**Extension Activities 6: Criticisms of Stewardship**

**[http://ex.ac.uk/beyondstewardship](http://ex.ac.uk/beyondstewardship%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**

**Critiquing Stewardship**

Stewardship has become the dominant 'default' position in much environmental ethics, particularly from a Christian perspective. Considering possible criticisms and alternative views is therefore very important.

An excellent range of essays, both in favour of stewardship and critical of it, can be found in R.J. Berry (ed.), [*Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspectives, Past and Present*](http://www.amazon.co.uk/Environmental-Stewardship-Critical-Perspectives-Present/dp/0567030180)(London: T&T Clark, 2006).

Have a look at the essays which propose stewardship as the best way to think of humanity's relationship to the earth. As you read, bear in mind the criticisms presented on the ‘criticisms of stewardship’ section of the website:

1. Stewardship does not have a strong biblical basis
2. Humanity is given a ‘managerial’ role; God has disappeared from the scene
3. The world becomes a ‘natural resource’ to be managed well for human benefit
4. Stewardship arrogantly assumes that humans have the right and ability to organise nature, and that nature is better off when managed by us
5. An anthropocentric theory, stewardship places humans in a unique and privileged position in relation to other animals

To what extent do you think these points undermine the validity of the stewardship perspective presented in the essays?