

# Dominion Stewardship Conservation

What do these words mean?  
How do they interact?  
And just what is our responsibility  
to care for God's creation?

**In the closing years of the last millennium, these questions gained unprecedented prominence in religious circles as clergy, theologians, and laymen alike grappled to establish a firm environmental ethic. In the face of growing concerns about how our rapidly advancing technologies, coupled with our increasing demand for resources, were affecting creation, yet at the same time trying to balance the need for increased progress and productivity – especially for the world's poorest citizens – many divergent views emerged.**

A major step was taken in the spring of 2000 when a coalition of scholars and religious leaders put forward an ethical statement of belief called *The Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship*. This declaration has so far been signed by over 1,500 clergy, theologians, and other people of faith, and has come to be viewed as one of the most significant expressions of belief about religion and the environment in modern times.

**Regarding Cornwall's contents, the *Declaration* recognizes that "the moral necessity of ecological stewardship has become increasingly clear," and then seeks to clear up three common misunderstandings that can impede a sound environmental ethic.**

First, the document notes that "many people mistakenly view humans as principally consumers and polluters rather than producers and stewards." Second, *Cornwall* takes a critical look at the perception that "nature knows best," or that "the earth, untouched by human hands is the ideal." Third, the *Declaration* points out that while "some environmental concerns are well founded and serious, others are without foundation or greatly exaggerated." This is of particular concern in developing nations, where basic issues like inadequate sanitation, widespread use of primitive fuels like wood and dung, and primitive agricultural practices go largely unaddressed while more distant and theoretical issues receive the lion's share of funding and attention.

**The *Cornwall Declaration* further sets forth an articulate and Biblically grounded set of beliefs and aspirations in which God can be glorified through a world in which "human beings care wisely and humbly for all creatures" and "widespread economic freedom . . . makes sound ecological stewardship available to ever greater numbers."**

By all accounts, *Cornwall* provides the philosophical and theological underpinnings upon which a broad environmental ethic can be formulated. The time has come, however, for a new coalition to take the principles of *Cornwall* and apply them to specific public-policy issues in the environmental dialogue.

**It is for this reason that the Cornwall Alliance for the Stewardship of Creation has been formed. The Alliance is a coalition of clergy, theologians, religious leaders, scientists, academics, policy experts, and others committed to bringing a proper and balanced Biblical view of stewardship to the critical issues of environment and development. The Alliance is thus seeking to promote the principles of the *Cornwall Declaration* in the discussion of various public-policy issues including population and poverty, food, energy, water, endangered species, habitat, and other related topics.**

For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof. – I Cor 10:26



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**Cornwall Alliance**  
*For The Stewardship Of Creation*

**The goals and activities  
of the Cornwall Alliance include:**

- Providing an informal "meeting place" for clergy, theologians, scientists, economists, public-policy experts, and other concerned individuals to analyze, debate, and discuss contemporary issues of stewardship and ecology.
- Working in developing nations in Africa and elsewhere with like-minded organizations and congregations to bring long-term economic and environmental prosperity to local villages and other impoverished communities.
- Maintaining a website at [www.cornwallalliance.org](http://www.cornwallalliance.org) that highlights articles, essays, and other information about specific stewardship topics.
- Offering articulate clergy and theologians as spokesmen to the news and religious media for comments and interviews. Scientists, economists, and other policy experts who support Cornwall's principles are also featured.
- Providing a clearinghouse for articles, opinion pieces, policy papers, Sunday school curricula, sample sermons, videos, and other helpful materials to advance the Cornwall message, and build an ever-increasing world of faithful stewards.

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**Cornwall Alliance**  
*For The Stewardship Of Creation*

Bridging  
humanity  
and the  
environment  
through  
faith and  
reason

