

Exploring the Conceptualization of Nature, Creation, and Earth on Websites of Dutch Christian Climate Active Groups



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Image title page: *Burning Bush*, in Dave Bookless, “Luister naar de Stem van de Schepping,” Climate Stewards, last modified August, 2022, <https://www.climatestewards.nl/luister-naar-de-stem-van-de-schepping/>.

Abstract

This thesis examines how Dutch Christian Climate Active groups interpret the concepts of nature, creation, and earth on their websites in relation to the Dutch ecotheological discourse presented in Van Montfoort's *Groene Theologie* (2019). Unlike Van Montfoort's theoretical and theological approach, this study employs a content analysis of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups' websites to explore the applications of nature, creation, and earth in more practical, everyday life contexts. The study shows that although the websites of the groups demonstrate a similar range of approaches toward these concepts compared to Van Montfoort's discussion of the Dutch ecotheological discourse, there is a discernable variation in emphasis. Some approaches receive greater emphasis on the websites, while others receive less, compared to what Van Montfoort observes in the discourse. This variation can be attributed to the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups' incorporation of an ecological perspective in their theology. Furthermore, the study indicates that denominational distinctions have a diminished presence in the ideas expressed on their websites, and some significant theological issues addressed by Van Montfoort appear to be of little relevance to these groups.

Keywords: nature, creation, earth, ecotheology, Trees van Montfoort, Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, content analysis.

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1 Introduction



Figure 1: *Burning Bush*, in Dave Bookless, “Luister naar de Stem van de Schepping,” Climate Stewards, last modified August, 2022, <https://www.climatestewards.nl/luister-naar-de-stem-van-de-schepping/>.

In a blog of Climate Stewards (see Ch. 2.1.3) on God speaking through creation, theologian Dave Bookless relates the story of God speaking to Moses through a burning bush in Exodus 3, to forest fires, which become more frequent and destructive because of climate change. His question is: What would God say to humans today through these fires?¹

Bookless’ comparison of the burning bush in Exodus and contemporary forest fires is remarkable for a variety of reasons. While the former was initiated by God and the bush did not burn up (3:2-3), the latter is often caused by humans and is very destructive. Furthermore, the fire in the bush represents God’s presence, and the ground around the bush was holy (3:5-6). The idea that God speaks through contemporary forest fires, may suggest that God is also present in these fires, which can be considered problematic because of their devastating effects.

The use of the image of the burning bush in Figure 1, also shown on the title page of this thesis, is similarly striking. The placement of the burning bush in front of a depiction of the planet suggests that the planet is burning. This is an established symbol of the warming of the earth as well as suffering on the earth in a more general sense and is often regarded negatively. However, in the case of the burning

¹ Dave Bookless, “Luister naar de Stem van de Schepping,” Climate Stewards, last modified August, 2022, <https://www.climatestewards.nl/luister-naar-de-stem-van-de-schepping/>.

bush, the fire represents God's presence. As a result, the figure can be interpreted positively.

This all raises the question of to what extent God is involved in the climate crisis. Does He play a role in climate change? If so, is climate change related to eschatology? And what are the implications of this? These are some examples of issues that I consider in this thesis, which focuses on the relationship between Christian faith and the climate debate.

1.1 Context

Theology that deals with ecology, also known as ecotheology, is not a completely new phenomenon. Already in the 1940s and 1950s, some theologians, most prominently Lutheran theologian Joseph Sittler, pleaded for a theology of nature because "she too is God's creation and bears God's image."³ His plea was however met with indifference from most and hostility from those who associated his theology with Nazi thinking.⁴ An influx in research on the relationship between religion and ecology came however after Lynn White Jr. published an article in 1967 in which he argues that the historical roots for the environmental crisis lie with ideological and cultural factors, most specifically those factors that are associated with Western Christian religion.⁵ This article can be regarded as the jumpstart for the research field of religion and ecology, as it prompted a vast and ongoing scholarly response, in which an interplay takes place between ecological views on theology and theological views on ecology.⁶ In particular ecofeminist

³ Joseph Sittler, "A Theology for Earth," *The Christian Scholar* 37, no. 3 (September 1954): 372, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41176816>; Joseph Sittler, Steven Bouma-Prediger, and Peter W Bakken, *Evocations of Grace: The Writings of Joseph Sittler on Ecology, Theology, and Ethics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2000), 2.

⁴ H. Paul Santmire, and John B. Cobb, "The World of Nature according to the Protestant Tradition," in *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, ed. Roger S. Gottlieb (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 133.

⁵ Lynn White Jr., "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (10 March 1967): 1203-7, <https://www-science-org.tilburguniversity.idm.oclc.org/doi/abs/10.1126/science.155.3767.1203>.

⁶ Todd LeVasseur, and Anna Peterson, "Introduction," in *Religion and Ecological Crisis: The "Lynn White Thesis" at Fifty*, eds., Todd LeVasseur, and Anna Peterson (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2017), 4.

theologians like Ivone Gebara, Mary Daly, Sallie McFague, and Rosemary Ruether played an important role in the establishment of the research field.⁷

In the Netherlands, the study of religion and ecology has started off more slowly. After an increase in the 1980s, interest waned. It is only in the last decade that more attention is paid again to the theme and that ecotheology has taken off.⁸ The study of ecotheology in the Netherlands is still rather limited, even though it is expanding rapidly. An important voice in the field of ecotheology in the Netherlands is Trees van Montfoort, a Protestant theologian who has studied both Catholic and Protestant theology, and who became known with the publication of her book *Groene Theologie*.⁹

Apart from ecotheology, which tends to be more theoretical, there is also eco-praxis, although an interplay can be observed between the two. In that case, ecotheology is put into practice, or an ecological practice generates a related theology. In the Dutch context, many examples of religious communities engaging in environmentalism exist. So far, at least in the Dutch context, most studies have focused on ecotheology and eco-praxis on a more theoretical level or individual case studies. For example, theologians Elisabeth Hense and Tjirk van der Ziel recently published a book discussing 36 individual parishes and monasteries in the Netherlands that put ‘taking care of creation’ into practice. The case studies show a pattern in which the practices of these faith communities are often centered around the garden. The garden functions as a place where on the one hand, care for the earth is practiced and on the other hand, people can experience community with one another.¹¹ Nevertheless, the ‘greening of religion’, or the practice in which

⁷ Mary Evelyn Tucker, and John Grim, “The movement of religion and ecology. Emerging field and dynamic force,” in *Routledge Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, eds. Willis Jenkins, Mary Evelyn Tucker, and John Grim (London: Routledge, 2016), 9.

⁸ Trees van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie* (Middelburg: Skandalon, 2019), 15.

⁹ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 9. Also available in English translation: Trees van Montfoort, *Green Theology: An Eco-Feminist and Ecumenical Perspective*, trans. Wim Reedijk (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2022).

¹¹ Elisabeth Hense, and Tjirk van der Ziel, *Groen en Solidair: 36 Kerken en Kloosters in Nederland* (Heeswijk-Dinther: Abdij van Berne, 2022). For a good overview of the ecotheology that has been influential in the Dutch context on a more theoretical level, see Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*.

religious communities become more environmentally conscious and spread ecological awareness, has also met resistance in some areas.¹²

While individual case studies give insight into the interplay of ecotheology and eco-praxis in specific cases, the domain of overarching organizations and networks focusing on ecotheology and eco-praxis has – to my knowledge – not yet been studied. Since these groups share a concern for the environment, which includes climate change, I call them *Dutch Christian Climate Active* groups in what follows, even though not all groups are primarily climate groups.¹³ In general, these groups aim to provide theological and practical information and inspiration about environmentalism from a Christian theological perspective to individual Christians and Christian communities.¹⁴ All of these groups deal with similar topics. Yet, the groups differ in identity, such as denominational background, as well as purpose. Such distinctions can influence their ecotheology.

According to Van Montfoort, the main issues in the Dutch ecotheological discourse, especially in broader ecumenical conversations, are the result of different understandings of the concepts of nature, creation, earth, humans, and God. For example, some interpret nature as a place where God can be found, while others consider that idea pagan.¹⁵ According to Van Montfoort, varied understandings like this are the result of diverging theological frameworks of different denominations. In the third chapter, I will expand on these issues.

1.2 Research Question and Procedure

The issues Van Montfoort refers to are situated on a more theoretical level. Discussion on this level can also be found in materials distributed by Christian

¹² J. Koehrsen, J. Blanc, and F. Huber, “How ‘green’ can religions be? Tensions about religious environmentalism,” *Z Religion Ges Polit* (2022): 43, <https://doi-org.tilburguniversity.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s41682-021-00070-4>.

¹³ This term is based on the term used by Elizabeth Bomberg, and Alice Hague, “Faith-Based Climate Action in Christian Congregations: Mobilisation and Spiritual Resources,” *Local Environment* 23, no. 5 (2018): 584.

¹⁴ See, for example, the mission statements of the following networks and organisations: “Wat is onze missie,” GroeneKerken, accessed March 28, 2023, <https://www.groenekerken.nl/over-groenekerken/>; “Over de alliantie,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed March 28, 2023, <https://laudato-si.nl/over-laudato-si/>; “Wie we zijn,” A Rocha Nederland, accessed March 28, 2023, <https://www.arocha.nl/nl/home/wie-we-zijn/>.

¹⁵ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 176-181.

environmental groups, but generally, these materials are meant for a general public and are more focused on the practical, everyday life context. This study aims to compare the ecotheologies of Dutch Christian Climate Active groups with that of Van Montfoort, who is in discussion with other theological voices. The focus is especially on the concepts of nature, creation, and earth because these concepts are the most relevant for environmental groups. The concepts of God and humans are discussed as far as they relate to interpretations of nature, creation, and earth, but not separately.

This leads to the central research question: How do the interpretations of the concepts of nature, creation, and earth among Dutch Christian Climate Active groups relate to the different ways in which these concepts are used in the Dutch ecotheological discourse as described by Van Montfoort? This question can be divided into three sub-questions, namely (1) what different approaches towards the concepts of nature, creation, and earth are found in the Dutch ecotheological discourse according to Van Montfoort; (2) what are the approaches towards these concepts of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups; and (3) how does the interpretation of these concepts in the Dutch ecotheological discourse as described by Van Montfoort relate to that of Dutch Christian Climate Active groups?

The exploration of what approaches toward the concepts of nature, creation, and earth are found among Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, is based on the content found on the websites of these groups, where the groups present themselves online. The contents on these websites are readily available for anyone interested in the subject, in particular the target groups. While the websites may contain various forms of content, such as written texts, images, and videos, this thesis primarily focuses on analyzing the approaches toward the concepts in the textual domain.

In chapter two I introduce the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups that are discussed in this thesis and explain the methodology used to analyze the websites of these groups. Chapter three deals with the theoretical framework of this thesis, and Van Montfoort's discussion of the concepts 'nature', 'creation', and 'earth'. In chapter four, I present and discuss the results of my analysis of the websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, and compare these results to the Dutch

ecotheological discourse as described by Van Montfoort. Finally, in the fifth chapter, I present my conclusions and answer the research question.

2 Methodological Framework

To find out how the concepts of nature, creation, and earth are interpreted by Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, I have conducted a content analysis of the websites of these groups. In this chapter, I first outline the sampling method and introduce the analyzed groups. Then, I will explain the methodology of content analysis. The chapter ends with an indication of the methodological limitations of this study.

2.1 Dutch Christian Climate Active Groups

The Dutch Christian Climate Active groups that I analyze in this thesis are introduced in this section. The definition I use for Dutch Christian Climate Active groups is groups that: have a Christian identity; have a particular purpose that is related to concern for the climate; are active in the Netherlands; at least have a department based in the Netherlands; and have content that was originally written in Dutch on the websites. The Dutch Christian Climate Active groups are introduced in alphabetical order.

2.1.1 A Rocha Nederland

A Rocha Nederland is the Dutch department of A Rocha International, “a global family of conservation organizations working together to live out God’s calling to care for creation and equip others to do likewise.”¹⁷ This definition is also reflected on the Dutch website. The group's roots lie in the evangelical movement. The organization has been active in the Netherlands since 2003. It has fourteen local groups of volunteers throughout the country that are committed to nature conservation, and together with Climate Stewards (see further below), the

¹⁷ “Welcome to A Rocha,” A Rocha International, accessed April 10, 2023, <https://arocha.org/en/>.

organization works on awareness and a sustainable lifestyle through, among other things, education.¹⁸

2.1.2 *Christian Climate Action*

Christian Climate Action (CCA) Nederland is part of the international organization Christian Climate Action, which originates from the UK. The Dutch branch of the organization describes itself as a community of Christians that support each other in non-violent direct action and public witness about the climate and ecological crisis. Of all the groups discussed in this thesis, CCA Nederland is the group that is most active in protests. They actively participate in civil disobedience when they feel that it is necessary.¹⁹ Since people involved in the group come from various denominations, CCA Nederland is in practice ecumenical.

2.1.3 *Climate Stewards Nederland*

Climate Stewards Nederland is the climate program of A Rocha Nederland, but because it has its own website and purpose, it is discussed here separately. Climate Stewards also has a department in the UK and in the US. Climate Stewards Nederland focuses on reducing one's CO₂ footprint, as well as that of churches, and compensating for one's unavoidable emissions by supporting Climate Steward's projects around the world.²⁰ The group promotes itself as a movement of Christians, but like A Rocha, it has evangelical origins.²¹

2.1.4 *GroeneKerken*

GroeneKerken stimulates churches to be more sustainable and greener, both in practice and theology. Every church that participates in its program may call itself a *Green Church*. The organization also provides a network for these churches, so that they can meet, help each other, and share inspiration. GroeneKerken shares

¹⁸ "Wie we zijn," A Rocha Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.arocha.nl/nl/home/wie-we-zijn/>.

¹⁹ "Over ons," Christian Climate Action Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/about/>.

²⁰ "Home," Climate Stewards, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.climatestewards.nl/#>.

²¹ "Over ons," Climate Stewards, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.climatestewards.nl/over-ons/>.

information and inspiration for these Green Churches and everyone else who is interested, on their website, through newsletters, and on social media.²² The organizations behind GroeneKerken – Kerk in Actie and Maatschappij van Welstand – are rooted in the mainstream Protestant tradition. However, GroeneKerken aims to cater to churches and communities with all kinds of confessional backgrounds.²³ In that regard, the group can be considered ecumenical, but rooted in Protestantism.

2.1.5 *Laudato Si' Alliantie Nederland*

The Laudato Si' Alliantie Nederland (LSAN) was established in 2015 and has a Roman Catholic identity.²⁴ This group, which is an alliance of nine Catholic organizations and is chaired by bishop Gerard de Korte, promotes the vision of Pope Francis on the climate crisis and social injustice as portrayed in the papal documents *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si'* and *Fratelli Tutti*.²⁵ In addition to providing inspiration from and information about these documents on the website, the group also organizes events, workshops and lectures. It targets parishes, schools, other communities, and individuals.²⁶

2.1.6 *Micha Nederland*

Micha Nederland fights for justice for both humans and – since 2014 - nature.²⁷ Primary inspiration for this goal is Micah 6:8, in which the prophet Micah states that the LORD requires humans to live justly, to be loyal, and to focus their lives on God.²⁸ Micha Nederland targets individual Christians, churches, and

²² “Over GroeneKerken,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.groenekerken.nl/over-groenekerken/>.

²³ “Over GroeneKerken,” GroeneKerken.

²⁴ “Over Laudato Si’,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://laudato-si.nl/over-laudato-si/>.

²⁵ “Over Laudato Si’,” LSAN.

²⁶ “Kom samen,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://laudato-si.nl/kom-samen/>.

²⁷ “Over ons,” Micha Nederland, accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/micha-nederland/over-ons/>; “Micha Monitor,” Micha Nederland, accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/micha-nederland/monitor/>.

²⁸ Micah 6:8: “He has told you, O mortal, what is good, and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God?” All Bible citations in this thesis are from the NRSVUE translation, except if otherwise indicated.

organizations, and tries to inspire them to actively live as Christians in this world. Micha Nederland is part of Micah Global, and its roots can be found in the evangelical movement.²⁹ Nevertheless, Micha Nederland partners with organizations with different denominational backgrounds within the broader Protestant tradition.³⁰

2.1.7 Other Groups

There are several more groups active in the Dutch Christian environmental context that will not be included in this research, such as Kerk en Dier, Kerk en Milieu, and GroenGeloven.³¹ The main reason for this is the fact that these groups do not fit the definition used in this thesis for Dutch Christian Climate Active group.

2.1.8 Content Collection

To my knowledge, all groups that fit into my definition of a Dutch Christian Climate Action group have been included in the study, making the sampling representative. The study is cross-sectional. Therefore, all website content was downloaded on the same day, which is April 4th, 2023, except for the content on the website of Micha Nederland, which was downloaded on May 11th. This was because the group was first not considered to have a specific goal related to the environment, but this position was reconsidered, and the group was included. To maintain the cross-sectional character of the study, a comparison of the downloaded content of the website with an archived version of the website on April 2, 2023, was conducted.³²

The content is analyzed without special regard for the date of publication, except if relevant. That is especially the case for blogs and news posts, of which only the posts that have been published since April 4th, 2022, have been included in the data

²⁹ “About,” Micah Global, accessed May 19, 2023, <https://micahglobal.org/page/about-a905cf99-e1de-423e-b4b7-cc8f84566d6c>.

³⁰ “Ons Netwerk,” Micha Nederland, accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/micha-nederland/netwerk/>.

³¹ For a more comprehensive list of groups active in this realm see: “Duurzame organisaties,” Kerk en Milieu, accessed July 4, 2023, <https://kerkenmilieu.nl/doe-mee/duurzame-actie/>.

³² The archived version of the website can be found through <https://web.archive.org/web/20230402163050/https://www.michanederland.nl/>.

set because the public is more likely to read recent blogs and news posts and because the measure makes the data load more manageable for this thesis.

2.2 Content Analysis

In this thesis, I conduct a content analysis of the relevant content found on the websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups to disclose their approaches toward the concepts of nature, creation, and earth. Content analysis of websites was also used in similar studies, such as the research into faith-based climate action in Christian groups, including wider ecotheological networks such as A Rocha, which has been conducted in the Scottish context by Elizabeth Bomberg and Alice Hague.³³

Content analysis is a qualitative empirical research method. Lune and Berg summarize several definitions of content analysis and explain the method as “a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, assumptions, and meanings.”³⁴ To be able to analyze the content on the websites, the relevant webpages of the websites were saved as a PDF file. A webpage was considered relevant when something on the page gives any kind of information on or indication of how the group understands the concepts of nature, creation, and earth.

In total, 296 webpages were coded, recoded, and analyzed in the program *Atlas.ti*. The coding was conducted with specific attention to mentions of “natuur” (nature), “schepping” (creation), and “aarde” (earth).³⁵ For example, if there was a sentence that mentioned something about how the group cares for nature, the quotation – which can be a set of sentences, a specific sentence, or a relevant part of the sentence, depending on how much context is relevant and needed to understand the quotation – would get the codes *nature* and *care*. This created a data set of quotations that are linked to codes, which function as a categorical label. The codes for earth, nature, and creation are considered *key codes* in this analysis.

³³ Bomberg, and Hague, “Faith-Based Climate Action in Christian Congregations,” 584.

³⁴ Howard Lune, and Bruce L. Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 9th ed. (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2017), 182.

³⁵ The original codes are in Dutch, since the data is in Dutch as well. However, I will use the translations of the codes from Dutch to English from now on.

The analysis was done with the help of the code co-occurrence table. This table shows where and how often one code is linked to the same quotation as another code and thus helps identify relationships between different codes. These relationships are then defined based on further examination of the linked quotations. This is what the conclusion of how nature, creation, and earth as approached and interpreted by the groups is based on, and it will be discussed in the fourth chapter.³⁶

The concepts of nature, creation, and earth are taken deductively from Van Montfoort. Their function is to provide a framework for the study. Yet, the process of coding takes an inductive approach in order not to be limited by the definitions, interpretations, and approaches found in Van Montfoort's description of the concepts.

Since the content of the websites of Dutch Christian Climate Active groups is in Dutch, I conducted the analyses using the original Dutch content of the websites to keep the validity high. It is only when providing examples in the presentation of the results of the analyses, that the quotation is translated. In that case, the original quotation in Dutch is put in the footnotes.

2.3 Limitations

First, it should be noted that at the time of writing this thesis, I did an internship at the Laudato Si' Alliantie Nederland. This is one of the organizations that is analyzed. Through that internship, I have also encountered employees of other Dutch Christian Climate Active groups. In the research, the possible bias and its impact on the validity and reliability are minimized by focusing on the content of the websites, on which I have no direct influence. Furthermore, an outsider who is not associated with one of the analyzed organizations was asked, in addition to the supervisors of this thesis, to review the analysis and conclusions of this research.

Second, to analyze the ecotheologies of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, different media besides websites, such as news reports, newsletters sent out by e-mail, etc., and possibly interviews with the people working for the groups are also relevant. Yet, due to time constraints, I have limited my research to analyses

³⁶ Lune, and Berg, *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*, 182-4.

of the websites. This limitation is justified because the content on websites is broad, varied, readily available, and aimed at the target public. The websites, therefore, provide a good indication of the position propagated by the groups.

Third, not all documents on the websites of the Christian Climate Active groups are originally written by the organizations themselves. Still, because the documents were published on the websites of these groups, I will assume that the group agrees with the content, and the documents will be considered representative of the group's position.

Fourth, during my internship as well as while researching the different organizations, I noticed that the world of Dutch Christian environmentalism is rather small. For example, organizations work together, employees know each other and sometimes live together, and employees switch from one organization to another. As a result, the groups influence each other's views, and it is more difficult to distinguish the specific ideas of one group from the ideas of another. For this reason, this thesis will not focus on comparing the different groups.

Fifth, some groups have significantly more content on their websites than other groups. For example, the analyzed file of GroeneKerken contains 105 web pages, while Climate Stewards' file only contains 26. To prevent that the content of one website weights more in the analysis than another, the website of each group – as a collection of documents – is coded and analyzed in a separate file. In this way, the resulting code co-occurrence tables can be used to identify similarities between the groups, without overshadowing the groups that have less content on their websites.

In this chapter I have introduced the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, explained how their websites are analyzed, and considered the limitations of the analysis. Before conducting the analysis and focusing on the content on the websites of the groups, first, I will introduce and discuss the concepts that are central to the research, namely nature, creation, and earth, as presented in the context of Trees van Montfoort's book *Groene Theologie*.

3 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, I present Van Montfoort's discussion on the various approaches toward the concepts of nature, creation, and earth.³⁷ This discussion is found in her book *Groene Theologie* (2019). The book, which Van Montfoort originally intended to be a dissertation, is written for a broader audience with an academic approach regarding argumentation and substantiation. It aims to make reflection the combination of theology and sustainability more accessible to the Dutch public as well as to give a new impulse to the practice of faith and ecology.³⁸ In the book, Van Montfoort discusses the – often English – literature that has been written on the subject and develops her own position. In separate chapters, she focuses on the role of theology in the ecological crisis, relevant texts from the Bible, the ecotheological developments in the Netherlands and Flanders, the insights of ecofeminist theology worldwide, and Christological thinking in an ecological context. She ends the book with some practical examples of ecological spirituality.

Groene Theologie was well received among Dutch Christians, exemplified by the fact that it won the prize of “theological book of the year 2019”.³⁹ As (one of) the first popular Dutch book(s) about the Christian faith and ecology, it has become a staple for everyone interested and/or active in the field. Most of the groups considered in this thesis also refer to the book on their websites.⁴⁰

In the third chapter of her book, where Van Montfoort considers the ecotheological developments in the Dutch context, she selects five issues that make a wide ecumenical discussion difficult because of the distinctive theological frameworks involved. These five issues are nature, creation, earth, God, and

³⁷ I will focus on the usage of the Dutch terms in this thesis, which may vary slightly from the usage of the English terms.

³⁸ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 10, 16.

³⁹ Remco van Mulligen, “Samuel Lee is de nieuwe ‘Theoloog des Vaderlands’,” *Nederlands Dagblad*, November 18, 2019, <https://advance-lexis-com.tilburguniversity.idm.oclc.org/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5XHM-C341-DY2H-B3TR-00000-00&context=1516831>.

⁴⁰ For example: “Boeken,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed July 28, 2023, <https://laudato-si.nl/verdiep-en-verander/boeken/>; “Lees-, kijk- en luistertips over zorgen voor de schepping,” Micha Nederland, accessed July 28, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/lees-kijk-en-luistertips-over-zorgen-voor-de-schepping/>.

humans. As said above, the focus in this thesis is especially on the concepts of nature, creation, and earth because these concepts are the most relevant for environmental groups. These three concepts provide the focus for the concept analysis in this thesis. The other two concepts are only discussed as far as they relate to nature, creation, and/or earth.

3.1 Nature

Of the three concepts under discussion, nature, or “natuur” in Dutch, is the most ambiguous one. Van Montfoort states that nature in general can refer to everything that the natural sciences study, but also animals, plants, and non-living nature in all its forms, including or excluding humans and their culture. Furthermore, the term is used in social theories, as the opposite of socialization, technology, the supernatural, and/or human creations.⁴¹

In the context of the Christian faith, nature is understood in several ways. First of all, nature can be regarded positively, namely as part of or as a synonym of creation, as well as that which is obvious or inevitable, but the concept can also be viewed in a negative way, namely as threatening, or as fallen, the opposite to grace, and in need of salvation. In addition, Van Montfoort states that the worth of (non-human) nature is sometimes defined by its usability as a resource, or by its ability to act as a mirror of the human experience. She states that the concept is often set in opposition to history, with history as the place where God is found, although nature can also be seen as a place where God or the holy is found. However, some consider this idea to be dangerously “pagan”.⁴²

According to Van Montfoort, the interpretations under discussion here can be traced back to several significant developments within theology. The culture of modernity as well as the Western conception of human history as a liberation from nature have played a major role in the development of the Protestant tradition. Throughout all Protestant denominations, the notion is found that God and nature are separated. This is the result of the Cartesian separation between matter and

⁴¹ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 41, 177.

⁴² Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 41, 177.

mind, and the ideas of the deists who built upon Descartes' ideas and regarded nature as a machine made by God. God's involvement with the world is placed mainly in the beginning and the future, i.e., death and the end time, but less in the present. Related is the also widespread conception that God is exclusively connected to ethics and has nothing to do with nature. This idea is influenced by an interpretation of Kant's philosophy, as well as Karl Barth's insistence that God is not revealed in nature. Nature is often juxtaposed to history, for example by twentieth-century Dutch theologian Kornelis Heiko Miskotte, and later, Kune Biezeveld. That does not mean that nature is necessarily looked upon negatively in Protestant circles. For Biezeveld, nature is valuable because the changes in nature throughout the seasons reflect human experiences. Furthermore, among the "bevindelijken" within the various Dutch reformed churches, there is a focus on the working of God's spirit in the human heart as well as an openness to the beauty of nature, which is valuable in itself.⁴³

In Catholicism, the culture of modernity has influenced theology, particularly from the *nouvelle théologie* and Vaticanum II onwards. Before that time, neo-Thomistic thought, which made a strict separation between the natural and the supernatural, was prominent. In the mid-twentieth century, theology became more closely connected to human experience. As a result, the belief that God's grace is not opposed to but present in natural/material reality has become dominant. Consequently, nature is not regarded with suspicion. Still, anthropocentrism prevailed in Dutch Catholicism: God was viewed as a God of humans, the Bible as a history of humans, and non-human nature was not important.⁴⁴ That changed when in 2015 Pope Francis' encyclical *Laudato Si'* was promulgated, which focuses on humanity's connection with nature and humanity's task to care for it. It also presents a view of nature in which everything is interconnected, including a natural order with rules about sexuality and procreation.⁴⁵

Van Montfoort herself believes that nature should not be regarded as holy by itself, but holy as a place of God. She clarifies that nature belongs to God, exists

⁴³ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 148-153.

⁴⁴ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 154-6.

⁴⁵ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 164-7.

for, and mirrors the glory of God, and that both human and non-human nature must honor God.

3.2 Creation

The second concept, creation, “schepping” in Dutch, is also a concept that is interpreted in multiple ways. According to Van Montfoort, creation can either be: everything that has to do with God; only non-human nature; or only humanity. Furthermore, creation may refer to an origin, the contemporary, or the future.⁴⁶

According to Catholic theology, creation encompasses everything that exists. Still, important voices in the Dutch Catholic context, such as *De Nieuwe Katechismus* (1966), theologian Edward Schillebeeckx, and theologian and hymnwriter Huub Oosterhuis, remain focused on humans. As a result, creation is perceived to be predominantly the creation of humanity and creation by human labor, i.e., human culture.⁴⁷

Creation in Protestant theology has been interpreted in several ways. One example is a document of the Dutch Reformed (“Hervormde”) Synod in 1990. It describes creation as “a word of faith that is used within churches to describe the whole living and non-living reality as brought into existence by God,” but explains that it can also be interpreted as a one-time act of God at the beginning of history, or in an eschatological sense.⁴⁸ Unlike Catholic theologians, who often connect ecology with the theology of creation, most Protestants do not.⁴⁹ Within Protestantism, the notion of stewardship, criticized by Van Montfoort because of its economic characteristics, is more popular in this context.⁵⁰ The creation stories are used less because many Protestants perceive a conflict between creation and evolution theory.⁵¹ This conflict can be traced back to the influence of Descartes. His notion that separated humans from the machine, i.e., the world, did not match

⁴⁶ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 177-8.

⁴⁷ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 156-7.

⁴⁸ “(...) geloofswoord dat binnen kerken gebruikt wordt om de hele levende en niet-levende werkelijkheid aan te duiden als door God in het leven geroepen.” Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 160.

⁴⁹ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 177.

⁵⁰ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 143-147.

⁵¹ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 143.

the evolutionist idea that people *belonged* to that material, mechanical world. Fundamentalist Protestants, therefore, rejected the evolution theory in favor of the creation stories in the Bible. Other Protestants attempted to unite the two by explaining that creation had taken place in different phases of evolution. Also, the idea that evolution was a process led by God – process theology – was developed.⁵²

The question of how God currently relates to creation is one that often comes up in Dutch ecotheological discourse according to Van Montfoort.⁵³ Orthodox Christians often strongly separate God and humans as well as humans and other creatures. For more liberal Protestant Christians, the distance between God and humans is smaller, but their perception remains anthropocentric. Humans are creatures of God, but non-human creatures are not considered or even acknowledged as creatures.⁵⁴

Another issue according to Van Montfoort is the question of whether all of creation or only humanity is created in the image of God.⁵⁵ She does, however, only discuss theologians that understand humanity as the image of God. An example is theologian Gijsbert van den Brink, for whom the image of God is the sole marker that differentiates humans from animals. This helps him as a reformed Protestant to accept the evolution theory.⁵⁶ In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis states that only humans were created in the image of God, too, but he explains that this does not imply absolute domination, nor does it deny the worth of all other living creatures to God. This stands in contrast to theologian Taede Smedes, who views humans as the peak of evolution and the crown of creation.⁵⁷

Van Montfoort warns against using unilateral linear models to understand creation in an eschatological sense. She believes it is impossible to order Bible texts from the beginning to the end time and does not agree with the framework of 'salvation history.'⁵⁸ According to her, the danger of such a focus on the future, is that it reduces the contemporary to an interim period. At the same time, she argues

⁵² Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 149.

⁵³ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 178.

⁵⁴ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 150.

⁵⁵ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 177-8.

⁵⁶ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 173.

⁵⁷ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 165, 172-3.

⁵⁸ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 55.

that it is also risky when people believe that they must realize the kingdom of God by themselves. Then the kingdom of God starts to coincide too much with an ideal society, characterized as a utopia.

In her own conclusion about creation, Van Montfoort focuses on its relation to evolution. She does not consider the two terms to be opposites. Furthermore, she deems Christian narratives, specifically creation accounts, are worth being told. They can serve as a counterweight to the narratives of the natural sciences and modernity, which tend to devalue other stories.

3.3 Earth

The concept “aarde”, or earth, may seem less ambiguous in meaning, yet Van Montfoort explains that this term, too, is interpreted in various ways from different perspectives. She describes that cosmologically, the earth is a minimal part of the universe, but from a biological perspective, it is the overarching ecosystem. Within liberation theology, the earth has been interpreted as poor and suffering because of humanity’s violence, as stated in Pope Francis’ *Laudato Si’*.⁵⁹ The earth can, however, also be seen as a procreator. The latter view is found predominantly in non-western cultures.⁶⁰

Modernity’s dominant worldview regards humans as rulers and owners of the earth.⁶¹ This can, for example, be seen in the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, which posits subjugation of the earth as something positive if it means that the needs of all people are met.⁶² As a result of new insights, this view is changing. According to Van Montfoort, the earth is sometimes referred to as a common home. This is the case in *Laudato Si’*, where the earth is ‘our common home’ which cries out because of pollution, climate change, depletion of natural sources, etc. The suffering of the earth is moreover related to the suffering of the poor.⁶³ A similar view is held by philosopher Henk Manschot, who views the earth as a home on

⁵⁹ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 164, 167, 179.

⁶⁰ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 169, 179.

⁶¹ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 168.

⁶² Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 154-5.

⁶³ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 165-7.

which humans reside together with other forms of life.⁶⁴ Other understandings of the earth are as a working place for humans, or as a vulnerable home in the unlivable universe.⁶⁵

Van Montfoort believes that humans need to acknowledge that they are part of the earth. Humans do not rule over it but instead are fellow residents. Yet, she warns that the image of the earth as a common home can also be used to promote patriarchal family values.

3.4 Evaluation

Even though Van Montfoort aims to discuss the Dutch ecotheological discourse in the third chapter of her book, not all theologians or theological works that she refers to are Dutch, even though they may be influential in Dutch theology. This is especially the case for *Laudato Si'*, which she discusses at length. Furthermore, in her discussion of the concepts, Van Montfoort presents an overview and evaluation of the theological discourse, which is theoretical in nature. Her claims are largely based on church documents and the thinking of various influential theologians. She does not necessarily pay attention to how these concepts are understood in more practical, everyday life contexts. Nevertheless, her discussion of the various approaches toward the concepts of nature, creation, and earth provides a useful context for the results of the content analysis in the next chapter. Particularly interesting for these results are the distinctions Van Montfoort makes in how different denominations approach these three concepts.

⁶⁴ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 168.

⁶⁵ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 178-9.

4 Analysis and Discussion

In this chapter, I will discuss the overall results of the content analysis of the websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups and compare them with Van Montfoort's observations. Only the codes that had a relationship with one of the keycodes in the top-ten results of the code co-occurrence table (see Appendix I) of more than half of the groups in the study have been included. The references to the web pages that back up the results and claims made in this chapter are found in Appendix II. The results are discussed and compared to Van Montfoort according to the order of nature-creation-earth.

4.1 Nature

Nature is generally used to refer to the collection of plants and animals, but also seas, deserts, rivers, etc. In many cases, nature is approached as a (living) entity, but sometimes, nature is personified. For example, LSAN cites Pope Francis who once said that "God always forgives, us people sometimes forgive, but nature never forgives. If you hit it, it will always hit back."⁶⁸ The personification of nature is not examined in Van Montfoort's discussion. Yet, it indicates that in some cases for the Christian Climate Active groups, nature is regarded as an active subject, not a passive object that humans rule over.

Often, the groups state that humans are part of and dependent on nature, but also with a special task to conserve and care for it. Especially for A Rocha this task is essential because they view it as the first task that God gave to humans, based on Genesis 1-2.⁶⁹ The task of conservation stands in contrast to the disrupting way in which humanity currently treats nature, a manner that is criticized by the groups. Even though nature used to be threatening to humans, this is now considered to be

⁶⁸ In Dutch: "God vergeeft altijd, wij mensen vergeven soms, maar de natuur vergeeft nooit. Als je die slaat, slaat ze altijd terug." Laudato Si' Alliantie Nederland, *Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans*, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Rozenkransgebed_rond_LS.pdf, 2.

⁶⁹ Dave Bookless, *De Identiteit van Christenen in Gods Schepping*, document, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/08/De-identiteit-van-christenen-in-Gods-schepping-Dave-Bookless.pdf>, 7.

an outdated view. Instead, humans should enjoy, discover, and wonder about nature.

The question can however be raised if this type of relationship between humans and nature truly portrays humans as a part of nature. In general, people taking care of other people is not regarded as caring for nature. Instead, conserving nature for most refers to, for example, taking care of a piece of land where plants can grow and animals can live.⁷⁰ The same is true for the encouragement to enjoy, discover, and wonder about nature, because the task is often interpreted as going to a park, forest, beach, etc. to watch trees and other plants and discover animals.⁷¹ So, in many cases humans are situated outside of nature, and the claim that humans are part of nature is not applied to these practices.

The relationship between God and nature is approached in several ways that can be categorized according to denominational background. For the Catholic LSAN, nature is a place where God can be found. This is not surprising, considering Catholic theology, which is not suspicious of associations between God and nature. GroeneKerken, as a Protestant group with ecumenical tendencies, approaches nature as a place of inspiration for faith and recognizes that natural phenomena can reveal something about God. It does however not endorse the view that God can be found in nature. Similarly, other Protestant groups express the idea that nature is a place of revelation of God, but not a place where God can be found. Only Micha expresses some reservation towards the connection between God and nature, arguing that the revelation of nature cannot be without God's revelation in history.

This shows that the influence of modernity in the Protestant tradition, with its separation between God and nature, is still visible if weaker. The fact that only one Climate Active group expresses a nuanced reservation towards the association between the two, speaks volumes. For most groups with Protestant origins, nature can be inspirational, or even a place of God's revelation. While nature is not seen as a place where God can be found, the contrast with e.g., Karl Barth, who resisted

⁷⁰ See, for example, "Werk mee met de landelijke natuurwerkdagen," A Rocha Nederland, last modified October 27, 2022, <https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/werk-mee-met-de-landelijke-natuurwerkdagen/>.

⁷¹ See, for example, GroeneKerken, "GroeneKerken webinar Schepping en natuur om de kerk – oktober 2020," October 20, 2020, video, 01:50-01:52, <https://vimeo.com/470231618>.

any association between God and nature almost a century ago, is staggering. Nature is clearly interpreted much more positively by the Climate Active groups. The conceptions of the Christian Climate Active groups about the relationship between God and nature are clearly similar to Van Montfoort's ideas. This alignment can be attributed to their shared objectives related to ecology.

The use of the term nature to describe a certain created order, such as the Catholic natural law, is found on the websites of the groups to a limited extent, namely only in Micha's documents. The concept is interpreted in contrast to the chaos at the beginning of Genesis 1, as well as in contrast to human-caused disruption of the order of nature resulting in climate change, such as floods and the reduction of available drinking water. The traditional moral elements that are found in the concept of natural law of the Catholic Church, or the Protestant created order, which as Van Montfoort states "give the semblance of obviousness" to culturally decided ideas that are not necessarily obvious, are not included.⁷² For that reason, Van Montfoort would probably not find Micha's interpretation problematic.

In short, the analyzed websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups portray a positive stance toward nature. Even though these groups in theory include humans in their interpretation of what nature encompasses, in practice they are often situated outside of the concept. Furthermore, the association between nature and God is not shunned as in traditional Protestant theology, but rather celebrated, even though Micha expresses a sense of reservation.

4.2 Creation

The groups under discussion generally consider creation to encompass everything. Often, this also includes physical reality outside of the earthly realm. Creation is mostly regarded as an object – the result of God's creative powers – that humans are a part of and dependent upon. This is rather consistent with Catholic and Protestant theology as discussed by Van Montfoort. Yet, the Catholic notion that human culture is also a part of creation, is not present on the websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups.

⁷² Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 167.

All groups express the idea that humans have the responsibility to care for creation. In many cases, this is related to the notion of stewardship. Striking is that this idea is even expressed on the website of the Catholic LSAN, even though stewardship is a predominantly Protestant concept.⁷³ Unlike Van Montfoort, who prefers not to use stewardship, the notion is not only utilized to argue that people must care for creation, but used even more widely than expected.

Creation care is also expressed in prayer. Some prayers for creation ask for those people who worsen climate change to change their mindsets, or for God to intervene. Other prayers ask to support the efforts of people who strive to better the world. There are also prayers for all creatures, including humans, that are suffering because of the ecological crisis. Among all groups, there is the idea that prayer can bring about improvement. For CCA particularly, prayer is also used as a sign to others. By praying in public – often in or near places where more climate destruction is brought about, such as airports – the prayer is not only directed to God but also to the bystanders. In this way, prayer becomes a means to peacefully protest.

All groups except Micha explicitly reject anthropocentrism and argue like Van Montfoort that instead of humans, God is central in creation. For Micha, separate mentions of creation and humanity suggest that humans occupy a special place in creation.⁷⁴ Yet, anthropocentric tendencies trickle down in the content of the other groups as well. For example, an A Rocha document expresses that salvation from God is only for humans, who will in turn then deliver creation. Romans 8:19, which states that “creation waits in eager longing for the revealing of the children of God” is used to support the idea that the saved humans will restore creation in the way that God intended creation to be.⁷⁵ Even though this interpretation includes salvation of non-human creation, humans are put in a higher and more central

⁷³ Van Montfoort, *Groene Theologie*, 143-7.

⁷⁴ Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, *Themapakket – Buitengewoon!*, document, accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Buitengewoon.pdf>, 17; Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, *Themapakket – Dag Schepping?*, document, accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Dag-schepping.pdf>, 10, 17.

⁷⁵ Bookless, *De Identiteit van Christenen*, 8.

position than the rest of creation, since the salvation for the non-human part of creation has to happen through humans.

A recurring element on the web pages of the groups is the idea that God is the Creator, and that creation, therefore, is His property. This emphasis results in a focus on the creative powers of God in the past, which is reinforced by the frequent references to the creation stories, specifically Genesis 1 and 2, often used to support the claim that humans have a duty to care for creation. Creation theology is, however, rarely positioned in opposition to evolution theory. This notion is only found once, namely in a document of A Rocha.⁷⁶ Notwithstanding Van Montfoort's assertion, the conflict of creation and evolution does not seem to be a significant issue among the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups. This is striking because most of these groups have a Protestant identity.

Sometimes, the groups express the idea that creation – as an act – is not limited to ‘the beginning’ but that creation continues because God maintains it. Other times, creation is used in the context of the future. Both types of eschatological interpretations of creation discussed by Van Montfoort, who has a critical standpoint towards them, are to a certain degree present among the groups. For CCA, realizing the ‘new creation’ is something that is accomplished in a collaboration of humans with God.⁷⁷ This is a variation of the model in which humans must realize the kingdom of God by themselves. By having humans collaborate with God, the risk that Van Montfoort cautions about, namely that the kingdom of God is characterized as a utopia, is averted. Other groups, like A Rocha, and Micha find hope in the idea that God – not humans – will renew and thus repair creation.⁷⁸ Jesus plays a central role in this hope, and especially Colossians 1:15-20 is referred to in this context to explain that Jesus will bring reconciliation and restoration during his second coming for all of creation, not only for humans. A

⁷⁶ Jeroen Sytsma, *Dino, Dodo en Dodaars*, document, October 4, 2009, <https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/03/Dino-dodo-en-dodaars-Jeroen-Sytsma-preek-over-Genesis-1.pdf>, 3-5.

⁷⁷ “Over ons,” CCA Nederland.

⁷⁸ Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, *Themapakket – Levenskunst*, document, accessed May 11, 2023, <https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Levenskunst.pdf>, 6, 21; Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, *Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!*, 10; Judith Westerink and A Rocha Nederland, *Goed Boeren: De Bijbel over Landbouw*, brochure, 2021, <https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2021/06/Brochure-Goed-Boeren.pdf>, 13.

Rocha and especially Micha, use the unilateral model, from creation (esp. Genesis) to the end times (esp. Revelation), criticized by Van Montfoort, to frame salvation and the coming of the kingdom of God. While, indeed, they may view the contemporary as a sort of interim, this does not mean that these groups take a passive stance toward creation. On the contrary, these groups take a very active role in the fight against its destruction and strive for a better world, even before the kingdom of God has arrived. So, while Van Montfoort's warnings about eschatological interpretations of creation are not misplaced, the conceptions of these Climate Active groups show that such interpretations can still be effectively used in environmental action.

In summary, creation is generally considered to encompass all of material reality. For all groups, care for creation is essential, and the notion of stewardship in this context remains popular. Furthermore, while the groups generally explicitly reject anthropocentrism, its influence has not vanished. Striking are the discoveries that creation theology in the context of ecology is used in both the Catholic and the Protestant groups, and that the issue of creation versus evolution is almost nonexistent for these groups. Finally, especially the groups with evangelical origins express eschatological unilateral views of creation on their websites, while Van Montfoort criticizes these views.

4.3 Earth

The description of the earth as 'our common home' from the *Laudato Si'* encyclical, has become a popular way to describe the earth. While only LSAN repeatedly uses the phrase, all other groups, including the Protestant ones, use it at least once on their websites. This demonstrates that Van Montfoort's preference for this description is widely shared and that the encyclical has influenced not only Catholic and ecumenical organizations, but also Protestant ones.

For a large part, the concept earth is written about and used in a similar way to creation. It is generally seen as created by God and God's property. Furthermore, the role of humans is to care for it, and most Protestant groups relate this task to the notion of stewardship. What is not the case with the concept of creation is that some documents on the websites of A Rocha and Micha endorse the view that it is

humanity's God-given task to rule over the earth. By defining *to rule* as serving as Jesus did, this idea is related to care for the earth.⁷⁹ As discussed above, the view that regards humans as rulers of the earth can be traced back to modernity. A Rocha and Micha, though, have nuanced this view and reject the idea that humans should subjugate the earth.

The groups occasionally personify the earth by presenting it as a living entity that testifies to God's might, feeds, and/or carries humans. This idea is most prominently portrayed on the websites of the groups that have Roman Catholic or ecumenical origins, namely LSAN, GroeneKerken, and CCA, and often in the context of the Canticle of the Sun of Francis of Assisi, which refers to the earth as "Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who produces various fruits (...)".⁸⁰ LSAN also personifies the earth by stating that the earth is poor and suffering. This idea is derived from the *Laudato Si'* encyclical §2, liberation theology, and Romans 8:22.⁸¹

The term "earth" is often found in a phrase together with "heaven." The expression "heaven and earth" is used in the Bible to refer to the whole of creation.⁸² That is also the most common way in which the groups apply the phrase, largely because the phrase is most often found in citations or references to the Bible, such as the creation stories in Genesis, the Lord's prayer, or the promise of "a new heaven and a new earth" in Revelation 21:1. The latter is used in several fashions. For A Rocha and Micha, the promise is seen as a reason for hope for the earth and a reason to restore humanity's relationship with the earth. CCA, however, warns

⁷⁹ Westerink and A Rocha Nederland, *Goed Boeren*, 17; Bookless, *De Identiteit van Christenen*, 5; Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, *Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!*, 8-10.

⁸⁰ Regis J. Armstrong, J. A. Wayne Hellmann, and William J. Short, *Francis of Assisi - The Saint: Early Documents, Vol. 1: Early Documents* (New York: New City Press, 1999), 114.

⁸¹ Rom. 8:22: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning together as it suffers together the pains of labor".

⁸² Michael B. Hundley, "Heaven and Earth," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Theology*, ed. Samuel E. Balentine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), <https://www-oxfordreference-com.tilburguniversity.idm.oclc.org/view/10.1093/acref/obso/9780199858699.001.0001/acref-9780199858699-e-98>.

that such a hope may lead people to refrain from taking responsibility and making changes in their lives.⁸³

The phrase “heaven and earth” is however not limited to the Bible. Particularly interesting is an article on the website of CCA, which cites a translation of a verse from the Qur’an: “The creation of the heavens and the earth is certainly greater than the re-creation of humankind, but most people do not know” (40:57).⁸⁴ While this verse is cited in the context of an interreligious service, it seems to be inspirational enough to be fully cited in the article. From this can be concluded that CCA’s source of inspiration is not necessarily limited to the Bible and Christianity.⁸⁵

A Rocha, remarkably, also uses the two terms to indicate a contrast. For example, A Rocha refers to a song that expresses a “longing to be freed from earthly existence and to go home, to the heavenly.”⁸⁶ Heaven is interpreted more positively, associated with salvation, while the earth is interpreted more negatively, as a place where salvation is needed.⁸⁷ Contrariwise, a document on the website of Micha explains that such dualism has Greek origins, rejects the view, and argues that the earthly is worth just as much.⁸⁸

Jesus is related to both the earth and creation in similar ways. They are discussed together here, and the two terms can be considered interchangeable in this paragraph. Widespread among the groups is the idea that Jesus is an example for humanity. He serves as a source of inspiration to properly care for the earth. Prominent as well is the notion that the earth was created by God through Jesus and that Jesus suffered for all of creation on the cross. In the documents of A Rocha and

⁸³ “Brief aan scriba en moderamen PKN,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, last modified October 4, 2021, <https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/acties/brief-aan-scriba-en-moderamen-pkn/>.

⁸⁴ The Qur’an 40:57, translated by Dr. Mustafa Khattab, <https://quran.com/40?startingVerse=57>.

⁸⁵ Margot, “Paradijs op aarde: de Klimaatmars,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, last modified November 7, 2021, <https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/blogs/paradijs-op-aarde-de-klimaatmars/>.

⁸⁶ “Opeens klinkt er het sterke verlangen door om maar verlost te worden van dat aardse bestaan en naar huis te gaan, naar het hemelse.” Embert Messelink, *Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping*, lecture, November 30, 2017, <https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/03/Recht-doen-en-zorg-voor-de-schepping-Embert-Messelink.pdf>, 3.

⁸⁷ Messelink, *Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping*, 2.

⁸⁸ Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, *Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!*, 20.

Micha, there is a striking focus on the role of Jesus in eschatology. He is the fulfillment of creation and will restore the earth/creation. Jesus' resurrection was the beginning of the new creation, and he knows what the new earth/creation will be like. However, overall, Jesus' relationship to the earth and creation in the concept analysis does not uncover much about the conceptions of the groups of these two key concepts.

To sum up, the description of the earth as a common home has been popularized and appears among all groups. Earth is sometimes personified, particularly among the Catholic and ecumenical groups. The earth is used together with "heaven" most often in the context of the Bible, and in many cases, it refers to the whole of creation. Regarding the earth's relationship to God and humans, the conceptualization is like that of creation, with God as creator and owner, and humans as caretakers.

4.4 Interrelationship of Nature, Creation, and Earth

The interrelationship between nature, creation, and earth is defined in multiple ways. The previous discussion already indicates that creation is interpreted to include the earth and nature. The earth is generally considered to be the planet, often with everything that lives on it, and nature is regarded to include parts of creation and the earth. Thus, the concepts could be ordered as follows: creation > earth > nature.

Yet, in many cases, the terms are used interchangeably. For creation and earth, this is especially visible in the combination of "heaven and earth" as synonym for creation. This can be explained by the fact that the phrase is used in the Bible to refer to all of existence, similar to the general understanding of the term creation. The earth as a standalone term is also used interchangeably with creation on the websites of the groups, predominantly to alternate terms in a sentence or paragraph. The analysis above has also shown that there are many similarities in how the concepts of earth and creation are applied. This is especially noticeable in statements about how humans relate to the earth/creation, as well as how God relates to the earth/creation. In some cases, nature and creation are also used interchangeably. This applies particularly to cases where creation is used to refer to its non-human part. Creation care is often expressed in practice as care for nature.

The concepts of nature and earth are rarely interchanged and the two concepts have no significant interrelation in the concept analysis of the websites.

4.5 Discussion

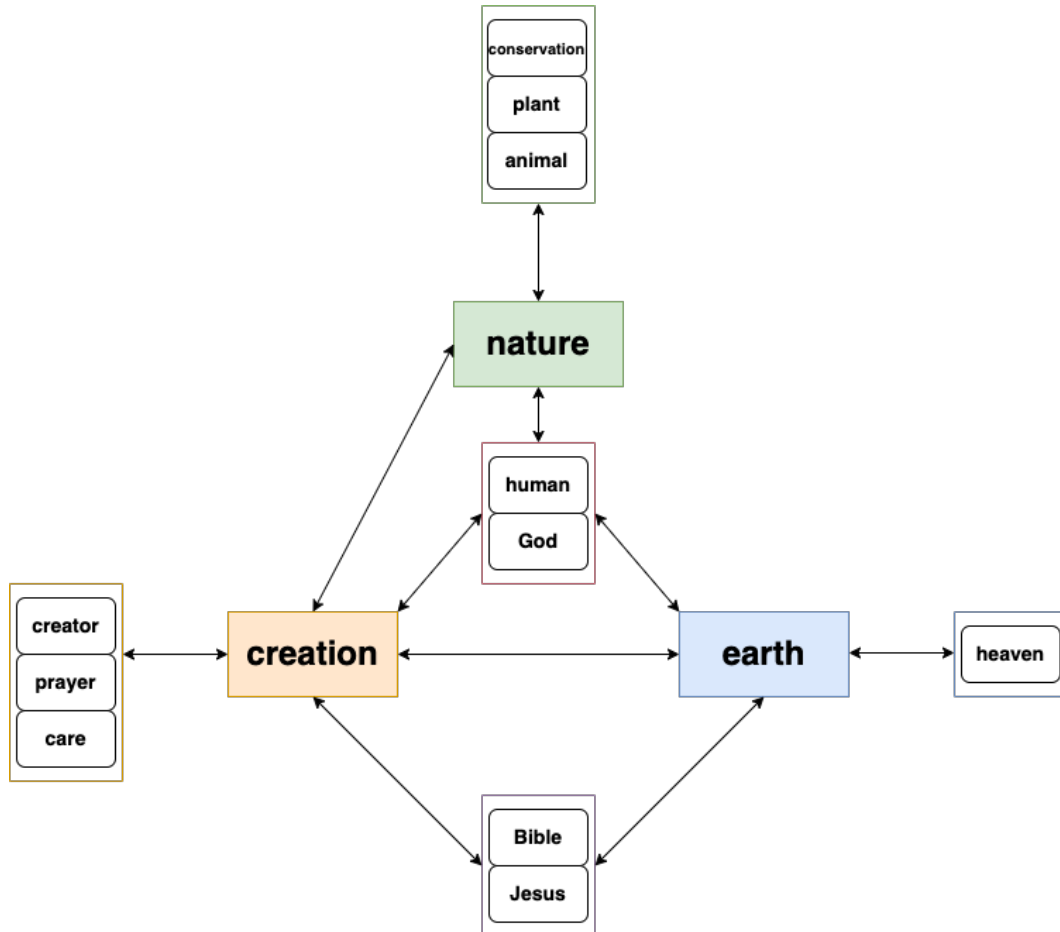


Figure 2: Diagram representing the main results of the content analysis.

The results of the content analysis have been made visible in the diagram above (Figure 2). The diagram shows clearly that creation and earth are used in more theological contexts on the analyzed websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, exemplified by the relationships with codes such as “creator” and “prayer” (with creation), “heaven” (with earth), and “Bible” and “Jesus” (with both creation and earth). Nature, however, is more often used to refer to physical reality and practice, exemplified by the relationships with the codes “conservation”, “plant”, and “animal”.

Striking is that all key codes have relationships with the codes “God” and “human”, which are the two other concepts that Van Montfoort discusses in her book. With this, her suggestion that these two concepts are also important and lead to debates in the Dutch Christian ecotheological discourse can be confirmed. After all, many of the different approaches toward the key concepts discussed above can be related to the various interpretations about the relationship between God, humans, and nature/creation/earth. That is also true for the discussion about to what extent God is involved in the climate crisis, especially in the context of eschatology, the question this thesis began with.

4.5.1 God and the Climate Crisis: After Us No Flood!

In this chapter, I discussed how the concepts of nature, creation, and earth function on the metalevel. The following case serves as a specific example of how God, the climate crisis, and eschatology are combined, namely a flyer on the homepage of the website of CCA Nederland.

NA ONS GEEN ZONDVLOED!

“Als we de Bijbel serieus nemen, zouden we vooraan in de rij staan om klimaatactie af te dwingen.” - Katharine Hayhoe

Christian Climate Action is een actiegroep die vanuit christelijke overtuiging opkomt voor klimaat-rechtvaardigheid. Rechtvaardigheid voor de schepping die ernstig lijdt onder menselijk misbruik, en voor de allerarmsten die het minst bijdroegen aan het ontstaan van de klimaatcrisis, maar de gevolgen ervan als eerste ondergaan. Wij doen dit onder andere door voorlichting te geven en vreedzame acties te organiseren.

**Wil jij klimaatactie voeren vanuit een gedeeld geloof?
Doe met ons mee, voor of achter de schermen!**

Van deelname aan vreedzame burgerlijke ongehoorzaamheidsacties tot het schrijven van teksten en het maken van creatieve buttons en spandoeken; iedereen is nodig, iedereen is welkom!

www.christianclimateaction.nl
welkom@christianclimateaction.nl



Figure 3: CCA Flyer, in “Welkom,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, <https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/>.

After us no flood!, written on top of the flyer (Figure 3) as well as on several other subpages on the website of CCA Nederland, is a variation on the French expression *après nous, le déluge* [after us, the flood]. The origin of the saying is found with Mme Pompadour, the mistress of King Louis XV. The phrase was popularized as *après moi, le déluge*, and while it is often linked to the French Revolution, it was

already in use at least twenty years before that.⁸⁹ The proverb is also used in the Dutch language, expressing that one should not worry about what happens later.⁹⁰ CCA reverses the message, stating that one should worry about later events, with which they mean climate change.

The use of the phrase in a protest for the climate is striking because the phrase refers to the biblical story of the Flood in Genesis 6-9. The story is particularly important in Christian theology because of the covenant that God made with humans and animals: that “never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth” (Gen. 9:11). From this perspective, *after us no flood* can also be interpreted to mean that humans can trust God that the earth will not be destroyed again. However troublesome or pressing the issue is, there is hope in God’s promise for life, symbolized by the dove carrying young leaves (Gen. 8:11) on the background of the flyer. On the one hand, this understanding may express the idea that there is no need for action, which does not align with the mission of CCA. On the other hand, as suggested by Old Testament Scholar Gert Kwakkel, God’s covenant portrays how much God cares for the earth. As images of God, humans should follow Him and care for the earth, and not cause a flood themselves.⁹¹

In this example, God is entirely detached from the cause of the climate crisis and its accompanying symptoms. This clear distinction sharply contrasts with the example presented in the introduction of this thesis, where God is not directly implicated as the cause of the crisis, but an insinuation is made that God may be connected to its symptoms. By emphasizing human responsibility, the approach taken by CCA Nederland represents the perspective of the Dutch Christian Climate Active Groups more accurately.

⁸⁹ Michael Sonenscher, *Before the Deluge: Public Debt, Inequality, and the Intellectual Origins of the French Revolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 10.

⁹⁰ *Dikke Van Dale*, s.v. “zondvloed (n.),” accessed July 11, 2023, <https://zoeken.vandale.nl/?dictionaryId=gwn&article=%7B%22search%22%3A%22zondvloed%22,%22index%22%3A0,%22type%22%3A%22EXACT%22,%22dictionaryId%22%3A%22gwn%22%7D&query=zondvloed>.

⁹¹ Gert Kwakkel, “Genesis 9: na ons (g)een zondvloed?,” *debijbel.nl*, last modified October 17, 2019, <https://debijbel.nl/bericht/genesis-9-na-ons-geen-zondvloed>.

4.5.2 *Evaluation*

While humans causing the climate crisis is something that all Dutch Christian Climate Active groups agree on, not all the results discussed above necessarily apply to all groups. Because the results are based on code co-occurrences of the analyses of websites that occur among the websites of over half of these groups, they denote general tendencies. However, in some instances, the code co-occurrence table of one group exhibited significant differences when compared to the tables of the other groups. Particularly noteworthy are CCA Nederland and, to a lesser extent, Climate Stewards, which appear as outliers (see Appendix I). The divergence in the case of Climate Stewards, especially in the “earth” category, can largely be attributed to the limited amount of content on its website. On the other hand, CCA Nederland’s deviation from the general tendencies can predominantly be explained by the group’s activist-oriented objective, which sets it apart from the other groups that primarily focus on providing information, inspiration, and practical aid. Consequently, the type of content found on CCA Nederland’s website is different.

Furthermore, the analysis revealed a variety of approaches even within the groups themselves, where subtle variations were observed on their respective websites. While the differences are minor, they do exist and can be attributed to the diverse range of authors that write the articles and documents. Given that this thesis focuses on general tendencies, these differences do not significantly impact the overall results. However, it is essential to acknowledge and consider these variations when conducting more detailed comparisons between the groups. Nevertheless, through the content analysis, I have been able to disclose how the concepts of nature, creation, and earth are generally approached on the websites of Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, and how these relate to Van Montfoort’s discussion on the Dutch ecotheological discourse.

5 Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is threefold. Firstly, it presents and assesses Van Montfoort's discussion of the various approaches towards nature, creation, and earth, which serves as the theoretical framework for the analysis and discussion in Chapter 4 (Chapter 3). Secondly, it examines the ways in which Dutch Christian Climate Active Groups use these concepts on their websites, utilizing content analysis (Chapter 4). Lastly, it explores the relationship between Van Montfoort's discussion of the Dutch ecotheological discourse regarding nature, creation, and earth, and the approaches of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups (Chapter 4).

This brings us back to the research question: how do the interpretations of the concepts of nature, creation, and earth among Dutch Christian Climate Active groups, based on their websites, relate to the different ways in which these concepts are used in the Dutch ecotheological discourse as described by Van Montfoort? In general, the ambiguity toward the concepts of nature, creation, and earth that Van Montfoort discusses, also appears in the use of the terms on the websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups. The emphasis, however, sometimes shifts. This is particularly visible in the positive stance towards nature and its associations with God, in contrast to the negative stance of modernity and influential theologians such as Karl Barth towards nature as argued by Van Montfoort. The fact that some results of the content analysis differ from the discussion in Van Montfoort, can largely be explained by the missions and perspectives of these groups. Most of the theological voices discussed do not apply the environmental perspective to theology that Van Montfoort herself, as well as the groups, use. The groups' approaches towards nature, creation, and earth are quite similar to Van Montfoort's own perspective because both have environmental aims.

But not all approaches of the groups correspond to Van Montfoort's ideas. In fact, notions that Van Montfoort is critical of are expressed on the groups' websites. This includes the use of stewardship to indicate care for the earth/creation, and the notion of salvation history as a unilateral model. Two striking results differ from Van Montfoort's assertions. One is the discovery that creation theology in the

context of ecology is not limited to the Catholic groups but is also widespread among the groups with Protestant backgrounds. This can be explained by the fact that Van Montfoort refers to theological literature, while in practice, denominational demarcations seem to be more blurred. Another is that the opposition of creation versus evolution is not an issue for most of the groups, since only one webpage out of almost three hundred discusses this matter.

Even though it falls outside the scope of this thesis to extensively examine the differences between the interpretations of the groups, in general, their ecotheologies seem to be quite similar. The main differences between the conceptions can either be traced back to the different denominational backgrounds of the groups, or the different missions of the groups. For further research, it would be interesting to compare the groups in a more detailed fashion and let the use and exegesis of certain parts of the Bible inform this comparison.¹⁰¹

Moreover, while this thesis has focused particularly on how concepts function in the textual realm, there is also a visual side to this issue that falls outside the scope of this thesis. For instance, the logo of CCA Nederland (see Figure 3) presents an intriguing symbol warranting analysis. Other groups also frequently employ visual imagery on their websites. Consequently, investigating the visual representations of nature, creation, and earth on the websites of Dutch Christian Climate Active groups could be an interesting avenue for future research.

¹⁰¹ See Appendix III.

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Appendix I: Code Co-occurrence Tables

The content analysis of the websites of the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups was done in *Atlas.ti*. Each group had a separate file containing all the downloaded web pages of its website. The content on the web pages about nature, creation, and earth was labeled with codes. For example, a paragraph that referred to Genesis to explain that God created the earth, would get the key code “earth”, and the codes “God”, “Creator” and “Bible”.

After this was done for every group, with the help of the code co-occurrence table, an analysis could be conducted to examine the relationships between the different codes. In this study, I focused on the relationships between the key codes (nature, creation, and earth) with the other codes. The following tables (Figures 4-6) show the top ten results of the code co-occurrence tables from *Atlas.ti* for each of the key codes. They are in Dutch because the content analysis was conducted in Dutch. In many cases, the code co-occurrence tables contained many more results. However, I decided to focus on the relationships between codes that were the strongest. The results in the tables below are ordered according to the strength of the relationship between the key code and the other code, expressed in a number between 0-1. In some cases, more than ten results are shown. In this case, the tenth spot was a tie for multiple codes.

The codes in bold are the codes that are found in more than half of the top ten code co-occurrence tables of all groups. These are the codes that are discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis, and these are also the codes that are portrayed in the diagram of Figure 2. The emphasis of the content analysis is on these codes because these codes denote the more general tendencies of how nature, creation, and earth are understood by the Dutch Christian Climate Active groups on their websites. The other results in the code co-occurrence tables could be used to examine how the approaches of the groups differ.

	A Rocha	CCA	Climate Stewar	GroeneKerken	LSAN	Micha
● natuur	○ beheer 0,20	○ Franciscus van Assisi 0,29	○ Bijbel 0,20	● schepping 0,15	○ mens 0,18	○ mens 0,14
	● schepping 0,12	○ wereld 0,23	○ mens 0,19	○ planten 0,12	○ klimaat 0,16	○ God 0,10
	○ Onderwijs 0,10	○ mens 0,17	○ biodiversiteit 0,19	○ geloof 0,10	○ gemeenschap 0,13	● schepping 0,09
	○ mens 0,10	○ afhankelijkheid 0,14	○ klimaat 0,18	○ mens 0,10	○ God 0,12	○ dier 0,09
	○ lokale groepen en vrijwilligers 0,10	○ moeder 0,14	○ crisis 0,13	○ God 0,09	○ verbondenheid 0,10	○ bijbel 0,08
	○ dieren 0,09	○ schade 0,14	○ planten 0,13	○ dieren 0,09	○ gebruik 0,09	○ zorg 0,07
	○ Verwondering en ontdekking 0,09	○ vrede 0,14	○ uitputting 0,13	○ duurzaamheid 0,08	○ armoede 0,07	○ rust 0,06
	○ planten 0,09	○ verbondenheid 0,13	○ water 0,12	● aarde 0,05	○ Franciscus van Assisi 0,07	○ Jezus 0,05
	○ God 0,09	○ zuster 0,13	○ dieren 0,12	○ milieu 0,04	○ Jezus 0,07	○ beheer/behoud 0,04
	○ geloof 0,09	○ milieu 0,13	○ God 0,11	○ behouden 0,04		○ dreiging 0,04
	○ zorg 0,09			○ tuin 0,04		○ verwondering 0,04
				○ voedsel 0,04		○ klimaat 0,04
				○ recht 0,04		

Figure 2: Code co-occurrence table for nature.

	A Rocha	CCA	Climate Stewart	GroeneKerken	LSAN	Micha
● schepping	○ God 0,37	○ behoud 0,17	○ God 0,45	○ God 0,23	○ God 0,26	○ God 0,38
	○ zorg 0,25	○ God 0,16	○ zorg 0,19	● natuur 0,15	○ gebed 0,15	○ bijbel 0,17
	○ mens 0,16	○ rechtvaardigheid 0,15	○ Bijbel 0,18	○ duurzaamheid 0,14	○ behoud 0,13	○ mens 0,17
	○ Gods eigendom 0,15	○ bidden 0,12	○ mens 0,18	○ zorg 0,11	○ mens 0,12	○ zorg 0,13
	○ bijbel 0,13	○ liefde 0,10	○ stem 0,16	● aarde 0,10	○ Jezus 0,10	● natuur 0,09
	● natuur 0,12	○ vreedzaam 0,10	○ klimaat 0,09	○ verbondenheid 0,09	○ menselijke waardigheid 0,09	○ Jezus 0,08
	● aarde 0,11	○ schade 0,10	● natuur 0,09	○ Bijbel 0,09	○ zorg 0,09	● aarde 0,08
	○ dieren 0,10	○ mens 0,10	○ actie 0,06	○ vieren 0,07	○ Bijbel 0,09	○ schepper 0,07
	○ liefde 0,09	○ viering 0,09	○ schepper 0,06	○ recht 0,07	○ bezinning 0,08	○ gebed 0,07
	○ Jezus 0,09	○ christenen 0,09	○ liefde 0,06	○ geloof 0,07	○ Schepper 0,07	○ dier 0,06
					○ verantwoordelijkheid 0,07	

Figure 3: Code co-occurrence table for creation.

	A Rocha	CCA	Climate Stewart	GroeneKerken	LSAN	Micha
● aarde	○ mens 0,23	○ opwarming aarde 0,21	○ droogte 0,50	○ God 0,21	○ armoede 0,14	○ God 0,21
	○ God 0,22	○ leefbaar 0,17	○ bewoners 0,25	○ Bijbel 0,14	○ mens 0,11	○ mens 0,16
	○ Jezus 0,17	○ hemel 0,13	○ opwarming 0,25	○ mens 0,10	○ Bijbel 0,11	○ bijbel 0,12
	○ vernieuwing 0,15	○ mens 0,13	○ bodem 0,17	● schepping 0,10	○ gebed 0,10	○ hemel 0,09
	○ bijbel 0,14	○ armen/kwetsbaren 0,12	○ water 0,17	○ hemel 0,09	○ schreeuw 0,09	● schepping 0,08
	○ dieren 0,14	● natuur 0,11	○ stem 0,11	○ duurzaamheid 0,08	○ gemeenschappelijk huis 0,09	○ dier 0,07
	● schepping 0,11	○ Franciscus van Assisi 0,08	○ Bijbel 0,09	○ klimaat 0,06	○ Jezus 0,09	○ klimaat 0,06
	○ schepper 0,11	○ plant 0,08		○ verbondenheid 0,05	○ God 0,09	○ zorg 0,06
	○ (mede-)schepselen 0,10	○ ecosysteem 0,07		○ planten 0,05	○ hemel 0,08	○ opwarming 0,06
	○ hemel 0,10	○ zelf schuldig 0,07		○ Schepper 0,05	○ zuster 0,06	○ Jezus 0,06
				○ zorg 0,05	○ verbondenheid 0,06	
				○ geloof 0,05		
				● natuur 0,05		

Figure 4: Code co-occurrence table for earth.

Appendix II: Examples to Support Claims Ch. 4

Nature	
Claim	Support examples
Nature consists of plants, animals, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Organiseer een wandeling,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/toolkit/beleving/organiseer-een-wandeling/. • Jeroen Sytsma, <i>Hoe talrijk zijn uw werken, Heer</i>, document, April 2011, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/08/Psalm-104-Jeroen-Sytsma.pdf, 2. • Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Rozenkransgebed_rond_LS.pdf, 3. • Margriet Bos, “Nieuwe kernwapens in Nederland? 6 augustus 2020 – 75 jaar na Hiroshima,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, August 6, 2020, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/blogs/actie-tegen-kernwapens-6-augustus-2020/2/.
Humans are part of nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dave Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen in Gods Schepping</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/08/De-identiteit-van-christenen-in-Gods-schepping-Dave-Bookless.pdf, 8. • GroeneKerken, “GroeneKerken webinar Schepping en natuur om de kerk – oktober 2020,” October 20, 2020, video, 07:58-08:04, https://vimeo.com/470231618. • Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, <i>Leven in gemeenschap met alle schepselen</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Vert._Meditatie_3_LS_def.pdf, 2.
Humans are dependent on nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Bidden voor biodiversiteit,” A Rocha Nederland, last modified December 7, 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/bidden-voor-biodiversiteit/. • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen</i>, 8. • Bos, “Nieuwe kernwapens in Nederland?.”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?</i>, document, accessed May 11, 2023, https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Dag-schepping.pdf, 20. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Levenskunst</i>, document, accessed May 11, 2023, https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Levenskunst.pdf, 4. • Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, <i>De tuin der wereld bewerken en bewaren</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Vert._Meditatie_6_LS_def.pdf. • Margot, “Paradijs op aarde: de Klimaatmars,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, last modified November 7, 2021, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/blogs/paradijs-op-aarde-de-klimaatmars/. • Trinus Hoekstra, <i>Preek</i>, document, February 2, 2018, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Johannes-2-Twello-4-2-18.pdf, 3.
Humans have task to conserve nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Boekentips,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/toolkit/hoe-krijg-je-de-kerk-in-beweging/boekentips/. • “Wat we doen,” A Rocha Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/home/watdoenwe/. • A Rocha Nederland, “A Rocha in Canada,” <i>Nieuwsbrief A Rocha Nederland</i>, December 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2023/02/Nieuwsbrief_december_2022.pdf, 8. • Bookless, <i>De identiteit van Christenen</i>, 6-7. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 8. • Stefan Paas, <i>Spelen met walvissen</i>, document, November 22, 2009, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/08/Spelen-met-walvissen-Stefan-Paas-gecorrigeerde-versie.pdf, 4.
Criticism of human	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “A Rocha loopt mee met klimaatmars op 19 juni,” A Rocha Nederland, last modified June 14, 2022,

<p>behavior towards nature</p>	<p>https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/a-rocha-loopt-mee-met-klimaatmars-op-19-juni/.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “IPCC: wat is het en waarom is het belangrijk?,” Micha Nederland, accessed May 11, 2023, https://www.michanederland.nl/ipcc2023/. • “Plastic Free February: een maand zonder plastic,” A Rocha Nederland, January 12, 2023, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/plastic-free-february-2023/. • Arie Trouwborst, <i>Heersen over de schepping = dienen in liefde!</i>, document, October 3, 2021, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2021/11/Preek-van-de-leek-door-Arie-Trouwborst.pdf, 3, 8. • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen</i>, 6. • Bos, “Nieuwe kernwapens in Nederland? 6 augustus 2020 – 75 jaar na Hiroshima,” CCA Nederland. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 8, 11. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 2. • LSAN, <i>Leven in gemeenschap met alle schepselen</i>, 1. • Marjolein Tiemens-Hulscher, <i>Laudato Si’ Wandeling</i>, document, April 2020, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Laudato_Si_wandeling_pdf.pdf, 2. • Paas, <i>Spelen met walvissen</i>, 4. • Pater Richard Lobo SVD, <i>Kruisweg</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Kruisweg-Schepping.pdf, 1.
<p>Humans should enjoy nature</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ontdek de Schepping: de natuur in met bijbelklassen,” A Rocha Nederland, last modified November 23, 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/ontdek-de-schepping-natuurlessen-voor-bijbelklassen/. • “Organiseer een wandeling,” GroeneKerken. • “Wat we doen,” A Rocha Nederland. • A Rocha Nederland, “A Rocha in Canada”. • A Rocha Nederland, “Wildplukken maakt mijn verbinding met de schepping sterker,” <i>Nieuwsbrief A Rocha Nederland</i>, December 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2023/02/Nieuwsbrief_december_2022.pdf, 4-5.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Levenskunst</i>, 4. • Embert Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, lecture, November 30, 2017, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/03/Recht-doen-en-zorg-voor-de-schepping-Embert-Messelink.pdf, 5. • Paas, <i>Spelen met walvissen</i>, 6. • Petra Crofton, “Kinderen zijn (verwarde) klimaatkanjers,” Climate Stewards, august 2022, https://www.climatestewards.nl/kinderen-zijn-verwarde-klimaatkanjers/. • Tiemens-Hulscher, <i>Laudato Si’ Wandeling</i>, 2.
Personification of nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gesprekshandleiding toespraak Reinier van den Berg,” GroeneKerken, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Gesprekshandleiding-bij-toespraak-Reinier-van-den-Berg.pdf, 2. • Dave Bookless, “Luister naar de stem van de schepping,” Climate Stewards, August, 2022, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.climatestewards.nl/luister-naar-de-stem-van-de-schepping/. • Jeroen Sytsma, <i>Dino, Dodo en Dodaars</i>, document, October 4, 2009, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2016/03/Dino-dodo-en-dodaars-Jeroen-Sytsma-preek-over-Genesis-1.pdf, 7. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 2. • Sytsma, <i>Hoe talrijk zijn uw werken, Heer</i>, 4.
Nature is where God can be found	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Meditaties,” <i>Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland</i>, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/verdiep-en-verander/meditaties/. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 3. • Tiemens-Hulscher, <i>Laudato Si’ Wandeling</i>, 14.
Nature is place of revelation of God	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Nieuw boek van Jaap Oosterhuis: ‘Dagboek voor natuurliefhebbers,’” A Rocha Nederland, last modified August 30, 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/dagboek-voor-natuurliefhebbers/. • “Organiseer een wandeling,” GroeneKerken. • Bookless, “Luister naar de Stem van de Schepping.” • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, document, accessed May 11, 2023,

	<p>https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Verwondering.pdf, 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GroeneKerken, “Duurzaamheid en Diaconie,” November 7, 2020, video, 24:57-25:13 and 25:38-25:45, https://youtu.be/Glyp2ybvAVg. • Paas, <i>Spelen met walvissen</i>. • Sytsma, <i>Dino, Dodo en Dodaars</i>, 7.
Distrust towards God-nature relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 4.
Natural order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 4-6, 17. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Buitengewoon!</i>, document, accessed May 11, 2023, https://www.michanederland.nl/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/Themapakket-Buitengewoon.pdf, 17.

Creation	
Claim	Support examples
Creation as everything that is created	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Materialen,” A Rocha Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.arocha.nl/kerken-en-schepping/materialen/. • Hannah Hereward, “Mijn PhD compenseren,” Climate Stewards, December, 2022, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.climatestewards.nl/mijn-phd-compenseren/. • Hoekstra, <i>Preek</i>, 1. • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 2-3. • Sytsma, <i>Hoe talrijk zijn uw werken, Heer</i>, 3. • Verdiep en verander,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/verdiep-en-verander/. • Westerink and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 14.
Humans are part of and dependent upon creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Bidden voor biodiversiteit,” A Rocha Nederland, last modified December 7, 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/bidden-voor-biodiversiteit/.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Wat is een Groene Kerk,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.groenekerken.nl/over-groenekerken/wat-is-een-groene-kerk/. • Bookless, “Luister naar de Stem van de Schepping”. • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen in Gods Schepping</i>, 8; • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 9. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Levenskunst</i>, 25. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 5. • LSAN, <i>Leven in gemeenschap met alle schepselen</i>, 1. • Westerink and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 11, 17-18.
Humans have task to care for creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “IPCC,” Micha Nederland. • “Laudato Si’ in zeven kernwoorden,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/downloads/laudato-si-in-zeven-kernwoorden/. • Admin, “Pleidooi Frits ter Kuile in de rechtbank na Schipholprotest: ‘We koersen zo op uitsterven,’” Christian Climate Action Nederland, June 16, 2022, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/acties/pleidooi-frits-ter-kuile-in-de-rechtbank-na-schipholprotest-we-koersen-zo-op-uitsterven/. • Ethel White, “De bodem: modder of mysterie?,” Climate Stewards, April, 2022, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.climatestewards.nl/bodem-modder-of-mysterie/. • GroeneKerken, <i>Kerkenmateriaal Groengelovig 2021: De toekomst van de aarde (2)</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Groengelovig-Kringmateriaal-Toekomstvdaarde_3.pdf, 1. • Kirsten, “Christelijke klimaatactivisten voeren actie bij BAM,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, May 23, 2022, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/acties/christelijke-klimaatactivisten-voeren-actie-bij-bam/. • Trouwborst, <i>Heersen over de schepping</i>, 2.

Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Gesprekshandleiding toespraak Reinier van den Berg,” GroeneKerken, 2. • “Over GroeneKerken,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.groenekerken.nl/over-groenekerken/. • “Verdiep en Verander,” LSAN. • Age Fennema, “Verwonderen, Luisteren, Verbinden,” <i>Nieuwsbrief A Rocha Nederland</i>, December 2022, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2023/02/Nieuwsbrief_december_2022.pdf, 3. • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen</i>, 7-8. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Buitengewoon!</i>, 5, 30. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 3, 8, 10. • GroeneKerken, “Duurzaamheid en Diaconie,” November 7, 2020, video, 17:27-17:35, https://youtu.be/Glyp2ybvAVg. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 6. • Trouwborst, <i>Heersen over de schepping</i>, 3, 8. • Westerink and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 31.
Prayers for creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Bidden voor biodiversiteit,” A Rocha Nederland. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Buitengewoon!</i>, 16. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 15-16. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 15. • GroeneKerken, <i>Kerkenmateriaal Groengelovig 2021: De toekomst van de aarde (1)</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Groengelovig-Kringmateriaal-Aardeningeloof_2.pdf, 2. • GroeneKerken, <i>Meditatief boetseren</i>, document, September, 2019, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/GI-Download-1_-_Meditatief-boetseren-1.pdf, 2. • Kirsten, “Christian Climate Action blokkeert ExxonMobil en houdt een gebedsviering: “We staan op voor de

	<p>schepping,”” Christian Climate Action Nederland, last modified May 20, 2022, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/agenda/acties/christian-climate-action-blokkeert-exxonmobil-en-houdt-een-gebedsviering-we-staan-op-voor-de-schepping/.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kirsten, “Gebed voor de schepping,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, last modified December 4, 2022, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/agenda/vieringen/gebed-voor-de-schepping/. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 1. • Pater Richard Lobo SVD, <i>Kruisweg</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Kruisweg-Schepping.pdf, 18. • Ton van Leur, “Voorbede voor duurzaamheid voor het weekend van 1 en 2 april 2023,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/downloads/voorbede-watertekort-en-landbouw/.
Anthropocentrism rejected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen</i>, 1, 5-6, 8. • GroeneKerken, “GroeneKerken webinar Schepping en natuur om de kerk – oktober 2020,” 07:16-08:04. • Paas, <i>Spelen met walvissen</i>, 4-5. • Sytsma, <i>Dino, Dodo en Dodaars</i>, 6-7. • Tiemens-Hulscher, <i>Laudato Si’ Wandeling</i>, 2. • Trouwborst, <i>Heersen over de schepping</i>, 3, 5.
Creation is God’s property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Micha Manifest,” Micha Nederland, accessed May 11, 2023, https://www.michanederland.nl/michanederland/manifest/. • “Over GroeneKerken,” GroeneKerken. • “Over ons,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/about/. • Bookless, “Luister naar de Stem van de Schepping”. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 1-2, 4-5. • Sytsma, <i>Hoe talrijk zijn uw werken, Heer</i>, 3.
References to Genesis 1 and 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Ontdek de Schepping,” A Rocha Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://www.arocha.nl/ontdek-de-schepping-2/. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 8.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 9-10. • Crofton, “Kinderen zijn (verwarde) klimaatkanjers”. • GroeneKerken, <i>Gesprekshandleiding toespraak Trees van Montfoort</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/Gesprekshandleiding-bij-toespraak-Trees-van-Montfoort.pdf, 2. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 1. • LSAN, <i>De tuin der wereld bewerken en bewaren</i>. • Sytsma, <i>Dino, Dodo en Dodaars</i>, 1-8.
References to Romans 8:19-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookless, “Luister naar de stem van de schepping.” • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 8. • Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, <i>De kreet die uit de aarde opstijgt en de kreet die de armen slaken</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Vert._Meditatie_2_LS.pdf, 1. • Westerink, and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 12-13, 23.
God maintains creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 4-5. • GroeneKerken, <i>Meditatief boetseren</i>, 2. • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 2-3.
Creation as act in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Over ons,” CCA Nederland. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 10. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Levenskunst</i>, 6, 21. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 5. • Westerink, and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 13.
References to Col. 1:15-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annemarle Westerbeek, “Hoopvolle stappen zetten richting minder afval,” A Rocha Nederland, last modified March 2, 2023, https://www.arocha.nl/nl/news/hoopvolle-stappen-zetten-richting-minder-afval/. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 9, 11. • GroeneKerken, <i>Gesprekshandleiding toespraak Trees van Montfoort</i>, 2. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 3.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 2-4.
Jesus as example to care for creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “IPCC,” Micha Nederland. • “Wat is een Groene Kerk,” GroeneKerken. • A Rocha Pro, “Toon hart voor de schepping – wij bieden support,” document, June 8, 2015, https://www.arocha.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/06/Oproep-aan-kerken-Toon-hart-voor-de-schepping.pdf, 2. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 7, 10. • Trouwborst, <i>Heersen over de schepping</i>, 3.
Creation was created through Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 6. • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 2-3. • Westerink, and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 17, 19.
Role of Jesus in eschatology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 11. • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 2-4. • Westerink, and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 14.
Jesus suffered for all of creation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Duurzaam Avondmaal,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/toolkit/bewust-inkopen-doen/duurzaam-avondmaal/. • GroeneKerken, <i>Gesprekshandleiding toespraak Trees van Montfoort</i>, 2. • Sytsma, <i>Hoe talkrijk zijn uw werken, Heer</i>, 6. • Vastenactie, <i>Op weg naar ecologische bekering</i>, 9.
Creation is used interchangeably with earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GroeneKerken, <i>Meditatief boetseren</i>, 1-2. • LSAN, <i>De tuin der wereld bewerken en bewaren</i>, 1. • Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, <i>Een gids voor uitdagende gesprekken over geloof en klimaatverandering</i>, document, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/Handleiding-Gesprekken-over-klimaatverandering-en-geloof.docx. • “Meditatief wandelen,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/GI-Download-2_-Meditatief-wandelen.pdf, 1. • Paas, <i>Spelen met walvissen</i>, 2. • Westerink and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 13.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Rocha Pro, “Toon hart voor de schepping – wij bieden support,” 2. • “Wat we doen,” A Rocha Nederland.
Creation is used interchangeably with nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GroeneKerken, <i>Meditatief boetseren</i>, 1. • LSAN, <i>De tuin der wereld bewerken en bewaren</i>, 1. • “Meditatief wandelen,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/10/GI-Download-2_-_Meditatief-wandelen.pdf, 1. • “Ontdek de Schepping,” A Rocha Nederland.

Earth	
<i>Claim</i>	<i>Support examples</i>
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<p>Humans have a responsibility to care for the earth</p> <p><i>Related to Stewardship</i></p> <p><i>Related to ruling</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 2. • LSAN, <i>Paus Franciscus over de zorg voor ons gemeenschappelijk huis</i>, 1. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Over GroeneKerken,” GroeneKerken. • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen</i>, 7. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 11. • GroeneKerken, <i>Kerkenmateriaal Groengelovig 2021: De toekomst van de aarde (1)</i>, 2. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookless, <i>De Identiteit van Christenen</i>, 5. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 8-10. • Westerink and A Rocha Nederland, <i>Goed Boeren: De Bijbel over Landbouw</i>, 17.
<p>Earth is personified</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Duurzame eucharistie,” GroeneKerken, accessed April 4, 2023, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/toolkit/bewust-inkopen-doen/duurzame-eucharistie/. • “LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 5, 7. • “Meditatiewandeling a.d.h.v. het Zonnelied,” Laudato Si’ Alliantie Nederland, accessed April 4, 2023, https://laudato-si.nl/downloads/meditatiewandeling-a-d-h-v-het-zonnelied/. • Jelle, “A12 Blokkade 11 Maart,” Christian Climate Action Nederland, March 12, 2023, https://www.christianclimateaction.nl/blogs/a12-blokkade-11-maart/.

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Use of "heaven and earth"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Brief aan scriba en moderamen PKN," Christian Climate Action Nederland. • A Rocha Pro, "Toon hart voor de schepping – wij bieden support," 1. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?</i>, 5, 9, 20. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Levenskunst</i>, 4. • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Verwondering</i>, 15. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 3. • Margot, "Paradijs op aarde: de Klimaatmars," CCA Nederland. • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 2-4. • Protestantse Gemeente Twello, "Liturgie Twello," document, February 4, 2018, https://toolkit.groenekerken.nl/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/04/4-2-18-Twello-1Kron-2910-16-en-Joh-21-11.pdf, 2. • Westerink and A Rocha Nederland, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 11.
Jesus as example to care for the earth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Wat is een Groene Kerk," GroeneKerken. • LSAN, <i>Bidden voor de schepping met de rozenkrans</i>, 2.
Earth was created through Jesus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christelijk Ecologisch Netwerk, <i>Themapakket – Dag Schepping?!</i>, 6. • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 3. • Westerink, and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 17, 19.
Role of Jesus in eschatology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messelink, <i>Recht doen en zorg voor de schepping</i>, 4. • Westerink, and A Rocha, <i>Goed Boeren</i>, 14, 19.

Appendix III: Use of Bible Texts

The following table (Table 1) shows an inventory of the Bible texts used on the Christian Climate Active groups' websites but only includes those texts used in the context of nature, creation, and earth. Bible texts on the websites not used in the context of nature, creation, and earth, are, thus, not included.

Table 1: Use of Bible Texts.

Group	Creation	Nature	Earth
A Rocha	Gen. 1	Gen. 1	Gen. 1
	Gen. 2	Gen. 2	Gen. 2
	Gen. 6-9	Gen. 6-9	Gen. 6-9
	Job 38-42	Job 38-42	Gen. 41
	Ps. 8	Ps. 8	Ps. 8
	Ps. 24	Ps. 104	Ps. 24
	Ps. 50	Col. 1:15-20	Ps. 50
	Ps. 89		Ps. 89
	Ps. 104		Ps. 96
	Ps. 115		Ps. 98
	Ps. 145		Ps. 103
	Ps. 147		Ps. 104
	Ps. 148		Ps. 115
	Ps. 150		Rom. 8
	Mat. 6:26		Op. 21
	Luk. 12:6		
	Rom. 8		
	Col. 1:15-20		
GroeneKerken	Gen. 1	Jes. 55:3	Gen. 1
	Jes. 55:3	Mat. 6:25-34	Gen. 2
	Jes. 64:7		Gen. 6-9
	Mat. 6:25-34		Ex. 20:4, 11
	Joh. 3:16		1 Chr. 29:15
	Col. 1:17-20		Jes. 64:7
			Col. 1:17-20
Christian Climate Action	Luk. 12:48		
Laudato Si' Alliantie Nederland	Gen. 1:26, 28	Gen. 1:28	Gen. 1:28

	Gen. 2:15	Gen. 2:15	Gen. 2:7, 15
	Lev. 25:23		Deut. 30:19
	Rom. 8:19-21		Ps. 19
	Col. 1:16-17		Jes. 24:4-63
			Joh. 12:24
			Rom. 8:22
			Col. 1:16-17, 19-20
			Op. 21:1-5a
Climate Stewards	Gen. 2	Ps. 19	Ps. 19:1-5
	Ex. 3:1-12	Rom. 8:19-22	
	Zech. 8:19		
	Ps. 19		
	Rom. 8:19-22		
Micha	Gen. 1	Ps. 8	Gen. 1
	Gen. 2	Ps. 29	Gen. 2
	Gen. 3	Ps. 104	Job 12
	Gen. 6-9	Ps. 147	Ps. 29
	Ex. 20:9-11	Mat. 6:26	Ps. 68
	Deut. 5:12-15	Rom. 8	Ps. 93
	Job 38-41	2 Kor. 5:17	Ps. 102
	Ps. 8		Ps. 104
	Ps. 29		Ps. 147
	Ps. 93		Prov. 12:10
	Ps. 102		Jes. 45:18
	Ps. 103		Luk. 2:14
	Ps. 104		Acts 3:21
	Ps. 105		Rom. 8:19
	Ps. 147		2 Kor. 5:18-19
	Prov. 12:10		Col. 1:15-20
	Jes. 45:18		
	Acts 3:21		
	Rom. 8:19-23		
	2 Kor. 5:17-19		
	Col. 1:15-20		

The following tables (Table 2a+b) show how the most frequently used texts are interpreted by each group.

Table 2a: Interpretations of most widely used Bible texts.

	A Rocha	GroeneKerken	LSAN
Gen. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on rectifying the interpretation of ‘ruling’ over the earth as using the earth in whatever way we want. Instead, it should be interpreted as caring for it. • Humans are created in the image of God (1:26), which brings responsibility to rule with love as God does. • Comparison of the rich world described in Gen. 1 (and Ps. 104) vs. the world now. • Discussion of creation story. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘To rule’ should be interpreted in an adequate way. • In Gen. 1-2, God makes the earth dry so people can live on it. In Gen. 6-9, humans let the dry land fall again with the flood. • Gen. 1 shows the beauty God intended for the earth. But there is not much left because of humanity’s actions. People, animals, and plants suffer because of it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command to populate and subject the earth (1:28) as a contrast to care for the earth in Gen. 2:15. • 1:26,28 as a command to care for creation.
Gen. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are made up out of the dust of the earth (2:7), like all other creations. We are part of a created family, a community, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garden is interpreted as whole earth. God gives the commandment to protect and care for it. • In Gen. 1-2, God makes the earth dry so people can live 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People are the dust of the earth (2:7) and thus composed of elements of the earth and dependent upon the earth.

	<p>we should be glad about it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adam gets the command to care for the garden (2:15), and thus caring for creation is a core part of being human and serving God. 	<p>on it. In Gen. 6-9, humans let the dry land fall again with the flood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command to cultivate and care for the earth (2:15) in contrast to Gen. 1:28.
Gen. 6-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Gen. 7:2-3, God gives humanity all other animals on the earth as food, in addition to all plants. But they should only be used for our basic needs, not exploitation. • In Gen. 9, God makes a covenant with humans and animals, and indirectly with plants. There is a balance because humans, animals, and plants need each other. Taking care of creation is taking care of this balance. • In Gen. 9:1, God gives the command to fill and cherish the earth, but not to exploit it. Throughout the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Gen. 1-2, God makes the earth dry so people can live on it. In Gen. 6-9, humans let the dry land fall again with the flood. • Covenant shows intent of God: conservation of all life on earth. Humans, with Noah as example, cooperate with it. 	/

	Bible he gives guidelines.		
Rom. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be an end to all futility on earth. The futility is interpreted as e.g., the loss of animal species, plastic islands, the decline of tropical forests, and soil exhaustion. • Creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed because the true children of God take care of creation instead of exploiting it. Nature conservation is the core of what it means to be human. 	/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The earth belongs to the most abandoned and mistreated poor (8:22).
Col. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christ came to bring peace in all, interpreted as all relations a human has, including to God, to other people, to itself, and to creation. The relation between humans and creation is disrupted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without Christ, creation would fall apart. • Jesus's reconciliation is for everything on heaven and earth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christ can be seen in everything (1:16-17). • In Christ, there is reconciliation for everything (1:19-20). He is the answer to all our questions about evil.

Table 3b: Interpretations of most widely used Bible texts.

	Climate Stewards	Micha
Gen. 1 /		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humans have a special place in creation and a special responsibility regarding animals. • Creation story gives inspiration and motivation for a sustainable lifestyle. • Creation is a wonder, not self-evident. • God gives humans the command to rule over the earth. This should be done with love. • Gen. 1:24-25 speaks of the multi-coloredness of God’s creatures together.
Gen. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life in paradise is used as a contrast to our current lifestyles. Creation as an instrument of God’s mercy vs. creation as an object to satisfy our passions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Humans have a special place in creation and a special responsibility regarding animals. • At the beginning of Gen. 2, God rests after creation. Like an artist, he takes a step back and wonders about his creation. In this way, rest and wonder about

		<p>nature/creation are connected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The human named all animals in Gen. 2. Having a name means being unique and having worth. All animals and all species have worth and are unique to God. • Creation was beautiful before sin. Because humans go against God's will, creation, nature, and humanity decays.
Gen. 6-9	/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flood came because people did not respect the order of creation. God will not let a Flood happen again, but the Bible does not say that humans won't. • Gen. 9 gives humans a special responsibility towards animals. • Gen. 7 speaks of the multi-coloredness of God's creatures together.
Rom. 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signs of the groaning creation are seen in melting glaciers, the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8:19-22 describes how creation suffers now but will be fully renewed later.

	<p>bleaching of corals, the toxification of oceans, etc. Human victims of earth's decay are part of the groaning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the children of God reveal themselves, the world will become more just and more livable. • Through lifestyle choices other people and creation should be able to distinguish who is a child of God (Christian). • (8:19-20) Our senseless yearning for more, damages creation time and time again. (8:21-23) But by renewing creation, God will save humans, and creation from humanity's selfish I's. • The futility the earth is subjected to is interpreted as creation no longer reaching the goal God had set for it, because of human sin.
Col. 1	/	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through Jesus, God wants to reconcile with everything (1:20), which includes humans, animals, and the whole ecosystem earth, including the climate.