Today our planet is faced with the problems of climate change (global warming), acid rain, Carbon Monoxide emissions, toxic waste, pollution in general, endangered species, and new genetically evolved species imported by the ease of travel for trade, that risk damaging the ecosystem. "The disposable universe", "the air conditioned nightmare", and "green house effect" are phrases that describe how the environment has been hurt by a world view that considers "man the measure of all things" and the environment merely a means for his use through utilitarianism. Rather our mission is the Kingdom of ends to restore the planet to its environmental Edenic state.

These problems in part stem from a fundamental misuse of G-d's divine creation. The act of divine Creation provided us with "the Given" of time put in place by G-d's setting in motion the heavenly bodies which cause the seasons, We dare not by so arrogant and falsely believe that we can in any way manipulate G-d creation of time which is ultimately eternal and not human controlled, but rather poetically dwelled in time? Poetically dwelling in time is alluded to in Adam and Eve’s injunction to care for and safeguard the Garden of Eden in which they were placed originally and after their expulsion it is the task of Humanity to restore the planet and human consciousness to this Edenic state of "caring, protecting, and safeguarding." Jewish ecological thought in part is a process in restoring the world to this more perfected state of being that Adam and Eve knew before they disobeyed G-d's command and ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil although they were allowed to eat from all the other trees in the garden.

In the Talmud Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai says, "if someone tells you the Messiah has arrived, go and plant your tree." In Israel today the JNF allows people to sponsor with money the reforestation of Israel which helps Israel ecologically in many ways. Planting trees in Israel is a way of protecting the environment. This does not mean that we heaven forbid 'worship trees" as the Celts in medieval Europe did, a form of paganism that results in idolatrous worship of pantheism." Rather it is a way to appreciate the beauty of the symphony of G-d's creation and eco diversity celebrated in works like perek Shira which explains how we can see G-d's uniqueness in all the creatures that He created in the first 6 days of Creation.

There is much proto-ecological material within the Jewish tradition, from the topic of bal tashchit (not wasting or destroying needlessly) to the rhythms of the Jewish calendar, Tu' Bish' vat, and revolutionary idea of Sh'mitah and Yovel, the sabbatical and Jubilee years when the land is allowed to rest as fallow, that Jewish environmental educators have plenty to teach. Every 7th abbatical year Sh'mitah and 50th Jubilee (Yovel) in Biblical Israel the land was not actively farmed and all debts were cancelled. In the Yovel or 50th year after seven Sh'mitah cycles. This system of rest and renewal fulfilled on a grand social scale the ideal of Shabbat. Sh'mitah-Jubilee was directed equally toward creating a right and environmentally ethical relationship with 'the land' and toward creating a right relationship between human beings by morally accounting for our internalization of the fact of our dependence on Nature and on other creatures, and defining ethical norms that emphasize human responsibility and the right way
to balance human needs and the well being of the environment. It reminds us that human beings are a part of the natural divinely created world and not in opposition to it.

A mental sunrise will dawn when we hear the clarion divine call to "care for, protect, and safeguard" the garden in which we find ourselves. A Chinese proverb notes, "when was the right time to plant a tree? Twenty years ago. And if not then, when? Today!"