1. The authors state that in order to, "avoid losing many more species as the human population grows in the very near future, it will be necessary to formulate policies that recognize and guard against an inevitable energetic trade-off at the global scale." (Page. 185) Besides the methods listed (enhanced sustainable farming practices, expanding existing nature reserves, and fossil fuel alternatives), what other solutions are out there? Do you believe any of them are not working completely, or they simply need to be improved upon? What else can/should be done to minimize this human/non-human species trade-off?

2. Brook and Barnosky explain some of the evolutionary benefits and faults of megafauna. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of being a "big"?

3. The synergistic effect of natural climatic changes and human causes is pinned as the reason behind the large megafaunal extinctions of the past. What are your reactions to this concept of synergy as an explanation for extinctions? How do you think focusing on this synergistic effect will improve/complicate conservation efforts? Do you believe conservationists are already applying this more holistic approach to ecosystem protection by focusing on this betweenness of extinction causes?

4. What struck you when reading about the dieback hypothesis, its criticisms, and the "inevitable doom" it suggests? Do you agree with the statement "…it is critically important to leave policy makers with the sense of being empowered rather than just waiting for the climate shoe to drop?" Do you think this somewhat implies a false sense of hope is necessary for policy makers?

5. The faults of using models to predict plant species loss are presented in Chapter 12, with a lot of the speculation being debatable. For example, Bush and Mosblech state, "…if precipitation decreases and there is 85 percent reduction in Amazonian forest cover, species-area curves would suggest about a 70 percent loss of species. However, that number is certainly too high…true loss of diversity under Amazon dieback might be closer to 10 percent than 70 percent…" (page 210) With their doubtful reliability, should these models even be used? What are the positives/negatives of using these models to predict plant extinctions? Should we focus more attention on trying to obtain actual data?

6. With chapter 11 and 12 presenting what we know about megafauna and plants, respectively, which do you believe is more important and deserves more attention in terms of conservation resources and effort?