

# THE USE AND ABUSE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

## Learning outcomes:

To **describe** dominion and stewardship  
To **explain** the importance of stewardship  
To **evaluate** which type of pollution is the most harmful

## Starter:

Who is responsible for the world?  
Why?

What is the message in this image? How does it relate to our lesson learning today?



# Key Terms

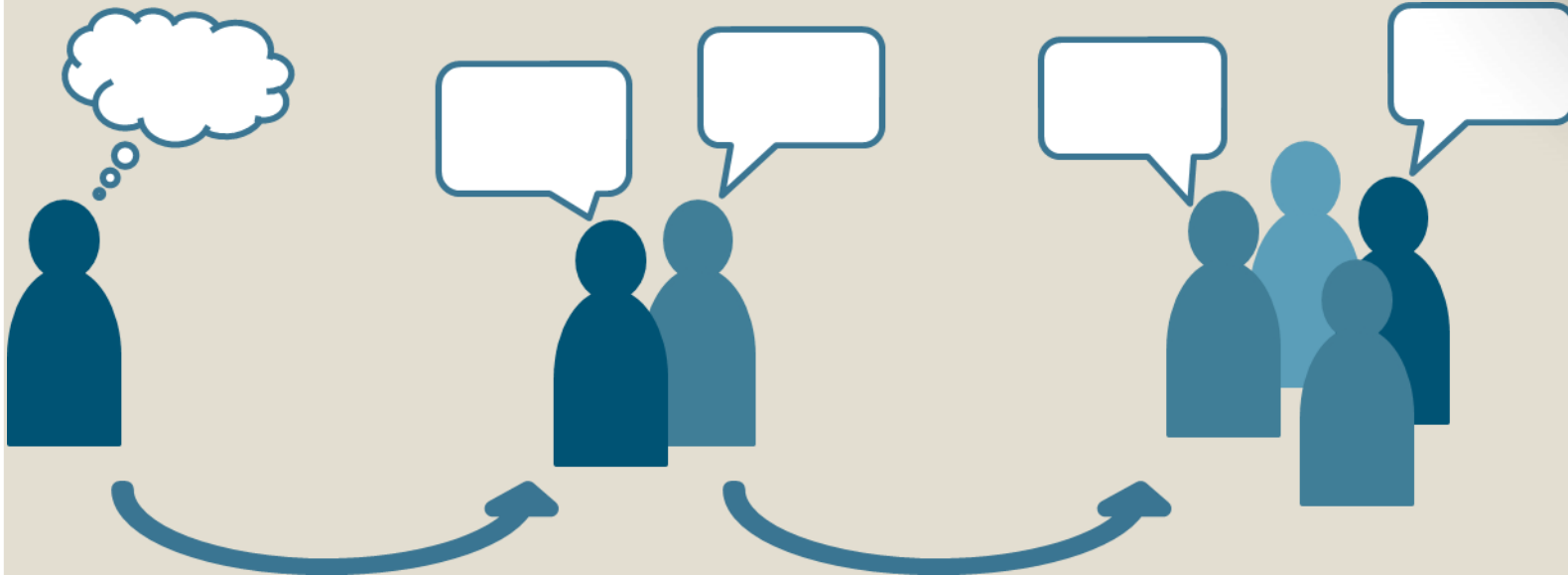
- **Environment:** the natural world; the surroundings in which someone lives.
- **Pollution:** making something dirty and contaminated, especially the environment.
- **Natural resources:** material found in nature – such as oil and trees – that can be used by people.
- **Stewardship:** the idea that believers have a duty to look after the environment on behalf of God.
- **Dominion:** dominance or power over something; having charge of something or ruling over it.
- **Sustainable development:** building and progress that try to reduce the impact on the natural world for future generations.
- **Non-renewable resources:** things the earth provides that will eventually run out as there is a limited amount of them i.e. oil, coal.
- **Deforestation:** the cutting down of large amounts of forest.
- **Renewable energy:** energy that comes from a source that does not run out, such as wind or the sun.

# The use and abuse of the environment

- The rapid growth in the world's population is putting the environment under extreme pressure. Two of the major environmental problems facing people today are the increase in pollution and the increase in the consumption of natural resources.
- Pollution damages the environment and contributes to global warming. It can come in many forms. Fumes from factories and vehicles can contribute to global warming and acid rain. Waste that is dumped into the sea can have devastating effect on marine life. Chemicals that get into the ground can poison wildlife and contaminate people's food. Despite laws to limit pollution and attempts to clean up the environment, it continues to be a problem as technology advances the world's population grows.
- Earth's growing population also means that natural resources are being used up more quickly. At the rate of current consumption, it is estimated that there is enough oil left for about 50 years. After this, the world may have to adapt considerably in order to live without it.

1. Who is to blame for the damage to the environment?
  2. What is the most shocking piece of information to you? Why?
- Challenge!**  
What would a Buddhist or Christian say in response to this information? Why would they say that?

# What are the main types of pollution?



# What are the main types of pollution?

<u>Pollution Type</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Possible Problems Caused</u>
Air		
Land		
Water		
Noise		
Light		

1. **Read** the **handout** on **pollution**.
2. **Draw** and **complete** the **table** on different **types** of **pollution**.
3. Write down the quote by Greg Graffin:

*“So much of the habitat destruction and pollution is based on the simple principle that we somehow have been given free license over other species to degrade the planet.”*

*~ Greg Graffin*

Do you agree or disagree with him? Why?

### **Challenge!**

Which type of pollution do you think is the most harmful to:

- a) Humans
- b) Animals
- c) The environment

Fully explain your answers.

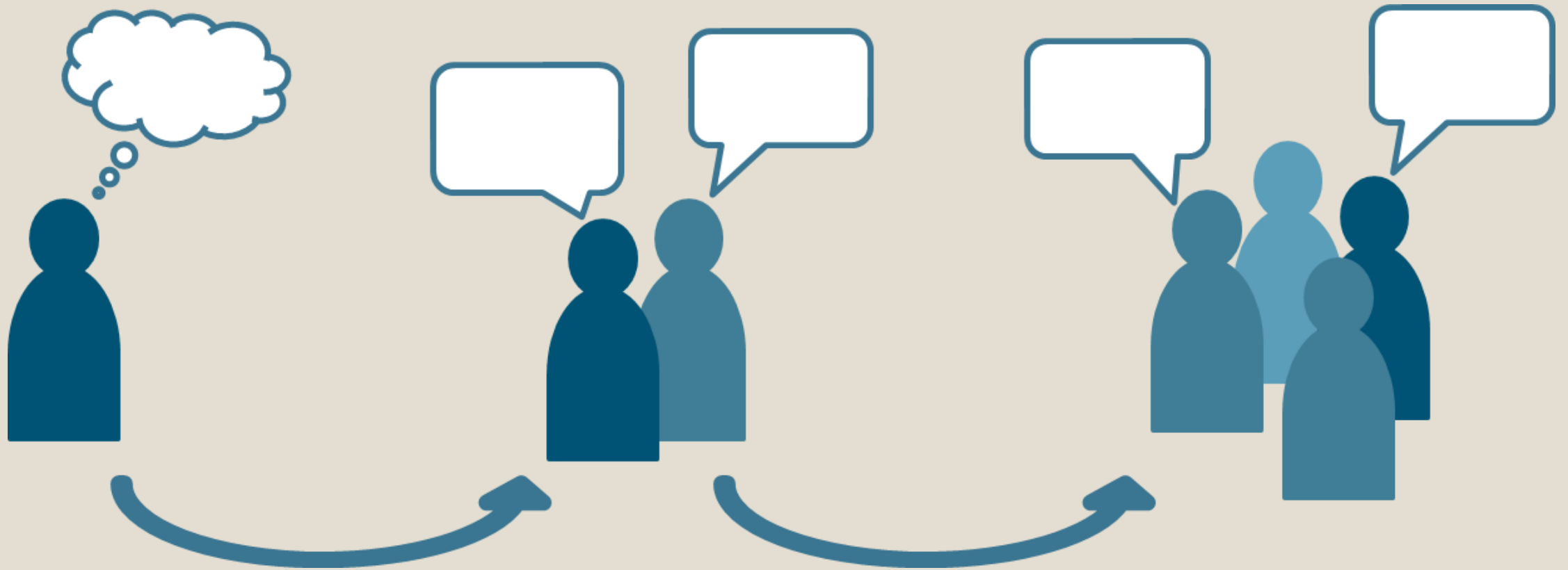
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<u>Pollution Type</u>	<u>Cause</u>	<u>Possible Problems Caused</u>
Air	Fumes from factories and transport	Asthma, diseases such as lung cancer, global warming, climate change and acid rain.
Land	Poor disposal of waste	Chemicals pollute the earth causing poisoned wildlife, inefficient farming and poisoned food.
Water	Dumping waste into rivers and seas	Oil spills and plastic waste kill birds and marine life.
Noise		
Light		

Can show students this to help them get started.



# How would a Christian respond to the use and abuse of the environment?



# What do these quotes tell us about Christian views on the environment?

“Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.” **Genesis 1:28**

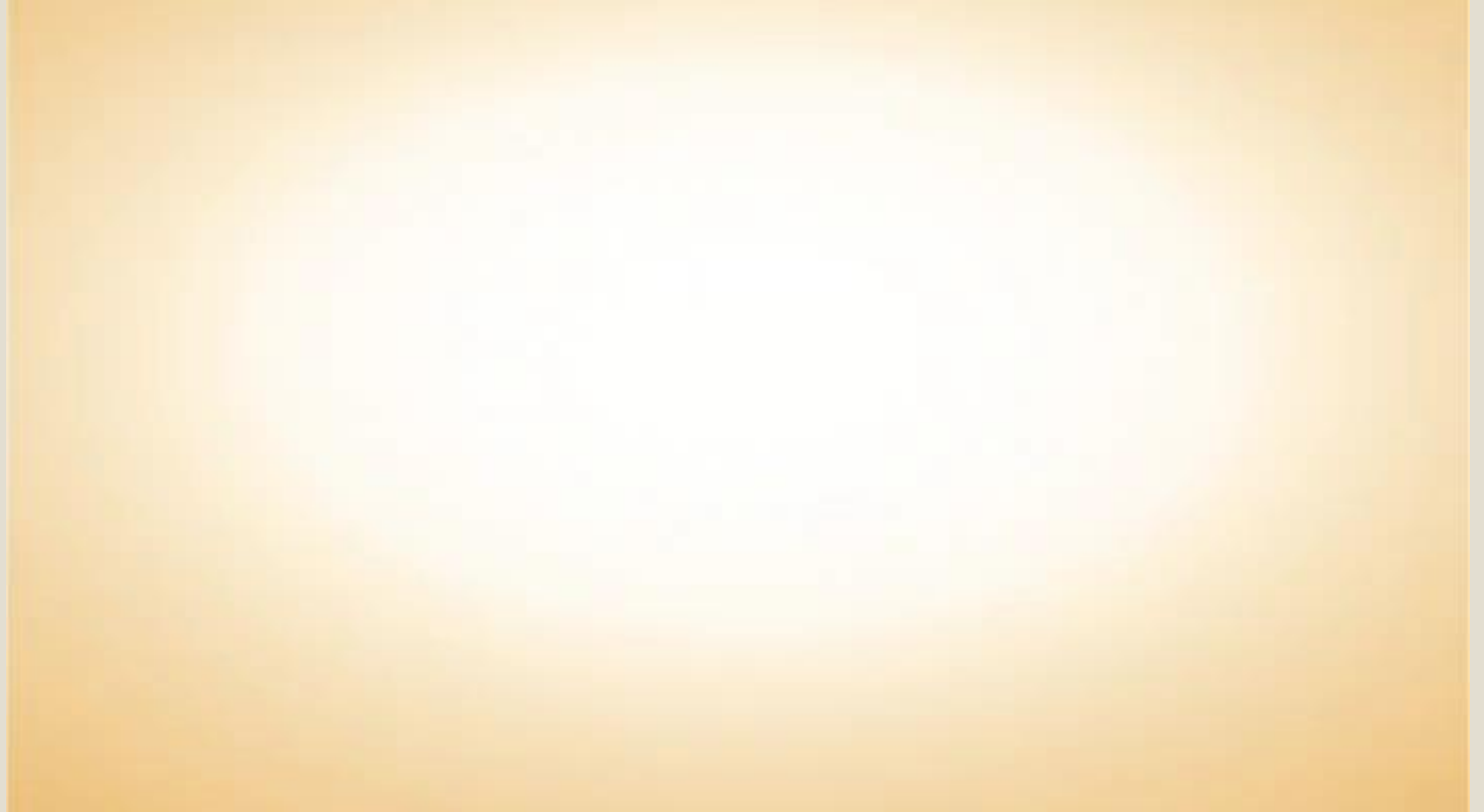
“The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.”  
**Psalms 24:1**

“And I brought you into a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and its good things. But when you came in, you defiled my land and made my heritage an abomination.”  
**Jeremiah 2:7**

“Reducing the causes of climate change is essential to the life of faith. It is a way to love our neighbour and to steward the gift of creation.”  
**Justin Welby,  
Archbishop of  
Canterbury**

“You shall not pollute the land in which you live, for blood pollutes the land, and no atonement can be made for the land for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it. You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell, for I the Lord dwell in the midst of the people of Israel.”  
**Numbers 35:33-34**

1. Watch the clip.
2. Take notes on Christian views on the environment.
3. Explain two Christian beliefs on how we should treat the environment.
4. Challenge! What bible teachings support Christian views?



# Christian views on the environment

- Stewardship means Christians have a duty to look after the environment on behalf of God. Christians believe God passed down the responsibility of caring for the world. In Genesis 2:15 God puts Adam and Eve into the Garden of Eden to 'work it and take care of it.' If they use the world wrongly, they are destroying what belongs to God.
- In return for caring for the world, humans may use it to sustain life.
- Genesis 1:28 teaches that God gave humans dominion (power and authority) over the world. A Minority of Christians interpret this as meaning that humans can do whatever they want with the world. But most Christians want to care for the world as God's stewards.

**Our commitment to Jesus Christ  
compels us to solve the global warming crisis.**

# Christian views on the environment

- Christians want to reduce pollution. They might base their views on following beliefs and teachings:
- The world is on loan to humans, how have been given the responsibility by God to look after it (Genesis 1:28)
- The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) warns that God will be the final judge about how responsible humans have been in looking after the earth.
- Pollution is not loving towards others – Jesus taught that we should ‘love thy neighbour’ (Luke 10:27)
- Pope Francis called on everyone to take action to help protect the environment. In his open letter ‘On the Care of Our Common Home’ he stressed the need to reduce pollution, use renewable energy and recycle more.

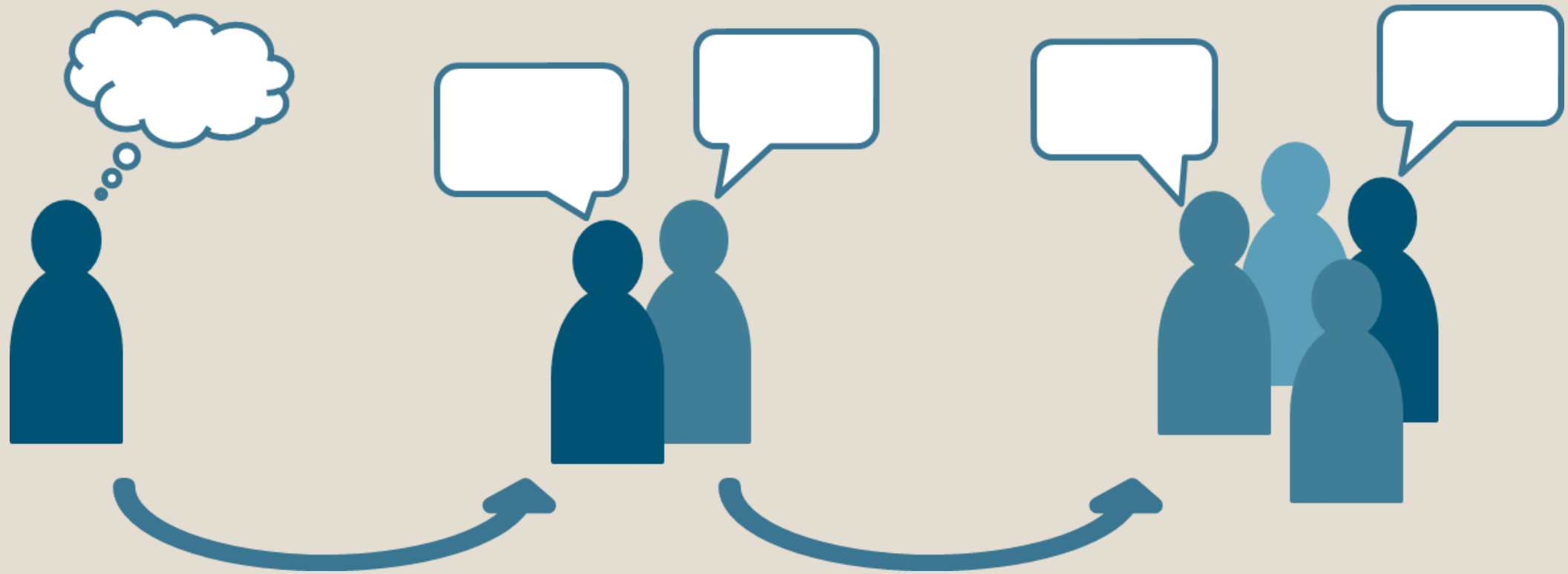


# How are Christians working towards ending climate change/pollution?

1. **Read** the information and **watch** the clip:  
<https://www.churchofengland.org/environment>
2. **How** are they **tackling climate change/pollution**?
3. **Read** and then **watch** the clip:  
<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns/climate-change-campaign>
4. How are **Christian Aid working** towards ending **climate** change?
5. How **effective** are these **methods** by the CofE and Christian Aid?
6. What **quotes support** their **work** they are doing to end climate change?
7. **How** could **you** help **tackle climate change**?



# How do Buddhists respond to the use and abuse of the environment?



# What do these quotes tell us about Buddhist beliefs?

“I believe that not only should we keep our relationship with our other fellow human beings very gentle and non-violent, but it is also very important to extend that kind of attitude to the natural environment.” Tenzin Gyatso (the Dalai Lama)

“In order to protect the environment we must protect ourselves. We protect ourselves by opposing selfishness with generosity, ignorance with wisdom, and hatred with loving kindness. Selflessness, mindfulness, compassion and wisdom are the essence of Buddhism. We train in Buddhist meditation which enables us to be aware of the effects of our actions, including those destructive to our environment.” Faith in Conservation



# Buddhist reasons for protecting the environment

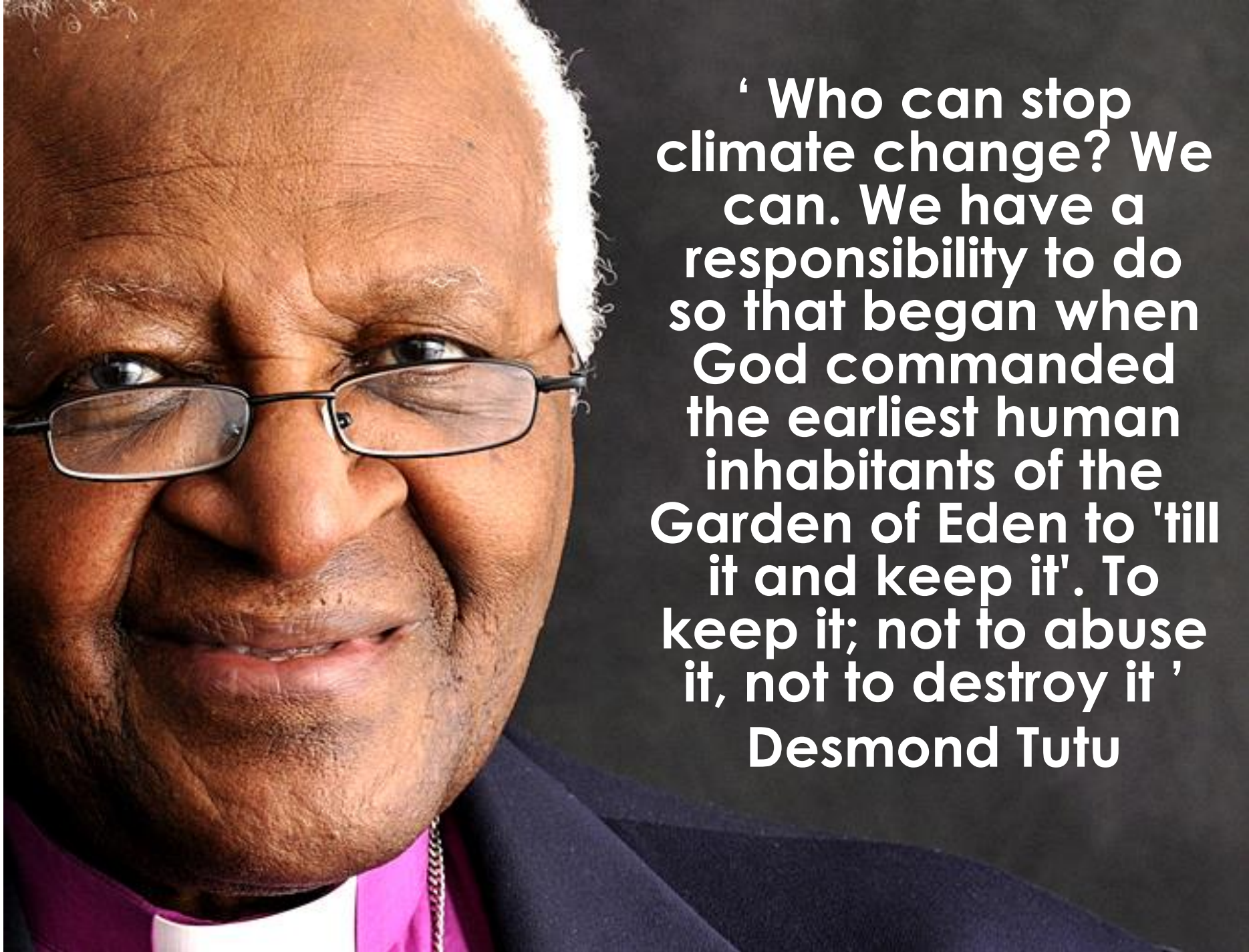
1. Watch the video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRwlygihP7I>
2. **Read** the **handout** and **highlight** key information.
3. **Explain** in your own words a **Buddhist response** to the **use** and **abuse** of the **environment**.
4. **Who** is **responsible** for **caring** for the **environment**?
5. **What** is the **Holy Isle Project**?
6. **How** does the Holy Isle Project **relate** to our lesson **learning** today?
7. The **Buddha** taught that **greed**, **hatred** and **ignorance** are the main **causes** of **suffering**. How might this **belief** affect the **way** a Buddhist **interacts** with their **environment**? **Explain** fully your answer.

“All beings tremble before violence. All fear death, all love life. See yourself in others. Then whom can you hurt? What harm can you do?”  
~ Buddha





How does  
this image  
link to our  
lesson  
learning  
today?



**‘ Who can stop climate change? We can. We have a responsibility to do so that began when God commanded the earliest human inhabitants of the Garden of Eden to 'till it and keep it'. To keep it; not to abuse it, not to destroy it ’  
Desmond Tutu**

How does this quote make you feel?  
How does it link to our lesson learning today?

# Can you meet the learning outcomes?

## Learning outcomes:

To **describe** dominion and stewardship

To **explain** the importance of stewardship

To **evaluate** which type of pollution is the most harmful