Recommended Resources on the Climate Crisis
Touch the Earth Forum, Edmonton, Alberta, 2024.

There is not one book that adequately covers Buddhism and environmentalism at the same time. They represent two streams, the Buddha's teachings and the imperilled land, air, waters and life. Your job is to bring these two streams together and discover how they inform, support and inspire one another. Some teachers see eco-buddhism as a Buddhist practice through which one develops compassion and critical awareness. To learning about global warming, one must also develop critical awareness to discern scientific facts and conclusions from the great body of misinformation and the practice of "greening." The books and authors listed below are eminent scientists and investigative science journalists.

There are also authoritative sources on line. I'd recommend the following websites:

- World Wildlife Foundation, www.worldwildlife.org › threats › effects-of-climate-change.
- Audubon Society, Climate Initiative - National Audubon Society, www.audubon.org › Conservation.
- UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, www.un.org › climate change › reports.
- World Meteorological Organization, Climate change - World Meteorological Organization WMO, wmo.int › topics › climate-change.
- The Energy Mix, https://www.theenergymix.com. This is a fine source of information on energy and climate change issues from Canada.

Here are the books.

- Katherine Hayhoe, 2021, *Saving Us: A Climate Scientist's case for Hope and Healing in a Divided World*, One Signal Publ. The well known Canadian climatologist at Texas Tech. University is an evangelical Christian which makes her book all the more interesting and useful. This is an excellent starting point.

- Bill McKibben (Ed.), 2011, *The Global Warming Reader,* Penguin. McKibben is likely the most important environmentalists around; his thinking is revealed through his many books, activism and projects, such as 350.org and Third Act. McKibben's Reader is an excellent collection of short pieces on science, politics and impacts of global warming. You'll be shocked by how long global warming has been a known issue and how little has been done to stave off the impacts of GHG emissions.

- George Monbiot, 2022, *Regenesis: Feeding the World Without Devouring the Planet*, Allen Lane. Of all the forms of human activity none has had greater impact on the planet, including green house gas (GHG) emissions, than agriculture. This is a topic that should be near and dear to Buddhists on the Prairies.

- Robin Wall Kimmerer, 2013 *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants,* Milkweed. Gratitude, reciprocity and Indigenous teachings on how to live a sustainable life are topics of this award winning author. This is my alone-on-an- island book. A young person's edition is also available. Kimmerer makes us see the importance of integrating the two streams of good science and indigenous ways, which are often regarded as antithetical to one another.

- Jeff Goodell, 2023, *The Heat Will Kill You First: Life and Death on a Scorched Planet,* Little Brown. Highly regarded, well written and researched, Heat gets right to the heart of the

global warming danger. His case studies generate compassion for anyone faced with work and exposure to the new climate.

- Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Katherine K. Wilkinson (Eds.) 2020, *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage and Solutions for the Climate Crisis,* One World. This is an outstanding collection of women's voices in the climate crisis. Uniquely organized it is a realistic yet positive examination of past, present and future needs.

- Amitav Ghosh, 2021, *The Nutmeg's Curse: Parables for a Planet in Crisis*, Chicago Univ. Press. One of India's most important writers of fiction and non-fiction, Ghosh brings historical, colonial, and third world insights to our planetary crisis that are fundamental to eco-justice activism.

Now lets consider some of the eco-buddhist literature.

- Stephanie Kaza, 2019, *Green Buddhist: Practice and Compassionate Action in Uncertain Times,* Shambhala, is a fine and important book from a lover of trees and a long time eco-buddhist and author.

- David Loy, 2018, *Ecodharma: Buddhist Teachings for the Ecological Crisis,* Wisdom, is another important Buddhist teacher and author who has through his books developed the practice of the eco-sattva.

- Pema Chödrön' 2005, *No Time to Lose: A Timely Guide to the Way of the Bodhisattva*, Shambhala. There are many versions of this seminal Mahayana text, Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara, translated as The Way of the Bodhisattva. It is a must read for anyone becoming a Buddhist activist. The commentary by this popular Buiddhist teacher is wise and accessible.

- Thich Nhat Hanh has blessed us with so many wonderful resources that support engaged buddhism. With his passing, Sister True Dedication, has assembled and edited his writing and published, 2021, *Zen and the Art of Saving the Planet,* Harper One. His 2014, *The Mindfulness Survival Kit,* Parallax, is his expanded update of the five Upasaka vows, an important contribution to Buddhist practice.

- Bhikkhu Anālayo, 2019, *Mindfully Facing Climate Change*, provides an excellent discussion of buddhism and climate change from an early buddhist perspective. This fine book is available as a PDF through the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies.

- Lots of resources are devoted to eco-trauma, climate-trauma, eco-therapy and healing. Many love the work of pioneer eco-buddhist, Joanna Macy, and have found it particularly helpful. Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone, 2012, *Active Hope: How to Face the mess We're in without Going Crazy,* New World Library, is recommended.

- With four granddaughters in their late twenties, I know this age group is particularly vulnerable and question their futures and whether children should be brought into such a chaotic world. I recommend the work of Britt Wray, 2022, *Generation Dread: Finding Purpose in an Age of Climate Crisis*, Knopf. Visit her gendread.substack.com.

- We shouldn't lose track of Canadian voices in the climate warming-environmental crisis discussion. Naomi Klein and Seth Klein, for example. I will add Stan Rowe, the respected Univ. of Saskatchewan plant ecologist who wrote, 1990, *Home Place: Essays on Ecology,*

NeWest. He was a great example of environmental activism and deep integrity who observed, "We are of nature, not in nature."

My interests in environmentalism and Buddhism came early and together. Two names stand out in environmentalism (conservation) and eco-buddhism, Aldo Leopold and Gary Snyder, respectively. Both have had a profound influence on me, personally, and the way I approach life. Their work stands out for anyone interested in environmentalism and eco-buddhism.

- Aldo Leopold 1948 *The Sand County Almanac,* Oxford Uni. Press. An environmental classic, beautifully written and highly insightful, it established the ties between ethics and the land. Visit The Aldo Leopold Foundation website.

- Gary Snyder, poet, essayist, zen practitioner and naturalist, has since the 1950s defined what is called eco-buddhsm. You will see his influence in the work and thoughts of many eco-buddhist authors, like Stephanie Kaza, for example.

- While all of Snyder's poetry is published in Shoemaker, Jack and Hunt, Anthony (editors), 2022, *Snyder: Collected Poems,* The Library of America, I'd look at his earlier work, for example, *The Back Country, Axe Handles, Turtle Island* or his 1996 award winning epic, *Mountains and Rivers Without End,* Counterpoint.

- Snyder, Gary, 1990, *The Practice of the Wild*, North Point, is an important collection of his essays on buddhist, nature and indigenous ways. It may be interesting to note that Touch the Earth Forum has been reading more of indigenous thought and perspectives.

If you started at the top and worked your way down this too long a list, you'd have one hell of an understanding of climate warming from a Buddhist perspective.

Charles Schweger is a long time practitioner in the Karma Kagyu tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. His teachers have been Chögam Trungpa Rinpoche and Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche. Thrangu Rinpoche encouraged him to form an eco-buddhist sangha; Touch the Earth Forum began in Edmonton in 2010. Schweger, PhD, geology, Prof. Emeritus, is a paleoecologist. What ever that is.