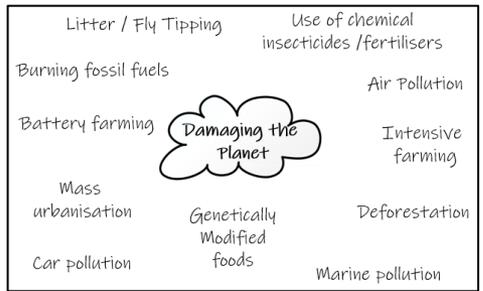


This is an ancient Native American proverb or saying. Native Americans do not believe that they - or anyone else - owns the Earth. They believe in true spiritual stewardship, and traditionally they lived in total harmony with the environment. They used only what they needed and no more. They gave thanks in special ceremonies to what the Earth provided (for example, the Buffalo).



## Beliefs about the Earth

**Christianity**  
God made the Earth and gave Christians the special responsibility as **Stewards** to look after it. They can use the Earth but cannot abuse it.

**Judaism**  
Jews believe that God created the world and gave human beings a special responsibility within creation to **cultivate** it, **guard** it and use it wisely. This is known as **stewardship**.

**Buddhism**  
Buddhists believe in the **interconnectedness** of all things. Humans depend on nature and nature depends on humans. Harming one part of this whole is the same as harming all of it. Therefore, if people learn to live simply and in **harmony** with the world, the whole of the environment will benefit.

**Humanists**  
Because there is no God or supernatural force, human beings must take sole responsibility for solving the **world's** environmental problems. Only humans are capable of finding the solutions that can lead to a **sustainable** existence.

**Sikhism**  
The Guru Granth Sahib teaches that Sikhs show **respect and responsibility** towards creation and bear in mind the needs of future generations, as well as their own current needs.

**Islam**  
Allah made the Earth and humans have the duty as **Khalifahs** to care for it and maintain **fitrah** (natural balance) in the world.

**Hinduism**  
Everything around us is part of the Earth and nature. We should practice **Ahimsa** - the principle of **non-violence** - with the Earth. Also, all living things in the natural world are sacred because they are part of **God**.

## Key Terms

**Stewardship**  
Looking after something for it's real owner. Caring for the Earth on behalf of God.

**Environment**  
Everything around us in the natural world. The environment includes people, animals, plants and resources.

**Sustainability**  
Using the Earth's resources in a way which protects the environment for present and future generations.

**Wants**  
Luxuries. Things that humans desire but that are not needed for survival.

**Needs**  
Necessities Things that we must have in order to survive and thrive.

**Dominion**  
Having a form of control and responsibility which was given to humans by God.

**Conservation**  
Preserving and protecting the environment.

## Being a Steward: Chico Mendes



Chico Mendes was a Christian **eco-warrior** and a steward of God's creation. Chico Mendes was a rubber tapper who lived in Brazil in South America. He was **concerned about the destruction of the environment**. Chico Mendes introduced the idea of **setting aside areas of forest** for sustainable collection of rubber and Brazil nuts. He taught that it is **possible to generate income from the forest without destroying it**. Chico Mendes was the founder of the peaceful Alliance of the People of the Forest. Chico was a leader of the rubber tappers. He found ways to **use Amazonian resources to support the economic benefit for the local people and to protect the rainforest**. He is well known for being the leader of a non-violent campaign against deforestation by the cattle barons and plantation owners. Chico **explained to his fellow tappers that they had rights**, and he began to organize them to resist the relocation efforts of the government. Chico established the **Rural Worker's Union** and was **elected Town Councilman** in Xapuri. Some people did not agree with what Chico was doing, and his life was threatened many times. Chico Mendes was murdered in 1988 at his home in front of his wife and family. The land that Chico Mendes lived and died for was named the Chico Mendes Extractive Reserve.

## IFEES: The Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences



IFEES is a UK based charity dedicated to the maintenance of the Earth as a healthy habitat for all living beings. Since the mid 1980s their efforts have been directed towards **creating mass awareness** and include **research**, the **production of teaching materials**, **training and project development** and we offer this work as a gift to our fellow humans wherever and whenever they may be. Their work is also a call to Muslims to **live up to their responsibilities as guardians or Khalifah's** of Allah's creation and work towards **leaving a liveable earth for future generations**. They work world-wide and invite collaboration from organizations and individuals of all religions and faiths who agree with this vision.

"Corruption has appeared in land and sea caused by the hands of people so that they may taste the consequences of their actions and turn back"  
The Qur'an- 30:41



## The Big Green Jewish Campaign



Big Green Jewish campaigns and educates on environmental issues that affect British Jews. Some of the issues that they address are **renewable energy for synagogues**, **sourcing Fairtrade materials for prayer shawls** and Kippots, and **holding greener celebrations** which produce less rubbish and waste.

Organisers have **set different themes for the first four years of the campaign**, beginning with the **Year of the Bagel**, focusing on **reducing food packaging**. This will be followed by the **Year of the Bicycle**, geared to sustainable and non-polluting transport, the **Year of the Bin**, dealing with waste, and the **Year of the Brick**, showing how buildings such as synagogues can adapt and become more eco-friendly.

"The campaign is focused on action. Our Jewish tradition is based on a society committed to nature".



## A Rocha



A Rocha is an international Christian environmental and conservation movement. The name is Portuguese for 'the rock' - because the organisation's first project was a field study centre in Portugal. A Rocha believes that there needs to be more than talk about the environment - there needs to be action. As a Christian organisation it believes that being different and making a difference is an important part of being a Christian. This is something that they're passionate about.

"If everyone waits for someone else to act, nothing will change. Our aim is to help you to do something practical as an individual, living in your local community, perhaps as a member of a local church, and as part of the global community."

# Caring for Animals and Animal Rights

## When have Humans not treated animals sustainably?



## What issues are linked with Caring for Animals / Animal Rights ?



## Islam and Caring for Animals

- All living creatures were made by Allah and should therefore be respected, treated with kindness and compassion. Allah loves all animals and people equally.
- Muslims are instructed in the Qur'an to avoid treating animals cruelly, over-working or over-loading animals, neglecting animals, hunting animals for sport, hunting for food is permitted if the animals are killed humanely animal fighting as a sport
- There are many stories and sayings of the Prophet that demonstrate his concern for the welfare of animals. Once someone travelling with the Prophet took some eggs from a nest, causing the mother bird great grief. The Prophet saw this and told the man to return the eggs.
- When the Prophet was asked if Allah rewarded acts of charity to animals, he replied: "Yes, there is a reward for acts of charity to every beast alive."

The Prophet said "Whoever kills a sparrow or anything bigger than that without a just cause, Allah will hold him accountable on the Day of Judgment." Killing would be for a just cause if it was for food.



## Christianity and Caring for Animals

- In God's ideal world human beings live in harmony with animals. The Garden of Eden, in which human beings lived in peace and harmony with animals, demonstrates God's ideal world, and the state of affairs that human beings should work towards.
- The prophet Isaiah in the Old Testament describes the Kingdom of Heaven as a place where animals and human beings live together in peace.
- God has the right to have everything he created treated respectfully - wronging animals is wronging God. Human and non-human animals were made by God and therefore should be respected. Humans have dominion, so they can use animals for meat, but they cannot abuse them.
- Christians should try to live a Christ-like life - inspired by the actions and goodness of Jesus. Inflicting pain on any living creature is not compatible with living in a Christ-like way. Animals are weak compared to us - Jesus tells us to be kind to them. Jesus told human beings to be kind to the weak and helpless - and in comparison to human beings, animals are often weak and helpless. Christians should therefore show compassion to animals.

"A man is worth many sparrows, but not one sparrow can die unnoticed in God's World". The Bible: Matthew 10:29-31



## Hinduism and Caring for Animals

- In Hinduism, we are ALL animals and humans are ALL deserving of life and protection and God loves us all equally.
- Hindus follow the teachings of Ahimsa which means no harm to any living being. For this reason Hindus do not eat meat and are vegetarian.
- They believe if you make animals suffer you will get bad karma which will make you have a bad rebirth.
- All animals have souls which will potentially become humans when re-incarnated or reborn. If you test on or kill animals you are harming life.
- Many of the main gods have an animal form or an elephant as a vehicle. For example Ganesha, one of the most popular Gods is an elephant and Shiva has an eagle as a companion. This shows the high status that animals are given.

"One is dearest to God who has no enemies among the living beings, who is nonviolent to all creatures". Bhagavad Gita (Hindu holy book)