



An Appraisal of Ethical Environmental Practices in the Light of the Glorious Qur'an and Contemporary Environmental Science

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Abstract

This paper undertakes a systematic appraisal of the ethical environmental principles embedded in the Glorious Qur'an and examines their resonance with, and relevance to, the findings and demands of contemporary environmental science. Drawing upon classical Qur'anic exegesis, juristic reasoning, and prophetic tradition alongside modern ecological literature, the study demonstrates that Islam's environmental ethic is neither incidental nor peripheral but constitutes a foundational dimension of the faith itself. The Qur'an articulates a coherent philosophy of human stewardship (khilafah), the sanctity of the natural order (mizan), the prohibition of corruption and excess (fasad), and the imperative of moderation (wasat), all of which find direct correspondence in the most pressing environmental challenges of the twenty-first century, including climate change, deforestation, water scarcity, pollution, and the erosion of biodiversity. The paper concludes with ten concrete findings and ten actionable recommendations intended to guide both policy and practice in Muslim-majority societies and beyond.

Keywords: Qur'an, environment, khilafah, mizan, fasad, Islamic environmental ethics, climate change, sustainability, stewardship, ecological science.

Introduction

The relationship between humanity and the natural environment is one of the most urgent questions confronting civilisation in the modern era. From the melting of the polar ice caps and the acidification of the oceans to the daily loss of irreplaceable species and the contamination of rivers upon which millions depend for survival, the evidence of ecological breakdown is no longer a matter of scientific dispute but of lived experience across every continent. In responding to this crisis, scholars, policymakers, and communities have increasingly turned not only to the natural sciences but also to moral philosophy, theology, and religious tradition, recognising that the roots of the problem are as much ethical and spiritual as they are technological or economic.

The Glorious Qur'an, revealed over fourteen centuries ago to the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace, addresses the human being's relationship with the created world with a depth and consistency that continues to astonish careful readers. Far from treating the environment as a backdrop to human affairs, the Qur'an presents the natural order as a system of deliberate divine artistry, a sign (*ayah*) pointing to the Creator and charges the human being with the weighty responsibility of its stewardship. The Prophet, upon him be peace, reinforced these Qur'anic directives through a rich body of practical guidance, establishing environmental protection not as an optional virtue but as an obligation embedded in the fabric of Islamic law and morality.

This paper examines the key Qur'anic principles bearing upon environmental ethics *khilafah* (vicegerency), *mizan* (balance), *fasad* (corruption), and *istislah* (public interest) situates them within the classical interpretive tradition, and draws deliberate connections to the findings and challenges of contemporary environmental science. In so doing, it seeks to demonstrate that the Qur'anic vision of human responsibility towards the natural world is not merely historically interesting but urgently relevant and practically indispensable.

Conceptual Foundations: The Qur'anic Worldview of Nature

a. *Khilafah*: The Human Being as Steward of the Earth

The most foundational concept in the Qur'anic environmental ethic is that of *khilafah*, or vicegerency. In Surah al-Baqarah, Allah declares:

And when your Lord said to the angels, I am placing a vicegerent (*khalifah*) on the earth.¹

The classical exegetes were unanimous that this designation entails both privilege and responsibility. Al-Tabari, the towering figure of Qur'anic exegesis, explains that the *khalifah* is one who acts in the place of another, charged with upholding the interests of his principal, meaning that the human being holds the earth not as an owner but as a trustee answerable to its real Owner².

This notion of trusteeship carries profound ecological implications. A trustee may not destroy, despoil, or exhaust what has been entrusted to him; he must preserve, maintain, and return it intact. In the contemporary context, this principle stands as a direct theological repudiation of the extractive model of development that has driven industrial capitalism for three centuries, a model whose consequences are now visible in the collapse of fisheries, the salinisation of agricultural land, and the loss of topsoil at rates far exceeding natural regeneration. The United Nations Environment Programme has documented that approximately one-third of the world's farmable land has been degraded since the mid-twentieth century, a statistic that the principle of *khilafah* renders not only an ecological tragedy but a moral and theological failure³.

Mizan: The Divine Order of Balance

Closely related to *khilafah* is the Qur'anic concept of *mizan*, or balance. Surah al-Rahman presents one of the Qur'an's most sustained meditations upon the natural order:

And the sky He raised it and He set the balance, that you may not transgress in the balance;
and establish the measure in justice and do not fall short in the balance⁴.

The repetition of the word *mizan* in these verses is deliberate and emphatic. The classical commentator al-Baydawi notes that the *mizan* here refers simultaneously to the physical scales of justice and to the cosmic order of creation, in which every element has its appointed measure and place⁵.

The ecological relevance of this verse can scarcely be overstated. Contemporary environmental science is, in its essence,

¹ Qur'an 2:30.

² M. ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Jami' al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ayi al-Quran*, vol. 1, Dar al-Ma'arif, Cairo, 1954, p. 449.

³ UNEP, *The Economics of Land Degradation: Making the Case for Sustainable Land Management*, United Nations Environment Programme, Nairobi, 2015, p. 12.

⁴ Quran 55:7-9.

⁵ A. al-Baydawi, *Anwar al-Tanzil wa Asrar al-Ta'wil*, vol. 2, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1988, p. 362.

the study of balance, the balance of gases in the atmosphere, of nutrients in the soil, of predator and prey in ecosystems, of salt and fresh water in river deltas. When human activity disrupts these balances, the consequences cascade through interconnected systems in ways that can be irreversible. The current atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide, approximately 420 parts per million, the highest in at least three million years, represents precisely the kind of transgression of the *mizan* against which the Qur'an warned. The resulting disruption of the global climate system, from intensified hurricanes in the Caribbean to catastrophic flooding in Pakistan and prolonged drought across the Sahel, illustrates with terrible clarity what it means to "fall short in the balance."⁶

a. *Fasad*: The Prohibition of Corruption and Destruction

The Qur'an's condemnation of *fasad*, variously translated as corruption, disorder, or destruction is one of its most sustained ethical themes, and it is consistently linked to the natural environment. Among the most direct of these warnings is the verse:

Corruption has appeared in the land and the sea on account of what the hands of men have wrought, so that He may make them taste part of what they have done, in order that they may turn back⁷.

Ibn Kathir, whose Tafsir remains among the most widely consulted in the Islamic world, understands this verse as referring precisely to the material consequences of human moral failure: the drying of rains, the diminishing of harvests, and the spread of disease and famine⁸.

This verse is, in a remarkable sense, a Qur'anic description of the Anthropocene, the geological epoch now widely recognised by scientists as the era in which human activity has become the dominant force shaping the planet's systems. The "corruption in the land" encompasses desertification driven by overgrazing and deforestation; the corruption "in the sea" encompasses the dead zones produced by agricultural run-off, the islands of plastic waste accumulating in the Pacific Ocean estimated to cover an area larger than France, and the bleaching of coral reefs that sustain the livelihoods of half a billion people worldwide. The Qur'an's warning that human beings will be made to taste the consequences of their own deeds has acquired, in the age of climate science, a precision that borders on the prophetic⁹.

b. *Hima* and *Harim*: Early Islamic Conservation Institutions

The ethical principles of the Qur'an found concrete institutional expression in early Islamic governance through the systems of *hima* and *harim*. The *hima* was a protected zone, established by the Prophet and subsequently by caliphs and governors, within which grazing, felling of trees, and hunting were restricted or prohibited entirely in order to allow natural systems to regenerate. The *harim* was a protected buffer surrounding sources of water, wells, springs, and rivers within which any activity that might contaminate or diminish the water supply was forbidden by law. The Prophet, upon him be peace, is reported to have said: "Muslims are partners in three things: water, pasture, and fire," a hadith understood by jurists to establish the principle that natural commons are a collective trust rather than private property¹⁰.

The ecological wisdom of these early institutions is today acknowledged by scholars of environmental governance. The *hima* system anticipates by more than a millennium the modern concept of nature reserves and protected areas; the *harim* corresponds in its logic to the riparian buffer zones now recommended by environmental regulators worldwide to prevent the contamination of waterways by agricultural chemicals and urban run-off. The fact that these institutions were grounded not in economic calculation but in religious obligation gave them a moral authority and a social resilience that purely regulatory approaches have often struggled to achieve.

The Prophetic Tradition and Environmental Stewardship

If the Qur'an provides the theological framework, the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace, provides its practical application in extraordinary detail. The Prophet's environmental consciousness pervades the corpus of hadith literature with a consistency that suggests not incidental concern but deliberate and sustained teaching.

He is reported to have prohibited the felling of the lote tree in the desert, which alone provides shade for both human beings and animals; he forbade the pollution of standing water and running streams; he prohibited the killing of animals for sport; and he commanded that if a Muslim plants a tree and a bird, or a human being, eats from it, this act counts as charity

⁶ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Sixth Assessment Report: The Physical Science Basis, IPCC, Geneva, 2021, p. 7.

⁷ Quran 30:41

⁸ I. ibn Kathir, Tafsir al-Quran al-'Azim, vol. 3, Dar Tayyibah, Riyadh, 1997, p. 451.

⁹ C. Pala, "The Great Pacific Garbage Patch," Scientific American, vol. 322, No. 5, Springer Nature, New York, 2020, p. 44.

¹⁰ A. ibn Hanbal, Musnad al-Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal, vol. 5, Mu'assasat al-Risalah, Beirut, 1999, p. 364.

(*sadaqah*) that endures even after death¹¹.

Among the most celebrated of his environmental teachings is the instruction that even in the act of ritual purification, water must not be wasted and this injunction applies even when one stands beside a flowing river. The Prophet is reported to have passed by his companion Sa'd ibn Abi Waqqas as he was performing ablution and said:

What is this extravagance, O Sa'd?" Sa'd replied, "Is there extravagance in the use of water for ablution?" The Prophet answered, "Yes, even if you are upon a flowing river¹².

In an age in which the World Health Organisation estimates that two billion people lack access to safely managed drinking water, the prophetic condemnation of waste at the individual level carries civilisational weight¹³.

The Prophet also practised what he preached. His personal lifestyle was one of extraordinary simplicity, he owned few material possessions, ate sparingly, and expressed genuine tenderness towards animals and plants. When he saw a camel weeping from overloading and overwork, he reprimanded its owner and intervened directly. When he found a bird distressed by the removal of its eggs, he returned the eggs to the nest and reproached those responsible. These are not incidental anecdotes but deliberate pedagogical acts intended to shape the moral sensibility of his community, establishing in practice a mode of living that modern ecological thought would describe as sustainable.

Islamic Jurisprudence and Environmental Protection: The Maqasid Framework

The classical scholars of Islamic jurisprudence developed, on the basis of Qur'anic principles and prophetic guidance, a sophisticated theory of the objectives of Islamic law (*maqasid al-shari'ah*) that has direct bearing upon environmental ethics. The Imam al-Ghazali enumerated five essential objectives that Islamic law is designed to protect: religion (*din*), life (*nafs*), intellect (*'aql*), lineage (*nasl*), and property (*mal*). To these, later scholars such as al-Shatibi added a sixth and seventh security and environment, reflecting the juristic recognition that the integrity of the natural world is a precondition for the fulfilment of all other human interests¹⁴.

The principle of *la darar wa la dirar*, there shall be no harm and no causing of harm, formulated on the basis of a prophetic hadith and recognised as one of the five universal maxims of Islamic law, functions as a comprehensive prohibition of environmental damage. Any act that harms the water supply, poisons the air, depletes the soil, or destroys the habitat of living creatures falls under this prohibition. Al-Suyuti, commenting on this maxim, notes that the prohibition extends to all forms of harm whether immediate or delayed, direct or indirect, individual or collective¹⁵.

In the context of industrial pollution, this classical maxim provides a juristic basis for holding corporations and states liable for environmental damage that is as rigorous as any provision of modern environmental law.

The juristic doctrine of *istislah*, the protection of public interest, further empowers Muslim jurists and rulers to prohibit activities that, though not explicitly mentioned in classical texts, are demonstrably harmful to the welfare of the community and its natural environment. This doctrine has been invoked by contemporary Muslim scholars to justify the regulation of industrial emissions, the prohibition of plastic waste, and the establishment of protected marine zones. The flexibility of this tool within the framework of Islamic legal reasoning is precisely what makes the tradition capable of engaging responsibly with environmental challenges that the classical jurists could not have foreseen.

Contemporary Environmental Challenges Through the Qur'anic Lens

a. Climate Change and the Disruption of *Mizan*

Climate change is the defining environmental challenge of the present era, and it can be understood through the Qur'anic framework as the most consequential disruption of the *mizan* in human history. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has confirmed with overwhelming scientific consensus that the burning of fossil fuels coal, oil, and natural gas since the industrial revolution has raised global average temperatures by approximately 1.1 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with projections of 1.5 to 4 degrees of further warming depending on the choices made by this generation¹⁶.

The consequences already visible intensified wildfires in Australia, Greece, and Canada; the submersion of Pacific island

¹¹ M. al-Bukhari, Sahih al-Bukhari, vol. 3, Dar Tawq al-Najah, Cairo, 1422 AH, p. 103.

¹² I. ibn Majah, Sunan Ibn Majah, vol. 1, Dar Ihya al-Kutub al-'Arabiyyah, Beirut, n.d., p. 147.

¹³ World Health Organization, Progress on Household Drinking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene 2000-2022, WHO, Geneva, 2023, p. 3.

¹⁴ I. al-Ghazali, Al-Mustasfa min 'Ilm al-Usul, vol. 1, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1993, p. 174.

¹⁵ J. al-Suyuti, Al-Ashbah wa al-Naza'ir, Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, Beirut, 1990, p. 83.

¹⁶ IPCC, Sixth Assessment Report: The Physical Science Basis, IPCC, Geneva, 2021, p. 14.

nations; the collapse of agricultural systems in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia are a direct expression of what the Qur'an names as the human transgression of the divinely established balance.

Muslim-majority countries are disproportionately among the most vulnerable to these impacts. Bangladesh faces the flooding of one-fifth of its territory by the end of the century; northern Nigeria and the Lake Chad basin are already experiencing desertification at alarming rates; Pakistan suffered flooding in 2022 that submerged one-third of the country, killing over 1,700 people and displacing more than thirty million. These are not abstract statistics; they are the lived consequences of a global failure of environmental stewardship that the Qur'anic principle of *mizan* both diagnoses and commands us to address.

b. Deforestation and the Destruction of Allah's Creation

The world's forests are among the most complex and life-sustaining expressions of the divine creative act that the Qur'an celebrates. They regulate the water cycle, stabilise the soil, moderate the climate, harbour the vast majority of the earth's terrestrial biodiversity, and sustain the livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people. The rate at which they are being destroyed, approximately ten million hectares of primary forest per year, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations constitutes, in Qur'anic terms, a form of *fasad* on a planetary scale¹⁷.

The Prophet's prohibition on the cutting of the lote tree, and his broader teachings on the sanctity of plant life, find their contemporary application in the call to halt deforestation and to invest in reforestation at scale. The Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change, issued in 2015 by a gathering of Muslim scholars and leaders convened in Istanbul, drew explicitly on these prophetic teachings in calling for the complete decarbonisation of the global economy and the protection of the world's remaining forests¹⁸.

c. Water Scarcity and the Prophetic Imperative of Conservation

Water occupies a position of unique sanctity in the Islamic tradition. The Qur'an declares:

And We made from water every living thing¹⁹

This verse, which anticipates the modern biological understanding that all life depends upon water, establishes the element as a gift of singular divine generosity. Yet contemporary environmental science documents a global water crisis of mounting severity. The World Resources Institute's Aqueduct project has identified that over half the world's population more than four billion people lives under conditions of high water stress for at least one month each year, with seventeen countries, including India, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan, facing conditions of extreme stress²⁰.

The prophetic teaching against the waste of water in ablution, combined with the establishment of *harim* zones protecting water sources, creates a comprehensive Islamic framework for water conservation that is directly applicable to the contemporary crisis. This framework encompasses the obligation of individuals to minimise their personal water consumption, the obligation of communities to manage shared water sources equitably and sustainably, and the obligation of rulers and states to ensure that access to clean water is treated as a right rather than a commodity a principle now enshrined in international human rights law but often betrayed in practice.

d. Pollution, Plastics, and the Principle of *La Darar*

The global pollution crisis presents what is perhaps the most direct contemporary application of the Islamic principle of *la darar wa la dirar*. The contamination of the earth's air, water, and soil with industrial chemicals, heavy metals, agricultural pesticides, and plastic waste represents harm on a scale that classical jurists could not have imagined but whose prohibition their legal maxims clearly entail. More than eight million tonnes of plastic enter the world's oceans each year, where they break into microplastics that have now been found in human blood, placentas, and lung tissue a contamination that extends the harm from the environment to the human body itself²¹.

The air pollution produced by the burning of fossil fuels and the incineration of waste kills, according to the World Health Organisation, approximately seven million people each year, a toll that dwarfs most other causes of preventable death. In the cities of Pakistan, Bangladesh, and northern Nigeria, which rank consistently among the world's most polluted, these are not distant statistics but the deaths of parents, children, and neighbours. The Islamic legal principle that harm must be

¹⁷ FAO, Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Rome, 2020, p. 12.

¹⁸ Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change, International Islamic Climate Change Symposium, Istanbul, 2015, p. 2.

¹⁹ Qur'an 21:30

²⁰ World Resources Institute, Aqueduct 4.0: Updated Decision-Relevant Global Water Risk Indicators, WRI, Washington D.C., 2023, p. 6.

²¹ R. Thompson, "Plastic Pollution and Its Solutions," Annual Review of Environment and Resources, vol. 47, Annual Reviews, Palo Alto, 2022, p. 437.

prevented, and that those who cause harm bear responsibility for its consequences, constitutes a powerful theological mandate for the regulation of pollution at both the individual and the industrial scale.

e. Biodiversity Loss and the Sanctity of Created Life

The natural world of the Qur'an is not merely a collection of resources for human use; it is a community of worshippers.

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein praise Him, and there is not a thing but glorifies His praise, but you do not understand their glorification²².

This verse establishes that every creature every bird, fish, insect, tree, and microorganism participates in the praise of its Creator, and that the destruction of a species is therefore not merely an ecological loss but a silencing of a unique voice in the divine chorus of creation.

Contemporary science estimates that the earth is currently experiencing a rate of species extinction one hundred to one thousand times higher than the natural background rate, the sixth mass extinction event in the planet's history, and the first caused by a single species. The extinction of the Javan rhinoceros, the vaquita porpoise, and countless unnamed insects and plants represents an irreversible diminishment of creation that the Qur'anic principle of the sanctity of all glorifying life renders a matter of religious as well as scientific urgency²³.

Muslim Responses: Scholarship, Institutions, and Practice

The engagement of Muslim scholars and communities with environmental challenges has grown substantially in recent decades, moving from isolated theological reflection to organised institutional response. The scholarly groundwork was laid by figures such as Seyyed Hossein Nasr, whose 1966 work *Man and Nature* established the case for an Islamic environmental philosophy rooted in the metaphysical vision of nature as theophany, the self-disclosure of the divine.²⁴

Nasr argued that the ecological crisis is at its root a spiritual crisis, a consequence of the modern West's abandonment of the sacred view of nature, a diagnosis that finds its corrective precisely in the Qur'anic teaching reviewed above.

The work of Nasr was extended by jurists and environmental scholars including Mustafa Abu-Sway, whose systematic review of the Qur'anic and hadith sources on the environment provides what amounts to a comprehensive Islamic environmental jurisprudence, and by Fazlun Khalid, whose Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) has for three decades translated Qur'anic environmental principles into practical conservation projects in Muslim communities from Malaysia to Madagascar²⁵.

At the institutional level, the 2015 Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change marked a watershed moment, bringing together Islamic scholars from across the major legal schools and regions to issue a collective call for ambitious climate action grounded in Qur'anic and prophetic authority. The Declaration invoked the principles of *khilafah*, *mizan*, and *fasad* in calling upon world leaders to commit to the complete decarbonisation of the global economy and upon Muslim communities to adopt sustainable lifestyles consonant with the prophetic model of simplicity and care. This document demonstrated that the Islamic tradition possesses not only the theological resources but the institutional will to engage with environmental challenges at the highest level of global policymaking.

Towards an Integrated Vision: Qur'an, Science, and Sustainable Futures

The dialogue between Qur'anic environmental ethics and contemporary environmental science is not a forced marriage of incompatible frameworks but a recognition of a deep and authentic convergence. Both traditions the revelatory and the empirical arrive, through their different methods, at the same fundamental conclusion: that the natural world is a system of intricate interdependencies that human beings have disrupted at great peril, and that the path to a viable future requires a radical reorientation of human values and behaviour.

Where environmental science contributes its indispensable gifts of measurement, modelling, and mechanism, the ability to quantify carbon concentrations, map forest loss, and project future temperature trajectories, the Qur'anic tradition contributes what science alone cannot provide: the moral authority, the spiritual motivation, and the communal framework necessary to translate knowledge into sustained action. A Muslim who understands deforestation as *fasad*, water waste as a violation of prophetic teaching, and climate inaction as a betrayal of the trust of *khilafah* is mobilised by a motivation far deeper than rational self-interest; he is moved by the imperative of accountability before Allah.

²² Quran 17:44

²³ E. Wilson, *The Diversity of Life*, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1992, p. 280.

²⁴ S. H. Nasr, *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis in Modern Man*, Unwin Hyman, London, 1976, p. 17.

²⁵ F. Khalid, *Islam and the Environment: Ethics and Practice*, Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences, Birmingham, 2002, p. 8.

The path forward requires Muslim scholars, scientists, educators, and policymakers to work together to develop what might be called an Islamic ecology, a comprehensive and practically oriented framework that integrates the rich resources of the Qur'anic tradition with the best of contemporary environmental science, and that speaks with authority and specificity to the challenges of the twenty-first century. Such a framework would draw on the legal tools of the *maqasid al-shari'ah*, the institutional models of the *hima* and *harim*, the motivational power of the Qur'anic vision of creation as divine trust, and the practical methodology of modern ecological science. It would address not only the large-scale systemic challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss but the everyday choices of Muslim individuals regarding what they eat, how they travel, what they consume, and how they manage their land and water.

Key Findings

1. The Qur'an establishes *khilafah*, human vicegerency over the earth as a trust (*amanah*) that imposes upon every Muslim the obligation to protect and not to despoil the natural environment.
2. The Qur'anic concept of *mizan* (balance) provides a theological foundation for the ecological principle of equilibrium, rendering the disruption of natural systems a form of religious transgression.
3. Surah al-Rum (30:41) anticipates the Anthropocene, explicitly linking moral corruption to the environmental degradation of both land and sea in terms that correspond precisely to contemporary ecological data.
4. The Prophet's environmental teachings conservation of water, protection of plant and animal life, prohibition of waste and pollution constitute a practical environmental ethic of remarkable comprehensiveness and contemporary relevance.
5. Early Islamic institutions such as the *hima* (protected zone) and *harim* (water buffer zone) represent historically proven models of community-based environmental conservation that predate modern protected-area systems by more than a millennium.
6. The Islamic legal maxim of *la darar wa la dirar* provides a robust juristic basis for environmental liability, applicable to industrial pollution, water contamination, and habitat destruction under classical Islamic law.
7. Climate change which disproportionately afflicts Muslim-majority countries including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nigeria, and the Sahel nations, constitutes the most urgent and large-scale contemporary expression of the *fasad* warned against in the Qur'an.
8. The global water crisis, with over four billion people experiencing acute water stress, represents a systemic failure of the principle of just stewardship that both Qur'anic teaching and contemporary science demand be addressed with urgency.
9. Biodiversity loss at current rates constitutes, in Qur'anic terms, the permanent silencing of communities of created beings who participate in the glorification of Allah, a harm of spiritual as well as ecological magnitude.
10. The 2015 Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change demonstrates the institutional capacity of the Muslim scholarly community to engage with environmental challenges at the level of global policymaking, grounding its demands in authentic Qur'anic and prophetic sources.

Recommendations

1. Curriculum Reform: Islamic educational institutions at all levels should integrate environmental ethics into the study of Qur'anic sciences, jurisprudence, and Islamic history, establishing ecological responsibility as a core dimension of Muslim education.
2. Fatwa Councils: National and international bodies of Islamic scholars should issue comprehensive fatwas on contemporary environmental issues including carbon emissions, plastic waste, and deforestation grounded in the *maqasid al-shari'ah* and accessible to ordinary Muslims.
3. Revival of Hima: Muslim governments and communities should revive and formally institutionalise the *hima* model, establishing legally protected conservation zones modelled on the prophetic precedent and adapted to contemporary biodiversity needs.
4. Green Mosques: Mosques worldwide should be converted to renewable energy, equipped with rainwater harvesting, and used as centres of environmental education — transforming the most frequented institution of Muslim communal life into a living demonstration of Qur'anic environmental values.
5. Water Stewardship: Muslim-majority states should enact and enforce comprehensive water conservation legislation, guided by the prophetic *harim* principle, that prohibits the pollution of water sources and mandates the equitable distribution of water as a public trust.
6. Halal and Sustainable Food: The concept of halal food should be expanded to encompass environmental sustainability, so that food produced through deforestation, excessive water use, or ecologically destructive practices is recognised as inconsistent with Islamic ethical principles.
7. Islamic Finance for Green Investment: The considerable and growing resources of the Islamic finance sector whose principles of social responsibility and prohibition of harm align naturally with environmental objectives should be channelled systematically into renewable energy, reforestation, and sustainable agriculture.
8. Interfaith and Interdisciplinary Collaboration: Muslim environmental scholars should engage actively with scientists, policymakers, and practitioners of other faith traditions, recognising that the environmental crisis transcends all

boundaries and demands collaborative rather than sectarian responses.

9. **Public Advocacy:** Muslim communities, scholars, and leaders in Muslim-majority and minority contexts alike should raise their voices in public advocacy for ambitious national and international climate policy, drawing on the moral authority of the Qur'anic tradition to demand justice for those most vulnerable to environmental harm.
10. **Individual Practice:** Every Muslim should be encouraged, through preaching, education, and community example, to review his or her personal consumption, waste, travel, and dietary choices in the light of the prophetic model of simplicity and care, recognising that sustainable living is not merely a civic virtue but an act of worship ('ibadah).

Conclusion

The Glorious Qur'an is not silent on the environment; it speaks to the condition of the earth with a clarity and urgency that fourteen centuries of human development have only rendered more audible. The principles of *khilafah*, *mizan*, *fasad*, and *la darar*, developed and refined by the classical scholars of Islamic jurisprudence and brought to life in the practical teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, upon him be peace, constitute a theological and ethical framework of genuine sophistication and enduring applicability. Contemporary environmental science, for its part, provides the empirical evidence that gives these principles their contemporary urgency, documenting with precision and comprehensiveness the scale of the disruption that human moral failure has wrought upon the systems of the natural world.

The convergence of these two traditions the revelatory and the empirical — around the same fundamental imperatives is not accidental. It is, for the Muslim, a further confirmation of the divine wisdom that embedded in the Qur'an, long before the instruments of science were developed to measure it, an understanding of the human being's relationship to the natural world that is as true and as necessary now as it was when first revealed. The task before Muslim scholars, scientists, educators, and communities is to translate this understanding into action, comprehensive, sustained, and commensurate with the urgency of the crisis trusting, as the Qur'an teaches, that Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves.

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