando de Soto, would provide a foundation for capital accumulation and unlock the wealth in land that is now informally held.
- The Cornwall Alliance calls for the creation of reservoirs that would provide energy through hydropower, create more reliable water supplies that could be linked to new rural and urban water purification systems, reduce the risks of floods and droughts, and provide irrigation water to enable higher crop yields.

- In support of agricultural production and trade within the developing world, The Cornwall Alliance supports the development of an intra-continental highway system and upgrading of rail transportation in sub-Saharan Africa so as to link every major city, along with appropriate trunk lines that would link areas of high agricultural production with local and regional markets.
- The Cornwall Alliance also supports the creation of a network of agricultural experiment stations and information and technology transfer to promote ecologically sound pest control and agricultural practices.

## **Health and Sanitation**

- The Cornwall Alliance strongly endorses the prudent use of the pesticide DDT, in conjunction with medications and other anti-mosquito tools such as bed nets, as a means to control malaria. The Cornwall Alliance also strongly supports funding for scientific research to create genetically modified mosquitoes that will help halt the spread of this dreaded disease.
- The Cornwall Alliance strongly supports efforts to provide clean water for drinking and general use throughout the developing world, along with educational programs that explain how parasites and micro-organisms can be removed to lower rates of death and disease.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports the construction, operation, and maintenance of water purification plants, sanitary sewer systems, and other infrastructure intended to improve the health and well-being of developing world residents, and proper training of local personnel who will operate these facilities.
- To bolster the supply of usable water, The Cornwall Alliance supports continued research and funding of desalination technology to transform ocean water and brackish inland waters into fresh water.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports efforts to remove trash and refuse, including animal waste, from public streets, parks, waterfronts, roadways, and buildings in developing world nations—including the provision of funds to pay residents to collect trash for recycling, reuse, or proper disposal. Trash and improper sanitation remain conduits for disease and for vermin that spread disease.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports the development of regional hospitals and local clinics that have continuous power supply, as well as backup power supply, so that high-quality medical care will be more widely available.

## **Development and Aid**

- The Cornwall Alliance supports expanded private efforts to bring aid to developing countries through both nonprofit and profit-making enterprises and considers these

generally more cost effective than government-to-government foreign aid. For example, businesses that employ immigrants from poor countries play an important role in reducing poverty in developing countries as immigrant workers send money back to relatives. Such remittances are the largest source of money going to the poor in developing countries. Immigration policies that provide employers with adequate numbers of immigrant workers are crucial in this regard. Alternatively, businesses could open operations in developing countries, enabling the poor to earn an adequate living within their own countries, thus empowering them to provide for their families and increasing the economic well-being of their entire communities.

- As the US government continues to provide foreign aid, the Cornwall Alliance calls for redirecting a larger percentage of that aid through the Millennium Challenge Corporation and expanding the reach of this institution beyond the lowest income countries to the poorest people in middle income developing nations, such as Mexico.
- Moreover, while the Cornwall Alliance recognizes that immediate and unconditional aid may be appropriate in the face of life-threatening disasters, it endorses the principle of determining eligibility for economic assistance—whether in the form of direct aid, support for direct foreign investment, or other types of assistance—based on a nation’s commitment to, and public record of, just governance. This includes securing political rights and civil liberties, the rule of law, control of corruption, investing in public welfare (e.g., education and health care), and the encouragement of private property ownership and economic freedom, especially for women and ethnic minorities.
- The Cornwall Alliance endorses joint efforts to create micro-finance and other programs that encourage savings and investment by those at the bottom of the economic pyramid. Such programs create a better understanding of and opportunities for capital investment and will aid localities with new business startups that are critical in their efforts at defeating poverty.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports free and unsubsidized trade—in goods, services, and ideas—because it plays an important role in increasing access to modern technology and reducing poverty.
- Because foreign investment is important to economic development and investors need confidence that their investments are secure, the Cornwall Alliance encourages efforts by the Millennium Challenge Corporation and other entities to assist governments in developing nations to establish legal policies on copyright, intellectual property, and dispute settlement and to provide new incentives for private investment that would include prohibitions on the arbitrary seizure of real or personal property.



# The Cornwall Stewardship Agenda

## Chapter 2: Energy and Climate Change

Signatories to the *Cornwall Declaration* aspire to a world “in which advancements in agriculture, industry and commerce . . . improve the material conditions of life for people everywhere.” For these advancements to occur, however, the supply of energy will have to be increased many-fold, especially in the developing world, because energy is the linchpin for advances in all other areas.

Imagine our own lives, homes, and communities without abundant, reliable, affordable energy. Without motor fuels, our transportation system would be unable to move people, raw materials, food, and finished products. Without electricity, we would have no lights, refrigeration, modern homes, heating and air-conditioning, computers, televisions, hospitals, schools, offices, water treatment facilities, or factories. Our standards of living, and even the well-being of the environment, would plummet.

Yet, even today, that is daily life for nearly a third of the world—almost two billion people. For them, roads, vehicles, electricity, and the benefits they bring are virtually nonexistent. Africa today has 13 percent of the world’s people but accounts for only 2 percent of global gross domestic product, and nearly 95 percent of its sub-Saharan population does not have access to electricity. Outside major cities in China, India, Indonesia, and Latin America, the deprivation is just as bad.

For these people, it is not merely a matter of convenience, basic necessities, modern living standards, or economic development. It is a matter of life itself. The lack of electricity means people must burn wood and animal dung and constantly breathe polluted smoke, drink unsafe water, and eat bacteria-tainted food. Up to ten million women and children die annually from lung and intestinal diseases, half of the children before their first birthday. Rampant poverty and deficient insect and disease control programs result in two million additional deaths per year from malaria.

Abundant, reliable, and affordable energy also is often a prerequisite for the success of a democratic people. Totalitarian and other repressive political systems thrive on a dearth of communication and mobility by restricting the knowledge base and experience of their enslaved peoples. For many, the spread of knowledge and ideas, fueled by energy availability, has directly led to the spread of democratic principles and freedom for many, which, in turn, has enhanced their economic opportunities and development.

It is no wonder energy and economic development are top priorities for impoverished nations. Developing countries desperately need vastly increased energy to support economic growth and basic infrastructure, as Pakistan’s Jamil Ahmad emphasized during a 2006 meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development. Even major cities are energy-deprived and rural villages often have no electricity whatsoever, or get electricity for only a few hours at a time, once every few weeks. Instead of rolling blackouts, they have rolling electricity.

These nations, Ahmad said, cannot afford to let fears of catastrophic global warming dissuade them from increasing their reliance on fossil fuels. While they remain very interested in advanced and cleaner fossil fuel technologies, as well as in energy conservation and renewable energy, what matters most to them is the generation, transmission, and distribution of ample supplies of dependable energy at affordable prices.

Many energy and development experts view wind and solar power as valuable interim measures, especially for remote villages. These energy sources can also add electricity to power grids, as they do in the United States. However they have major limitations. At present levels of technology, they cannot provide enough electricity for modern economies that generate jobs and material well-being for populations that want and deserve to take what Rabbi Daniel Lapin calls “their rightful places among the Earth’s healthy and prosperous people.” Only fossil fuels, hydroelectric, and nuclear energy can, at present and for the foreseeable future, do that—taking advantage of the coal, oil, natural gas, water power, and uranium that many of these nations have in abundance.

Activist organizations, however, often maintain that economic development in poor countries should be driven solely by energy sources that they describe as “renewable” and “sustainable.” They oppose fossil fuel projects out of a well-meant but misplaced concern about cataclysmic climate change, hydroelectric power because it requires the damming of rivers and restricts aquatic mobility and diversity, and nuclear power because of concerns about potential radioactive emissions and the disposal of radioactive waste. They have successfully, but regrettably, blocked the financing and construction of numerous, important power projects in India, Nepal, Uganda, and many other countries.

The *Cornwall Declaration* affirms that “the Earth, and with it all the cosmos, reveals its Creator’s wisdom and is sustained and governed by His power and lovingkindness” (Job 37:10-13). While climate has changed many times during Earth’s history—often dramatically—God established many self-regulating mechanisms (including the greenhouse effect) to make our planet habitably warm, and precipitation and storms to keep it habitably cool and provide life-sustaining water to plants.

At times, God altered Earth’s weather and climate to compel mankind to obey His command “to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8). He sent the great flood (Genesis 7:11), used regional climate change to help Joseph gain power in Egypt and protect the Israelites (Genesis 41:25-40), and set a drought upon Israel to expose the false prophets of Ba’al (1 Kings 17:1).

Geologists have described how mile-thick ice sheets may have once blanketed much of North America, Europe, and Russia. Many archeologists believe lengthy droughts ended the Anasazi and Mayan civilizations. Historians have chronicled how the Medieval Warm Period (circa 900-1300 A.D.) enabled Vikings to colonize Greenland, while the Little Ice Age that followed (circa 1300-1850 A.D.) brought illness, agricultural failures, famines, and profound social changes to Europe. Agriculture, civilizations, and cultures have flourished during warmer periods and struggled during times of reduced global temperature.

These Scriptural and historic records reveal that profound climate changes are neither new nor unique to our generation. They demonstrate that God created the Earth with a dynamic climate, whose remarkably variable weather and climate ultimately serve both humanity's and nature's needs. They also make it clear that changes in the global climate and weather have been driven primarily by variations in non-human forces, such as solar energy and solar wind levels, cosmic ray influx, Earth's tilt and orbit around the Sun, volcanic activity, and dynamic and turbulent forces of our oceans and atmosphere.

Many scientists believe greenhouse gas emissions can affect the global climate, as can large-scale land use/land cover changes. But few claim to know how much these changes matter, what they will mean for the future, or whether they are, on balance, good or bad. Scientists also understand that natural forces guarantee that our climate will fluctuate and change, regardless of human activities.

Emerging evidence suggests that at least some of the slight increases in temperatures at the Earth's surface in recent years can be attributed to increased solar activity, which is also warming Mars and other planets. Satellite and weather balloon measures show little to no significant warming trend in the troposphere over the tropics. Hence the available data cast doubt on the claim that recent (1975-1998) warming has purely anthropogenic causes and that rapid global warming is impending. Many studies also underscore the benefits of moderate (2-5 degrees F) warming and higher atmospheric carbon dioxide levels, which improve the growth of crops and other plants.

Average global temperature, measured by satellites and weather sondes, has not increased since 1998. Some experts believe the pattern of solar cycles suggests that cooling could soon set in and continue for several decades.

These analyses support the *Cornwall Declaration's* admonition that some environmental concerns are without foundation or greatly exaggerated and that we should be wary of warnings of speculative problems of global or cataclysmic scope a century in the future. Indeed, only three decades ago, human activity was blamed for the prolonged "global cooling" that had followed nearly three decades of warming between 1905 and 1940. One can only contemplate how many resources might have been squandered—and how much economic hardship unnecessarily endured—had huge investments been made to address that now discredited problem.

It is for this reason that *Cornwall* signatories warn that we should be especially careful when the proffered "solutions" to theoretical problems require major cutbacks in consumption, energy use, and economic development—particularly when policies proposed to combat the alleged threat would dangerously delay or reverse actions to improve human life or human stewardship of the environment. Such policies, tragically, almost always prolong the suffering of the poorest people.

Direct restrictions on energy use, or increased prices to discourage use, impact low and fixed-income families most severely. Studies by the US Energy Information Administration and others calculate that the Kyoto Protocol and other climate change proposals would cost an average US family of four between \$1,000 and \$4,000 a year and result in extensive unemployment.

Even worse, such actions would be little more than symbolic gestures that will not stabilize CO<sub>2</sub> levels, much less the climate, especially if China, India, and other developing countries continue building fossil fuel power plants at their present rates of construction. It is now generally

recognized that, even if the Kyoto Protocol were fully implemented by every nation, global temperatures would be reduced by no more than 0.2 degree F by 2050. But it would cost the global economy \$200 billion or more per year, depending on how it was implemented, in lost economic productivity and jobs. Moreover, scientists also acknowledge that it would require the equivalent of 30 or more Kyoto treaties, costing the global economy trillions of dollars annually, to achieve the levels of reductions in carbon dioxide emissions necessary to minimize the temperature increase—if carbon dioxide levels are the primary cause of climate change (a highly debatable assumption).

The most severe impacts of such policies, however, would be on the world's poorest families and countries. They would be prevented from developing the energy, jobs, and modern housing needed to eradicate poverty and disease, thus perpetuating the misery, despair, and death that pervade the developing world. Indeed, stabilizing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels would require that global emissions be reduced by 60 percent or more, making it virtually impossible to meet growing energy needs without building hundreds of new nuclear plants (assuming that we could overcome some environmentalists' concerns about nuclear energy)—or covering tens of millions of acres with wind turbines and solar panels that provide only intermittent energy.

It is therefore essential that the real, immediate, often life-or-death needs of poor countries be fully considered in evaluating climate change programs. However, the “precautionary principle,” various “cap-and-trade” proposals, and “Clean Development Mechanism” (CDM) projects often undermine efforts to meet those very needs. (CDM projects allow developed-world companies to claim carbon credits by helping less-developed nations undertake “clean energy projects” that minimize the use of fossil fuels.)

Even Yvo de Boer, executive secretary for the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and a staunch advocate for the Kyoto Protocol, admits that the world's least developed countries would see few benefits from most CDM projects. They simply do not provide sufficient supplies of reliable, affordable energy that modern industrialized nations need, he acknowledges. Many policy analysts and ethicists are likewise concerned that climate change initiatives will put narrowly focused activists and regulators in charge of virtually every important energy, transportation, housing, and economic decision in rich and poor countries alike. They fear that this will reduce living standards while providing little or no environmental gain. Others note that reduced economic activity and expenditures on climate change initiatives would deprive humanity of the funds that could otherwise be spent on critical health and infrastructure needs.

For example, UNICEF estimates that spending just \$80 billion a year—a fraction of the cost of complying with Kyoto—could give inhabitants of developing countries access to basic health, education, clean water, and sanitation services. Similarly, a panel of Nobel Laureates and other economists issued the Copenhagen Consensus, which concluded that money spent on climate change would bring few benefits, whereas spending much smaller amounts on HIV/AIDS and malaria would save millions of lives and help reduce poverty in many countries.

Throughout the Scriptures, God warns against oppressing widows, orphans, and foreigners who are hungry and in need of basic human kindness (James 1:27). From the beginning, those who recognized God's intervention in this world understood that His call was always to love and serve Him and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Leviticus 19:18). Indeed, as James says, “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in

peace, and be warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?" (James 2:16).

In today's world, access to affordable, plentiful, reliable energy is fundamental to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Can we deny these rights to anyone, especially on the basis of conjectures about global warming? The historical record is clear: When countries become wealthy, they also become clean. Air (indoor and outdoor) and water pollution levels are highest in poor countries. Environmental protection is a costly good, and in developing countries it is often a luxury people cannot afford. There, the need to develop the economy and lift people out of poverty must take priority. Abundant, inexpensive electricity, even when generated with fossil fuels, is an engine for prosperity that, for example, greatly increases women's efficient use of time, facilitates industrial investment and growth, eliminates the need for filthy indoor combustion, and reduces health risks through improper food storage. Environmentalism largely has become a preoccupation of rich Westerners who take these things for granted and never consider that their activism may prevent these benefits from flowing to the people who need them most.

*Cornwall* signatories favor policies that expand people's access to energy and the innumerable benefits it brings: clean air and water, transportation and healthcare infrastructure, motor vehicles, lighting, refrigeration, modern agriculture, jobs, life-enhancing machinery, and much more. We must place priority on God's command to feed the hungry and care for those suffering from misfortune, pestilence, and disease (Luke 10:25-37). The fundamental flaw in global warming alarmism is the assumption that the ordinary betterment of human lives—in keeping with God's commandments—is incompatible with the survival of creation. *Cornwall* signatories believe that God's sovereignty over climate assures us that we may continue to pursue human development, confident that the world is fit for this purpose.

Specifically, the Cornwall Alliance supports the following public policies:

## **Climate Change**

- The Cornwall Alliance supports continued study of climate change science—with full peer review, public access to all data and analytical methods, and, very importantly, open, robust, and civil debate about the results and their implications. Scientific journals and institutes must make provision for the findings of respected scientists and academics of various viewpoints about climate change science, even if they challenge prevalent opinions.
- The Cornwall Alliance agrees with the opinions of the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate that “development and poverty eradication are urgent and overriding goals”; of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which made clear the need for increased access to affordable, reliable, cleaner energy; and of the Delhi Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, which emphasized energy and economic development for poor nations in considering any approach to climate change. The Cornwall Alliance supports an expanded partnership program to encompass more countries and spur increased technological research and development, and the installation of modern energy generation and pollution control technologies in poor nations.

- The Cornwall Alliance believes there should be delays in the enactment of proposed bans on, or mandates in favor of, specific technologies, until (a) their costs and benefits have been assessed by independent analysts who do not have an ideological or economic stake in the results; and (b) the imminent threat of catastrophic climate change, or other environmental threats, can be ascertained with replicable scientific evidence and reasonable certainty, and not be based on conjecture, an asserted “consensus,” or computer models, whose predictions are tenuous at best.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports the elimination of climate-based restrictions on energy and economic development projects in poor nations so that they can create jobs, build vibrant economies, improve human health, and ensure improved environmental quality for their people and wildlife. Such prohibitions are scientifically unjustified, vestiges of colonialism, a denial of basic human rights, and an indifference to the plight of the world’s poor.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports and encourages the establishment of improved free and legal economic and property rights systems under the rule of law that foster foreign and domestic investment, the construction of energy generation and manufacturing facilities, improved health and economic opportunity for all people, and an ability to adapt to any dangers that may arise as a result of changing climate conditions, whether caused by natural forces or human influences.

## **Fossil Fuels and Nuclear Energy**

- The Cornwall Alliance agrees with the World Energy Council’s assessment that fossil fuels will remain the largest energy source for the next several decades, especially for use in the large-scale electricity and transportation sectors. Expanded fossil fuel use is also critical for the economic development of many nations struggling with poverty. For this reason, technology advance and transfer are critical to efforts to limit emissions of pollutants, as well as of heat-absorbing (“greenhouse”) gases.
- The Cornwall Alliance opposes attempts under the Kyoto Protocol and other international agreements or domestic laws to curtail the use of fossil fuels, or to subsidize the production or use of alternative energy sources, such as biofuels. Fossil fuels continue to be among the least costly ways of providing energy and are thus helpful to strong economic development. The Cornwall Alliance encourages ongoing environmentally sensitive exploration and production of fossil fuels and mining of uranium.
- The Cornwall Alliance endorses policies that favor the development of nuclear energy as an option for both the developed world and developing nations. South Africa, Namibia, and other African nations have ample reserves of fissionable materials, and modern nuclear energy technology can provide electric power safely to sizable populations, especially in areas remote from fossil fuel sources. The Cornwall Alliance also supports research and development of other nuclear technologies that hold promise for the supply of low-polluting energy.

## **New Energy Technologies**

- The Cornwall Alliance supports the use of wind and solar power as sources of electricity for poor nations and remote areas, but principally as interim measures, until large-scale power generation facilities (coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear, or hydroelectric) can be constructed to better meet the needs of large, sustained economic development.
- The Cornwall Alliance endorses increased private-sector and publicly supported spending on research and development of new, clean energy technologies for fossil fuels, nuclear energy, and renewables such as solar and wind. Increased R&D spending, according to Australian economist David McMullen, is the only long-term option for meeting world energy demand with clean energy technologies, and such spending on energy R&D can increase considerably without becoming an economic burden.
- The Cornwall Alliance also endorses the vision of the Asia-Pacific Partnership to promote and create an enabling environment for the development, diffusion, deployment, and transfer of existing and emerging cost-effective, cleaner technologies and practices through concrete and substantial international cooperation. The Cornwall Alliance also believes careful analysis of the energy, economic, agricultural, and environmental impacts of all such proposals must be carried out prior to their enactment to avoid harmful unintended consequences.
- The Cornwall Alliance agrees with the Group of 77 and China on the need to increase accessibility to energy through such measures as expanding energy services to the poor, particularly in rural and remote areas. Such efforts would contribute to energy security, provide jobs, and improve air quality and health in areas where the most common current sources of energy are often dung and wood.
- The Cornwall Alliance encourages the revision of cost recovery and regulatory rate setting structures to empower utilities to work with customers to reduce energy consumption through acquisition of energy-efficient appliances and HVAC systems and building materials (such as windows and roofing materials). It also supports international efforts to provide energy-efficient materials in new construction in the developing world and efforts to encourage governmental entities (schools, hospitals, office buildings, etc.) to invest in energy efficient technologies and methods. Such activities are motivators for making technological advances more affordable and, if designed appropriately, are often economically beneficial over time.

## **Energy and Economic Development**

- The Cornwall Alliance supports regional and international cooperation in the energy sector, including the interconnection of electricity grids and oil and natural gas pipelines in developing nations (particularly in Africa), and linking competent centers on energy technologies that could support capacity building and technology transfer activities.
- The Cornwall Alliance supports the efforts of the Asia-Pacific Partnership and the Group of 77 and China to secure improvements in the power generation sector, including

improving the thermal efficiency of power plants, reform of electricity markets, reduction in electricity loss during transmission, and demand-side power management technologies.

- The Cornwall Alliance agrees with the World Energy Council on the needs for stable legal frameworks in developing nations to lower the cost of capital; for gathering and dissemination of data on real energy costs in developing nations; to build a “maintenance culture” in which expatriate Africans, for example, contribute their skills, experience, and finances to African projects; and for improved education and information regarding the fundamentals of energy supply and demand.

In summary, the Cornwall Alliance supports energy and environment policies that will facilitate global social responsibility—for all corporations, including nonprofit activist corporations; for all people, especially the Third World’s poor, and families on low and fixed incomes; and for all concerns—for human and environmental health and welfare.

# From Climate Control to Population Control: Troubling Background on the “Evangelical Climate Initiative”

*A Joint Paper of the Institute on Religion & Democracy and the  
Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty*

## Introduction

On February 8, 2006, the “Evangelical Climate Initiative” (ECI) was launched. Citing the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and other sources, the ECI was described by its organizers as a Bible-based response to global warming: “We are convinced that evangelicals must engage this issue without any further lingering over the basic reality of the problem or humanity’s responsibility to address it.”<sup>1</sup> The 86 signers argued that “this is God’s world and any damage that we do to God’s world is an offense against God Himself.” Moreover, they claimed that “most of the climate change problem is human induced” and makes predictions that that “millions of people could die in this century.” Their prescription is to “pass and implement national legislation requiring sufficient economy-wide reductions in carbon dioxide emissions....”<sup>2</sup>

ECI signers include megachurch pastor Rick Warren, *Christianity Today* editor David Neff, and former Vice President of Governmental Affairs for National Association of Evangelicals Robert P. Dugan. Since those who signed the ECI are respected evangelical leaders, their statement was widely reported and discussed. That discussion reached a crescendo when it was discovered that one of the largest funders of the effort was the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The Hewlett Foundation, which contributed \$475,000 to the ECI, is a major contributor to the causes of abortion and population control. Like many other groups, the Hewlett Foundation explicitly connects its interest in these causes to its views on the environment.

Why would a pro-abortion foundation want to fund an *evangelical* effort to fight global warming? Is there a connection between these efforts? There is. And that connection should trouble all evangelicals, especially those who endorsed the Evangelical Climate Initiative.

## From Global Warming to Abortion

Logically, one can care for the environment without supporting population control. But for many radical environmentalists, the route from global warming (and care for the environment generally) to population reduction seems irresistible: since people use up natural resources, release CO<sub>2</sub> into the atmosphere and otherwise pollute the environment, the fewer people, the less global warming and less harm to the environment.<sup>3</sup> To help the environment, therefore, we must reduce the human population. Q.E.D.

This reasoning hovers in the background of current environmental debates. So how does the ECI statement respond to this background? It doesn't. It simply says that "climate change is happening and is being caused mainly by human activities, especially the burning of fossil fuels."<sup>4</sup> Actually, scientists still fiercely debate the causes, severity, and results of climate change while policymakers fiercely debate the relative costs and benefits of various proposed responses to climate change. But what is important here is that the ECI signers seem naively unaware that such dystopic interpretations of human activity are often tied to and derived from campaigns to reduce the human population.

This connection is not a coincidence. Population control is official doctrine for many environmental groups just as it is in certain circles of the UN. This reflects the historical views of prominent founders of the environmental movement. Consider these examples:

- "Man is always and everywhere a blight on the landscape."

John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club<sup>5</sup>

- "Given the total, absolute disappearance of Homo sapiens, then not only would the Earth's community of Life continue to exist, but in all probability, its well-being enhanced. Our presence, in short, is not needed."

Paul Taylor, author of *Respect for Nature, A Theory of Environmental Ethics*<sup>6</sup>

- "I got the impression that instead of going out to shoot birds, I should go out and shoot the kids who shoot birds."

Paul Watson, Founder of Greenpeace and Sea Shepard<sup>7</sup>

- "[W]e have no problem in principle with the humans reducing their numbers by killing one another. It's an excellent way of making the humans extinct."

Geophilus, spokesman for Gaia Liberation Front<sup>8</sup>

- "Human beings, as a species, have no more value than slugs."

John Davis, editor of the journal *Earth First!*<sup>9</sup>

Of course, not all environmentalists share such beliefs, but many do believe that the health of Earth's environment requires drastic reductions in the human population. For instance, Don Hinrichsen of the UN Population Fund and Bryant Robey, editor of *The Population Report* at Johns Hopkins University, have argued:

*Slowing the increase in population, especially in the face of rising per capita demand for natural resources, can take pressure off the environment and buy time to improve living standards on a sustainable basis. . . . If every country made a commitment to population stabilization and resource conservation, the world would be better able to meet the challenges of sustainable development.*<sup>10</sup>

The authors then specify what actions they believe should be pursued to attain “population stabilization”: “Family planning programs play a key role. When family planning information and services are widely available and accessible, couples are better able to achieve their fertility desires.”<sup>11</sup>

While this language may sound benign, phrases like “population stabilization,” “family planning,” and “sexual and reproductive rights” almost always include abortion-on-demand.

For instance, in 1996, several prominent UN groups<sup>12</sup> sponsored a symposium on “human rights,” and released the following recommendations:

- The right to freedom of movement could extend to the consideration of laws which prohibit women from traveling abroad to seek an abortion....
- The right to protection of privacy and the home could include consideration of women’s right to make their own decisions about pregnancy and abortion....
- The right to freedom of expression and to seek, receive and impart information protects the freedom of women of all ages to receive and impart information about health services, including contraception and abortion....<sup>13</sup>

Patrick Fagan of the Heritage Foundation notes that the UN has long sought to:

make abortion a “demand right” protected by national and international law, with unrestricted access for teenagers, and make the non-provision of abortion a crime in all cases, even for reasons of conscience. A report on Croatia, for example, finds “the refusal, by some hospitals, to provide abortions on the basis of conscientious objection of doctors... [constitutes] an infringement of women’s reproductive rights.”<sup>14</sup>

One finds similar support for this kind of “family planning” in important environmental documents such as the Earth Charter.<sup>15</sup> The preamble of the Earth Charter states:

The dominant patterns of production and consumption are causing environmental devastation, the depletion of resources, and a massive extinction of species. . . . an unprecedented rise in human population has overburdened ecological and social systems.<sup>16</sup>

The charter euphemistically supports “universal access to health care that fosters reproductive health and responsible reproduction,” under a section aptly entitled “Adopt patterns of production, consumption, and reproduction that safeguard Earth’s regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being.”<sup>17</sup>

The fundamental error in all of this is a one-sided and unbiblical view of human nature. Humans are seen merely as consumers and polluters of the Earth. The Bible describes human beings as fallen along with the rest of creation, yes; but it still describes us as image-bearers of God, who can exercise dominion, produce wealth, and cultivate creation. The Bible claims that the Earth was shaped by a benevolent Creator to be the habitat that sustains and enriches human life even as humans sustain and enrich the Earth through our creativity and industry. Thus the Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship affirms:

Men and women were created in the image of God, given a privileged place among creatures, and commanded to exercise stewardship over the earth. Human persons are moral agents for whom freedom is an essential condition of responsible action. Sound environmental stewardship must attend both to the demands of human well being and to a divine call for human beings to exercise caring dominion over the earth. It affirms that human well being and the integrity of creation are not only compatible but also dynamically interdependent realities.<sup>18</sup>

As part of our stewardship, God has blessed us and commanded us to be fruitful and multiply, and to fill the Earth (Gen. 1:28). Obviously there would be *some* Earthly limit to human population, since the Earth has a finite surface area. But there is little reason to think we will reach that limit, still less that we have already exceeded it.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, a worldwide study conducted by Conservation International found wilderness areas currently cover 46 percent of the earth's land surface, and intact wilderness sites on the planet occupy a land area equivalent to the six largest countries on Earth combined; or more than seven times the size of the U.S.<sup>20</sup>

Claims to the contrary are little more than misanthropic myths.<sup>21</sup> Unfortunately, many organizations conform their environmental views to just these myths. One such organization is the Hewlett Foundation, the main funder of the Evangelical Climate Initiative.

## The Role of the Hewlett Foundation

The Hewlett Foundation funds *both* environmental and population control groups not by coincidence, but because it thinks that an increase in human population must degrade the environment. The Hewlett Foundation website states, for example, that “as populations have grown in size and affluence, so too has the negative impact on the environment caused by their greater fossil-fuel use.”<sup>22</sup> The foundation's population project is focused on “helping women and families choose the number and spacing of children, protecting against sexually transmitted infections, and eliminating unsafe abortion.”<sup>23</sup> Such language is a thinly veiled defense of abortion-on-demand, which the Hewlett Foundation supports generously.

The foundation aggressively seeks out groups that share its point of view. In the first two months of 2006, the Hewlett Foundation granted \$13.7 million towards population control efforts.<sup>24</sup> All but a few million of that went to organizations supporting women's “reproductive rights”—programs that almost always include the right of abortion. During the same period, the Foundation awarded \$12.1 million for its environmental program, of which \$8 million went to global warming and energy efforts. And \$475,000 of this money went to the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (NRPE), which funneled the grant to the ECI.<sup>25</sup>

The NRPE bills itself as “an association of independent faith groups across a broad spectrum.” But in fact, it has consistently advocated radical environmental policies, from the misanthropy of James Lovelock to the atheism of Carl Sagan to various and sundry versions of New Age pantheism.<sup>26</sup>

Of course, evangelicals can make strategic alliances with diverse groups on issues of common concern.<sup>27</sup> The problem with the ECI is not that it has alliances and connections that go beyond the evangelical community,<sup>28</sup> but that it is supported by and as a result inadvertently

gives cover to population control and pro-abortion causes that evangelicals have historically opposed.

## Evangelicals and Population Control

The landscape is starting to change, unfortunately, since some evangelicals now link care for the environment to population control. For example, the foundational document of the Evangelical Environmental Network, a member organization of the NRPE, states that environmental “degradations are signs that we are pressing against the finite limits God has set for creation. With continued population growth, these degradations will become more severe.” Similarly, their “Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation” calls for the “thoughtful procreation of children.”<sup>29</sup>

While there is nothing necessarily wrong with the “thoughtful procreation of children,” the notion of some fixed “carrying capacity” of the entire Earth is highly speculative, since large portions of the Earth’s surface are currently uninhabited, most inhabitants are not using the best technologies available, and there’s no reason to assume that technological innovations have suddenly come to a halt. The problem is not population. It’s how to create just, peaceful, educated societies in which people can use and develop technologies to meet their needs.<sup>30</sup>

Yet in a May 2006 speech to the World Bank, Richard Cizik, Vice President for Governmental Affairs for the National Association of Evangelicals, reportedly told the audience, “I’d like to take on the population issue, but in my community global warming is the third rail issue. I’ve touched the third rail . . . but still have a job. And I’ll still have a job after my talk here today. But population is a much more dangerous issue to touch. . . We need to confront population control and we can—we’re not Roman Catholics after all—but it’s too hot to handle now.”<sup>31</sup>

Indeed. We doubt that this represents the opinion of most evangelicals, or of most signers of the Evangelical Climate Initiative. But any evangelical response to environmental issues should *resist* this fashionable but fundamentally anti-Christian ideology, not wait until a later date to address it.

Many environmentalists make a strong connection between climate change and population control. Some of the evangelicals calling for drastic measures to fight climate change, such as Richard Cizik and the Evangelical Environmental Network, are aware of the connection. But they evidently chose to leave it below the surface in the ECI statement.

Rather than dodging the issue, however, they need to confront it directly. If they are distinctly Christian and evangelical, they will have to state a position that puts them at odds with many of their environmentalist allies and their patrons at the Hewlett Foundation. If those allies choose to stick with them on this one issue, knowing their deeper philosophical differences, then all parties have shown integrity. But there’s no integrity in silence.

## Conclusions

For Christians, stewardship of God's creation is non-negotiable. Environmental issues deserve a well-informed and thoroughly Christian response that avoids the dangerous pitfalls of modern environmentalist ideology. Efforts are clearly underway to obtain endorsements from prominent evangelical leaders for a public relations agenda that, just under the surface, connects "creation care" to population control and abortion on demand.<sup>32</sup> Such efforts, if successful, would give anti-Christian ideologies unmerited moral and theological cover that they now lack.

Unfortunately, it appears that those associated with the Evangelical Climate Initiative are unwittingly doing just that. As a result we fear that these Evangelical leaders who in good faith associated themselves with the ECI are being exploited by organizations that not only deny their biblically-based value system, but hold such beliefs in contempt.

## Citations

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<sup>1</sup> "Evangelical Climate Change Initiative," [www.christiansandclimate.org/statement](http://www.christiansandclimate.org/statement).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> The basic argument goes like this:

- 1) An increase in carbon dioxide in the air is causing catastrophic climate change.
- 2) That increase is the direct result of human activity, such as the burning of fossil fuels.
- 3) The more people alive on Earth who drive automobiles and use electricity, the more CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are produced, the greater climate change for the worse.
- 4) Population control will result in fewer people driving and using electricity and will decrease CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, thereby reducing the effect of global warming.
- 5) Therefore, to protect the environment, we must reduce the human population.

<sup>4</sup> "Evangelical Climate Change Initiative," [www.christiansandclimate.org/statement](http://www.christiansandclimate.org/statement).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Chamber of Commerce, "The Environmentalist Little Green Book," <http://www.uschamber.com/issues/index/environment/greenbook.htm>.

<sup>6</sup> Paul Taylor, *Respect for Nature: A theory of Environmental Ethics* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), p. 115.

<sup>7</sup> *Access To Energy* 10, no. 4 (December 1982). Quoted in U.S. Chamber of Commerce, "The Environmentalist Little Green Book," <http://www.uschamber.com/issues/index/environment/greenbook.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> *These Exit Times*, no. 2 (July 1992); quoted in "Genocide threats from Green Terrorists," <http://www.off-road.com/green/genocide.html>.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Chamber of Commerce, *The Environmentalist Little Green Book* (2000); quoted in James Sherk, "Responsible Creation Care I: Stewardship vs. Environmentalism," *Evangel Society* (August 2, 2005), <http://www.evangelistsociety.org/sherk/responsiblecreationcare1.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Don Hinrichsen and Bryant Robey, "Population and the Environment: The Global Challenge," *Population Reports* 28, no. 3 (Fall 2000), <http://www.infoforhealth.org/pr/m15edsum.shtml>; quoted in Hinrichsen and Robey, "Population and the Environment: The Global Challenge," [http://www.actionbioscience.org/environment/hinrichsen\\_robey.html](http://www.actionbioscience.org/environment/hinrichsen_robey.html)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> The groups were the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women. The meeting was called the "Round Table of Human Rights Treaty Bodies on Human Rights Approaches to Women's Health, with a Focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights."

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- <sup>13</sup> United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women sponsored the “Round Table of Human Rights Treaty Bodies on Human Rights Approaches to Women’s Health, with a Focus on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights” (December 9-11, 1996), pages 22, 23.
- <sup>14</sup> Patrick F. Fagan, “How U.N. Conventions On Women’s and Children’s Rights Undermine Family, Religion, and Sovereignty,” The Heritage Foundation, Backgrounder #1407 (February 5, 2001). <http://www.heritage.org/Research/InternationalOrganizations/BG1407.cfm>. Quoting Report of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, 13th Sess., to the General Assembly of the United Nations, 53rd Sess. (1998), “Report on Croatia,” Document #A/53/38, Para. 109.
- <sup>15</sup> The genesis of the Earth Charter came in 1987 when the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development issued a call for the creation of a new charter that would, according to its official website, “set forth fundamental principles for sustainable development.” The Earth Charter Initiative, “Frequently Asked Questions,” [http://www.earthcharter.org/innerpg.cfm?id\\_menu=38](http://www.earthcharter.org/innerpg.cfm?id_menu=38). The drafting of the Earth Charter was part of the unfinished business of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, but was ultimately finalized and unveiled at a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) meeting in Paris in 2000.
- <sup>16</sup> The Earth Charter Initiative, “The Earth Charter,” <http://www.earthcharter.org/files/charter/charter.pdf>.
- <sup>17</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>18</sup> Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship, <http://www.stewards.net/CornwallDeclaration.htm>.
- <sup>19</sup> There is no reason to assume that human population will grow indefinitely. See, for instance, Julian L. Simon, *The Ultimate Resource 2* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996). In fact, in most highly industrialized countries today, populations have leveled off and some populations are even declining. Even the UN now speaks of world population peaks in the near future, not exponentially breeding humans. See, for instance, this recent UN press release: <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2005/pop918.doc.htm>.
- <sup>20</sup> “Study’s Authors Surprised to Find Nearly Half of Earth’s Wilderness Areas Intact,” by Marc Morano, CNSNews.com, December 6, 2002, <http://www.cnsnews.com/ViewCulture.asp?Page=%5CCulture%5Carchive%5C200212%5CCUL20021206b.html>
- <sup>21</sup> See Simon, *ibid.*, Part 2. Any well-informed attempt to link population control to the environment must take account of the evidence and arguments in Simon’s book.
- <sup>22</sup> Hewlett Foundation, “Energy,” <http://www.hewlett.org/Programs/Environment/Energy/>.
- <sup>23</sup> Hewlett Foundation, “Population,” <http://www.hewlett.org/Programs/Population/>.
- <sup>24</sup> One grantee, for instance, is the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club states in one of its publications that “population growth contributes to environmental degradation around the world ... [and] the ecological footprint of the growing global population has far-reaching environmental consequences.” [Sierra Club, “Global Gag Rule,” *Global Population and Environment*, [http://www.sierraclub.org/population/global\\_gag\\_rule/](http://www.sierraclub.org/population/global_gag_rule/).] No doubt because it connects environmental degradation to overpopulation, the Sierra Club recently received \$75,000 from the Hewlett Foundation for its population plan. [Hewlett Foundation, “Grants at The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation,” <http://www.hewlett.org/Grants/>.]
- <sup>25</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>26</sup> National Religious Partnership for the Environment, “Partners in Stewardship,” <http://www.nrpe.org>. The NRPE is a coalition of the U.S. Catholic Conference (now the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops), the National Council of Churches of Christ, the Evangelical Environmental Network, and the Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life. It claims to represent a grassroots membership of over 100 million and bills itself as “an association of independent faith groups across a broad spectrum.” The creation of the NRPE dates to an event at Oxford University in 1988 called the “Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders for Human Survival.” The keynote speaker at this event was James Lovelock, a renowned environmental leader and originator of the *Gaia Hypothesis*. This is the belief that the Earth is a living and even divine superorganism. On this view, human beings, as Lovelock puts it, “. . . are not special. We’re just another species.” (Transcript of online chat with James Lovelock, *The Guardian* (September 29, 2000), <http://books.guardian.co.uk/departments/scienceandnature/story/0,6000,375194,00.html>.)
- It was shortly after this event that the Very Reverend James P. Morton, President of the Temple of Understanding, approached astronomer Carl Sagan, an avowed atheist, to write an appeal to religious leaders to engage them on environmental issues. This letter garnered signatures from 32 scientists and was sent to the heads of over 300 denominations sounding an urgent plea to create “an uncommon marriage between science and religion.” Several more meetings ensued between religious leaders, scientists, and even some politicians

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including former Vice President Al Gore and Clinton State Department's Under Secretary for Global Affairs, Timothy Wirth.

Ultimately the NRPE was founded in 1992 through a collaboration of the United Nations Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders for Human Survival, and the Temple of Understanding in the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City to coordinate a program of action to involve religious leaders, including Evangelicals, in the environmental issue. (See Henry Lamb, "Green Religion and Public Policy," *Eco-Logic* Special Report (October 2001); Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, "Organizations at a Glance: The National Religious Partnership for the Environment," *Environment and Stewardship Review*, p. 6; and Robert A. Sirico, "The Greening of American Faith," *National Review* (August 29, 1994), p. 47.)

The Global Forum itself was co-founded only four years earlier by a joint venture between the Temple of Understanding and the UN and Paul Gorman, the NRPE's Executive Director, was former Vice President of Public Affairs of the Cathedral of the Saint John the Divine, and Director of the Temple of Understanding's Joint Appeal. (Ibid. Also see Henry Lamb, "Churches Duped by Green Extremists," *Enter Stage Right* (April 1, 2001), <http://www.enterstageright.com/archive/articles/0402/0402nrpe.htm>.)

The Cathedral of St. John Divine has historically advanced what only can be described as radical environmental theology. Serving as the cathedral's dean, James P. Morton delivered sermons on topics such as the "Earth as God's Body" and held book parties for environmentalists such as James Lovelock, author of *The Gaia Hypothesis*. (Acton Institute, "Organizations at a Glance: The National Religious Partnership for the Environment," p. 6.) The cathedral has also housed several new age groups including the Temple of Understanding. (Anonymous, "Green Theology," *Catholic Culture* (n.d.).)

<sup>27</sup> In theory, evangelicals could work even with abortion advocates on issues other than abortion, so long as those issues did not contradict key Christian beliefs.

<sup>28</sup> Moreover, the problem here is not "guilt by association." We are not implying that those who signed the ECI are pro-abortion because one of the key funders of the initiative is pro-abortion. Quite the opposite. We assume that few of the ECI signers were aware of this funding, and that most if not all of the signers are pro-life.

<sup>29</sup> Evangelical Environmental Network, "On the Care of Creation: An Evangelical Declaration on the Care of Creation," <http://www.creationcare.org/resources/declaration.php>.

<sup>30</sup> As it happens, population growth slows in more technologically advanced societies. So even if one wanted to slow population growth, the most humane way to do that would be to seek greater economic growth for poor nations.

<sup>31</sup> Myron Ebell, Personal e-mail (May 2, 2006). Ebell is Director, Energy and Global Warming Policy at the Competitive Enterprise Institute.

<sup>32</sup> In future months, we should expect to hear that "even the Evangelicals are on-board with global warming" as part of ongoing media efforts, mid-term election strategies, advocacy, and legislative proposals. The ECI will be held up as evidence and the signatories as advocates. Now that they have issued their statement, they will have a very difficult time preventing it from being used for causes they do not support.

February 10, 2010

## The end of the IPCC

By [S. Fred Singer](#)

Almost daily, we learn about new problems with the formerly respected UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): In their 2001 report, they claimed that the 20<sup>th</sup> century was "unusual" and blamed it on human-released greenhouse gases. Their infamous temperature graph shown there, shaped like a hockey stick, did away with the well-established Medieval Warm Period (around 1000AD, when Vikings were able to settle in Southern Greenland and grow crops there) and the following Little Ice Age (around 1400 to 1800AD). Two Canadians exposed the bad data used by the IPCC and the statistical errors in their analysis.

The most recent IPCC report of 2007 predicted the disappearance of the Himalayan glaciers within 25 years; the imminent death of nearly half the Amazon rain forest; and major damage from stronger hurricanes -- all in contradiction to expert opinions offered by its appointed reviewers, but ignored by IPCC editors for mostly ideological reasons. More scandalous even, the IPCC based their lurid predictions on anecdotal, non-peer-reviewed sources -- not at all in accord with its solemnly announced principles and scientific standards.

These events showed not only a general sloppiness of IPCC procedures but also an extreme bias -- quite inappropriate to a supposedly impartial scientific survey. By themselves, they do not invalidate the basic IPCC conclusion -- that a warming in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was human-caused, presumably by the rise of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide. Yet all of these missteps pale in comparison to ClimateGate, which calls into question the very temperature data used by the IPCC's main policy result.

As the leaked e-mails from the University of East Anglia (UK) reveal, this IPCC conclusion -- that Global Warming is anthropogenic -- is based on manipulated data and therefore flawed -- as are demands for the control of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, like the Kyoto Protocol and the Copenhagen Accord. In my opinion, ClimateGate is a much more serious issue than simply sloppiness and ideological distortion; ClimateGate suggests conspiracy to commit fraud.

Let us recall: The e-mails leaked in the fall of 2009 allow us to trace the machinations of a small but influential band of British and US climate scientists who played the lead role

in the IPCC reports. It appears that this group, which controlled access to basic temperature data, was able to produce a "warming" by manipulating the analysis of the data, but refused to share information on the basic data or details of their analysis with independent scientists who requested them -- in violation of Freedom of Information laws. In fact, they went so far as to keep any dissenting views from being published -- by monopolizing the peer-review process, aided by ideologically cooperative editors of prestigious journals, like *Science* and *Nature*.

Woe to these dissenting scientists, however. The younger ones were denied an opportunity to advance or receive academic tenure -- or were simply fired. The independent ones were maligned as "deniers" and ostracized. In many instances, commercially operated 'smear blogs' invented slurs; the most common ones being "tool of the oil industry" or "paid by the tobacco lobby." In my own case, my Wiki bio also carried additional malicious accusations; the most bizarre one was that I believed in the existence of Martians.

We learn from the e-mails that the ClimateGate gang was able to "hide the decline" [of global temperature] by applying what they termed as "tricks," and that they intimidated editors and forced out those judged to be "uncooperative." No doubt, thorough investigations, now in progress or planned, will disclose the full range of their nefarious activities. But it is clear that this small cabal was able to convince much of the world that climate disasters were impending -- unless drastic steps were taken. Not only were most of the media, public, and politicians misled, but so were many scientists, national academies of science, and professional organizations -- and even the Norwegian committee that awarded the 2007 Peace Prize to the IPCC and Al Gore, the chief apostle of climate alarmism.

In this enterprise, the group was aided not only by environmental zealots, anti-technology Luddites, utopian one-worlders, and population-control fanatics, but also by bureaucrats, businesses, brokers and bankers, who had learned how to game the system and profit from government grants and subsidies for exotic schemes to produce "carbon-free" energy and from the trading of carbon permits. Hundreds of billions have already been wasted -- most of this in transfers of tax revenues to a favored few.

These sums pale, however, in comparison to the trillions that would have been spent in future if some of the mitigation schemes had come to fruition -- such as an extension and major expansion of the 1997 Kyoto Protocol to control greenhouse-gas emissions. Fortunately for the world economy and for taxpayers in industrialized nations, these schemes collapsed at the Copenhagen climate conference in Dec 2009. Clearly, developing nations did not want to take on the sacrifices and restrictions on growth. There was little concern expressed about climate; Copenhagen was mostly about transfer of money from rich to poor countries - or more precisely, from the poor in rich countries to the rich in poor ones.

Of course, this breakdown in negotiating *global* controls does not stop unilateral actions. Major developing nations, like India and China, have already refused to act. Australia's

parliament has so far turned down attempts to impose limits on the emission of greenhouse gases, which many still believe to cause significant global warming -- in spite of contrary evidence. The European Union is likely to persist in its misguided efforts to continue and expand the Kyoto restrictions. In the US, the House has (barely) passed the calamitous Waxman-Markey "Cap & Trade" bill; the US Senate likely will not pass a similar bill in 2010, an election year.

There is still the US-EPA's drive to extend the Clean Air Act to include carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases as "pollutants." But with the evidence of ClimateGate in hand, EPA's attempt to provide the necessary scientific justification for its "Endangerment Finding" will surely fail. Whoever leaked the incriminating e-mails deserves a medal for saving the US economy from certain ruin.

*The writer, an atmospheric physicist, professor emeritus at the University of Virginia, and former director of the US Weather Satellite Service, is the organizer of NIPCC (Non-governmental International Panel on Climate Change) and coauthor of its reports "Nature, not human activity, rules the climate" [2008] and "Climate Change Reconsidered" [2009].*

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# The New World Religion

## Environmentalism and the Western World

By Regis Nicoll

Published Date: April 21, 2006

Best-selling author, Michael Crichton says that the most powerful religion in the Western World is environmentalism. With academic training in anthropology, Crichton explains that certain structures are irresistibly present in human society. And one of those structures is religion.

Religion can be suppressed or denied, but it always re-surfaces in another form. And for today's urban atheist, that form is environmentalism. Although no Christian apologist, Crichton compares environmentalism with religion, and specifically with that of the Judeo-Christian tradition.

According to the gospel of environmentalism's new votaries ... in the distant past there was an ecological Eden— an epoch of perfect harmony between man and his environment. But over time man's irresponsible actions resulted in an ecological Fall – the transmogrification of paradise into a polluted and hostile home. Eventually man's environmental "sins" will bring about a Judgment – a coming doomsday of global warming. In the meantime we are to be a community of faith, partaking in the Eucharist of organic food and pesticide-free water as we look to Salvation in "sustainability."

Crichton says that these are "deeply held mythic structures," that may be even "hard-wired into the brain." Interestingly, Crichton is right. These themes are central to four metaphysical questions that have loomed large in the mind of man since the beginning of time. That is,

Where did I come from?  
Why is the world the way it is?  
Why am I here? And,  
Is there a way out of this mess?

The universality of this metaphysical thirst, across all ages and cultures, is evidence of Him who has "set eternity in the hearts of men," and who is not content to leave us in a thirsting state. He extends us the roadmap of life-giving waters with refreshing springs along the way. We can either follow His directions to spiritual wellness or meander on our own, as theologian Cornelius Plantinga has said, to be "overfed and undernourished."

C.S. Lewis once noted, "When men cease believing in God, they do not then believe in nothing, they believe in anything." Just as the utopian promises of Marxism and fascism captured the hearts and minds of men who had ceased to believe in God, so the environmental movement has sought to fill the God-shaped vacuum left by a secularized culture with its own religion. Consider the confessional tone of this liturgy distributed by the National Religious Partnership for the Environment,

*God's creation is being abused and violated. . . [The Biblical reference to] having 'dominion over the earth' is used to exploit and destroy the earth . . . We use more than our share of earth's resources. We are responsible for massive pollution of earth, water, and sky . . . We are killing the earth . . . We are killing the waters . . . We are killing the skies.*

Taking this confession of culpability to the extreme Paul Watson, a founder of Greenpeace, adds, "We, the human species, have become a viral epidemic to the earth" and the "AIDS of the earth."

The new eco-votaries contend that such dramatic contrition is a necessary first step toward reclaiming the utopian Paradise of our idyllic past.

But Crichton argues that Edenic utopia never existed. Our Arcadian past included such things as 80-percent infant mortality, an average lifespan of 40, famines, wide-scale starvation, and medieval plagues. Moreover, a blissful environment runs counter to Darwinian theory, the holy writ of naturalism. According to Darwinism, the perpetual struggle against the many hazards of planet Earth ensures that only the fittest and best specimens will survive to reproduce. Thus, a hostile environment is essential to Darwin's theory of evolutionary progress and the emergence of higher life forms.

What about the idea of the "noble savage" living in harmony in his Eden-like home? Another fantasy.

Although Enlightenment philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau contended that primitive man was inherently good before the emergence of civilization, recent scholarship indicates otherwise. In his book *Constant Battles: The Myth of the Peaceful Noble Savage*, Steven A. LeBlanc states that primeval man was far more warlike than any of his civilized successors. In *War Before Civilization*, Lawrence Keeley notes that prehistoric massacre sites were common. And as Crichton states, indigenous people practiced infanticide, human sacrifice, and wiped out hundreds of species thousands of years before the white man.

Cornelius Plantinga would agree. In *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin*, Plantinga writes, "early biblical sin rises in ominous crescendo" after Adam and Eve's disobedience. As their son Cain launches the history of fratricide in the human family, the uncreation of what God had created escalates until the Flood – "The final stage in a process of cosmic disintegration which began in Eden."

According to the biblical worldview, things like our planet's wellness are the way they are not because man has broken shalom with creation, but because he has broken shalom with his Creator.

Unarguably we must be world stewards whose actions are responsible and sympathetic to the environment. As Dr. Margaret Maxey, a former Catholic nun and current administrator at the University of Texas, states "Respect and reverence for God's creation is . . . right and proper."

Advocacy of the environment is an example of putting Christian thinking into action. It is also a point of cultural engagement between those who see the care of the environment as an end in itself and those who see it as a holy responsibility.

But as Dr. Maxey continues, our advocacy “is forever to be distinguished not only from a worship of false gods, but also from the replacement of God by an exaltation of Goddess Earth as the center of adoration.”

Everything matters not because the Earth is a living, divine superorganism where the rain forests are the lungs of the planet, but because the cosmos and everything in it is a product of divine intention and will endowed with value and purpose.

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# A Renewed Call to Truth, Prudence, and Protection of the Poor

An Evangelical Examination of the  
Theology, Science, and Economics of Global Warming

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world is in the grip of an idea: that burning fossil fuels to provide affordable, abundant energy is causing global warming that will be so dangerous that we must stop it by reducing our use of fossil fuels, no matter the cost.

Is that idea true?

We believe not.

We believe that idea—we'll call it “global warming alarmism”—fails the tests of theology, science, and economics. It rests on poor theology, with a worldview of the Earth and its climate system contrary to that taught in the Bible. It rests on poor science that confuses theory with observation, computer models with reality, and model results with evidence, all while ignoring the lessons of climate history. It rests on poor economics, failing to do reasonable cost/benefit analysis, ignoring or underestimating the costs of reducing fossil fuel use while exaggerating the benefits. And it bears fruit in unethical policy that would

- destroy millions of jobs.
- cost trillions of dollars in lost economic production.
- slow, stop, or reverse economic growth.
- reduce the standard of living for all but the elite few who are well positioned to benefit from laws that unfairly advantage them at the expense of most businesses and all consumers.
- endanger liberty by putting vast new powers over private, social, and market life in the hands of national and international governments.
- condemn the world's poor to generations of continued misery characterized by rampant disease and premature death.

In return for all these sacrifices, what will the world get? At most a negligible, undetectable reduction in global average temperature a hundred years from now.

**Our examination of theology, worldview, and ethics** (Chapter One) finds that global warming alarmism wrongly views the Earth and its ecosystems as the fragile product of chance, not the robust, resilient, self-regulating, and self-correcting product of God's wise design and powerful sustaining. It rests on and promotes a view of human beings as threats to Earth's flourishing rather than the bearers of God's image, crowned with glory and honor, and given a mandate to act as stewards over the Earth—filling, subduing, and ruling it for God's glory and mankind's benefit. It either wrongly assumes that the environment can flourish only if humanity forfeits economic advance and prosperity or ignores economic impacts altogether. And in its rush to impose draconian reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, it ignores the destructive impact of that policy on the world's poor.

**Our examination of the science** of global warming (Chapter Two) finds that global warming alarmism wrongly claims that recent temperature changes have been greater and more rapid than those of the past and therefore must be manmade, not natural. It exaggerates the influence of manmade greenhouse gases on global temperature and ignores or underestimates the influence of natural cycles. It mistakenly takes the output of computer climate models as evidence when it is only predictions based on hypotheses that must be tested by observation. It falsely claims overwhelming scientific consensus in favor of the hypothesis of dangerous manmade warming (ignoring tens of thousands of scientists who disagree) and then falsely claims that such consensus proves the hypothesis and justifies policies to fight it. It seeks to intimidate or demonize scientific skeptics rather than welcoming their work as of the very essence of scientific inquiry: putting hypotheses to the test rather than blindly embracing them.

**Our examination of the economics** of global warming alarmism (Chapter Three) finds that it exaggerates the harms from global warming and ignores or underestimates the benefits not only from warming but also from increased atmospheric carbon dioxide. It grossly underestimates the costs and overestimates the benefits of policies meant to reduce carbon dioxide emissions. It exaggerates the technical feasibility and underestimates the costs of alternative fuels to replace fossil fuels in providing the abundant, affordable energy necessary for wealth creation and poverty reduction. It ignores the urgent need to provide cleaner energy to the roughly two billion poor in the world whose use of wood and dung as primary cooking and heating fuels causes millions of premature deaths and hundreds of millions of debilitating respiratory diseases every year. It fails to recognize that the slowed economic development resulting from its own policies will cost many times more human lives than would the warming it is meant to avert.

In light of all these findings, **we conclude** that

- human activity has negligible influence on global temperature,
- the influence is not dangerous,
- there is no need to mandate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, and
- environmental and energy policy should remove, not build, obstacles to the abundant, affordable energy necessary to lift the world's poor out of poverty and sustain prosperity for all.

We also gladly join others in embracing *An Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming*.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHAPTER ONE: THEOLOGY, WORLDVIEW, AND ETHICS OF GLOBAL WARMING POLICY**

Earth and all its subsystems—of land, sea, and air, living and nonliving—are the good products of the wise design and omnipotent acts of the infinite, eternal, and unchangeable Triune God of the Bible. As such they reveal God’s glory. Mankind, created in God’s image, is the crown of creation. Human beings have the divine mandate to multiply and to fill, subdue, and rule the Earth, transforming it from wilderness into garden. They act as stewards under God to cultivate and guard what they subdue and rule. Calling them to be His vicegerents over the Earth, God requires obedience to His laws—in Scripture and imprinted in the human conscience—in their stewardship. Although sin, universal among mankind, deeply mars this stewardship, God’s redemptive act in Jesus Christ’s death on the cross and His instructive activity through Scripture, communicating the nature of creation and human responsibility for it, enable people to create wealth and decrease poverty at the same time that they pursue creation stewardship and, even more important, the true spiritual wealth of knowing their Creator through Jesus Christ.

The Biblical worldview contrasts sharply with the environmentalist worldview—whether secular or religious—in many significant ways. Among these, four are particularly germane:

- Environmentalism sees Earth and its systems as the product of chance and therefore fragile, subject to easy and catastrophic disruption. The Biblical worldview sees Earth and its systems as robust, self-regulating, and self-correcting, not immune to harm but durable.
- Environmentalism sees human beings principally as consumers and polluters who are only quantitatively, not qualitatively, different from other species. The Bible sees people as made in God’s image, qualitatively different from all other species, and designed to be producers and stewards who, within a just and free social order, can create more resources than they consume and ensure a clean, healthful, and beautiful environment.
- Environmentalism tends to view nature untouched by human hands as optimal, while the Bible teaches that it can be improved by wise and holy human action.
- Environmentalism tends to substitute subjective, humanist standards of environmental stewardship for the objective, transcendent standards of divine morality.

This Biblical vision anticipates the development of environmentally friendly prosperity through the wise application of knowledge and skill to the raw materials of this world and the just ordering of society. That is, it anticipates the achievement of high levels of economic development and the reduction of poverty along with reductions in resource scarcity, pollution, and other environmental hazards.

The providence and promises of God inform a Christian understanding of creation stewardship, helping to avert irrational or exaggerated fears of catastrophes—fears that are rooted, ultimately, in the loss of faith in God. Those who do trust God are able to assess and respond to risks rationally. God’s wisdom, power, and faithfulness justify confidence that Earth’s ecosystems are robust and will, by God’s providence, accomplish the purposes He set for them.

Sound policymaking requires both moral and prudential (cost/benefit) analysis. In this, a high priority for the church should be the welfare of the poor, since environmental policies often adversely affect them. That is the case with policies intended to reduce global warming by reducing the use of fossil fuels. For example, such fuels are currently the most abundant and affordable alternatives to dirty fuels, like wood and dung, which are now used by two billion

people and cause millions of deaths and hundreds of millions of illnesses from respiratory diseases contracted by breathing their smoke. Insisting on the use of more expensive alternative fuels because of global warming fears means depriving the poor of the abundant, affordable energy they need to rise from abject poverty and its attendant miseries. Such policies fail both moral and prudential tests.

Environmental policies the world's poor most need will aim not at reducing global temperature (over which human action has little control) but at reducing specific risks to the poor regardless of temperature: communicable diseases (especially malaria), malnutrition and hunger, and exclusion from worldwide markets by trade restrictions. Money diverted from these goals to fight global warming will be wasted, while the poor will suffer increased and prolonged misery. Overall economic policy toward the poor should focus on promoting economic development, including making low-cost energy available, through which they can lift themselves out of poverty. It should not focus on wealth redistribution, which fosters dependency and slows development. Above all, the poor—and all other persons—need the gospel of salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHAPTER TWO: THE SCIENCE OF GLOBAL WARMING**

When people ask, “Do you believe in global warming?” chances are they mean, “Do you believe human beings are causing global warming?” It is unfortunate that global warming has become synonymous with *manmade* global warming, because it obfuscates the real question: To what extent are human beings contributing to changes that are always occurring in nature anyway?

Some people claim repeatedly that melting sea ice, an increase in global-average temperatures, stronger storms, more floods, and more droughts are occurring due to humanity's burning of fossil fuels. But how many of these changes are real versus imagined? And of those that are real, how much, if at all, can they be attributed to human activities?

Indeed, there have been some significant climatic changes in recent decades. For instance, the normal summer melt-back of Arctic sea ice has increased in the 30 years during which we have had satellites to monitor this remote region of the Earth. There has also been a slow and irregular warming trend of global-average temperatures over the last 50 to 100 years—the same period of time the carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) content of the atmosphere has increased.

But correlation does not mean causation, and there has been a tendency in the media to overlook research suggesting that these recent changes are, in fact, related to natural cycles in the climate system rather than to atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> increases from fossil fuel use. That changes occur does not mean human beings are responsible. There is good evidence that most of the warming of the past 150 years is due to natural causes. The belief that climate change is anthropogenic (human-caused) and will have catastrophic consequences is highly speculative.

Recent progress in climate research suggests that:

1. Observed warming and purported dangerous effects have been overstated.
2. Earth's climate is less sensitive to the addition of CO<sub>2</sub> than the alleged scientific consensus claims it to be, which means that climate model predictions of future warming are exaggerated.

3. Those climate changes that have occurred are consistent with natural cycles driven by internal changes in the climate system itself, external changes in solar activity, or both.

In fact, given that CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is necessary for life on Earth to exist, it is likely that more CO<sub>2</sub> will be beneficial. This possibility is rarely discussed because many environmental activists share the quasi-religious belief that everything mankind does hurts the environment. Yet, if we objectively analyze the scientific evidence, we find good evidence that more CO<sub>2</sub> could lead to greater abundance and diversity of life on Earth.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHAPTER THREE: THE ECONOMICS OF GLOBAL WARMING POLICY**

Many economists who have published articles on the subject consider the science of climate change a settled matter—that human beings are responsible for greenhouse gas emissions that cause dangerous global warming. We are aware of no economic models that take into account the possibility that human influence on climate is negligible. If this argument is correct—and we believe it is (see the science chapter)—then the justification for governments’ pursuing greenhouse gas reductions in the name of climate control collapse.

While we believe that human influence on climate is negligible, our task is to assess the economic prudence of policy options offered on the contrary assumption.

Although some sector-level economic studies in agriculture and forestry indicate that warming might enhance well-being, most models find that human well-being improves because of economic growth with or without warming but improves less with significant warming. Even so, economists conclude that an optimal climate policy, assuming there should be one, would avoid locking into a particular technology. Nonetheless, most energy legislation does just that. Economists also recommend against stopping climate change entirely, favoring a policy ramp whereby carbon taxes or emission reduction targets slowly increase as and if average global temperatures rise. But the optimal policy recommendations are based on projected future temperatures from climate models rather than observed temperatures, on the basis of which less warming might be expected.

On the assumption that politicians will seek to force reductions in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions, economists generally favor taxes over cap and trade as the means. Carbon taxes are (1) transparent so that citizens can recognize them, (2) flexible so they can be adjusted as needed (e.g., tied to average global temperatures), and (3) widely applicable (including across countries). Their revenues can be used to reduce other taxes, thereby possibly providing a double dividend (reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and economic growth due to removal of other taxes). In contrast, cap and trade leaves room for unjustified credits because of government and business corruption and dubious activities such as forest conservation and tree planting; it gives large emitters huge windfalls in the form of free permits early in the regime unless all emission permits are auctioned by the government; and it yields no double dividend. Both large industrial emitters and financial institutions, unsurprisingly, lobby hard for cap and trade—the former benefiting from the windfall at the start, the latter from transaction fees in a commodity market that could be worth \$3 trillion annually. Their support for climate policies must not be mistaken, however, for conviction either that dangerous manmade warming is real or that the policies are the best way to respond. It is rent seeking: lobbying for legislation to profit from potentially massive, policy-created windfalls.

Finally, many supporters of mandated emission reductions assume that price-competitive renewable energy sources will soon displace fossil fuels. However, large technical obstacles need to be overcome before renewable energy will become price competitive on global or national scales—a process that might take 50 to 100 years or more.

In light of these considerations and those of the other two chapters of this document, we recommend against mandated reductions on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions—whether through cap and trade (the worst kind of emissions reduction policy) or a carbon tax (the least bad emissions reduction policy, but still not good)—and for the promotion of economic development and targeted problem solving (e.g., disease reduction and nutrition enhancement) as a means to fortify people the world over—especially the poor—against material threats to their well-being, whether from climate change or anything else.

## **An Evangelical Declaration on Global Warming**

### **PREAMBLE**

As governments consider policies to fight alleged man-made global warming, evangelical leaders have a responsibility to be well informed, and then to speak out. *A Renewed Call to Truth, Prudence, and Protection of the Poor: An Evangelical Examination of the Theology, Science, and Economics of Global Warming* demonstrates that many of these proposed policies would destroy jobs and impose trillions of dollars in costs to achieve no net benefits. They could be implemented only by enormous and dangerous expansion of government control over private life. Worst of all, by raising energy prices and hindering economic development, they would slow or stop the rise of the world's poor out of poverty and so condemn millions to premature death.

### **WHAT WE BELIEVE**

1. We believe Earth and its ecosystems—created by God's intelligent design and infinite power and sustained by His faithful providence—are robust, resilient, self-regulating, and self-correcting, admirably suited for human flourishing, and displaying His glory. Earth's climate system is no exception. Recent global warming is one of many natural cycles of warming and cooling in geologic history.
2. We believe abundant, affordable energy is indispensable to human flourishing, particularly to societies which are rising out of abject poverty and the high rates of disease and premature death that accompany it. With present technologies, fossil and nuclear fuels are indispensable if energy is to be abundant and affordable.
3. We believe mandatory reductions in carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions, achievable mainly by greatly reduced use of fossil fuels, will greatly increase the price of energy and harm economies.
4. We believe such policies will harm the poor more than others because the poor spend a higher percentage of their income on energy and desperately need economic growth to rise out of poverty and overcome its miseries.

### **WHAT WE DENY**

1. We deny that Earth and its ecosystems are the fragile and unstable products of chance, and particularly that Earth's climate system is vulnerable to dangerous alteration because of minuscule changes in atmospheric chemistry. Recent warming was neither abnormally large nor abnormally rapid. There is no convincing scientific evidence that human contribution to greenhouse gases is causing dangerous global warming.
2. We deny that alternative, renewable fuels can, with present or near-term technology, replace fossil and nuclear fuels, either wholly or in significant part, to provide the abundant, affordable energy necessary to sustain prosperous economies or overcome poverty.
3. We deny that carbon dioxide—essential to all plant growth—is a pollutant. Reducing greenhouse gases cannot achieve significant reductions in future global temperatures, and the costs of the policies would far exceed the benefits.
4. We deny that such policies, which amount to a regressive tax, comply with the Biblical requirement of protecting the poor from harm and oppression.

### **A CALL TO ACTION**

In light of these facts,

1. We call on our fellow Christians to practice creation stewardship out of Biblical conviction, adoration for our Creator, and love for our fellow man—especially the poor.
2. We call on Christian leaders to understand the truth about climate change and embrace Biblical thinking, sound science, and careful economic analysis in creation stewardship.
3. We call on political leaders to adopt policies that protect human liberty, make energy more affordable, and free the poor to rise out of poverty, while abandoning fruitless, indeed harmful policies to control global temperature.

# THE CORNWALL DECLARATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

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

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

## – Our Concerns –

Human understanding and control of natural processes empower people not only to improve the human condition but also to do great harm to each other, to the earth, and to other creatures. As concerns about the environment have grown in recent decades, the moral necessity of ecological stewardship has become increasingly clear.

At the same time, however, certain misconceptions about nature and science, coupled with erroneous theological and anthropological positions, impede the advancement of a sound environmental ethic. In the midst of controversy over such matters, it is critically important to remember that while passion may energize environmental activism, it is reason—including sound theology and sound science—that must guide the decision-making process. We identify three areas of common misunderstanding:

1. Many people mistakenly view humans as principally consumers and polluters rather than producers and stewards. Consequently, they ignore our potential, as bearers of God's image, to add to the earth's abundance. The increasing realization of this potential has enabled people in societies blessed with an advanced economy not only to reduce pollution, while producing more of the goods and services responsible for the great improvements in the human condition, but also to alleviate the negative effects of much past pollution. A clean environment is a costly good; consequently, growing affluence, technological innovation, and the application of human and material capital are integral to environmental improvement. The tendency among some to oppose economic progress in the name of environmental stewardship is often sadly self-defeating.
2. Many people believe that "nature knows best," or that the earth—untouched by human hands—is the ideal. Such romanticism leads some to deify nature or oppose human dominion over creation. Our position, informed by revelation and confirmed by reason and experience, views human stewardship that unlocks the potential in creation for all the earth's inhabitants as good. Humanity alone of all the created order is capable of developing other resources and can thus enrich creation, so it can properly be said that the human person is the most valuable resource on earth. Human life, therefore, must be cherished and allowed to flourish. The alternative—denying the possibility of beneficial human management of the earth—removes all rationale for environmental stewardship.
3. While some environmental concerns are well founded and serious, others are without foundation or greatly exaggerated. Some well-founded concerns focus on human health problems in the developing world arising from inadequate sanitation, widespread use of primitive biomass fuels like wood and dung, and primitive agricultural, industrial, and commercial practices; distorted resource consumption patterns driven by perverse economic incentives; and improper disposal of nuclear and other hazardous wastes in nations lacking adequate regulatory and legal safeguards. Some unfounded or undue concerns include fears of destructive man-made global warming, overpopulation, and rampant species loss.

The real and merely alleged problems differ in the following ways:

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

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

## – Our Beliefs –

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

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

## – Our Aspirations –

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

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