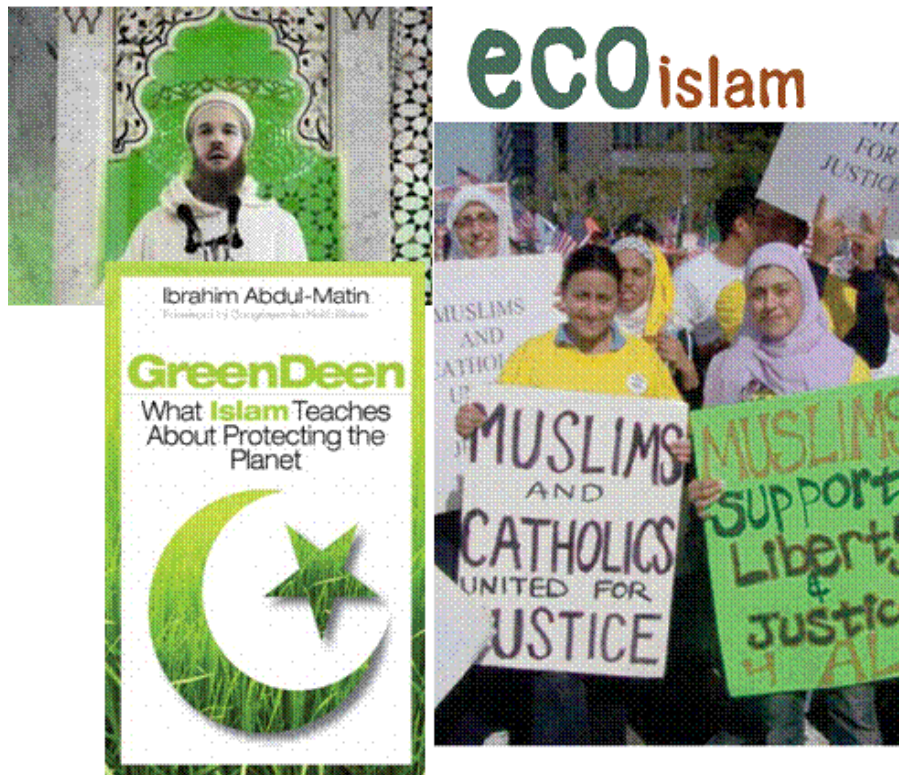


Globalized Eco-Islam

A Survey of Global Islamic Environmentalism



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The role of Islam could be one of the decisive factors tipping the planet towards a sustainable future. This commitment in Istanbul to a low carbon future can be of historic significance in the path to resolving climate change and other pressing environmental issues.

This could turn out to be the largest civil society movement in history.

Statement made by Assistant General Secretary of the UNDP, Olav Kjørven, about the 2009 Istanbul Declaration and the Muslim Seven year Action Plan on Climate Change.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Outline

Does ‘Islamic environmentalism’ *exist*? This is one of the key questions guiding this survey. We argue that indeed: *it does exist*. It exists in a *variety* of forms, reflecting both the varieties of contemporary Islamic *as well as* environmentalist thought. It exists in *theories* but also in several places in the world as *practices*.

In this survey we have searched for *and found* a great number of actors, essays, declarations, publications, internet posting and blogs of Muslims who reflect on the relevance of Islam for the environmental challenges of our times.

We confined ourselves to English literature, so in no way it presents a comprehensive overview. Even so, these findings are sufficiently significant to substantiate the claim that further research is more than welcome, which was one of the objectives of the survey. We also argue that, considering that English is the *lingua franca* of global society (also amongst Muslims), the Islamic environmentalism identified here is also most likely to contribute to *global discourses*.

We take an observation made by the Assistant General Secretary of the UNDP, Olav Kjørven, as a starting point. In 2009, he addressed a gathering of faith leaders at Windsor Castle organized by the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC). Clearly enthusiastic about the active Muslim engagement, he argued:

The role of Islam could be one of the decisive factors tipping the planet towards a sustainable future. This commitment in Istanbul to a low carbon future can be of historic significance in the path to resolving climate change and other pressing environmental issues. [...] (Olav Kjørven, Assistant General Secretary UNDP 2009¹):

Kjørven referred to a climate change initiative in Istanbul in 2009. In the summer of that year, a broad alliance of civil society organizations, universities, governments, religious institutions and influential scholars from across the Muslim world convened in Istanbul to discuss climate change. This conference was organized in anticipation of the Copenhagen Climate Change Summit in 2009. The participants emphasized a distinct ‘Muslim’ or ‘Islamic’ perspective to climate change, referring to Islamic tenets and principles to underpin practical action and also arguing that Islam has a constructive role to play in solving climate change. The *Istanbul Declaration* and its *Muslim Seven Year Action Plan* included proposals to green Mecca, introduce an ecological *halal* certification scheme, green Islamic business and mobilize Islamic forms of finance (*zakat* and *waqf*)². It found a follow up in Bogor, Indonesia and in the Philippines in 2010³.

¹ Kjørven, O. speech UNDP at Istanbul meeting on climate change 5-7- July 2009, ‘UN celebrates Muslim Seven Year Eco Plans’ at: ARC article website, 8 July 2009. ARC Press release ‘Celebration of Faiths and the Environment’, November 2009. Also: article COP15 website (COP 15 World religions join the fight against climate change: "Green Islam" impresses the UN, as the effort to combat global warming receives support from an unexpected side). (accessed in 2009; not online in 2012 <http://en.cop15.dk/>).

² ‘Istanbul Declaration on Climate Change’, July 12, 2009 at: Islam Online (accessed 2010). Earth Mates Dialogue Centre, a UK based non-governmental organization, was one of the initiators and facilitators. The website is not accessible anymore in 2012. See chapter 6.

³ See chapter 6.

Kjorven concluded his address suggesting that this might ‘turn out to be the largest civil society movement in history’⁴. That is an intriguing observation. Could Kjorven be right? Is an Islamic climate or environmental movement emerging today? Who is involved and what is being said? What is known about it? This high level recognition is suggesting that that something significant may be happening in the Muslim world, that may have alluded radars. We argue that a new type of environmental movement is emerging, ‘Islamic environmentalism’. The ‘green’ of Islam - its symbolic colour – is blending with the ‘green’ of sustainability.

Examples of active Muslim engagement with environmental or sustainability issues are readily found elsewhere, once you start looking for it. These include Islamic eco-philosophies, Islamic environmental law, *green jihadi* activism, *halal* eco-certified foods, Islamic eco-villages, Islamic local currencies, ‘green’ sheikhs and scholars, an *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development* (2002) of the Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC) and a *Muslim Declaration on Nature* (1986) of the Muslim World League and ‘ethical’ sustainable ‘sharia compliant’ finance, trade and business practices. On closer inquiry we find global networks that link British Muslim activists to Indonesian conservationists, Senegalese neo-Sufi brotherhoods to green life style conscious Muslim (Afro-)Americans. In terms of ideas, we also find intriguing blends of Islamic and environmentalist thought, such as Sufi mystical eco-spirituality and radical eco-anarchist Islamism. A first analysis of the discourses (the views and ideas) suggests that a variety of approaches have emerged, some theological-juridical and ethical, some social political, others mystical, each interpreting the Islamic sources in a distinct way.

We argue that this colourful world of Islamic environmentalism deserves a wider platform. To date, it appears to have escaped the attention of both the academic world and the general public. Environmental research tends to focus on secular movements, whilst studies of religions and Islam tend to focus on the radical, fundamentalist and political movements, Islamic theology and law. A single focus on the secular, the clashes and theology is diverting attention away from the many other social manifestations of contemporary Islamic thought and action. Islamic environmentalist thought received a platform in the late nineties in the context of a newly emergent sub-discipline of religious studies ‘religion and ecology’⁵. This resulted in the seminal collection of essays distributed volume *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. Richard Foltz, one of the editors, is one of the few academics who set out to analyze Muslim views and action from an academic perspective. Several other scholars from different disciplines have also started to study this field. Considerable scope is left for more in-depth and systematic research.

This survey aims to chart the terrain of contemporary Islamic environmentalism and identify the most promising areas for future research. It was funded by the *Leiden University Fund* (LUF), pilot study grant and conducted in 2010/2011⁶. This report was first submitted to the LUF in March 2011. This version is a slightly revised version of the initial report (February 2012).

1.2 Objective

This *explorative survey* aims to broadly investigate the terrain of ‘Islamic environmentalism’, here defined as any form of environmentalism that refers to Islam to substantiate its views and actions. It aims to uncover, identify and describe the ideas, activities and practices that have developed within the Muslim world since the 1970s, and identify the scope for further research.

⁴ ARC Press release ‘Celebration of Faiths and the Environment’, November 2009.

⁵ See Chapter 2. Most significant platforms are: Forum on Religion and Ecology and the International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture (ISSRNC).

⁶ Leiden University Fund (www.luf.nl)

Key questions are:

- (1) who are 'speaking out for Islam' about environmental issues (the *actors*)? What is their background (regional, institutional, ideological)? How do they relate to others speaking up for Islam, or others speaking out for the environment (references, alliances)? Can we identify key opinion leaders?
- (2) what ideas, theories, perspectives and views are proposed (the *discourses*)? What Islamic principles and tenets are called into play? What sources are used? How does it relate to commonly known environmental discourses?

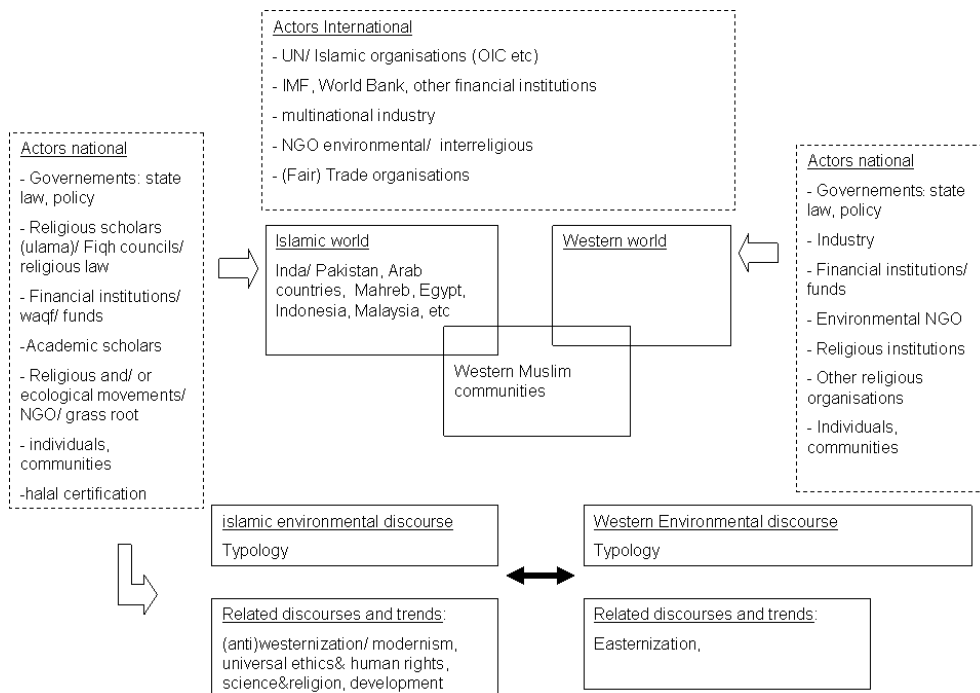
1.3 Scope and approach

The general approach is social scientific, meaning it aims to describe and analyze what others say and do without passing any normative judgments. It expresses no preference for one voice over another. The study explores the landscape of Islamic environmentalism with a *birds eye view*. It does not have the pretention to present a full comprehensive overview of 'Islamic environmentalism' worldwide (if possible at all).

As indicated this study is first of all limited by the language barrier. A wide range of languages is spoken in the Muslim world and significant part of Muslim world discourses will be carried out in languages, such as Arabic, Urdu, Bahasa Indonesia, Malay or Turkish. Arabic is the *lingua franca* of the religious establishments.

This study is based on public sources that are accessible in English. This biases research towards activities in the Western countries (US, UK, Europe, Australia) and non-western countries using English as the main second language, such as India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Egypt. It also biases towards certain types of actors, such as intellectuals, international NGOs, activists who use English as their prime language to share and exchange ideas. These are generally lay people who are not trained in the traditional Islamic sciences (theology, ethics and law).

At the same time English is also the *lingua franca* used by Muslims living in the various parts of the Muslim world. It can therefore be expected that Muslims who aim for global or Muslim world audiences will communicate in English. This type of *global* Islamic environmentalist discourse is therefore accessible.



Several methods were used to ‘draw out’ Islamic environmentalist sources. The internet is a powerful tool to use, as it enables an access to sources and establishing links that would have remained invisible ten, fifteen years ago. This may in part explain why Islamic environmentalism has remained relatively invisible until recently. Simply *googling* on ‘Islam and environment’ leads to a remarkable number of hits. Highly interesting blogs, such as *Green Prophet*, *Muslim Environment Watch* that aim to track and trace environmentalism in the Muslim world are a rich source of information⁷.

A deeper, more systematic search was then conducted by focussing on specific environmental topics (such as climate change, sustainable development), academic disciplines (religion, nature, ecology, environmental ethics, science, law etc), institutions (such as the UN, World Bank, OIC, ISESCO, Islamic Fiqh Councils), global Islamic NGO’s (such as Islamic Relief), specific sectors (finance, commerce and trade), Islamic opinion leaders (such Ramadan, Qaradawi), interfaith and global ethics initiatives (Earth Charter, Parliament of the World’s Religions, Alliance of Religion and Conservation) and Islamic websites, blogs with a global outreach to Islamic audiences, such as *IslamOnline*. By tracking and tracing references other sources also surfaced. The general scheme above roughly charts the searched landscape.

1.4 Setting the Stage: Environmentalism and Sustainable Development

Islamic environmentalism is not developing in a vacuum. It is inherently part of and a response to a wider and larger global environmental movement. We will start here with a (very broad) outline of the ‘environmental context’. We need to set the stage.

Awareness about the ‘environmental crisis’ first surfaced in the Western industrialized countries, who were the first to be confronted with the negative side-effects of the large scale industrialization. Landmark publications such as Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962)⁸ and the

⁷ See Chapter 9.

⁸ Carson, Rachel, *Silent Spring*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1962.

Club of Rome *Limits to Growth* report (1972)⁹ sparked public awareness at the end of the 1960s and early 70s, and have since spurred a significant transformation of the world's societies. At local, national and trans-national levels environmental government administrations, scientific and educational institutions, environmental non-governmental organizations and grass roots movements have emerged in all part of the world. In fact, it can be argued that 'sustainability' or 'environmentalism' has been one of the powerful drivers fueling global social change today.

The term 'environment' incorporates a range of issues. It includes localized issues such as pollution control, waste-, water-, resource- and energy management and nature conservation, and global issues such as energy security, biodiversity and climate change. Environmental discourse also incorporates social justice, human development, poverty alleviation, governance, economic systems and other issues. A variety of ideological approaches been developed over the past four decades, varying from 'radical reformist' to liberal 'laissez faire'. This largely reflects the spectrum of social political and ideological thought common to our times¹⁰.

The concept of 'sustainable development' has probably become the most common approach. It has come to carry many meanings since it was first introduced in the 1987 Brundtland report *Our Common Future*¹¹, but it is generally taken to indicate a type of development that will not compromise the 'ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. It also refers to the attempt to balance the three pillars of (1) social justice and equity, (2) ecological integrity and (3) economic growth. Highly influential UN summits, such as the Rio Earth summit (1992), the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) significantly influenced the world's course of events. It served as a rallying point for social movements and has inspired business, commerce, trade, finance sectors to search for ways to combine the interest of 'people, planet and profit', and develop corporate responsibility, sustainable ethical finance, business and trade, green economics and consumerism. In June 2012 a new summit on sustainable development, Rio+20, is organized in Rio.

In the Western world, mainstream environmental discourse has largely been a secular affair. Religious legitimization of politics and policies is generally not called into play (or deemed necessary). Muslim majority countries established environmental administrations in the early eighties, and Muslims participated in the environmentalist movements as activists, scientist, government officials from the start. However, this involvement was also largely 'secular' in the sense that few explicit references were made to 'Islam' or Islamic tenets or principles.

However, faithbased organizations have played a pro-active role on social and ecological issues. Faithbased organizations proliferated in the nineties¹² and an increasing numbers incorporate environmental agendas. Christian organizations in the US, for example, have organized strong lobbies supporting (or opposing) climate change policies¹³. Pope Benedict XVI pleaded for a

⁹ Meadows, Donnela and Dennis Meadows, *Limits to Growth*, 1972.

¹⁰ For an overview of the spectrum environmental discourses see for example: Dryzek, John S., *The Politics of the Earth, Environmental Discourses*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997, 2nd edition 2005, Hajer, M.A., 'Doing discourse analysis: Coalitions, Practices, Meaning' in: *Nederlandse Geografische Studies Issue* 344, 65-74, 2006. Other typologies: Hopwood, B., Mary Mellor, Geoff O'Brien, Sustainable development: mapping different approaches, *Sustainable Development*, 13, 38-52, 2005.

¹¹ Brundtland, G.H., *Our Common Future*, World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED), 1987 <http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm> (accessed March 2011)

¹² For Muslim charities see for example: Benthall, J., and J. Bellion-Jourdan (2003) *The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World*, 2009.

¹³ Wardekker, J. Arjan, Petersen, Arthur C., Sluijs, Jeroen P. van der, 'Ethics and public perception of climate change: Exploring the Christian voices in the US public debate' in: *Global Environmental Change*, Elsevier, 2009.

reappraisal of a religiously based ethic of moderation in economics and business in light of planetary limits to growth and essentially opted for a significant, or even radical systemic change in his 2009 *Caritas in Veritate*. Large international environmental organizations, such as WWF and IUCN and the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) have played a pivotal role in rallying support from faith communities, as we will see in this report.

Before we proceed, we need to make a distinction between ‘Islamic’ and ‘Muslim world’ environmentalism. ‘Islamic environmentalism’ is here taken to refer to all theories and practices that draw inspiration from Islamic sources (Qur’an, Hadith, schools of law, philosophical traditions) and search for a specific ‘Islamic environmental ethics’. By contrast ‘Muslim world environmentalism’ can be taken to indicate any form of environmental activism in the ‘Muslim world’ (which does not necessarily need to refer to Islam to substantiate environmental action).

1.5 Structure of the report

The report is roughly structured in a chronological order. We start off in the seventies with a number of pioneering intellectuals, and move through the eighties and nineties to end up end of 2010, early 2011. The first three decades (between 1970 and 2000) were characterized by efforts to formulate Islamic environmental theories, reflecting on the interrelation between human and nature, the causes and solutions to environmental crisis. In this period several types of approaches emerged, which vary in terms of use of the Islamic sources (Quran, hadith, Islamic Law, or other such as mystical-philosophical schools of thought and in terms of its of the implications for science and technology (Islamic science), social political and economical reform, and practical land- water resource management, nature conservation (conservationists) and individual lifestyles. In chapters 2 these main types and their some of their key representatives are introduced.

The next decade (between 2000 and 2010) is characterized by practical action, taken by . Islamic *principles are translated to practice* by nature conservationists (chapter 3), international Islamic institutions and Muslim country environmental policy makers (chapter 4), interfaith platforms (chapter 5), civil society groups (chapter 6 and 7), individuals and communities (chapter 8), the finance, business, trade and developmental sectors (chapter 9) and to limited extent the Islamic traditional scholars (chapter 10).

2 Islamic Environmental Principles and Ethics (1970s-2000)

2.1 Introduction

This chapter highlights a number of the landmarks of the emerging Islamic environmental movement between the 1970s and the turn of the century (around 2000). What characterized these activities was its more or less theoretical approach, focusing on what Islam has to say about the ‘environment’ or ‘nature’ and the human nature relationship. In the 70s, a number of intellectuals philosophized about the ‘environmental crisis’, approaching it from a distinctly Islamic perspective. They believed that Islam had something valuable to offer to the world: an ‘alternative’, less destructive worldview. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the Saudi Arabian government worked with a large conservationist non-governmental organization (IUCN) to formulate a framework and a set of principles that outlined the Islamic view of nature. Also during this time, the world’s religions engaged more actively in the environmental debates. This led up to the 1986 Assisi Declarations, which included Islamic statements. At the end of the 90s, academics from the emerging subfield of ‘Religion and Ecology’ provided the platform for a deeper exploration of the field. In the subsequent chapters we will see how some of the key themes were picked up and worked out in practice.

2.2 Pioneering intellectuals (1970s and 1980s)

Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Mystical nature philosophy¹⁴

One of the first to write about the ‘environmental crisis’ from an Islamic perspective was Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933), an Iranian American philosopher, and scholar of Islam and Comparative Religion. In the 60s, he addressed the ‘spiritual dimensions of the environmental crisis’ from a spiritual and an Islamic Sufi perspective¹⁵ in an essay which is said to predate Lynn White Jr’s famous thesis about the ‘historical roots of our ecological crisis’¹⁶. Nasr’s article never got the response White’s thesis had, but his argument about Western thought was basically similar. It drew attention to the anthropocentric, materialistic and exploitative attitude towards nature that had evolved in the Western world and that legitimated the dominance and exploitation of nature. The science and technology that evolved from this worldview have now become self-destructive. Lynn White traced this thought to its Christian roots, and triggered a debate about the religious anthropocentric roots of the ecological crisis. Nasr agreed that Western modern thought is the root cause of the ecological crisis. In his view, this worldview is fundamentally flawed in its disregard for the deeper sacred nature of both man and Nature. However, rather than blaming monotheistic ‘religion’, Nasr argued instead, that ‘authentic religions’ hold valuable wisdom that may provide humanity with the keys out of the crises. Nasr pleads for a rediscovery and reconnection with heritages of the great religious traditions of our world. In his view, the

¹⁴ This section is a summary of the Bachelor thesis written by A.M. Schwencke, *Seyyed Hossein Nasr: Islamic Esotericism, Traditionalism and Environmental Ethics*. Leiden University Institute of Religious Studies, supervised by prof. dr. A.F. de Jong, June 2009 (available on request, publication forthcoming).

¹⁵ Nasr, S.H. ‘Contemplation and Nature in the Perspective of Sufism’ in: *Iqbal* 12, January 1964, 14-21, in: *Islamic Studies* 1964.

¹⁶ This thesis is considered as a landmark in the development of environmental discourse. It links the ‘ethos of medieval Christianity to the emergence of [...] an exploitative attitude towards nature in the Western World’. Also see the entry ‘White, Lynn’, in: Taylor, B. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, 2 volumes, New York: Continuum, 2005, 2008. Original title: White, Lynn, ‘The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis’ in: *Science* 155:3767, 10 March 1967, p1203-1207.

authentic religions share a ‘common’ comprehensive cosmology or worldview that has been lost to the West on the advent of modernity. Islam as an authentic religion still lived and practiced by billions, has something valuable to offer the world, as it still has access to the ‘powerful and persuasive spiritual teachings about the natural world and the relation of human beings to it’. It also offers ‘concrete directives for human action’.

Nasr represents a mystical-philosophical strand of Islamic environmental thought. This emphasizes the sacred quality of nature, the inherent balance and orderliness of the universe at all levels of existence, and the significance of mankind in this grand divine scheme. Man holds great responsibilities in maintaining the inner balance within the soul, the balance with the divine and the outer balance with nature. Human spiritual self development is seen as a crucial component of the environmental teaching. By developing the virtues of moderation, discipline and restraint a renewed sense of the sacred will make humanity more receptive to the earth’s plight and on a more pragmatic level, will curb the greed that is fueling our consumer societies.

Nasr also formulated an Islamic environmental ethic. This is firmly rooted in the ‘traditional Islamic’ sources, the Quran, Hadith and Islamic Sharia law, all expressions in his view of a ‘authentic religious cosmology’. Contrary to other more conservative Islamic environmentalists, Nasr also draws from Islamic mysticism, philosophy, arts and architecture. Islamic law, sharia is an important source for Islamic environmental teachings, Nasr argued, because it contains both ‘concrete laws and principles for the regulations needed to confront the environmental crisis’¹⁷. Examples are: the prescriptions that regulate the management of communal resources (water, forests, and grazing lands), public and private property, just treatment of animals and various economic injunctions, such as opposition to usury, wasteful consumerism and excessive amassing of wealth. We will see how others have developed this sharia based Islamic Environmental Law. Nasr himself mainly focused on the theoretical, metaphysical and cosmological aspects the environmental teachings. ‘You cannot have effective environmental laws without having a greater vision of nature’¹⁸. Nasr is convinced that worldviews are the primary driving forces behind any substantial societal change. A spiritually awakened elite will trigger and effectuate the radical transformation that is needed to save our planet. These will inspire people to follow the spiritual path of inner development. ‘People have to reform themselves, before they can reform the world’. Nasr favours ‘traditional’ indigenous small-scale technologies, traditional farming methods or small-scale eco-village communities very similar to those proposed by, for example by environmental movement icons such as E.F. Schumacher. He can be shown to share common ground with ‘environmentalists’ in these circles.

His thought is an intriguing fusion of Persian shi’ite gnostic and Ibn Arabian mysticism and a Western school of thought, Traditionalism or Perennial Philosophy of Fritjof Schuon (Rene Guenon and others)¹⁹. Nasr’s environmental thought can also be shown to draw on early twentieth century American or New England Transcendentalism. There is a strong affinity with ‘deep ecology’ currents. His thought can be contextualized as part of a wider counter current of (Western) thought with long historical roots (‘esotericism’)²⁰.

Nasr continued to publish and lecture about the ‘environment’ till this date. He is addressing both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences.

He is considered a ‘founding father’ of contemporary Islamic environmental thought, appreciated for having provided ‘the foundations for the current discussions on Islam and the environment

¹⁷ Edited transcript of the taped telephone interview with Seyyed Hossein Nasr on 31 October 2008.

¹⁸ Transcript of the interview with Seyyed Hossein Nasr on 31 October 2008.

¹⁹ In my thesis *Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Traditionalism, Islamic Esotericism and Environmental Ethics* (2008), I contextualize Nasr’s work as part of the Traditionalist circle.

²⁰ See my Bachelor thesis: Schwencke, A.M., *Seyyed Hossein Nasr: Islamic Esotericism, Traditionalism and Environmental Ethics*. June 2009. BA thesis Religious Studies (not published).

(Foltz)²¹. Nasr's most cited work is *Man and Nature: the Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man* (1987)²². The most comprehensive exposition of his environmentalist thought is given in *Religion and the Order of Nature* (1996). His work is cited by many of the other Islamic environmentalists. At the same time it is also controversial, due to his 'perennial' views of other religions, its mystical perspective, his shi'ite roots and ties to the Persian regime. An unexpected sympathizer of Nasr's work is the British Prince Charles. The Green Radical Prince Charles repeatedly lectured about Islam and the West, the need to rediscover our 'sense of the sacred' and very recently about Islam and the Environment²³.

© Further research:

- mystical-philosophical interpretations of Islamic perspective of the environment.

Islamization of Knowledge, Science and the Environment

Towards the end of the 70s and early 80s, other intellectuals started to speak up about the 'environment'. Most vocal were: Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Ziauddin Sardar²⁴, an independent scholar and writer, and S. Parvez Manzoor, a geologist and linguist specialized in Islamic arts and languages. These scholars approached the 'environmental crisis from an 'Islamic science' perspective.

The 1984 *The Touch of Midas*, 1985 *Islamic Futures* and the 1989 *An Early Crescent*²⁵, all edited by Sardar, focus on the negative influence of Western science on Muslim thought and actively propagate the need to develop an ethical or 'Islamized' science. Like Nasr, who also contributed actively to these debates, these authors considered 'Western Science and technology' to be the root cause of the environmental crisis. A solution is to be found in a radical reform of the scientific enterprise, and a revival of 'Islamic science, as an integral part of the comprehensive Islamic moral and ethical framework.

²¹ Foltz, R.C. Entry on: 'Seyyed Hossein Nasr' in: Taylor, B. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, 2 volumes, New York: Continuum, 2005, 2008. p1151.

²² Nasr, S.H., *Man and Nature: the Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*, London: Unwin Paperbacks, 1987, new edition: London: Unwin and Hyman and Harper-Collins, 1990, Chicago: ABC International Group, 1997. Nasr, S.H. *The Encounter of Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*, London: Allan and Unwin, 1968. Reprinted as *Man and Nature* (1987). Nasr, S.H. *The Encounter of Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*, London: Allan and Unwin, 1968. Reprinted as *Man and Nature* (1987). Chapter 9 'Sacred Science and the Environmental Crisis: An Islamic Perspective'. In: Nasr, S.H., *The Need for a Sacred Science*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993. Nasr, S.H. *Religion and the Order of Nature*, New York Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996. Chapter 6: 'Cosmos as Theophany' in: Nasr, S.H., *Knowledge and the Sacred*, Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989.

²³ Lorimer, D., *The Radical Prince*, Floris Books, Edinburgh, 2003. The Prince of Wales website: speech Islam and the Environment:

http://www.princeofwales.gov.uk/speechesandarticles/a_speech_by_hrh_the_prince_of_wales_titled_islam_and_the_env_252516346.html;

Press release Foreign Common Wealth Office: HRH Prince Charles speaks on Islam and the Environment, 10 June 2010. HRH The Prince of Wales delivered a speech on 'Islam and the Environment' at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OXCIS) on 9 June.

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=22350511>; Green Prophet:

<http://www.greenprophet.com/2010/06/prince-charles-islam-environment/>

Strong ties exist between Nasr's traditionalist networks and Prince Charles. In an introduction to the 2006 Traditionalist conference, Prince Charles refers to Nasr's work. See

http://www.sacredweb.com/conference06/conference_introduction.html

²⁴ Ziauddin Sardar (www.ziauddinsardar.com)

²⁵ Sardar, Ziauddin (eds), *The Touch of Midas, Science, values and the Environment in Islam and the West*, Manchester University Press, 1984; Sardar, Ziauddin (eds.) *An Early Crescent: The Future of Knowledge and the Environment in Islam*, London: Mansell Publishing Ltd, 1998.

This debate coincided with Western ‘science’ debates that challenged the notion of ‘objectivity’ in science (inspired by Kuhn and Feyerabend). Ethics and societal values, it was argued, were determining factors in the methods and direction of research. This opened up the option of an ethical Islamic science. It is also part of an ongoing debate in the Muslim world about the relation between ‘science’, ‘knowledge’ and Islamic tenets and principles, which has its roots in the nineteenth century. The scholars Leif Stenberg and Taner Edis charted this ‘science and religion’ field conveniently, which will be helpful in contextualizing this ‘environmental’ debate²⁶. Nasr, Sardar and Manzoor incorporated the ‘environmental crisis’ in this debate in the 1970s and 1980s. Other representatives were (and still are): Muzaffar Iqbal²⁷, Ibrahim Kalin and a circle of Malaysian scholars, which included Seyed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, Anwar Ibrahim and Osman Bakar, (close associates of Nasr). A contemporary Malaysian scholar who is an excellent expositor of the ecological science perspective is Adi Setia, professor of history and philosophy of science at the International Islamic University, Malaysia²⁸. Also part of this circle: Azizan Baharuddin, who co-edited *Islam and Ecology* with Foltz in 2003. She is currently the director of the *Centre for Civilisational Dialogue* at the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur²⁹. This group of intellectuals also made a start with formulating the key Islamic principles of an Islamic environmental ethics. Ziauddin Sardar, summed up the basics of Islamic environmental teachings in his 1985 *Islamic Futures*.

Combine the concepts of tawhid, khilafah, amana, halal, and haram with words of justice (adl) and moderation, temperance, balance, equilibrium, harmony and the concept of ihtisam (preference for the better) and istislah (public welfare) and one has the most sophisticated framework for an environmental ethic that one can possibly desire³⁰.

This closely resembles the framework of principles that was developed with the Saudi Arabian government and the IUCN during these same years.

Ⓒ Further research:

- Islamized science and ecological and environmental implications.

²⁶ Stenberg, Leif, *The Islamization of Science: Four Muslim Positions, Developing an Islamic Modernity*, New York, Coronet Books, 1996. Edis, T., *An Illusion of Harmony, Science and Religion in Islam*, New York: Prometheus Books, 2007.

²⁷ Muzaffar Iqbal is the director of The Centre for Islam and Science: <http://www.cis-ca.org/>. A biography can be found on: <http://www.cis-ca.org/muzaffar/muz-bion.htm>

²⁸ Setia, A., ‘Three meanings of Islamic Science: toward Operationalizing Islamization of Science’ in: *Islam&Science*, June 22, 2007 Accessed at: www.thefreelibrary.com (January 2009). Setia, A., ‘The Inner Dimension of going Green: articulating an Islamic deep-ecology’ in: *Islam&Science*, vol 5, no 2, winter 2007. This is and amended and extended version of a paper originally presented at the *International Conference on the role of Islamic States in a Globalized World*, July 2007 by the Institute for Islamic Understanding (IKIM), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

²⁹ She was one of the key-note speakers on Islam at the Dutch 2006 Conference on Environment and Religion in Nijmegen and quoted Nasr’s work extensively Religion and Sustainable Development Conference, 28 September 2007, <http://conference28sept.wordpress.com/>

³⁰ Chapter ‘Islamic Futures ‘Towards an Islamic Theory of the Environment’ (p228) in: Sardar, Z., *Islamic Futures, The Shape of Ideas to Come*, London and New York, 1985. This publication is not available any more, so depending on citations Mawil Izzi Dien in *Environmental Dimensions of Islam* (2000), p81

2.3 Islamic Principles for the Conservation of the Natural Environment (1983/ 1994)

In the early eighties, many Muslim governments started to develop environmental policies and set up environmental departments. Most of these were Western style and secular. The Saudi government decided to search for an 'Islamic' foundation and set out to define 'Islamic Principles' for environmental protection and nature conservation. Also at this time, the large environmental and conservationist organizations, World Wildlife Fund (WWF) and World Conservation Union (IUCN), started to involve the faith communities of the world religions for environmental protection.

In 1981, the Saudi government was preparing for a central environmental administration and commissioned the King Abdul Azziz University to develop a set of Islamic environmental principles. The implementation of the policies, it was argued, would be more effective when these were based on 'creed and cultural and natural heritage'. The IUCN was asked to assist in developing the national conservation strategy. This resulted in the first 'Islamic statement' about environmental issues from an Islamic perspective: the 1983 'Islamic Principles for the Conservation of the Natural Environment (IPCNE)'. This was first published by IUCN and MEPA, the Saudi Meteorology and Environmental Protection Administration (IPCNE: IUCN Environmental Policy and Law Paper) in 1983. It was republished several times and re-edited in 1994³¹.

The 1994 'Islamic principles' introduced a number of key concepts that recur in most of the expositions on Islamic environmental teachings.

The key principles center on the concepts of unity, Oneness of God (*tawhid*), cosmic balance, stewardship (*khalifa*) and human responsibility and accountability to God. These principles legitimate a duty of care for the environment. Further ethical guidelines are deduced from basic ethical principles: to work for the common good, to do good and refrain from evil, preserve life and avoid harm, abuse and wastefulness. Sardar and Manzoor formulated similar principles during this same period, but it is not clear whether they contributed to this process of formulating the IPCNE principles. Possibly, they were involved behind the scenes. Characteristic of IPCNE principles is its focus on *sharia*. Shari'ite principles and practices, injunctions and traditional institutions, such as *hima* and *waqf*, are introduced as 'practical' tools for land, water and resource management, and conservation planning purposes.

Some of the key concepts:

First, the IPCNE principles strongly emphasize the principle of the 'common good'. This is in itself a much disputed concept within Islamic Law, with varying implications. IPCNE bases it on the notion of cosmic symbiosis (*takaful*), which refers to the balance between all living beings, and to the notion that God sustains all by means of one another (God created all beings to best serve Him, but also to serve each other). God is served best by working for the common good of all, so IPCNE concludes that the 'Universal common good is a principle that pervades the universe'. The concept of *takaful*, incidentally also refers to Islamic poverty alleviation and insurance schemes³². Later it will be argued that Islamic Finance is one of the key areas with practical implications of Islamic environmental thought (chapter 10).

³¹ 1983, 1994, Llewelyn, O. Abd-ar Rahman, Dee, Mawil Y. Izzi, Al-Glenid, M., Ba-Kader, Abdul Latif, 'Islamic Principles for the Conservation of the natural Environment, Gland, Switzerland IUCN and NR, MEPA, Saudi Arabia, (1983), 1994.

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/environmental_protection_in_islam.pdf ;

<http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/eplp20en.pdf>

³² ICMIF The International Cooperative and Mutual Insurance federation. Takaful and Poverty Alleviation (www.icmif.org/takaful).

Second, the IPCNE principles also strongly emphasize that creation is made to serve man. Man is allowed to utilize this gift of God, the ‘bounty’ of the earth, its fruits and resources for his own livelihood and benefit and for the benefit of the rest of creation. Man is therefore encouraged to ‘cultivate the lands and cause it to flourish through agriculture, cultivation and construction’, and to ‘improve all aspects of life for man’s benefit and welfare and betterment of life for all future generations’. Man’s activities are limited by the ‘trust’ with God, and ultimately, it is also stressed: creation belongs to God alone, man is not the proprietor. IPCNE considers this the best foundation for an Islamic legitimization of ‘sustainable development’, which incorporates the notion of ‘future generations’ and limits. The concept of ‘divine ownership’ is a central notion that is strongly related to environmental debates about the ‘global commons’. At the same time, the Islamic concept of man’s role within creation also opens up a debate about religious anthropocentrism, which was introduced by Lynn White jr. and is still strong within environmental discourse³³. More analysis is needed on these theological principles, which need to be contextualized within more comprehensive theological debates.

Several scholars contributed to the IPCNE principles³⁴. The sociologist AbuBakr Ahmed Bagader was listed as the lead author. However, Mawil Yusuf Izzi Dien Sammurai, an Iraqi born academic based in the UK, appears to have been the leading theorist and driving force. Uthman Abd Ar-Rahman Llewellyn contributed actively to the re-edited 1994 version. Both pursued careers in the environmental field and continued to contribute to the Islamic environment debates in the years to come. They represent a line of environmentalist thought that is strongly rooted in Islamic *sharia* Law, and is focused on nature conservation.

- Mawil Izzi Dien worked out his views in two main publications: ‘Islamic Environmental Ethics, Law and Society’ and *Environmental Dimensions of Islam* (2000). He is currently head of the *Centre for Islam and Ecology* based at the University of Wales, Lampeter³⁵. His interests include application of Islamic Law in the sectors of trade, commerce, finance and governance. This will be discussed as part of the Eco-Islamist discourse.
- Uthman Abd Ar-Rahman Llewellyn, an American born convert to Islam, became a specialist in sharia based conservation and has been working on nature conservation and environmental planning at the National Commission for Wildlife Conservation and Development at the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia since the eighties. He is actively involved in a number of nature conservation projects using shari’ite *hima*³⁶.

³³ Kaveh Afrasiabi, *Islam and Ecology: a Bestowed Trust*, p281-

³⁴ Other contributors: AbuBakr Ahmed Bagader (sociology), Abdullatif Tawfik Al-Chriazi El-Sabbagh (Islamic studies), Mohamad As-Sayyid Al-Glayand (Professor of Islamics, Dar al-Uluum, University of Cairo, Egypt). A preliminary report is said to have been written by Omar Bakhasab (1981), but this could not be traced. Other participants did not appear to continue in this field

³⁵ No information found. What happened?

³⁶ Publications: Llewellyn, Othman A. “Conservation in Islamic Law” in *National Legal Strategies for Protected Areas Conservation and Management, Fourth World Congress on National Parks and Protected Areas*, Caracas, 1992, 45–46.; Llewellyn, Othman A. “The Basis for a Discipline of Islamic Environmental Law,” in *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*, edited by Richard C. Foltz et al. (Cambridge, Mass.: Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard Divinity School; Harvard University Press, 2003), 185–247.; Llewellyn Othman. and Dana Ajlani, “The Hima in Saudi Arabia,” *Conservation for Poverty Reduction, Traditional Approaches in West Asia: Hima Revival and Evolution through the 21st Century*, 2007.; Llewellyn, Othman A., *The Protected Area System in The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia: Revised Plan*, NCWCD, in press.; Llewellyn, Othman, John Grainger and “Sustainable Use: Lessons from a Cultural Tradition in Saudi Arabia,” *Parks: The International Journal for Protected Area Managers* (Gland, Switzerland) 4, no. 3 (1994): 8–9.

Izzi Dien and Llewelyn both contributed to the two major publications about Islam and the Environment: 1992 WWF *Islam and Ecology* and the 2003 *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. They spend little time and effort in delineating why our planet is in peril or what the root causes of the environmental crisis are, as some of the other environmentalists do. Rather, they focus on the solution, believing that Islamic law and ethics have exceedingly rich contributions to offer, which now remain largely unarticulated and unrealized. It is pointed out that Islamic law is one of the most widespread legal and ethical systems on earth adhered to by nearly one fifth of human kind. Moreover, a number of sharia based practices still govern and influence the ways people use resources, particularly in rural areas. These people tend to have little sympathy for alien environmental legislation taken over from the industrialized West, which is frustrating enforcement of these laws³⁷.

Western environmentalists who picked up on the IPCNE have long seen these as representing the normative Islamic view³⁸. Whether, this is the case will need to be assessed. The question of 'normative' principles alludes to a complicated debate within the Muslim world about religious authority (authority to define the 'norms'). This will be discussed somewhat later, when discussing the religious establishment. As for the 1994 'Islamic principles' it is not clear in what way Islamic religious scholars, experts of theology and Islamic law (from the Fiqh Councils) have played a role in this process, nor whether the principles were endorsed by any of the leading scholars of that time. The contribution of the Dar-UI Ulum of Cairo is suggesting active participating of religious scholars, but their voices remain muffled and need to be drawn out.

- ④ Further research: detailed analysis of the various exposition of Islamic principles, Islamic Environmental Law and the interpretations of the sharia conservationists.

2.4 The Assisi Declarations: engaging the world religions(1986)

The 1986 *Assisi Declaration*³⁹ is another important watershed moment in the development of Islamic Principles for the environment. It also marked a more general active involvement of the world's religion with ecological issues. Rallied by Prince Philip, then-international president of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), religious leaders issued calls to their own faithful declaring how their faith inspired them to care for nature. The *Assisi Declaration* includes statement by Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, Islamic and later Baha'i, Jain and Sikh leaders. The 1986 *Assisi Muslim Declaration* was issued by the Muslim World League, which was headed at the time by Abdullah Omar Nassef⁴⁰ (who incidentally had also contributed to Ziauddin Sardar's volume). Nearly ten years later, in 1995 another statement was issued, also by the Muslim World League, the *Islamic Faith Statement*, which re-iterated the Islamic perspective and the commitment of Islamic religious leaders to the environment⁴¹.

A similar set of Islamic ecological ethical 'principles' is called into play (with some variation) as the 1983 IPCNE principles, although no explicit references are made. This includes: emphasis of the unity or interconnectedness of creation (*tawhid*), stewardship and trusteeship (*khalifa*), human responsibility to maintain balance and harmony in creation, human accountability to God (*akrah*)

³⁷ Llewelyn, O., 'The Basis for a Discipline of Islamic Environmental Law' in: *Islam and Ecology: A bestowed Trust*, 2003. p186.

³⁸ As is noted by Foltz in his biography of Izzi Dien in 2008, 2005, Taylor, B. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, 2 volumes, New York: Continuum. p890-891

³⁹ 1986 *Assisi Declaration*: <http://www.nyo.unep.org/eaf/eafadec.pdf>

⁴⁰ *Muslim Declaration on Nature*: <http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=132>. This is an extended version of the Assisi Declaration and is signed by Dr Abdullah Omar Nassef. ARC Islamic contributions, see: <http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=6>

⁴¹ Islamic Faith Statement: <http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=75> by

and general injunctions to avoid harm and wastefulness. Interesting is the emphasis on Islam as ‘a very practical world view’. Abdullah Omar Naseef, secretary general of the Muslim World League concluded the 1986 *Muslim Declaration to Nature*

It seeks, in all its principles and injunctions, to give pragmatic shapes to its concepts and values. Indeed, the notion of tawhid and khalifah have been translated into practical injunctions in the Shari'ah (Islamic Law).

In his view, the *sharia*, as an ethical-juridical system has a major role to play in defining a practical Islamic framework for environmental protection (for example the *hima* and *hurma* as means for nature conservation). This is also emphasized by the other theorists: the early Intellectuals, the Saudi government in its ‘Islamic Principles’ and the Assisi Declarations. The ambition to translate ‘principles to practice’ through use of Islamic *sharia* law might, in fact, be one of the distinguishing features of Islamic environmentalism, as compared to Christian environmentalism.

The active involvement of the Muslim World League is interesting. Its mission is to:

‘propagate the religion of Islam, elucidating its principles and tenets, ... advocating the application of the rules of the Shareah either by individuals, groups or states, lending it the support it needs to find Islamic solutions to contemporary problems’.

It is closely allied to the Islamic Fiqh Academy, one of the leading institutions in the field of Islamic Law, which at least suggests that Islamic religious scholars were actively involved in the formulation of the 1986 *Assisi Declaration* and the 1995 *Islamic Faith Statement*. However, this is difficult to verify. No references are made to particular scholars or even to involvement of the Islamic Fiqh Academy. The information of the Muslim World League and the Fiqh Academy is only accessible in Arabic, so it cannot be verified from these sources if any references are made to the Assisi Declarations (although I doubt any references are made at all which suggests these institutions may not contribute much weight to the Declarations).

Work of the world’s religions was continued under the flag of the WWF and later of the Alliance of religions and Conservation (ARC). In 1992, WWF published a series on the World Religions and Ecology which ‘looks how each of the five world religions has treated ecology in the past, what the teachings of each have to say on the subject, and how this is applied today’. The volume on *Islam and Ecology* (1992) was first in its kind, dedicated to drawing out Islamic perspectives on the environment. It contains a collection of essays by many of the authors who had become main representatives of Islamic approaches to ecology, including Mawil Y. Izzi Dien and Othman Llewellyn. The volume is edited by Fazlun Khalid, who is new to the scene at that time, but who we will soon see turned out to become one of the most vocal representatives of Muslim civil society.

More collections of essays were published towards the end of the nineties. Harfiya Abdel Haleem edited *Islam and Environment*, which included essays from herself, Abdullah Omar Naseef (who had also contributed to the Assisi Declarations and Sardars volumes), Fazlun Khalid, Ismail Hobson, Yasin Dutton, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Ilyas Baker and Gai Eaton⁴². Another collection was compiled by A.R. Agwan from the India Institute for Objective Studies in 1997⁴³. This India collection was inspired by Nasr and Ismail al-Faruqi, both exponents of the Islamic science

⁴² Abdel Haleem, Harfiyah (eds), *Islam and the Environment*, London: Ta-Ha, 1998.

⁴³ Agwan, A.R., *Islam and the Environment*, New Dehli: Institute of Objective Studies, 1997.

current of thought. It contains the IPCNE principles attributed to Abubakr Ahmad Bakader and contributions by Nasr, Mawil Izzi Din Sammurai and a few others⁴⁴.

2.5 Academic platforms: 'Islam and Ecology'

In the mid 1990s, the academic community picked up on the work done for the 1992 WWF series. The 1996-1998 conference series on 'Religion and Ecology' organized by the *Harvard Divinity School's Center for the Study of World Religions* (CSWR) enabled a more in-depth exploration of the themes that were identified in the 1992 WWF series.

Fazlun Khalid was one of the driving forces behind the 1998 *Islam and Ecology* conference and one of the editors of the 2003 *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*⁴⁵. He has become one of the leading voices of 'eco-Islam' today. Two academics Frederick Denny⁴⁶ and Richard Foltz also became actively engaged during this time. Foltz became one of the leading academic researchers on Islamic environmental discourse and activities.

Leading scholars or activists in the field were asked to reflect on a number of issues from an Islamic perspective: (1) the derivation of Islamic theological and ethical principles; (2) the role of science and technology in the 'environmental crisis'; (3) Islamic Law and its implications for nature conservation; (4) Islamic law and its implications for trade, commerce, economy, and finance and (5) sustainable development and population policies.

Contributors included Seyyed Hossein Nasr, Uthman Llewelyn. Fazlun Khalid, Nomanul Haq, Ibrahim Ozdemir, Safei-Eldin A. Hamed, and Mawil Izzi Dien. Their contributions were compiled in the *Islam and Ecology* volume and published in 2003. This was translated into Turkish in 2005 and Arabic in 2008 and is widely circulated and cited by Muslim and non-Muslims with an interest in Islam and environment⁴⁷.

Adnan Amin of United Nation Environment Program who supported the 1998 *Islam and Ecology* conference, observed that this conference 'marked a watershed moment in bringing together Islamic scholars and practitioners from Africa, South and Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America' for the first time, assembling the 'voices from across the Islamic world speaking [...] on the emerging alliance of Islam and Ecology'^{48, 49}.

This initiative provided a public platform for a number of key intellectuals who had dominated the discourse thus far, such as Nasr, Llewelyn, Khalid and Izzi Dien.

⁴⁴ Abd-al Hamid, Salahuddin Qureshi, M. Rafiq, Mohd. Ajmal, Mohd.Kaleemur Rahman, Sultan Ismail and P. Ibrahim.

⁴⁵ Both were funded by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, a branch of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), which takes an active interest in sustainable development. The AKDN represents the Ismaili community, an influential minority within the Muslim world. See: Tazim R. Kassam's contribution to *Islam and Ecology: a Bestowed Trust*, p477-494.

⁴⁶ Website Frederick Denny: <http://rlst.colorado.edu/Faculty/Frederick-Denny/>. Denny, Frederick M, 'Introduction: Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust Inviting Balanced Stewardship', Islam section of website Forum on Religion and Ecology, originally printed in: *Earth Ethics* 10, no.1, Fall 1998. Denny is a specialist of religious studies, comparative religion and Islam at the University of Colorado (now Professor Emeritus). His involvement with ecological issues and Islam appears to be limited to the conferences.

⁴⁷ Turkish edition, *İslam ve Ekoloji: Başedilmiş Bir Emanet*, tr. Nurettin Elhüseyni, Istanbul: Oğlak Yayınları, 2007. Arabic edition, *Al-islām wa'l-bī'at*, tr. Hussein Ghali, Cairo: 'Adel al-Mu'alam, 2008 (in press).

⁴⁸ Adnan Amin of UNEP in the Preface to *Islam and Ecology, a Bestowed Trust* (2003), p. xxxiii-xxxv.

⁴⁹ The conference was funded by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, a branch of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The AKDN represents the Ismaili community and its leader Imam Aga Khan IV. See: As is explained by Tazim R. Kassam's contribution to *Islam and Ecology: a Bestowed Trust*, p477-494.

New names also came up at this time.

- Azizan Baharuddin was one of the editors of *Islam and Ecology*. She was (and still is) director of the *Center for Civilizational Dialogue* of the University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur and professor in the Department of Science and Technology. She is closely connected to Nasr's Islamic science circle⁵⁰.
- Ibrahim Özdemir was (is) associate professor of history of philosophy at Ankara University. He continued his work on environmental philosophy, religion and the environment. In *Islam and Ecology* (2003) he reflected on Quranic ecotheology and in *Environmentalism in the Muslim World* (2005) on Turkish environmentalism. He has a specific interest in Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Approach to the Environment and environmental ethics. His 1997 dissertation *The Ethical Dimension of Human Attitude Toward Nature – A Muslim perspective* was republished in 2008. The subtitle 'A Muslim perspective' was added in 2008 and is somewhat misleading. Özdemir mainly discusses non-Muslim environmental ethical discourse and only marginally refers to specific Islamic views⁵¹.
- Seyed Nomanul Haq is a historian of Pakistani origin who specialized in Islamic history and philosophy. He contributed to the Islam and science debates that were also central to Nasr and Sardar. His Islam and Ecology essay was republished several times and mainly picked up in circles of environmental philosophers⁵².

Interestingly, Foltz himself questioned the representativeness of the *Islam and Ecology* platform. He pointed out that the most prominent of the Islamic environmentalists live in the West and write for Western audiences: 'The same faces keep appearing in anthologies and meetings; little more than tokens of Islamic representation'⁵³. He questions whether they are in any way representative of the attitudes of most the Muslims worldwide, and does not seem convinced that they are. Even so, this *Religion and Ecology* platform appears to have triggered a more widespread interest in Islamic environmental views. It may even have kick started an Islamic environmentalist movement itself (which is an interesting hypothesis).

The leading academics of the *Harvard Religion and Ecology* series of conferences are Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim. They continued their work on the intersection of Religion and Ecology ever since the conferences, coordinating their work through the *Forum on Religion and Ecology*⁵⁴. Several years later they also played an active role in the Islamic (Iranian) contributions to the Common Ground movement, that will be discussed in chapter 5. Academic work also

⁵⁰ Azizan Baharuddin presented the Islamic position at a conference on Religion and Environment organized by Nijmegen University in 2006.

⁵¹ Özdemir, I., 'Towards and Understanding of Environmental Ethics from a Qu'ranic Perspective', in: Foltz, R.C. Denny, F. Baharuddin, A. (eds), *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2003. Özdemir, I., 'Chapter 2: Turkey' in: Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, 2005. Özdemir, 'Ibrahim, Bediuzzaman Said Nursi's Approach to the Environment', Paper presented at the Fourth International Symposium on Bediuzzaman Said Nursi: A Contemporary Approach Toward Understanding the Qur'an: The Example of Risale-i Nur, Istanbul, Turkey, 20–22 September 1998. 2003, accessed at: www.theamericanmuslim.org on 8-9-2008.

⁵² Haq, Nomanul Haq, 'Islam and Ecology: Towards Retrieval and Reconstruction' in: *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*, 2003. Same essay also included in: Gottlieb, Roger S. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, Oxford University Press, 2006 and DAEDALUS, *Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 2001 and 'Islam' in *A Companion to Environmental Philosophy*, ed. Dale Jamieson, 111–29. London: Blackwell, 2001.

⁵³ Foltz, R. 'Islamic environmentalism: a matter of interpretation' in: *Islam and Ecology*, 2003

⁵⁴ Website Forum on Religion and Ecology: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/> Section on Islam: <http://fore.research.yale.edu/religion/islam/> with extensive bibliography.

continued on another platform: the *International Society for the Study of Religion, Nature, and Culture* (ISSRNC) which was established in 2005⁵⁵.

Roger S. Gottlieb, a professor of philosophy at Worcester Polytechnic Institute is one of the leading scholars and specialists on religious environmentalism⁵⁶. He edited two volumes *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology* (2006) and more recently *Religion and the Environment, Critical Concepts in Religious Studies* (2010), both collections of essays and articles about religious involvement with the environmental crisis. Both volumes include Islamic contributions. In the 2006 Handbook, Richard Foltz provided a comprehensive overview of his findings to that date. The 2010 volume included essays by Ali Ahmad⁵⁷, an expert on Islamic environmental law and Nomanul Haq.

2.6 Academic research about Islamic environmentalism

Richard Foltz is one of the few academic scholars who set out to study Islamic environmentalism from an outsider academic position⁵⁸. He was one of the main organizers of the 1998 conferences, the lead editor of *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* (2003), key author about 'Islam' in the ISSRNC *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*⁵⁹ and the *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology* (2006). He also published in several journals⁶⁰. He also edited *Environmentalism in the Muslim World* (2005)⁶¹ and published a book about *Animals in Islamic Tradition and Muslim Culture* (2006)⁶².

At the end of the nineties, other academics also started to show an interest in Islamic engagement with environmental issues. As these operate outside the circle of 'Religion and Ecology' studies their contributions remained somewhat invisible. Their contributions are also difficult to find, as it is scattered across the globe and across a whole range of academic subfields (such as Environmental policies law, or ethics to regional studies of the Middle East or East Asia or Religious and Islamic studies).

Some of these scholars found during the survey are:

⁵⁵ ISSRNC: www.religionandnature.com/society/

⁵⁶ Roger S. Gottlieb: <http://www.wpi.edu/academics/Depts/HUA/People/rsg.html>

⁵⁷ Publications: Ahmad, Ali, 'Nigeria' in: Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2005. 'Islamic Law' in Taylor, B. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, 2 volumes, New York: Continuum, 2005, 2008, p885-886. 'Islamic Water Law as an Antidote for Maintaining Water Quality' in University of Denver, *Water Law Review* 2, 1999, p169-88. *Cosmopolitan Orientation of the Process of International Lawmaking: An Islamic Law genre*. Lanham: MD: University Press of America, 2001.

⁵⁸ Website Foltz: <http://religion.concordia.ca/FoltzR.html>.

⁵⁹ Taylor, B. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Religion and Nature*, 2 volumes, New York: Continuum, 2005, 2008.

⁶⁰ Foltz, R.C., 'Introduction' and 'Islamic Environmentalism: A Matter of Interpretation' in: *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*, 2003; 'Iran' and 'The Environmental Crisis in the Muslim World' in: Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2005. 'Islam' in: Gottlieb, Roger S. (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Ecology*, Oxford University Press, 2006; 'Environmental Crisis and Global Violence: A Matter of Misplaced Values' in *Islamic Perspective, Centre for Sociological Studies* (IPCSS), Number 3, 2010 (See: <http://iranianstudies.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/Islamic-perspective-Journal-number-3-2010.pdf>, accessed March 2011).

⁶¹ Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, New York: Nova Science Publishers, 2005.

⁶² Foltz, Richard, *Animals in Islamic Traditions and Muslim Cultures*. Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2006.

Barbara Pusch⁶³ and Oğuz Erdur⁶⁴ who explored Islamist environmentalism in Turkey (see chapter 7), Soumaya Pernilla Ouis of Lund University, Sweden⁶⁵, and Rania Kamla et al. of the University of Aberdeen and Dundee in Scotland⁶⁶. A more systematic search is needed, but the general impression is that academic interest *about* Islamic environmentalism was still limited, but is rapidly increasing.

Most academic scholarship on Islam was coordinated through the subfield of Religion and Ecology. This was dominated by a few scholars (mainly Richard Foltz) and has a strong world religions perspective (also see chapter 5).

2.7 First broad analysis: a variety of approaches

Systematic analysis of the discourses (views, ideas, argumentative approaches) expounded in the above mentioned essays has not been conducted to date. Without being able to resort to detailed analysis here either (this will need to be part of future research), a few observations can be made at this stage. A first broad analysis of the material indicates the existence of a number of ‘types’ of approaches.

One group of authors set out to derive ‘Islamic principles and ethics’ (theory) based on the three classical sources for deriving ethics and law: the Quran, Hadith (example of the Prophet) and classical juridical system of Islamic law making (*sharia*). The authors vary in the way and extent they refer to these sources. Most favour an ethical and value-based approach and prefer to focus on Quranic and Hadith as the foundation of an Islamic environmental ethics. They by-pass the complex framework of the *sharia*. Others, such as the IPCNE principles refer extensively to the *sharia*. Some also refer to Islamic mystical and philosophical schools of thought (such as Nasr). Most authors end up with a distinct number of key principles that guide environmental action. These gravitate around a number of key concepts, such as unity, stewardship and balance. Yet, there are significant variations which need to be analyzed in more detail. Some focus on the notion balance and proportion and introduce other concepts, such as the ‘natural state’ (*fitra*). Other more mystical philosophers focus on nature, and introduce the Book of Nature as a revelation full of signs (*ayat*) and symbols that call man to contemplate nature and know its Creator.

Another group of authors set out to apply the Islamic ‘ethical’ foundation to analyze the cause of the environmental crisis and formulate an ‘Islamic solutions’. They criticize the lack of ‘ethics’ in the modern secular paradigm. Variation are visible in terms of the kind of ‘solutions’.

The pioneers strongly focus on reform of science and technology, which are seen as the main drivers behind environmental destruction (Nasr, Manzoor, Sardar, Haq).

⁶³ Pusch, Barbara, ‘The Greening of Islamic Politics: A Godsend for the Environment?’ in *Environmentalism in Turkey: Between Democracy and Development*. Adaman F., M. Arsel, eds. 2005; ‘The Ecology Debate Among Muslim Intellectuals in Turkey’ in: *Les Annales de l’Autre Islam* 6 (1999): 195–209.

⁶⁴ Re-appropriating the ‘Green’: Islamist Environmentalism,’ in *New Perspectives on Turkey* 17 (fall 1997): 151-166. Reference in Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, 2005.

⁶⁵ Ouis, Soumaya Pernilla, ‘Global environmental relations: an Islamic Perspective’ in: *The Muslim Lawyer*, vol4., issue 1, May 2003, (12-16) (<http://www.aml.org.uk/journal/4.1/SPO%20-%20Global%20Environment%20Relations.pdf>); ‘Review of *The Environmental Dimensions of Islam* by Mawill Izzi Dien’ in: *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*, vol19, no2: 113-116; ‘McDonald’s or Mecca? An existential choice of Qibla for Muslims in a Globalized World in *Encounters*, vol.7, no.2, Islamic Foundation: Leicester, UK, 2001 : 161-188.; ‘Islamic Eco-theology Based on the Quran’ in *Islamic Studies* 37, summer 1998: 153. Her work was recommended by Tariq Ramandan in *Radical Reform, Islamic ethics and Liberation*, 2009. note 3p347.

⁶⁶ Kamla, R., Gallhofer, S. Haslam, J., ‘Islam, nature and accounting: Islamic principles and the notion of accounting for the environment’, in: *Science Direct Accounting Forum*, Volume 30, Issue 3, September, Elsevier, 2006.

Others set out to revitalize injunctions and institutions from the *sharia*. Three major orientations emerge, one focused on land and resource management and nature conservation, and one focused on social political and economical governance systems (chapter 3) and more recently finance and economics (chapter 9). The social-political current is most radical, because it aspires towards radical system reform (chapter 7). Increasingly these principles are also used to support changes of lifestyles (chapter 8).

At this stage we suggest to distinguish roughly between the following types of 'Islamic environmentalist':

1. Theological and Islamic law
2. Practical conservationist: land- water resource management, nature conservation
3. Mystical-philosophical nature or eco-philosophy (Green mysticism)
4. Reform of science and technology (Islamic 'ethical' science)
5. Social political reform (Eco-Islamist)
6. Green life styles (Green Deen)
7. Finance and economics

The analysis of the publications, the content of the discourses, is one of the most promising areas for future research.

In the next few chapters, we will explore how principles are put to practice as a practical tool for resource management and nature conservation (chapter 3), for policy making (chapter 4), to underpin the search for common ground and achieve peace amongst the nations (chapter 5) and to spur civil society action (chapter 6). More radical thinkers draw their inspiration from *sharia* to plead for social and political reform (chapter 7), whilst other movements plead for the greening life styles (chapter 8) or economy and finance (chapter 9).

3 Practices in Nature Conservation (*Hima* and *Fiqh al-Bi'ah*)

3.1 IUCN, WWF and ARC programs

Since its formulation in the 80s of the theoretical 'principles', the most visible form of putting 'principles to practice' has occurred in the field of nature conservation. IUCN and WWF continued to play an active role in this field. In 1995, the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) was established by WWF to coordinate the work of the world's religions on environment and conservation. Based in the United Kingdom, the ARC continued to work with WWF, IUCN, the World Bank, UN organizations and regional conservation organizations. These 'secular' organizations are convinced that the religions have a significant role to play in nature conservation programs. To quote WWF in its 2005 report *Beyond Belief: Linking faiths and protected areas to support biodiversity conservation*:

Mainstream faiths, with many millions of followers, have a huge influence on the way in which we view and interact with the natural world. This influence is in large part by shaping people's philosophy and ethics, but also includes more direct links through ownership of land, investment and considerable political and social influence⁶⁷.

ARC and WWF developed several joint programs: *Gifts to the Earth* (2000) and *Sacred Gifts for a Living Planet* (2005) which coordinate conservation actions (protection of biodiversity, in forests, water and seas, climate change, toxics and species)⁶⁸. In 2000, ARC joined forces with the World Bank and launched the three-year *Faiths and Environment* program, which aimed to link faith-based initiatives with environmental advocacy, and 'raise the awareness and profile of religious arguments for forest and biodiversity protection and stewardship among the major faiths'. The 2003 *Faiths in Conservation* and the 2006 *Faiths and the Environment*⁶⁹.

IUCN also remained committed to a faith-based approach to conservation. In 1998, IUCN and WCPA, a leading network of protected area managers and specialists established the *Protecting the Sacred Natural Sites* (SNS) program which focused on 'natural areas of special spiritual significance to peoples and communities'. In Morocco, the shari'ite concept of a designated *haram* (holy) area is used a tool for nature conservation in the area surrounding the tomb of a Saint⁷⁰.

Some observations about the Muslim or Islamic activities.

⁶⁷ WWF report 2005, *Beyond Belief: Linking faiths and protected areas to support biodiversity conservation*, by WWF, Equilibrium and the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC), p8: http://assets.panda.org/downloads/beyondbelief.pdf?bcsi_scan_EC783A0C3C997A81=0&bcsi_scan_filename=beyondbelief.pdf

⁶⁸ 'Sacred Gifts for a Living Planet': http://www.panda.org/what_we_do/how_we_work/gifts_to_the_earth/about_sacred/; Report WWF report 2005, *Beyond Belief: Linking faiths and protected areas to support biodiversity conservation*, by WWF, Equilibrium and the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC): http://assets.panda.org/downloads/beyondbelief.pdf?bcsi_scan_EC783A0C3C997A81=0&bcsi_scan_filename=beyondbelief.pdf;

⁶⁹ ARC/ World Bank projects and book *Faith in Conservation* <http://www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=50>

⁷⁰ reference@

First, many of the programs refer to the 1994 IPCNE Islamic Principles of the IUCN and the Saudi government. The WWF report *Beyond Belief* (2005) summarized the ‘key ecological issues highlighted in the Islamic tradition’ as follows⁷¹:

Water is to be protected as the ultimate source of life and according to Islamic law water sources such as rivers and lakes, should have an inviolable zone around them (a buffer) to prevent damage. Authorities have the right and obligation to prevent violation of these zones.

Planting trees is regarded as good practice and an acceptable substitute for alms (itself one of the five basic pillars of the faith), whilst cutting down trees without strong and legitimate reasons is considered as destroying Allah’s creation.

Kindness to animals is encouraged and it is forbidden to kill animals for mere play. Birds are singled out in particular as their singing praises to Allah; one tradition suggests that if a bird is killed for amusement, it will ask Allah to extract justice from the killer on the Day of Judgment and a story about the Prophet returning pigeon nestlings to their nest is used to show concern for nature. Muhammad also forbade Muslims to kill the hoopoe, a particularly favoured bird.

Both air and the earth are regarded as the property of Allah, although the Prophet Muhammad stated that if someone is able to return barren land to productivity, then that land becomes rightfully theirs (Ihya’al-mawat), a ruling with important implications for property rights. Contaminating the air is an encroachment on nature, and a threat to the life of mankind and all other living things.

Second, the concept of *Hima* claimed centre stage with Uthman Llewellyn as its key theorists and driving force. The 2007 IUCN publication *Al-Hima: A Way of Life*⁷² is largely based on Llewellyn’s work. This booklet summarizes many of the practical actions in the field.

Hima is a traditional system of resource tenure which has been practiced for over 1400 years on Arabian Peninsula. It predates Islam. In Islam it signifies a natural area that is set aside permanently or seasonally for the public good, which may not be privately owned. The system is flexible and highly adaptive to local circumstances. Various types have been recorded, including management systems for range lands, woodland, grazing areas, reserves or bee-keeping. The system declined in the 1960s, but is increasingly appreciated by conservationists as an important link between conservation of renewable resources and sustainable development. It is seen to accord closely with current thinking on equity in the planning and management of protected areas. Nature conservation paradigms are shifting away from the establishment of “mighty parks” toward the emergence of community-based conservation, community conserved areas and co-managed areas. Principles of community-based conservation include empowerment of local communities, increasing public participation, equitable use and sharing of natural resources, preservation of indigenous knowledge and local customs, and recognition of indigenous customary rights.

East Africa/ Zanzibar, Indonesia, and Malaysia and Lebanon, Saudi Arabia are regional ‘hot spots’ where examples of *hima* reserves are found⁷³. In Lebanon, IUCN and a local birdlife organization (SPNL) are experimenting with ‘al-hima’ as a resource management and conservation tool⁷⁴. In Zanzibar, East Africa, the Mislali Island ‘Misali Ethics Program’ Islamic ethics derived from sharia are implemented for marine conservation (sharia conservationists). This program was awarded a Sacred Gifts for a Living Planet in 2000 and is actively promoted

⁷¹ WWF, *Beyond Belief*, 2005 p28.

⁷² IUCN West Asia, SPLN Booklet *Al-Hima: A Way of Life* http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/al_hima.pdf

⁷³ IUCN article, ‘Hima as a model for natural resource management in West Asia and North Africa’ by: Odeh Al-Jayyousi, PhD. Regional Director, IUCN Regional Office for West Asia, <http://www.iucn.org/about/union/secretariat/offices/rowa/?5853/Hima-as-a-model-for-natural-resource-management-in-WANA> ; IUCN West Asia, SPLN Booklet *Al-Hima a way of life*, 2007: http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/al_hima.pdf

⁷⁴ Website: www.spnl.org; Hima programme: http://www.spnl.org/load.php?page=hima_history

and supported by Khalid's IFEES, ARC and WWF⁷⁵. In Indonesia, hima initiative at Batang Gadis National Park, Province Aceh

Odeh Al-Jayyousi, director of the IUCN regional office West Asia considers the *Hima* to be 'one of those progressive concepts of the Arab and Islamic Worlds that helped advance society'.

Those concepts brought about positive change that extended effect geographically to reach Europe and Southeast Asia. The Hima ... spoke the language that the conservation community and after long years of active and sometimes painful field experimentation and research has arrived to today. ...

It is a testimony that the people of Arabia took sound and immediate consciousness of the nature of their environment in terms of it being harsh and rather poor in resources. ... The Hima became so much a Way of Life that it was passed from generation to generation and was practiced spontaneously and almost unconsciously and allowed the people of this region to survive the centuries that remained absent of modern comfort bringing tools and technology.. The vocabulary we use today as a global conservation community was already there, in practice.

It also illustrates how trends in nature conservation toward increased participation and use of indigenous traditional planning and management methods converge with the Muslim world trends to reconnect with the Muslim heritage. The Lebanese SPNL noted that:

People are more ready to accept conservation initiatives when they emanate from their heritage and language. Whereas local people opposed and at times were hostile to the creation of nature reserves, they have had a favorable reaction to himas.

In Lebanon, the word "hima" resonated more positively in people's ears than the word "mahmiyah," which is used to describe the conventional protected area. This may be due to the fact that the word hima is deeply rooted in people's collective memory and is associated with a way of life without which survival in the region extending from West Asia to North Africa would not have been possible. People are therefore conscious of the hima's focus on human well-being rather than the exclusionary wildlife conservation approach⁷⁶.

Third, the institution of *Waqf* or endowment is another interesting Islamic contribution to conservation practices. IUCN recently launched a 'Waqf for Sustainable Development Initiative'⁷⁷. The idea is to use the 'waqf' as a 'complement existing conventional development funds in the region and provide a more sustainable and innovative financing mechanism.'

This 'an Islamic model by which one makes a voluntary, permanent and irrevocable dedication of a portion of one's wealth – in cash or kind, for a certain purpose for certain beneficiaries. Once assets are set aside for Waqf, they can never be gifted, inherited or sold. The idea is that the capital remains intact, and the yield of investment is used for the beneficiaries. Hence the concept of sustainability is ensured'.

Jayyousi continued work in this area. A publication *Islam and Sustainable Development* is planned for June 2012.

Similar practical initiatives have been introduced in South Africa, Indonesia and Eastern Africa. In Africa, the Africa Muslim Environment Network (AMEN), which was established after a ARC meeting of Kenyan Muslim leaders in 2005, aims to organize micro-finance through *waqf* and *zakat*⁷⁸.

⁷⁵ WWF, *Beyond Belief*, pp79-81.

⁷⁶ Website: www.spnl.org; Hima programme: http://www.spnl.org/load.php?page=hima_history

⁷⁷ IUCN article, 'Waqf for Sustainable Development Initiative'
(http://www.iucn.org/about/union/secretariat/offices/rowa/iucnwame_ourwork/iucnwame_waqfinitiative/)

⁷⁸ ARC website: Africa Muslim Environment Network (www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=299)

Using 'Islamic finance' for sustainability purposes may become one of the most significant areas where Islamic institutions are put to practice. It is directly linked to developments that link Islamic insurance models (*takaful*) to poverty alleviation.

These initiatives indicate that this concept is gaining forces. Interestingly, it had not been worked out to a great extent as an 'environmental theme' by the early theorists, although it was pointed out as a potentially interesting area.

Islamic finance is developing in other spheres (development, poverty alleviation), but increasingly the close connection with sustainable development and environmental concerns is being recognized. I will argue later on that this area is possible the most interesting area for future research.

3.2 Green Indonesia movement

Indonesia is taking a lead in the 'greening Islam' process. The above mentioned ARC, WWF and WorldBank program facilitated collaboration of religious scholars, boarding schools and conservationist organizations. Conservation International-Indonesian and the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI) took the lead roles⁷⁹. Three observations can be made:

- the active involvement of the religious establishment,
- the development of *Fiqh al-Bi'ah* (Islamic environmental Law),
- the active involvement of the *pesantren*, Islamic boarding schools.
- The engagement of Indonesian political movements, manifesting a merging of Islamist and environmentalists movements.

The 2002 *Faith and Environment* program which was kick started in Bogor in 2002, actively engaged Islamic leaders, who were urged to promote conservation teachings in their network of Islamic schools. Several workshops were organized to discuss teaching on environmental care, referred to as *Fiqh al-Bi'ah*⁸⁰. These findings were summarized in the 2005 *Konservasi Alam Dalam Islam* (Nature Conservation Through Islam)⁸¹, which unfortunately has not been translated in English (as far as I know). The 'Eco-pesantren' that incorporate Islamic teachings about waste, resourcefulness etc in their curricula have also received much response in the area. The national government introduced an eco-pesantren program to 90 Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Yogyakarta⁸².

Some observers point out that an active green movement is developing in Indonesia, which is also affecting the political domain. Saleem Ali described the 'The Greening of Islamic politics' of the in 2008 established Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa (PKB) or National Awakening Party. Calling itself the country's green party, this is said to have a 'powerful environmental message', merging

⁷⁹ ARC/ World Bank projects and book *Faith in Conservation*

<http://www.arcworld.org/projects.asp?projectID=50>

⁸⁰ A Colloquium on Islamic Fiqh on the Environment, organized by Indonesia's Ministry of the Environment, Conservation International, Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES), Wisma Syahida State Islamic University, and several Indonesian non-governmental organizations, was held at Wisma Syahida State Islamic University in Jakarta, Indonesia, on 21 – 22 June, 2007.

⁸¹ According to CI-I. Yayasan Obor (or Fachruddin Mangunyaja), *Konservasi Alam Dalam Islam* (Nature Conservation Through Islam), 2005.

⁸² Jakarta Post, <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/11/06/ministry-launches-ecopesantren039-program.html>; also see: Common Ground, <http://www.commongroundnews.org/article.php?id=22537&lan=en&sid=1&sp=0> ; Article: <http://www.krakyat.org/en/2009/12/eco-pesantren-in-yogyakarta/>

Islamist with environmentalist discourse. A similar merging of trends is noted in Turkey as we will see, when discussing more radical eco-Islamist movements⁸³.

Fachruddin Mangunjaya from Conservation International-Indonesian is one of the driving forces in Indonesia⁸⁴. He was also actively involved in other initiatives that will be discussed shortly: the 2009 Istanbul and 2010 Bogor Declarations, and the 2009 Melbourne meeting of the Parliament of World's Religions (Chapter 6). Mangunjaya and Fazlun Khalid (IFEES) are actively involved in many of the Indonesian projects and programs, such as the *hima* initiative in Batang Gadis National Park and the *eco-pesantren*⁸⁵.

In Indonesia's province of North Sumatra, Conservation International is working with IFEES and local communities on a *hima* initiative at, establishing a *hima* system. In many parts of Indonesia, and particularly in Aceh and West Sumatra, customary law (*adat*) is quite strong and positive, and derived from Islamic teachings, including institutions along the lines of *himas* and *harim zones*; while customary law is not yet recognized officially, efforts are currently underway to incorporate it into the official legislation pertaining to resource tenure. In the province of Aceh, the provincial legislative system is to be derived from the *shari'ah* and WWF is working with IFEES and local authorities and *fuqaha'* to flesh out *shari'ah*-based environmental legislation. Among the elements envisaged is to designate the entire coastline as a marine *harim zone*⁸⁶.

This UK-Indonesia network indicate that a 'globalized' Muslim civil society is emerging that is actively engaging with environmental issues. IFEES is the linchpin of many of these activities, linking groups of (young) Muslims in the UK to groups in Indonesia. IFEES, for example, is also supporting the 'Green Indonesia movement' with a tree planting projects through a charity (Just Giving)⁸⁷ which is supported by the UK based Islamic group *The Radical Middle Way*⁸⁸.

© Further research:

- Country studies: more systematic analysis of activities on the ground to evaluate how principles are put to practice. (policy papers).
- Islamic Environmental Law (*Fiqh al-Bi'ah*) and relevance nature conservation.
- Islamic finance as tool for sustainable development.

⁸³ Saleem H. Ali, Haris N. Hidayat, The Greening of Islamic Politics, in: Policy Innovations for a fairer Globalization, 11 august 2008 (www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/innovations/data/000068#).

⁸⁴ Blog Islam dan Ekologi, Fachruddin Mangunjaya:

<http://agamadaneкологи.blogspot.com/2007/11/islamic-world-and-climate-change.html>

⁸⁵ Factsheet *Conservation International Faith-based Initiative*

(<http://www.conservation.org/Event%20Documents/Conservation%20International%20Faith%20Overview%20Fact%20Sheet%20Final.doc> ; Factsheet *A Divine Intervention through Conservation* (2010):

<http://www.conservation.org/Event%20Documents/CI%20Indonesia%20Conservation%20and%20Islam%20%20Factsheet%20-%202010-11-07.doc>

⁸⁶ IUCN West Asia, SPLN Booklet *Al-Hima: A Way of Life*, p12:

http://cmsdata.iucn.org/downloads/al_hima.pdf

⁸⁷ IFEES charity program to 'Green Indonesia': <http://www.justgiving.com/GreenIndonesia>

⁸⁸ Radical Middle Way (www.radicalmiddleway.co.uk/events/scholar-tour/greening-indonesia). They find their inspiration from Shaykh Abdullah bin Bayyah, Dr Tariq Ramadan and Na'eem Jeenah.

4 International Policies: Islamic Sustainable Development

4.1 Introduction

At the turn of the century international platforms representing the Islamic world started to engage more actively in global environmental debates. Muslim governments had participated in the United Nations summits such as the UN Environment Conference in Stockholm (1972), the summit on sustainable development (WCED 1987) and the Earth Summits in Rio de Janeiro (1992), conferences on climate change (Kyoto protocol 1997) and other major summits such as the Millennium Summit (2000). The UN summit in Johannesburg (WSSD 2002) triggered a more distinctly ‘Islamic approach. Before 2000, the Arab countries had issued joint ‘Arab’ statements about the Environment⁸⁹. However, few had made the effort – at least on an governmental and institutional level – to emphasize a specific ‘Islamic’ perspective. This apparently changed in 2000. In particular, the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002 provided the rallying call for more active ‘Islamic’ participation. It introduced a new type of approach centered on ‘Islamic sustainable development’.

What triggered this need to ‘Islamize’ a sustainable development approach is an interesting question. We suggest it reflects the general *Islamization* trends that has become more influential in the nineties, and that had also led up to the formulation of *Islamic Declaration of Human Rights*. It may also reflect the more active involvement of the developing world at the UN conferences, or the active interest of UN and other organizations in engaging the faith communities.

Interestingly, at the turn of the century, *two* main tracks of international institutional Islamic involvement emerged. One is dominated by Iran, the other by Saudi Arabia. The Iranian strand is more firmly rooted interreligious/ interfaith, common ground or intercivilizations movements. This has a distinct world religions perspective, aiming to search for common ground. This will be discussed in chapter 5. The other track is more firmly rooted in Saudi influenced Islamic institutions which have a more distinct focus on the ‘Islamic world’ and ‘Islamic perspectives’. The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) took the lead in this process. This chapter will highlight some of the landmarks of this policy driven track.

4.2 Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development (2002)

In 2000, the Organisation of Islamic Conferences (OIC), the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and the Saudi Meteorology and Environmental Protection Agency (MEPA) organized the *Global Environmental Forum from an Islamic Perspective* in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. MEPA had also contributed to the IUCN Islamic Principles in the eighties and nineties, discussed in chapter 2. The aim of this conference was to discuss the ‘Environment from an Islamic Perspective’. It also wished to ‘explain to non-Muslims the Islamic viewpoints on the environment’, arguing that ‘the teaching of Islam regarding the environment are applicable now more than ever’⁹⁰, a conviction that repeatedly put forward by Islamic environmentalists. The Forum issued the 2001 *Jeddah Environment Declaration from an Islamic Perspective* (2001)⁹¹.

⁸⁹ Arab Declaration on Environment and Development (1986), Arab Statement on Environment and Development and Future Outlook (1991), Abu Dhabi Declaration: Perspective of Arab Environmental Action (2001), Arab Declaration to the WSSD, Johannesburg (2002).

⁹⁰ Article: ‘The Environment from an Islamic Perspective’ in : Environmental Policy and Law, 31/1, 2001: <http://iospress.metapress.com/content/gklqvt4pncen9j5/fulltext.pdf>

⁹¹ Check ref.

This entrusted OIC/ISESCO to prepare a 'working program representing the Arab Islamic perception of environmental development for submission to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg in 2002. ISESCO took the lead in developing an Islamic framework for sustainable development. The Rabat, Morocco based ISESCO is 'an international organization specializing in the fields of education, science, culture and communication', established to develop 'an educational system inspired by the Holy Quran and the Sunnah'⁹². It is financially supported by the Saudi Arabian government. Arab countries clearly dominate this platform, although membership includes a total of fifty Muslim (majority) states, including Iran and Indonesia. It is closely allied to the *International Islamic Fiqh Academy (IIFA)*⁹³. This suggests active participation of religious scholars.

ISESCO refers to itself as the 'Islamic renaissance movement at the dawning of a new age with the awakening of Muslim Ummah'⁹⁴, an indication of its Islamic Reformist or Revivalist stance.

Considering the active engagement of the Muslim World League (with ARC/ WWF) and the Saudi government (IPCNE principles with IUCN) in eighties and nineties, it is interesting to take note of this consistent active Saudi influence on the Islamic environmentalist discourse.

Two years later, in 2002, the *First Islamic Conference for Ministers of the Environment* was held in Jeddah⁹⁵. This issued the *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development*, which was presented at the World Summit in Johannesburg a few months later⁹⁶. How this was received at the Summit could not be recovered, and will need further research. However, its message was picked up by the emergent Muslim civil society movement, as we will see in chapter 6.

4.3 Preparatory studies: Islam and sustainable development

More interesting than the declaration itself is the preparatory work that went into developing the General Framework for Islamic Sustainable Development. This resulted in a substantial series of studies and reports that exploring the dimensions of sustainable development from various angles. ISESCO published these documents, as a book and online, but as far as I can assess this work has remained unnoticed. It is highly significant in light of Islamic environmentalism. A systematic and thorough analysis of this material was not possible considering the scope of this survey.

Most interesting is the extensive elaboration of the 'Islamic values' underpinning an Islamic approach to sustainable development: *Study on Sustainable development from the Perspective of Islamic Values and Specificities of the Muslim World*.

This exposition reverberates with the IPCNE 'Islamic Principles of 1994, by defining a number of key guiding principles: unity or wholeness, balance and harmonious order of creation (proportion and measure), the inherent purpose of all of God's creation to maintain the balance and safeguard the continuation of life, human stewardship and responsibilities, appreciation of life's diversity and the need to contemplate this as a source of knowledge, and the duty to care for God's creation as a gift of God. These are substantiated by extensive references to Quranic verses (not hadith or jurisprudence).

Interestingly, however, few direct references are made to these earlier efforts. More significantly, the author is not mentioned either, nor are references found to scholars or publications of religious institutions. It cannot be deduced in what way the religious establishment contributed to the process of formulating guiding this ethical framework. The close alliance of OIC with the

⁹² ISESCO (www.isesco.org.ma)

⁹³ International Islamic Fiqh Academy (www.fiqhacademy.org/sa)

⁹⁴ ISESCO: <http://www.isesco.org.ma>

⁹⁵ See ISESCO *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development*: http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/publications/sust_dev/P7.php#

⁹⁶ ISESCO *Conference of Environment Ministers*: <http://www.isesco.org.ma/english/confSpec/MinistresEnvironnement/index.php?page=/Home/Specialized%20Conferences/>

influential International *Islamic Fiqh Academy* is suggesting active participation of scholars behind the scene.

Interesting is its comparative approach, comparing ecological science with Quranic ethics. Perhaps, unsurprisingly, ISESCO concluded that both approaches are consistent with each other.

The message that modern environmentalism conveys in order to change man's attitude towards nature is enclosed in the Holy Quran, which discussed either patterns of natural equilibrium ... or the necessity to preserve the environment.

The Holy Quran is not a book on ecology, but It should be the first and last source this science draws on. An evidence to this is that all that scientists and 'green' thinkers deduced has been mentioned in the Book in a way or another, centuries ago. One should just contemplate the words of the Creator, Which covered anything modern societies may be concerned with.

Accordingly, each concept explained in these Holy Verses has an equivalent general principle.

- Ecosystem universality is equivalent to the concept of Allah's "One Universe", glory be to Him.
- Ecologic balance corresponds to the harmony of the universe. Scarcity of resources matches blessings apportion.
- Biologic diversity is equivalent to the miscellany of creatures, finalism to adoration, and environmentalism to succession on earth⁹⁷

These are some of the general principles that can be worked out from Allah's Words, and which can be the basis of an Islam-oriented sustainable development. This does not mean Islam has an own sustainable development strategy and refuses the concept as it is agreed upon in this day and age, but it can contribute advantageously to its elaboration, and help modern science change man's attitude towards his environment⁹⁷.

Several other studies also set out to work out (sometimes slightly divergent) sets of Islamic principles, such as *The Islamic World and the Challenges of Sustainable development*, and *Study on Environment and Sustainable development in Islamic Countries*. This work is a clear example how Islamic environmental principles are used as a means to legitimate and underpin international policy making and strategic action

At the same time, it should be noted here that this 'ethical' underpinning formed only a small part of the overall work. On the whole the *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development* and the preparatory work voiced a 'developing country perspective', rather than an 'Islamic perspective'. It strongly emphasized the close interrelationship between the environmental and developmental interests. 'Rich countries are urged to take into account the interests of poor countries and to avoid the implementation of projects at the expense of poor nations' development agendas'⁹⁸.

ISESCO concluded with an advise to the Conference of Environment Ministers to consider a 'more active participation of the Islamic world in pro-environment and sustainable development activities under the patronage of the United Nations'.

4.4 Follow up: Conferences of Environment Ministers (2006, 2008, 2010)

The environmental ministers convened in 2006, 2008 and 2010 and issued new Declarations on environmental protection and sustainable development. The most recent one is the 2010 *Tunis Declaration on Enhancing the Efforts of the Islamic World towards Environment Protection and Sustainable Development*. These meetings mainly served to coordinate activities for the major UN summits, the UN Climate Change Conferences in Copenhagen (2009) and Cancun (2010), Biodiversity (2009). The 'developing country' perspective is dominant, which means a strong focus on water resource management, population, health, environment, desertification, food

⁹⁷ 'Sustainable development for the Perspective of Islamic Values and Specificities of the Muslim World'. Part of: *The Islamic World and the Sustainable Development (Specificities, Challenges and Commitments)*:

⁹⁸ Report from conference: <http://iospress.metapress.com/content/glk1qvt4pncen9j5/fulltext.pdf>

security, disaster risk management, vulnerability to climate change (and adaptation) and the clean development mechanism, biodiversity, finance and funding. It responds to the increasingly tense international relations between the industrialized and developing world, particularly on the climate change summits. Islamic ideals and values are still called into play to substantiate the a duty of care for the environment, but are not elaborated in much detail.

Future research:

- More systematic analysis of the Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development and the underlying policy documents, involvement of the religious establishment, theological underpinning. Comparative analysis with earlier/ other formulations of Islamic principles.
- What triggered this type of 'Islamic policy making'? How was the Islamic perspective received by the UN and the international communities? What role does the OIC play in the Muslim world at large? What role did the UN organizations play in this process?

5 Global Ethics and the Search for Common Grounds

5.1 Introduction

A second type of international Islamic engagement with environmental issues is closely tied up with the interreligious and interfaith dialogue movements. We have already seen how the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC) has played a significant role in coordinating engagement of the world's religions in the past decades, although this was more closely allied to the 'Islamic' institutional strand described in chapter 4.

The type of involvement described in this chapter emerged from the 'common ground movement' (my own term). This movement searches for 'common values', 'common answers to common problems' and generally favours an ethical or value-centred approach⁹⁹. Alliances are formed between religious and non-religious parties under this banner of shared values or interests.

This movement is influential and political analyst Graham Fuller pointed out that 'shared issues of concern might become one of the possible points of convergence between the modern Western world and religious traditions'.

Today many Westerners are themselves uncomfortable with some of the directions that Western society is taking that they view as unhealthy. Many wonder how Western society can weather the challenges of the post-modern era with its massive atomization of society, release of untrammelled individualism, lessening sense of community and social obligation, broadening diversification, if not chaos, among competing ideas, values interests and interrelationships, widening income gaps, and domination of the marketplace as the most powerful force upon society. Movements abound that search for correctives to glaring social afflictions.

In this sense no-one can be sure whether or not some kind of convergence could eventually develop between the modern Western world and religious traditions, including Islam over shared issues of concern for the moral foundations of a healthy society.

I am not speaking about an alliance between Muslim and Christian fundamentalists but a broader shared vision of the common moral problems and dilemma's faced by all societies¹⁰⁰.

Fuller does not mention the 'environment' here, but this can easily be added to his list of 'shared issues of concern'. As a global problem calling for global answers, this has been an important part of this common ground discourse since 1980s. In some (sub)circles, the environmental and religious concerns merged into a 'religion and ecology' movement, which also includes many of the academics working at this field, such as Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, the two drivers behind the *Religion and Ecology* conferences in the 1990s¹⁰¹.

Prominent Muslim opinion leaders are active in the common ground movement, some with an Islamic ecological message. These include the former president and vice president of Iran, Seyed Khatami and Massoumeh Ebtekar, Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Tariq Ramadan. Tariq Ramadan is an active supporter of the *Charter of Compassion* (2009), a recent landmark of the movement which was initiated by scholar of the world's religions Karen Armstrong. Ramadan has not spoken up publically about ecological issues. However, on closer reading of his work, 'nature'

⁹⁹ Fuller, G. *The Future of Political Islam*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003, p.205.

¹⁰⁰ Fuller, G. *The Future of Political Islam*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003, p205-206.

¹⁰¹ See chapter 2. Watling, T., *Ecological Imaginations in the World Religions: An Ethnographic Analysis*, London: Continuum, 2009.

and ‘ecology’ are found to figure quite prominently¹⁰². The world religion’s common ground perspective is also contested and increasingly after the 9/11 events. Muslim criticism echoes human rights debates of the nineties. We will discuss five examples of ‘green’ Muslim involvement in this movement: global ethics (1995), Earth Charter (2000), Tehran Declaration (2001, 2005), the Melbourne gathering of the Parliament of World Religions (2009) and a recent publication *Moral Grounds* (2010).

5.2 World Religions and Global ethics (1995)

In the 1980s and 1990s, the United Nations played an important role in searching for global values and ethics. In the mid nineties, the *Parliament of the World’s Religions* (CPWR) became involved. Convinced that religions have much to offer to the world’s challenges, this platform set out to develop a common ground agenda. The Catholic theologian Hans Küng was one of the driving forces.

The world religions belong to the major sources of wisdom of humanity. We need this ancient treasury of wisdom now more than ever. Religions can serve as a tremendous force to free human beings from totalitarian regimes, protect human dignity, guarantee human rights and maintain world peace¹⁰³.

In 1995, the Parliament endorsed a *Declaration toward a Global Ethic* which was based on four fundamental convictions:

- No peace among the nations without peace among the religions;
- No peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions;
- No dialogue between the religions without global ethical standards!
- No survival of our globe without a global ethic, supported by both religious and nonreligious people¹⁰⁴.

Peace among the nations was its main objective, and it was argued that this was best achieved by defining the common ground, or ‘global ethics’:

‘a common set of core values is found in the teachings of the religions, and that these form the basis of a global ethic’.

An ethics already exists within the religious teachings of the world which can counter the global distress. [...] This ethic provides no direct solution for all the immense problems of the world, but it does supply the moral foundation for a better individual and global order: A vision which can lead women and men away from despair and society away from chaos¹⁰⁵..

The most famous expression of this minimum common ethical guideline is the *Golden Rule*: *What you do not wish to be done to yourself, do not do to others. Or: what you wish done to yourself, do to others*. Karen Armstrong is the most active protagonists of this Golden Rule principle in the Charter of Compassion¹⁰⁶.

The ‘ecological crisis’ was central to the global ethics framework. This crisis had deeper lying ‘ethical’ causes, it was argued, and the world was in need of a ‘grand vision’: *global problems*

¹⁰² Ramadan, Tariq, *Radical Reform, Islamic ethics and Liberation*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Chapter 14: Ecology and Economy (p233-258); Ramadan, Tariq, *Western Muslims and The Future of Islam*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. (Especially: Chapter 1 on Book of Nature as Revelation and Source of Knowledge. Chapter 7 Social Commitment and political participation, Chapter 8 Economic Resistance). P233, 240, 253

¹⁰³ Lecture by Hans Küng at the Dutch seminar De Kracht van Cultuur of 1996.

¹⁰⁴ 1993 *Parliament of the World’s Religions, Declaration toward a Global ethic*. See: <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/includes/FCKcontent/File/TowardsAGlobalEthic.pdf>.

¹⁰⁵ Declaration Toward a Global Ethic (1993), p.1.

¹⁰⁶ Charter of Compassion (<http://charterforcompassion.org/>)

call for global ethics. Religions and their traditional cosmologies offered viable alternatives to the prevalent destructive views of nature, whilst also providing ethical and moral guidelines for more harmonious human interactions with nature.

The *Parliament* convened in 1999, in Cape Town, South Africa. It re-emphasized ‘the role of religion in response to the critical issues facing the world today’. The *Call to our Guiding Institutions* (1999) urged religious and political leaders, governments, business, education, civil society and media to reflect on and transform their roles and face the major challenges of our times: cultural diversity, sustainability and justice. This religiously inspired vision of a ‘global ethics’ influenced the global discourses on universal ethics. It fed into the United Nations dialogue processes that were organized in the 1990s, and into the Earth Charter process.

The pioneer Seyyed Hossein Nasr (chapter 2) contributed actively to the ‘global ethics’ debates. He focused on the role of religions and religious diversity, emphasizing a comparative approach to religions, rather than a distinctly Islamic perspective. He did not appear to have focused on ‘ecological’ concerns specifically, although he worked on his seminal *Religion and the Order of Nature* (1996) during that time. This is dedicated to drawing out a common core of authentic religious teachings of the Earth and commonly shared environmental ethics. Nasr was and still is deeply engaged in the interreligious dialogue movement. He is closely related to high level interfaith circles in the United States and beyond, and is currently active in the *A Common Word*, an interreligious dialogue initiative between Muslim and Catholic religious leaders.

Other Muslims also represented the Islamic point of view, but they mostly focused on religious diversity (see below).

5.3 The Earth Charter (2000)

In 2000, the Earth Charter was launched as an attempt to provide the emerging global society with a shared ethical framework. This also centered on ecological integrity and social justice. Its mission is:

to promote the transition to sustainable ways of living and a global society founded on a shared ethical framework that includes respect and care for the community of life, ecological integrity, universal human rights, respect for diversity, economic justice, democracy, and a culture of peace¹⁰⁷.

In what way the ‘Islamic voices’ contributed to this process proved difficult to extract from the sources. This needs further research. Regional Earth Charter groups are active in many Muslim countries, including Indonesia, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Egypt and Jordan. The Gulf state Arab countries are missing in the list, which I believe is significant.

5.4 Tehran, the Environment, Religion and Culture (1998-2006)

In 1998 Iran started to actively engage in the common ground discourse. Seyed Mohammed Khatami and Massoumeh Ekbetar were the primary players in this process. In 1998, Khatami inspired the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim 2001 as the *Year of Dialogue among Civilizations*¹⁰⁸. He wished to provide a positive image of Islam to counter the increasingly prominent ‘Clash of Civilizations’ rhetoric and negative portraying of Muslims. Interestingly, he emphasized the relevance of religions for the environmental crisis and invited the nations to broaden the dialogue on the environment, peace and security, three issues that were seen as closely interrelated: environmental degradation is intrinsically linked to poverty, injustice and insecurity, wars have inflicted damage to drinking water, health and the environment, and conversely, a degraded environment may spark conflicts and war.

¹⁰⁷ Earth Charter (www.earthcharterinaction.org)

¹⁰⁸ UN Resolution 55/22.

In 2001, Iran, the UN and the United Nations Environment Program organized a major *International Conference on Environment, Religion and Culture* in Tehran. The 2001 *Tehran Declaration on Environment, Religion and Culture* stressed the ‘moral and religious obligation to provide future generations as healthy as the one we inherited’. Clearly expressing the common ground vision that could be shared by the ‘world religions’, it affirmed that:

- religions share basic common values revolving around respect for life and the need to live in harmony with nature,
- religious precepts have had a positive influence on natural environments, although practice often has lagged behind,
- religions have a unique potential to inform, inspire and instruct people throughout the world as well as of the need to retrieve, re-evaluate and reconstruct core human and ecological values embedded in different traditions¹⁰⁹.

In chapter 4, it was already noted that this international Iranian track with its shi’ist and world religion perspective, parted company with the ISESCO track that emphasized the ‘Islamic’ perspective. The 2000 *Jeddah Declaration of Islam and the Environment* that would lead up to the ISESCO 2002 *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development* was mentioned in the *Tehran Declaration*, but after this time the two track took separate turns.

References to Islamic perspectives are limited in the *Tehran Declaration*, nor is it clear in what way the religious establishment was involved, although a reference is made to Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei call for ‘promoting the protection of the environment as a religious duty through a holy combat for the protection of the environment based on our respective religious precepts’. However, no further background or references are provided.

No references were made to the 1995 *Global Ethics Declaration* of the Parliaments of World Religions, nor to the *Earth Charter* which was launched a year before. Instead, it mentioned the 1986 *Assisi Declarations*, the 2000 *WWF Sacred Gifts for a Living Planet* meeting in Nepal and the *World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders* that was held in conjunction with the *Millenium Summit* in 2000. Interesting is also the active involvement of Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim, two of the driving forces behind the academic discipline on Religion and Ecology, that had evolved from the Harvard Divinity School series of conferences on religion and ecology (chapter 2).

In 2005, a follow up conference was organized, again in Tehran, which focused on the interactions between security, peace and environment. The religious dimension was less prominent. Further Iranian involvement was soon thwarted by the change of political leadership.

A new mystical voice: Massoumeh Ebtekar

The Tehran Conference introduced a new voice to the Islamic environmentalist discourse: Massoumeh Ebtekar. She was the first female vice president of Iran and worked as head of the Department of the Environment during 1997-2006, actively contributing to integrating sustainable development in Iran’s development policy. She is a considerable force in the reformist movement in Iran, and one of the founding members of the reformist Islamic Iran Participation Front. Her work as an environmentalist was recognized by the international community: she was announced one of the seven 2006 Champions of the Earth by the UNEP program¹¹⁰ and The Guardian named her as one of 50 environmental leaders¹¹¹.

¹⁰⁹ 2001 Tehran Declaration on Environment, religion and Culture (www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/56/a56458.pdf); 2001 The International Seminar on Religion, Culture, and Environment” United Nations Environment Programme Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran June 18–20, 2001 (<http://fore.research.yale.edu/events/archived/2001/unep.html>)

¹¹⁰ UN article ‘Seven environmental heroes to be honoured by UN agency’: <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=17905&Cr=UNEP&Cr1=>

¹¹¹ The Guardian, 5 January 2008. Not accessible anymore. Reference from IUCN.

Ebtekar is still active as an 'Islamic environmentalist'. She heads the *Centre for Peace and the Environment* in Tehran. In 2008 she lectured at the 2008 IUCN *Congress on Spirituality and Conservation*¹¹². She also contributed to *Moral Ground* publication in 2010. Here, as well as in her blog *Persian Paradox* and interviews, she explained how she finds her inspiration for environmentalist work in Persian mysticism, in particular by Mulla Sadra. In her view Sadra expounds a path of inner development that enhances peace of mind and heart. These are qualities that 'leaders need before they could promote peace with nature and with other human beings'. She emphasizes the close interrelationship between spirituality, peace and the environment, the feminine deficit and the lack of compassion in the world today.

Her 'type of discourse' is in line with the 'common ground' (ecological) discourse and the philosophical-mystical approach as expounded by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. Both focus on 'the virtuous green mystics way', self development and virtues. In this sense it is not surprising that both were invited to contribute to *Moral Grounds* (2010), as the only two Muslim voices.

Although the spirit of the Tehran conference will have appealed to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, he did seem to have participated in the conference. Due to his problematic relation to the regime, he was probably denied access to Iran.

5.5 Parliament of the World's Religions Melbourne (2009)

In 2009 the *Parliament of the World's Religions* reconvened in Melbourne¹¹³. The common ground agenda is clearly expressed in its mission:

Working towards a more just, peaceful and sustainable future lies at the heart of aspirations of people everywhere. Emerging at this moment in history is a growing and shared recognition that "we are all in this together." The deciding factor in our future will have to do with those things which will make us an Earth community, and for which we must take common responsibility.

'Healing the Earth with Care and Concern' was one of its seven key topics:

The Melbourne Parliament will draw forth the sacred nature of the environment from all religious and spiritual traditions, led by the Indigenous peoples of the earth. It will also showcase the partnership between communities and other guiding institutions in pursuing practical approaches for reversing climate change and its effects.

Some well-known and influential Muslim opinion leaders participated, such as Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf Tariq Ramadan and Anwar Ibrahim, mainly in sessions about democracy, diversity, politics, war, peace, Islam and West, topics which were evidently more pressing than the 'environment and ecology'¹¹⁴. However, we have already mentioned that Tariq Ramadan has also worked out interesting Islamic views of 'nature', which on closer reading resemble the mystical approach of Nasr. Ramadan also pleads for more active civil society involvement of Muslims in the ecological discourse, aligning with the activist civil society groups represented by Fazlun

¹¹² IUCN interview 08 October 2008: <http://www.iucn.org/media/materials/interv/?1803/Massoumeh-Ebtekar-Director-of-Peace-and-Environment-Centre>: Massoumeh Ebtekar on peace and the environment; spirituality and the environment; feminine deficit and the lack of compassion.

¹¹³ CPWR Melbourne 2009 (www.parliamentofreligions.org)

¹¹⁴ Imam Feisal Abdul Rauf is an active leader of the Cordoba Initiative in the United States, a multinational, multireligious project that works to improve relations between the Muslim world. (This has recently become controversial due to its ambition to build a religious centre near Ground Zero in New York). Tariq Ramadan is an influential European opinion leader active in the debate on the issues of Muslims in the West and Islamic revival in the Muslim world. He is a professor of Contemporary Islamic Studies at Oxford University. Anwar Ibrahim was Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia from 1993 to 1998. He is said to have spearheaded the Asian Renaissance movement and remains a leading advocate of civilised dialogue aimed at bridging the gap between East and West

Khalid¹¹⁵. Anwar Ibrahim, an influential Malaysian politician (currently opposition leader), actively participated in the Islamization of Science debates of the eighties and nineties and is closely related to the early pioneers, Sardar, Nasr and the *Centre of Civilisational Dialogue* at the University of Malaya. Several other well-known Islamic environmentalists participated, such as Nomanul Haq, a Lahore University professor who contributed to the *Islam and Ecology* series with an exposition on the normative sources of Islam (see chapter 2), and Fachrudin Mangunjaya from Conservation International Indonesia who presented the program in Indonesia on pesantren, *Fiqh al-Bi' ah* (see chapter 3). New names are: Norah Ziad Elmagraby, Fahad A Alhomoudi, Imam Afroz Ali, and Nargis Virani. Fahad A Alhomoudi is a specialist on Islamic law and environmental law, who obtained his PhD in Islamic Law from McGill University (2006) and currently works at Imam University in Saudi Arabia (2007), and Imam Afroz Ali Founder and President of the Sydney-based *Al-Ghazzali Centre for Islamic Sciences & Human Development*. Bagher Talebi Darabi is active in the Iranian green movement¹¹⁶.

The panel *The Muslim Green: Muslim Contributions to Healing the Earth* discussed Islamic views to the environment.

For many Muslims, the color green represents a connection to the beauty and promise of nature—on Earth and in Paradise. Nearly 800 of the 6,236 verses in the Qur'an reference nature and its relationship to humanity. Through the lenses of scholarship, activism and the arts, this panel will discuss the Muslim connection to nature and the environment as well as many Muslims' approach to healing the Earth coming from Sunni, Sufi and Shi'a perspectives. Panelists will discuss the role of protecting the environment and natural resources in Islamic Law, the rights of the environment in Islam with special emphasis on water management principles, Rumi's views on the dynamism of the relationship between humans and nature, the environmental crisis and human health from a Shi'a Islam viewpoint, and more.¹¹⁷

The key approaches reverberate with work of previous years (pioneers, IPCNE, ISESCO): Islamic Law, water management and mystical views to nature (here Rumi).

Other panel sessions were organized about Islamic Finance (*The Compassionate Approach to Market and Money*), but these was not related to environmental approaches.

5.6 Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril (2010)

The ecological viewpoint of the Common Ground movement is represented well by the publication *Moral Ground, Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril* (2010).

In the face of environmental degradation, species extinction, and climate change, scientific knowledge alone does not tell us what we ought to do. Nor can political processes or economic incentives give us all the answers. The missing premise of the argument and the much needed centerpiece in the debate to date has been the need for ethical values, moral guidance, and the principles reasons for doing the right thing for the future of our planet, its animals, its plants, and its people¹¹⁸.

This collection of essays brings together some of key voices of contemporary environmental discourses in the West. These include environmental philosophers, ethicists, and activists, such as Gary Snyder, Holmes Rolston III, Carle Pope, Peter Singer, Paul Hawken, Christian ecotheologians such as Sallie McFague, and Thomas Berry, leading academics on religion and ecology, such as Bron Taylor, Mary Evelyn Tucker, religious leaders such as Desmond Tutu, the

¹¹⁵ Ramadan lectured at an IFEES meeting in 2009 (or 2010). This was posted at the time on the IFEES website, but no references can be found anymore (February 2012).

¹¹⁶ Foltz, *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, p14.

¹¹⁷ CPWR Melbourne 20009 Program p291: <http://www.parliamentofreligions.org/index.cfm?n=7>

¹¹⁸ Dean Moore, Kathleen, Michael P. Nelson (eds), *Moral Ground, Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril*, San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 2010.

Dalai Lama, and scientists such as E.O. Wilson and even influential government officials such as Barack Obama. Although contributors are said to come from across the world, most of the authors contributors are American academics. Only two Muslim voices were included: Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Massoumeh Ebtekar. Despite its 'global' ambitions, the Western voices clearly dominate the discourse. Significantly, the Muslim voices that are included expound a mystical-philosophical approach, which we argue is only one of several Islamic environmentalist approaches.

5.7 Muslim critiques of the universality of 'common grounds'

Some observations can be made at this stage. First, this movement clearly prefers a world religions perspective. It favours the mystical-philosophical approach as represented by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Massoumeh Ebtekar, or an ethical approach as represented by Tariq Ramadan. All three also plead for a reform of social, political and economical systems and the modern paradigm, worldview or attitudes. Second, the Muslim engagement in these circles is not very pronounced, with the exception of the Iranian involvement between 1998 and 2006. On the whole it proved difficult to draw out the distinctly Islamic contributions to the Earth Charter process for example. This would require a more systematic and deep search of the background sources to trace the footsteps of Muslims who are active in these circles.

The strong emphasis of common grounds is contested amongst various faith communities, including the Muslim communities. Debates about religious diversity date back the nineteenth century, and also re-emerge in debates about the alleged 'universality' of human rights. Muslim critiques of the universality of global ethics were expressed by the American- Pakistani scholar Riffat Hassan, who was actively involved in this process¹¹⁹. In her view, global ethics may be yet another claim to 'universality' of what is essentially a Western product. She gave voice to a widely shared conviction in many non-Western countries, namely, that universal human rights and by extension 'global ethics' are not universal at all; they reflect Western, modern, secular and humanist values with 'a strong individualistic nuance'¹²⁰. She remembered 'how a strong resistance, particularly by Muslims had been visible at the NGO forum of all the [recent] United Nations conferences' [in the nineties]¹²¹. She expected that 'just as the strongest resistance to the Western notion of human rights has come from Muslims, it is likely that the strongest resistance to the new Western notion of Global Ethics will also come from Muslims'. Other Muslim scholars have articulated similar views¹²². This suspicion may also affect the global discourses about environmental ethics, such as currently carried by the Earth Charter, and may explain the apparent limited participation of Muslims with a strict 'Islamic discourse' within these circles.

Further research: More systematic analysis of Muslim contributions to Earth Charter, global ethics, common ground movement etc., the key exponents, such as Nasr, Ebtekar and Ramadan and the critiques about the universality claims.

¹¹⁹ Riffat Hassan, *Reflections of a Muslim on Global ethics and cultural diversity*, Conference Power of Culture, Netherlands, 1996.

¹²⁰ Ibid. Riffat Hassan also refers to a two-year international project on religion and human rights, led by Johan D. van der Vyver (eds.), *Human Rights in Global Perspective*, where a similar observation is made.

¹²¹ These objections inspired to Muslim countries and NGO's to devise an *Islamic Human Rights Declaration*.

¹²² This view is expressed by Prof. Dr. Mohd Kamal Hassan during a public lectures on global ethics at the Institute of Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM), published in: H. Kung and Mohd Kamal Hassan, *Towards a Common Civilization*, Institute for Islamic Understanding Malaysia (IKIM), 1997. He refers to a paper by Richard Falk 'False Universalism and the geopolitics of exclusion: the case of Islam' presented at a conference on 'Universalizing from particulars: Islamic views on the Human and the UN declaration of Human Rights in Comparative perspective' at Princeton University.

6 Muslim Civil Society and Global Activism

6.1 Introduction

At the turn of the century, a global Muslim civil society' started to organize, largely triggered by the 2002 Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD).

Similar to their Christian counterparts, Islamic faithbased non-governmental organizations and charities had proliferated in the nineties¹²³. Many of these were primarily dedicated to humanitarian and development aid, but this sector was also increasingly sensitive to environmental concerns¹²⁴. The summits sustainable developments and the Millennium Summit Development Goal on Environmental Sustainability had consistently stressed the interrelation between poverty and environmental degradation¹²⁵. National Islamic faithbased *environmental* NGOs had also proliferated in the nineties, as is charted in *Environmentalism in the Muslim World* (2005) for Egypt, Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, Nigeria, and Malaysia¹²⁶. Researcher Richard Foltz observed that these activities were not necessarily inspired by 'Islamic' environmental ethics with Iran as the notable exception. Iran, Foltz argued, may 'offer the strongest evidence of applied Islamic environmental ethics in the world today'.

In 2002 Muslim NGO's from across the world convened for the first time at a Muslim civil society Summit. Similar conferences were organized parallel to other subsequent UN conferences on climate change (such as the 2009 Istanbul initiative; introduction). In these years global civil society networks emerged, many centered on Fazlun Khalid and IFEES. Some radical movements also started to engage in the climate debates. This is discussed in chapter 7.

6.2 First Muslim Convention on Sustainable Development (2002)

The *First Muslim Convention on Sustainable Development* ('Muslim Summit') was the first global public assertion of Muslim global civil society voicing distinctly Islamic perspectives on environmental issues. This was organized as a parallel event to the WSSD in Pretoria. The *Awqaf Foundation* of South Africa was its main driving force. In several meetings running up to the Summit, a short *Draft Principles to Muslim Commitment to Sustainable Development* was compiled¹²⁷. It was dedicated to the aim to model lives on the principles of sustainable living and development based on Islam and maintaining a mutually supportive relationship with our fellow human beings and together acting to preserve our natural surroundings'. It emphasized the 'boundless beauty of this planet' and the privilege granted by God to 'use of its natural wealth for the benefit and well being of ourselves and equally the rest of His creation', aware of the fact that the Creator has appointed man as the guardians of this planet thus placing a sacred trust in his hands.

The human race is the dominant and favoured species of all creation endowed with the faculty of reason', yet 'we do not own this planet and cannot claim a monopoly of it.

¹²³ Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, 2005. Also: 'The growth of Muslim charities in recent years has been outstanding and is receiving increasing analysis.' In: Ajaz Ahmed Khan, *Islamic Relief Translating Faith into Development*, Islamic relief Report, June 2009. See: <http://www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/translating-faith.aspx>. Benthall, J., and J. Bellion-Jourdan (2003) *The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World*, 2009.

¹²⁴ Islamic relief policy stances on 'the environment: Islamic Relief Worldwide, *A Draft Environmental Policy*, 2008: <http://www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/Default.aspx?depID=6>

¹²⁵ Millennium Development Goals: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

¹²⁶ Foltz, R.(ed), *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, Nova Science Publishers Inc, 2005.

¹²⁷ Draft Principles: http://www.awqafsa.org.za/draft_principles.htm

The *Awqaf Foundation* reports that the Convention was attended by about ‘900 participants and delegates that included leaders, members of parliament, representatives of community organizations, professionals, academics, activists, ulama, and social workers’. Many were South African Muslims, but international speakers also participated, including Fazlun Khalid and Sheikh Hassan Cisse of the African-American Islamic Institute in Senegal. Interesting is the active participation of the religious establishment (*United Ulama Council of South Africa* and *Jamiatul Ulama*).

The Convention was officially opened by the Secretary of the United Ulama Council of South Africa, Moulana Yusuf Patel, who welcomed participants and praised Muslims for their efforts in the empowerment of communities. He commended the organisers for hosting such an event and emphasised Islam’s view on issues such as environmental damage, peace, justice, and poverty eradication. The 900 strong participants and delegates included leaders, members of parliament, representatives of community organizations, professionals, academics, activists, ulama, and social workers, from all parts of South Africa and the World.

Highlights of the convention included a mix of cultural items rendered by different schools and madressas from Gauteng and talks given by an array of Muslim academics and activists – Prof Yusuf Dadoo, Prof Suleman Dangor, Shamshad Sayed, Moulana Ashraf Dockrat, Asma Hassan, Dr Ismail Munshi, and Zeinoul Abedien Cajee. International speakers included Prof Fazlun Khalid, the Director of the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Studies. Shaykh Hassan Cisse of Senegal also graced the occasion¹²⁸.

Interestingly, the Summit organizers referred extensively to the 2002 ISESCO *Islamic Declaration on Sustainable Development* and its background documents (chapter 4) and the 1994 IPCNE Principles (chapter 2). Their influence had now clearly expanded beyond the policy domain.

International networks worth tracing are those centered on for example, Shayk Hassan Cisse. Cisse is said to be a linchpin between Afro-American and Senegalese Sufi brotherhoods¹²⁹. His clear interest in sustainable development in 2002, may indicate a more widespread ecological engagement of his (neo-) Sufi brotherhood. Senegal has an active network of ‘eco-villages’. The other networks are related to Fazlun Khalid, who will be discussed shortly.

Many South African Muslims are still active as ‘Islamic environmentalists’, often collaborating in interfaith initiatives. Academic research on Islamic environmental education is conducted by Najma Mohamed.

6.3 One of the key players: Fazlun Khalid and IFEES (2005)

Before we proceed with more examples of Muslim civil society environmental activism, we will introduce one of the key players of Islamic environmentalism and one of the most active ‘Islamic’ eco-activists of today: Fazlun Khalid¹³⁰. We already noted his active involvement with the *Islam and Ecology* conferences and series in 1992, 1998 and 2003, and the nature conservation projects in Zanzibar and Indonesia. Khalid turns up in many of the Muslim civil society ‘circles’ that engage in environmental action (Indonesia, Africa). Significantly (perhaps), he does not appear to be actively involved with the common ground activities such as those centered on the Earth Charter (chapter 5).

¹²⁸ AWQAF South Africa *First Muslim Convention on Sustainable Development*: http://www.awqafsa.org.za/muslim_convention_sd.htm; IMASE Islam, Muslims and Sustainable Development: The Message from Johannesburg 2002: <http://www.imase.org/reading/reading-list-mainmenu-34/27-islam-muslims-and-sustainable-development-the-message-from-johannesburg-2002>

¹²⁹ Olivier Roy, *Globalized Islam*, p226

¹³⁰ In: *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, pxiii.

In 2005, Khalid established the *Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES)*¹³¹. Its mission is to:

Work towards the revival of Islamic environmental norms through programs designed to: Increase knowledge and awareness of Islamic teachings that address this subject; Change attitudes and behaviour that cause major environmental problems such as climate change deforestation, desertification, pollution, and environmental destruction generally; and alleviate poverty through projects specially designed to deal with sustainability issues.

IFEES wants to contribute to the global campaign for environmental responsibility by:

Developing an Islamic Science of natural resource management; Developing and implementing sustainable projects in key locations; Developing training material and conducting training in key locations; Collaborating with governments, NGO's, the academic world and other related institutions and collaborating with Islamic institutions and establishing networks of Muslim environmental activists worldwide.

IFEES collaborates with Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, the UK Green party and is closely allied with other local UK based Muslims environmental groups such as Wise (former LINE London Islamic Network for the Environment) and its founder Muzammal Hossein¹³². 'Working together' is 'vital in establishing social and environmental justice and is an essential part of the IFEES outreach work'. 'A shared planet necessitates shared responsibilities and we have much to receive from others, and also much to give'. Partnerships are also established with Islamic eco-activist groups in Indonesia, Southern an Eastern Africa and Canada¹³³.

IFEES is generally favours a pragmatic and practice approach, as was already illustrated by the projects on Islamic resource management (chapter 3). *A Muslim Green Guide to reducing Climate Change* was launched in 2008, offering the tools for Muslims to reduce carbon emissions at home. More recently, a campaign is targeting mosques to become green Eco-Mosques. This greening life styles approach is also propagated by Abdul Matin and others (see chapter 9).

Khalid's essays also reveal a more radical 'Eco-Islamist' discourse, which will be discussed in chapter 7. He presented his severe criticism of the banking system and the debt crisis at the Muslim Summit in 2002 (four years before the financial crisis), but this was not included in the *Draft Principles* statement. Khalid's ideas, work and networks are definitely worth further research¹³⁴.

6.4 Climate Change Summits in Bali (2007), Istanbul (2009) and Bogor (2010)

Muslims re- grouped during the UN Climate Change Conference in 2007 in Bali. Indonesian environmentalist groups dominated this time, largely lead by Fachruddin Mangunjaya, the conservationist who was also a major driving force behind many Muslim activities in the region. The Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen in December 2009 triggered civil society activism worldwide, including the Muslim engagement heralded by UNDP official Olav Kjørven (introduction).

The Istanbul Declaration (2009)

In the summer of 2009 a coalition of nearly two hundred Muslim representatives issued the *Istanbul Declaration*, which endorsed a *Muslim Seven Year Action Plan (M7YAP)* on climate

¹³¹ IFEES: www.ifees.org

¹³² Wisdom in Nature (former LINE) (www.wisdominnature.org.uk)

¹³³ Other examples are: Canada iEnviro: www.ienviro.ca

¹³⁴ Some research was conducted, for example by Yazlina Yazid, *Faithbased Environmentalism, A Case Study of Islamic-based Environmental Organizations in the United Kingdom*, master thesis, ISS, 2008 (unpublished, access February 2012 at: <http://oathesis.eur.nl/ir/repub/asset/7121/Yazlina%20Binti%20Mohd%20Yazid%20ESD.pdf>).

change. This plan included proposals to green Mecca and the annual Haj, promote eco-friendly mosques, an ecological halal certification scheme, green Islamic business and a Quran made of paper from sustainable forests¹³⁵. It is characteristic of an approach that is centered on greening life styles. The meeting was attended by ‘Muslim scholars, experts, and representatives of Islamic civil society organizations, ministries of environment and Awqaf endowment of Islamic countries, such as Kuwait Bahrain, Morocco, Indonesia, Senegal, Turkey..’ The seven year plan was drawn up by a group of environmental experts, with cooperation of the Kuwaiti Ministry of *Awqaf* and Islamic Affairs. Significantly, this plan was actively endorsed by leading religious scholars, which included amongst others:

Youssef Al-Qaradawi, the president of the International Union of Muslim Scholars, the ‘Grand Mufti of Egypt, Dr. Ali Juma’ah, and the Mufti of Palestine, Dr. Ekrama Sabri, Dr. Salman Alouda, a prominent Saudi Arabian scholar, and Said Ali, Mohamad Hussein FadlAllah, a Lebanese Shiah scholar, [...]. Other participants were ISESCO - the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Al Fatih University in Turkey and the municipality of Greater Istanbul, and other organizations in the Islamic world¹³⁶.

This process was initiated and facilitated by a UK based Muslim NGO *Earth Mates Dialogue Centre* (EDMC)¹³⁷ and supported by the ARC/ UNDP *Long Term Commitments for a Living Planet program*¹³⁸. It is not clear if IFEES and Fazlun Khalid were involved in this process.

In November 2009, ARC organized a special meeting at Windsor Castle, England. The seven Year Muslim action plan was presented to the Secretary General of the United Nations. At the Copenhagen UN climate change conference of December 2009, it was also presented to the Assistant General Secretary of the UNDP (Olav Kjørven). He welcomed the Istanbul initiative which in his view ‘might turn out to be the ‘largest civil society movement in history’ (see introduction).

Follow up: International Muslim Conference on Climate Change in Bogor, Indonesia 2010

The initiative was followed up by the first *International Muslim Conference on Climate Change* which was held in the Indonesian city of Bogor, in West Java, in April 2010¹³⁹. Nearly 150 persons from 14 Muslim countries are said to have attended, including scientists, *ulama* (religious leaders) and green activists from the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Brunei, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Indonesia, as well as from Britain, India and Africa.

The *Bogor Declaration*¹⁴⁰ stressed that Muslims should become agents of change to protect the environment and emphasized the need for education. It contained plans to develop an Islamic environmental school curriculum, eco-Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), training of religious leaders, support mosques to disseminate green the messages to the congregations. In this sense, it clearly builds on the work done with ARC, WWF and the World Bank *Faiths and Conservation*

¹³⁵ The Muslim 7 Year Action Plan (M7YAP) to deal with Climate Change (www.arcworld.org/downloads/Muslim-7YP.pdf) . ARC about Muslim Long Term Plan: <http://www.arcworld.org/faiths.asp?pageID=165>

¹³⁶ Islam Online: ‘Istanbul Declaration on Climate Change’, July 12, 2009 (accessed in 2009; not online in 2012).

¹³⁷ Earth Mates Dialogue Centre of Mahmoud Akef. The website could not be retrieved in February 2012 For an interview with Akef see: <http://www.loe.org/shows/segments.html?programID=09-P13-00031&segmentID=6>.

¹³⁸ ARC, Faith commitments and Seven Year Plans, Booklet *Many Heavens, One Earth*, <http://www.windsor2009.org/Windsorcommitmentslayoutfinal.pdf.pdf> ; Thirty-one faith congregations have developed such plans to date, mostly Christian organizations.

¹³⁹ Article ARC, ‘MACCA holds its first conference in Indonesia in April, February 11, 2010: <http://www.arcworld.org/news.asp?pageID=378>;

¹⁴⁰ Check reference: @

Programs (chapter 3). The Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) was urged ‘to strengthen its position on climate change, promote climate change policies and life styles that are in line with Islamic values’. The OIC should also set up a council on climate change to offer more leadership and take on a more active role in the international UNFCCC board on climate change. This clearly connects with the OIC/ ISESCO activities of some years earlier (2002), but also indicates that OIC/ISESCO had since stepped down its ‘environmental’ activities. The conference also proposed to turn Bogor into a ‘green city’, a model for sustainable living for other Muslim cities around the world: an *al-Khaer* City which represents the Islamic ideal of a ‘good city’. This reverberates with views of pioneer Ziauddin Sardar and the group that worked on reviving Islamic sciences on the ‘built environment’ (chapter 2). The Istanbul plans to green the hajj and set up an umbrella organization to implement the Seven year action plan (MACCA) were not discussed in Bogor.

The conference had the support of Indonesian government bodies, such as the Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Forestry, Department of Religious Affairs and the National Council for Climate Change, as well as of leading conservation groups such as the Indonesian Biodiversity Foundation (KEHATI) and Conservation International (Indonesia). Fachruddin Mangunjaya played an active role (again). KEHATI incidentally is also active with the Earth Charter Initiative. It also has the support of two of the world’s biggest Islamic organizations, both based in Indonesia: *Muhammadiyah*¹⁴¹, *Nahdhatul Ulama* and the *Indonesian Council of Ulemas*. This indicates a more active involvement of religious scholars (*ulama*). *Nahdhatul Ulama*, for example, is seen to be very active on more ecological issues. In 2008, a fatwa was issued against a nuclear power plant in Java which was warmly welcomed by Greenpeace¹⁴².

Philippines

The initiative also found support in the Philippines. A group of Muslim Philippino scientists, religious leaders, academics and activists decided to support the global Muslim Seven year Plan and form a network to confront climate change in October 2010¹⁴³.

6.5 Discussion

Several observation can be made about the civil society engagement:

The UN summits clearly serve as the main focal points spurring Muslim civil society to mobilize and organize joint action. A diverse group of actors is involved, involving individuals, scientists, activists, government officials and significantly also the religious establishment. What role the religious scholars have in these processes need more careful analysis. Are they only (passively) endorsing, or are they actively contributing?

Several strands that had developed in somewhat separate spheres in previous years, appear to converge in the most recent initiatives in Istanbul and Bogor: the ISESCO sustainable development, the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC)/ WWF activities in Indonesia and possibly even the Earth Charter initiative (in Indonesia). It is difficult to assess what role the

¹⁴¹ Article ARC: Muhammadiyah with 29 million members runs around which funds schools, hospitals, and organises communities or ‘kampungs’ into groups to help combat poverty.

¹⁴² ‘Greenpeace welcomes Nahdhatul Ulama decision forbidding Nuclear Power Plant in Java Forbidding Nuclear Power Plant in Java’ on Greenpeace website, September 2007:

<http://www.greenpeace.org/seasia/en/press/releases/greenpeace-welcomes-nahdhatul>

¹⁴³ Roundtable discussion on Muslim Action for Climate Change (MACC). Supported by Peace and Equity Foundation, Magbassa Kita Foundation, MuslimEnvironmentWatch: Philippine Muslims Form Network to Confront Climate Change, By M Terdman, October 3, 2010:

<http://muslimenvironment.wordpress.com/2010/10/25/philippine-muslims-form-network-to-confront-climate-change/>

ARC had in mobilizing Muslim civil society in Istanbul. Is it coordinating and facilitating, or also agenda setting?

It would be interesting to search for Muslim civil society involvement with the more radical climate justice movements, for example at the *World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth* in Bolivia in 2010. Where Muslim involved? If so, in what way? Muslim involvement appears to be limited, although there is an interesting convergence of interests and affinity of approach in this area. Both movements strongly assert spiritual views of nature and promote traditional and indigenous practices.

© Further research:

- Analysis of networks Muslim civil society (sociological perspective, network analysis etc), more systematic tracing of the links, alliances and connections between various groups and actors. Link with climate justice movements.
- Involvement of religious establishment.

7 Eco-Islamist Activism and Radical Social Reform

7.1 Introduction

Some of the Islamic environmentalists plead for more radical reform. 'Radical' in the sense that it is focused on a radical reform of the life styles, financial, economical, social and/ or political governance systems. These approaches blend social-political Islamist and radical environmentalist thought. A convergence between these movements in Turkey and Indonesia was observed by several researchers,

In this chapter, what we call the 'Eco-Islamist approach' is introduced. This is represented by a number of contributors to the 1992 and 2003 *Islam and Ecology* series. Their discourses is 'theoretical', but some of their ideas are put to practice. For example, in the form of Islamic intentional eco-communities (eco-villages), in local Islamic monetary systems (based on the Gold Dirham). These have their counterparts in eco-villages and local currencies such as LETS system. In its less radical approaches, this approach also refers to contemporary trends in Islamic economy, finance and Islamic business ethics which have strong affinity with ecological economy, ethical investment and finance and corporate social responsibility (chapter 10).

7.2 The Eco-Islamists and an Islamic Ecotopia

Several authors of the *Islam and Ecology* series worked out an Islamic vision of the Islamic ideal society, which in their view is also in harmony with the environment, an Ecotopia. The Islamist models of Medina or the Caliphate serve as blueprints for the ideal state. One group of authors in particular espoused views that I would like to label as Eco-Islamist. They propose radical system change in life styles, financial, economical, social and political governance systems. This included Fazlun Khalid Umar Vadillo, Dockrat and Yasion Dutton and their essays in the 1992 and 2003 *Islam and Ecology* series. These Eco-Islamists search for alternative models for organizing society. They agree that the ecological challenge of our times is best met by reviving or reinvigorating specific 'traditional Islamic institutions'. It is argued that the divine law (*sharia*) reflects God's perfect natural order, the natural state (*fitra*), and therefore its injunctions can serve as guidance to maintain the natural order and live in harmony with the environment. Traditional Islamic societies, they argued, have lived in harmony with nature for centuries and traditional institutions such as the *hima* (reserves for natural resources management) reflect centuries of practical experience of living on and in harmony with the land.

Khalid and Vadillo focus on the financial systems and deeply criticize the Western capitalist 'interest' based banking systems which are seen to be the root cause of the environmental (and other) crises. The continual flow and creation of new capital is fueling the large scale investments in environmentally destructive technologies. The Islamic ban on 'interest' (*riba*) is central to their argument. These Eco-Islamists plead for the reestablishment of a 'tried and tested' Islamic monetary system based on the Gold Dinar and Silver Dirham¹⁴⁴.

The Gold Dinar system was implemented in practice. An Islamic Mint that was created in Dubai in 2001 by Umar Ibrahim Vadillo. It appears to reverberate more widely, in particular in Malaysia, the current hot spot of Islamic finance¹⁴⁵. It parallels debates about re-establishing the Gold

¹⁴⁴ See: *The return of the Gold Dinar* (Cape Town: Madinah Press, 1996). Khalid refers to it in *Muslim Environmentalism*, p99. Dutton also refers to: Vadillo's *The End of Economics* (Granada: Madinah Press, 1991).

¹⁴⁵ BLOG Gold Dinar <http://gold-dinar.blogspot.com/>. Also Umar Vadillo. Islamic gold dinar gains ground in Malaysia, 4 september 2010: <http://articlesofinterest-kelley.blogspot.com/2010/09/islamic-gold-dinar-gains-ground-in.html>

Standard as a means to stabilize currencies¹⁴⁶. The Eco-Islamists also plead for radical reform of the governance structures based on *sharia* concepts such as the *hisba* and the *muhtasib* for environmental governance, or re-establishment of the caliphate which according to Khalid ‘functioned without banks or massive bureaucracies under the ethos of what is known as the millet system of autonomous regions’¹⁴⁷. The ‘Caliphate’ and the Dirham are well-known concepts from political Islamist discourse, and is also promoted by radical movements like *Hizb ut-Tahrir*¹⁴⁸.

Mubaritun movement

Interestingly, all four Eco-Islamist contributors to the 1992 and 2003 *Islam and Ecology* series (Khalid, Vadillo, Dutton and Dockrat) referred to the Scottish convert Ian Dallas or Abd al-Qadir as-Sufi, the founder and active member of the radical and controversial Mubaritun movement. According to Khalid, As-Sufi is ‘one of the leading Muslim thinkers of our times’¹⁴⁹. Khalid appeared to have distanced himself from this group, at least in his public utterances, but may have been an active Mubaritun member in his early days. The influence of the Mubaritun on this type of Eco-Islamist thought is definitely worth further research. Dutton and Dockrat have since disappeared from the environmentalist scene altogether¹⁵⁰. Vadillo, a Basque convert to Islam, is still active as a leader of the Mubaritun movement and promoter of the Islamic Mint (most recently in Malaysia). He appears to have retreated from the environmental discourse¹⁵¹.

7.3 Islamism and Environmentalism: converging movements?

The Eco-Islamist approach did not receive much response from the academic community. Maybe it is seen as too radical and politicized. The academic religion and ecology community appears to prefer the more mystical and spiritualized versions of Islamic environmentalism. However, even Nasr, the key representatives of a mystical-philosophical approach is essentially promoting radical social reform. In his view this reform is effectuated by radical reform of the dominant worldview, or paradigm. Social reform will naturally follow. Ziauddin Sardar and Manzoor also propagated reconnecting with the Muslim heritage to effectuate radical reform of our societies. Mawil Izzi Dien and Uthman Llewellyn focused primarily on the traditional *shari’ite* model for land- and resource management, which does not necessarily require substantial societal reform. However, Mawil Izzi Dien also worked out concepts derived from Islamic Law in the sphere of trade, commerce, finance and governance that have social and political implications. His conceptual framework is largely based on Sayyid Qutb, a key representative of Islamist thought. Considering the strongly politicized and polarized Islam debates, this type of radical discourse is likely to alienate many secular minds with its strong emphasis of *sharia* and links with other radical (neo)fundamentalist groups. It does not appeal to contemporary mainly secular environmental movements.

Even so, Eco-Islamist thought has a clear affinity with the radical ecological movement and anarchist thought, such as Bookchin’s organic society, bioregionalism, eco-village movements etc. and with global contemporary discourse of the antiglobalist, eco- and climate justice movements. The Islamic mint system of the Gold Dirham, for example, finds a parallel in the local currency

¹⁴⁶ Such as: Positive Money Movement (www.positivemoney.org.uk/)

¹⁴⁷ *Islam and Ecology: a bestowed trust*. P318

¹⁴⁸ www.hizb-ut-tahrir.org

¹⁴⁹ Refernce@

¹⁵⁰ Dutton was a scholar at Edinburgh University. (note: Dutton is also mentioned in Viktor, *Between God and the Sultan, A History of Islamic Law*, as a Maliki scholar, p26n). Of Dockrat little is known, other than that he is a South African. The biographical details cannot be verified.

¹⁵¹ Vadillo, incidentally, is strongly opposed to the Traditionalist’ approach such as expounded by Seyyed Hossein Nasr. He wrote a 1000 page book to support his objection to ‘esoteric deviations’.

systems that are implemented in some eco-village communities. There is a definite connection between eco-villages and Islamic intentional communities, which is worth more systematic research¹⁵². Khalid, for example was involved in setting up an 'Islamic eco-community' in rural Britain in the mid 80s and is said to live in an Islamic eco-village in Spain (possibly the Mubaritun village in Granada)¹⁵³.

Most interesting in my view is the focus on the finance and banking sectors. Whilst this may have been brushed aside before 2008, the financial crisis had reinvigorated worldwide debates about alternative finance and economical systems. This potential convergence of Islam and sustainability in the finance sector will be discussed in the Chapter 10.

7.4 Potential impact of Eco-Islamist discourses

Can we expect this type of Eco-Islamist discourse to become more prominent in the near future? Richard Foltz who studied Islamic environmentalism for some years, noted these social reform agendas in the 2003 *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. He observed that 'environmentalism is increasingly expressed in "Islamic" terms and that this 'coincides with a more general tendency within Islamic discourse and Muslim reform':

Muslim reformers throughout history have claimed that the problems facing society result from the fact that an Islamic lifestyle based on the Qur'an and sunna was absent in the present age. Islamic reform movements have thus typically aimed to encourage Muslims to rediscover how the sources of the faith instruct one to live. This process of discovery is referred to as *Islah*, a cleansing of tradition in order to return to Islam to the original pristine state these sources are believed to evoke.

If more Muslim realise that an eco-friendly Islam is urgently needed in the world, that Islamic environmental thought in its contemporary form is likely to play a major role in reshaping and revitalizing Islam as a guiding force and principle in Muslim communities around the globe¹⁵⁴.

Social researcher, Barbara Pusch also observed a 'marginal but potentially vastly influential merger of Islamist and environmental thought' in Turkey¹⁵⁵, as did Oğuz Erdur. According to Foltz,

Erdur demonstrates how the American environmental movement began as a radical critique of Western modernity and was subsequently absorbed into it. He proceeds by illustrating how the struggle against Western modernity and its secular values is actually at the root of the Turkish Islamist environmental agenda. He provides an analysis of both the Islamist stance on overconsumption and population control as well as their proposed collectivist counter-economics which he finds in direct response to Western capitalism¹⁵⁶.

¹⁵² Research by Eleanor Finnegan might prove exceptionally helpful. She has also noted the convergence of ecological and Islamic discourse in a number of intentional Muslim communities in her paper 'Making meaning in an American Medina and Mazar: Defining Progress among Muslim Farm Communities in the United States'. Presentation at conference 'Religion, Nature and Progress, 3rd International Conference of the ISSRNC, 23-26 July 2009, Amsterdam.

¹⁵³ *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, p92

¹⁵⁴ Foltz, 'Introduction' in: *Islam and Ecology*, 2003, p274.

¹⁵⁵ Pusch, Barbara, 'The Greening of Islamic Politics: A Godsend for the Environment?' in: *Environmentalism in Turkey: Between Democracy and Development*. Fikret Adaman and Murat Arsel, eds. Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005; Pusch, Barbara, 'The Ecology Debate Among Muslim Intellectuals in Turkey' in: *Les Annales de l'Autre Islam* 6 (1999): 195–209.

¹⁵⁶ Re-appropriating the 'Green': Islamist Environmentalism,' in *New Perspectives on Turkey* 17 (fall 1997): 151-166. This article does not appear to be available online. Reference in Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, 2005.

Its impact may however be limited. Ibrahim Özdemir, a Turkish scholar and participant to the *Islam and Ecology* debates, observed that ‘the religious discourse on environmentalism in Turkey has not yet produced any genuine environmental institutions and groups’¹⁵⁷.

Perhaps, the more active interest of some ‘radical movement such as the radical Islamist movement *Hizb ut-Tahrir* can be taken as a indication of a more pro-active merging of Islamism and environmentalism. Running up to the Climate Change Summit in Copenhagen in 2009, it published a paper about ‘The Environmental Problem, its Causes and Islam’s Solution’. This deeply criticized the global market based climate change policies, the so called ‘carbon markets’. It voiced a strong anti-capitalist stance that parallels the South American Bolivian climate justice movements. The anti (carbon) capitalist market discourse that has been gaining force in the environmental movements since the financial crisis. To *Hizb ut-Tahrir* Islam is *the* solution. However, how this is meant to be realized is not worked out in much detail. It would have enhanced the argument, if the proposed Islamic alternative governance structures based on concepts of *hisba* (here defined as a ‘market regulator’) would be compared to already existing regulative institutions. Could these be considered as contemporary forms of *hisba* for example?

The problem lies in the ruthless behavior of Capitalist countries in their pursuit of achieving material prosperity at the expense of others and at any price. The reason for this behavior is inhumane doctrine of the Capitalist ideology. The Capitalist countries refuse to take any responsibility, not even from a moralistic perspective for their and their companies' behavior. The world is suffering under this doctrine and is exploited in a manner which is contrary to the most basic of human values.

The solution to the global environmental problems and problems concerning poverty and other global issues is to remove and discard the real reason, which has caused these problems, i.e. by a global rejection of the inhumane Capitalist doctrine, which still controls the destinies of nations, and by looking for an alternative that ensures mankind's happiness and tranquility.

We, in *Hizb ut-Tahrir*, present the alternative to you, which is Islam, with its idea and method. Islam is the solution to the world’s problems. Islam’s political, economical, social, environmental and other solutions are the only solutions which will save the world from the injustice and darkness that the Capitalist system has thrown it in. Islam is the alternative that takes people from worshipping other people to the worship of the Lord of mankind. And Islam takes people away from the injustice of various doctrines and ways of life (Capitalism, etc.) to the justice of Islam¹⁵⁸.

The potential alignment between Islamic activist movements and radical environmentalist, social, climate and eco-justice movements is worth further research.

© Further research:

- Radical movements: analysis of discourse, convergence and divergence with radical environmentalism.
- Practical manifestations: Gold dinar systems and practical implementation, Eco-villages and Islamic intentional communities, Islamic finance and sustainable investment

¹⁵⁷ Özdemir, I., ‘Chapter 2: Turkey’ in: Foltz, R.C., *Environmentalism in the Muslim World*, 2005. p30

¹⁵⁸ Hizb ut-tahrir, *The Environmental Problem, its Causes and Islam’s Solution*
(www.khilafah.com/images/images/PDF/Books/EnvEng.pdf)

8 The *Green Deen* Movement: Greening Lifestyles and Economies

8.1 The *Green Deen*

The call to ‘Green our Deen’ and develop the *Green Deen* movement is the most recent addition to the Muslim environmental movement. In fact, it might be the first clear sign that an ‘Islamic environmental movement’ might be developing. It has its centre in the United States.

Ibrahim Abdul-Matin coined the term ‘Green Deen’ - green Islamic lifestyle- in his *Green Deen: What Islam teaches about Protecting the Planet* (2010)¹⁵⁹. In this empowering book, Abdul-Matin outlines a pragmatic and practical ‘green’ life style guide for his fellow Muslims. It is a powerful example of a specific type of discourse that focuses on greening life styles and the economy. It is similar to what Fazlun Khalid is proposing with IFEES, although Khalid has a more activist, political and radical Eco-Islamist agenda than Abdul Matin.

Calls to green our lifestyles on individual and household levels have been issued by the green movements since the 80s and 90s. As environmental awareness of the mainstream public of the industrialized countries increased, so did the realization that we as individuals also share part of the responsibility. This type of discourse focuses on what we as individuals and citizens can do to reduce our own environmental impact. Some extend this to include what we can do to prompt policymakers into action. More recently, calls to green the economy and green jobs are added to the agenda.

As far as I know, Abdul-Matin is the first to have written about Islamic inspired greening life styles in such a comprehensive way. *Green Deen: What Islam teaches about Protecting the Planet* (2010) is about how ‘principles translate to practice and civic action’ combining issues of environmental protection, social justice and sustainable development.

His ‘Islamic Environmental ethos’ is founded on the ‘Six Principles of a Green Deen’, which together serve as ethical guides for Muslim’s in their interaction with the world’ (xix): Understanding the Oneness of God and His Creation (*tawhid*); Seeing signs of God (*ayat*) everywhere; Being a Steward of the Earth (*khalifa*); Honoring the covenant, or trust we have with God (*amana*) to be protectors of the planet; Moving toward justice (*adl*) and Living in Balance with Nature (*mizan*). These principles reverberate with the principles of the earlier Islamic environmentalists. This is acknowledged by Abdul Matin.

I believe this also legitimates the relevance of the earlier documents such as the IUCN Islamic Principles. Clearly, a new generation is picking up on their work.

However, Abdul Matin does not devote much of his time to legitimate these principles. He is not a qualified scholar, nor does he wish to be one. He wants to collect ‘thoughts, stories, analyses and practical pieces of advice to help anyone to further their Green Deen’ and seeks to understand the spirit of the Quran and Hadith to be able to live out its commandments in a way that make sense for his life (xxii).

His main message is centered on practical action. He promotes ‘green’ life style changes well known to the contemporary environmentalist: resourceful and efficient use of resources, reduce waste and pollution, reduce energy use, switch to renewable energy and change food patterns. Significantly, Abdul Matin does not propose any radical system changes, and clearly favours a gradual reform of our economy which needs to transform into a ‘green economy’. This mainly means stimulating the renewable decentralized energy sector, reduce our dependency on centralized power (live off the grid) and a smaller scale regionalized organic food production system. ‘Green jobs and a green economy have the potential to transition our society from an

¹⁵⁹ Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim, *Green Deen: What Islam teaches about Protecting the Planet*, San Fransicso: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2010.

economic system that is reliant on pollution to one that is greener and fulfils our responsibility as stewards of the Earth' (xxiv)'. He does not propose any political changes of our system of governance.

Abdul Matin creatively links the Principles to practice. I particularly like his concepts of 'Energy from Heaven' (solar and wind) and 'Energy from Hell (coal, oil, gas) and the link of 'solar power' with the Quranic verse *As-Shams* (the Sun). Green Deen is most passionate about the 'food' connection, connecting *halal* to organic foods. In my view this is may turn out to be one of the most viable areas where principles are put to practice.

Individuals, converts and eco-villages

The *Green Deen* is particularly interesting, because it is about 'people' with a personal history, rather than about ideas, principles and concepts only. Abdul Matin is open about his Afro-American roots and intellectual roots and shares how his own thoughts and ideas have developed over time.

The book 'represents the people, places, and events that have shaped my understanding of Islam and my role as a steward of the Earth' (xxi).

Green Deen illustrates how individuals are taking action, telling us real-life stories about for example, a group of Muslims participating in the *Huffington Post's NO Impact Week* (in 2009), a young Muslim woman with an urban garden growing her own food in New York City, an entrepreneur specializing in organic halal food, and an eco-community in Chiapas Mexico. These personal histories provide us with some interesting insights in the people behind the ideas, as well as in their motivations. This is definitely worth further research.

One thing that stands out, for example, is that many of the active eco-Muslims are first or second generation converts. The question is: is this significant and if so, what does it mean? I suggest this is related to conversion as a 'protest identity' (Olivier Roy), but this is framed somewhat negatively (to explain radical and violent action). I prefer to frame the 'Green Deen' in terms of a search for 'conscious living' and the 'search for meaning'. Both the environmental and Islamization movements have a strong focus on praxis, inspiring people to take on 'conscious' 'countercultural' lifestyles deviating from the mainstream. Taken to its extreme, this may inspire people to live in intentional communities and indeed in this sense, it is significant that Abdul Matin points out the existence of a number of Islamic eco-village projects. This same connection is pointed out by Fazlun Khalid who has lived and may still be living in an Islamic eco-village (currently in Granada). There is a strong eco-village network in Senegal, which might be related to the neo-Sufi brotherhoods in the area. The connection between eco-lifestyles and neo-brotherhood networks is worth further research.

The 'green Shaiyk' Zaid Shakir and Zaytuna institute

Abdul Matin is inspired by Shayk Zaid Shakir, who is 'a true Green Imam¹⁶⁰' in his view.. Shakir is an American Muslim scholar, (also) an Afro-American convert to Islam, and co-founder of the Zaytuna Institute¹⁶¹. The Zaytuna institute is closely related to Hamza Yusuf, also a convert (in 1977), who is actively involved in the religious dialogue movement.

¹⁶⁰ Chapter 4 Green Mosques, p69, note 18, p197. Also see: Newsweek,

¹⁶¹ Mentioned in the 500 Most influential Muslims, p100. "The 500 Most Influential Muslims" edited by noted professors John Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin was published November 20, 2009 by The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre (Jordan) and the Prince Alwaleed Bin-Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding (Georgetown University). Washington Post, 2007 article

Abdul-Matin cooperates with Faraz Khan, who has ‘codified’ the existing ‘Islamic principles’ for him for the *Green Deen*¹⁶².

8.2 The Blogosphere: Eco-Muslims, Green Sufis and Hijabis

More Muslims appear to be responding to the Islamic environmentalist calls to action. New books are published about Islam and its views about the environment¹⁶³ and in the past two years many green Muslim blogs were added to the blogosphere by Eco-Muslimah’s, Eco-hijabis, Green Sufis or Green Sheikhs etc. A sample only:

1000 Good Deeds, A World of Green Muslims, Go Green Muslims, Green Deen, Green Jeddah, Green Muslimah, Green Muslims in the District, Islam Awareness Blog, Islamic Nature, Muslims Green Clinic, The Eco Muslim, The Ramadan Compact, Unity Blog, Care2 make a difference: Green Creation, Wisdom in Nature (website), World of Green Muslims (Arwa Aburawa), Azizah Magazine, Green Islam Supplement Colour me Green: Loving Planet Earth (Najma Mohamed), Eco-jihad and Muslimness/ Eco Islam Section (Zaufishan), Green Muslimah Blog, Muslim Hippie, The Green Bush, The Ramadan Compact Blog.

The blogs *Muslim Environment Watch*¹⁶⁴ and *Green Prophet*¹⁶⁵ both administered by Moshe Terdman, attempt to ‘keep track of new developments in this field within the Arab and Muslim world’. The blog is updated regularly and is a very rich source of information. His observations underpin my own contention that Muslim environmentalism is on the rise:

Muslim religious scholars have published books and rulings concerning environmental issues and recently, even radical Islamic groups could not ignore the subject and started to publish their own solutions to environmental and climate change issues.

The ever-increasing awareness to the subject has caused Arab and Muslim governments and organizations to initiate environmental projects, such as preservation of nature, green businesses, water purification and more. As a result, more and more businesses, whose main scope is the environment, have been established in the Arab and Muslim world¹⁶⁶.

In February 2011, Moshe Terdman established the *Green Compass Research*. His aim is to ‘enable individuals, companies, NGOs, and decision makers to better understand the Arab and Muslim world as well as to help businessmen and companies to become integrated in environmental business activities throughout the Arab and Muslim world’¹⁶⁷.

Whilst in 2005, Richard Foltz concluded that ‘although over the past ten years environmental awareness has grown among some educated Muslims, it is still a very long way from being considered an important issue within the Islamic mainstream’¹⁶⁸, these manifold and vibrant activities in the blogosphere indicate that this may be changing.

¹⁶² Faraz Khan, lectures on Islam and the Environment, Columbia University, New York, February 19, 2010 and has an active blog about the environment. *Green Deen*, Chapter 4, p. 5; note 10. p192. See: Blog Faraz Khan <http://liberalartsforum.com/index/environment/> Abdul Matin and Khan work together to promote the Green Deen.

¹⁶³ Such as: *199 Ways To Please God*, self published 2009 of Rianne Ten Veen, who works for *Islamic Relief*.

¹⁶⁴ Muslim EnvironmentWatch: <http://muslimenvironment.wordpress.com/>; According to his blog, Terdman is conducting research and lecturing on the subject of Islam and the environment and the environmental policy and projects in the Arab and Muslim world. I have not been able to trace any of his articles (March 2011).

¹⁶⁵ Green prophet: <http://www.greenprophet.com/>

¹⁶⁶ Muslim Environment Watch/ About.

¹⁶⁷ Muslim Environment Watch/ About.

¹⁶⁸ Email correspondence, September 2008.

9 Islamic Sustainable Finance, Economics, Commerce and Trade

9.1 Introduction

The most interesting developments on the intersection of Islam and the environment in my view are occurring in the fields of finance, economics, commerce and trade. Most reflections on Islam and the environment or sustainable development (discussed in previous chapters), emphasized the relevance of Islam for nature conservation and environmental protection. Some of the authors, such as Khalid, however expanded the scope and also criticised the (Western) global economic and finance systems, which are seen to be the root cause of the ecological crisis. They proposed Islamic systems as viable alternatives.

This line of thought appears to be picking up more recently. New sets of actors are entering the stage, i.e from the finance and business sectors. Two recent publications reflecting on the Islamic perspectives on sustainable development focus on the relevance of Islamic economics and finance, in particular in the field of development cooperation¹⁶⁹. Jayyousi of IUCN had pointed out the significance of *waqf* for development (chapter 3). The other author, Munawar Iqbal from the Islamic Development Bank points out how ‘from an Islamic perspective the emphasis on justice, equity and redistribution in sustainable development philosophy is a move in the right direction’¹⁷⁰. Many others are starting to take note of a highly interesting convergence of interests of ‘sustainable’ and ‘Islamic’ ethics in the spheres of finance, economics, trade and commerce.

9.2 Islamic finance

In the industrialized world, the financial crisis of 2008 has reopened fervent debates about the financial sector and banking system, which deeply criticize speculative and unethical practices. Ethical banking or socially responsible investment guided by ‘ethical’ social and environmental criteria, have been developing for some years, but are recently becoming more and more mainstream. Finance, development and environment are increasingly linked. In the developmental sector new forms of finance, such as microcredit schemes, insurance schemes, also incorporate environmental concerns.

The financial crisis also boosted Muslim confidence in propagating the benefits of Islamic systems, as these appeared to have remained immune to this crisis. This spurred a renewed ‘search for an Islamic solution to the problem’. The Islamic Development Bank points out:

Two root causes of this crisis have been identified as excessive credit and excessive speculation, which find a clear expression in the Islamic prohibition of *riba* and *gharar* that lead to a severance of linkage between financial and real economies¹⁷¹ (IDB 2011).

The Islamic finance sector started to develop in the 1970s and although heavily debated and criticized¹⁷², it flourished in recent years. Financial analysts are starting to note of the converging

¹⁶⁹ Iqbal, M., eds. *Islamic Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005
Jayyousi Odeh R. Al-, *Islam and Sustainable Development*, Royal Scientific Society, Jordan, forthcoming. June 2012.

¹⁷⁰ Iqbal, M., eds. *Islamic Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005

¹⁷¹ Islamic Development Bank, Global Financial Crisis, website www.isdbforum.org/ (accessed January 2012).

¹⁷² See for example, El-Gamal, Mahmoud, “‘Interest’ and the Paradox of Contemporary Islamic Law and Finance,” *Fordham International Law Journal*, December, 2003

worlds of Islamic and sustainable finance¹⁷³. For example, the French analysts of Novethic for example point out that that

the purpose [of Islamic finance] resembles that of Socially Responsible Investment with its focus on sustainable development and its economic and social principles – creation of wealth for society and improvement of the quality of life¹⁷⁴.

New innovative financial products are emerging, such as *green sukuk* (environmentally friendly Islamic bonds), which is supported by the World Bank and the Islamic Financial Services Board¹⁷⁵. Other forms of Islamic finance, such as microcredit, insurance, cooperative schemes (*takaful*), *zakat* schemes cater to the needs of the poor¹⁷⁶, and are in this respect sometimes perceived as part of the religious obligation of *zakat* or alms-giving¹⁷⁷. Other initiatives leverage *waqf* or *zakat* funds for poverty alleviation and sustainable projects (such as Al-Jayyousi).

Islamic finance received limited attention from the Western world, although this also appears to be changing. The London financial markets have been working out *halal* financial products and European and US bankers are showing a keen interest in the Malaysian *sharia* banking sector¹⁷⁸.

What interests me is in what way Islamic finance can contribute to the sustainable development. In essence, sharia compliant investment is in essence a form of ‘ethical’ investment. If ecological issues are incorporated into the sharia compliant schemes¹⁷⁹, and this appears to be happening, this may have considerable impact investment flows. The ban on ‘interest’ (*riba*) and risk has more far reaching implications.

My impression is that these two worlds – Islamic finance and environment – have not found each other, but that they soon will. In my view this is one of the most interesting areas calling for more systematic research. The practical relevance is also evident.

9.3 Islamic sustainable economics

Islamic finance is part of a wider field: Islamic economics. We have seen how some of the Eco-Islamists explicitly connect the environment to malfunctioning economical systems. However, until recently, this line of thought was not been picked up by the Islamic economists. This appears to be changing.

¹⁷³ Gassner, Michael, ‘Sustainability, Islamic Finance and Managing Risks While Seizing Opportunities’, in: Dow Jones Islamic Market Indexes Newsletter, 2008. DinarStandad and Dar Al Istithmar, Social Responsibility Trends at Islamic Financial Institutions, based on 2009 Social Responsibility Survey, January 2010 (accessed: January 2012).

¹⁷⁴ Novethic, Islamic finance and SRI: 2 any crossover? report website Novethic, 2009 (accessed January 2012); also article ‘Islamic Finance and SRI: Any Crossover?’ and website EurekaHedge (reprinted from Islamic Finance News (p14, Vol 6, Issue 29) (accessed January 2012)

¹⁷⁵ Yee, A., ‘Dubai targets a green sukuk’ in: The National, 25 December 2011.

<http://www.thenational.ae/thenationalconversation/industry-insights/finance/dubai-targets-a-green-sukuk> (accessed February 2012)

¹⁷⁶ Harper, M. Partnership financing for small enterprise: Some lessons from Islamic credit schemes, Intermediate technology Publications, 1997.

¹⁷⁷ Benthall, J., and J. Bellion-Jourdan, The Charitable Crescent: Politics of Aid in the Muslim World, London: I. B. Tauris. De Cordier, B., 2003, paperback edition: 2009. Clark, J.A, Islam, Charity and Activism: Middle Class Networks and Social Welfare in Egypt, Jordan, and Yemen, Bloomingthon: Indiana University Press, 2004.

¹⁷⁸ Dutch Documentary Tegenlicht in February 2011 about ‘Sharia Banking’.

¹⁷⁹ The criteria are set by the Sharia boards of Islamic Financial Institutions, international standard setting institutions such as AAOIFI and the Islamic Financial Services Board and transnational conferences. These are starting to incorporate environmental criteria. See for example,

Global debates about ‘economic sustainability’ have been ongoing since the seventies, and have more recently regained force. Critical economists, such as Herman Daly, Amartya Sen, and Mahbub ul-Haq, have worked consistently on developing ‘alternative or sustainable’ economics, questioning the growth paradigm, and proposing alternative understandings of human well-being and quality of life, (or, in short, ‘human development’)¹⁸⁰. The New Economic Foundation is currently agenda setting in this field in the UK¹⁸¹. The ‘green economy’ is a key theme of the forthcoming UN Conference on Sustainable Development Rio+20 in June 2012.

Islamic social-political thought has been deeply concerned with the social impacts of (western, colonial) economical developmental models, and has theorized extensively about Islamic alternatives to the communist and capitalist economic systems. This has contributed to the emergence in the 1970s of a new discipline of the Islamic sciences: Islamic economics. Its purpose to ‘improve living conditions and well-being, establish social equity and prevent injustices’, is observed to resemble the goals of sustainable economics in the commonly known discourse¹⁸². Despite the apparent resemblances, it is my impression that the Muslim economy debates and the sustainable economy debates are carried out in parallel spheres. Debate and research about these theoretical and practical synergies or divergences is certainly timely at this moment.

9.4 Islamic markets, business ethics and fair sustainable trade

A similar convergence of trends is taking place in the sphere of business ethics, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and Islamic business. Sustainability has been a key concern to Western corporations for some time (with all the greenwashing that goes along with it). At the same time, multinational corporations that operate in Muslim countries cannot ignore the social and cultural Islamic context. Food corporations like the dairy producer Campina, for example, have close working relationships with the *halal* certifying bodies to ensure their Muslim markets in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Ogilvy & Mather, an international advertising, marketing and public relations agency, pointed out in recent market research that ‘branding and marketing needs to take Islamic values into account’, also noting the ‘parallels between the evolution of business practices toward sustainability and the values of *Shariah* compliance’¹⁸³.

Western businesses are pragmatically incorporating some Islamic practices, the question is: will Islamic business incorporate sustainability? This field is largely unexplored, but is being picked up by market analysts and some researchers¹⁸⁴.

¹⁸⁰ Haq, ul, Mahbub, *Reflections on Human Development*, Oxford University Press, 1996 (2nd ed.1999); Daly, H. Farley, J. *Ecological Economics: Principles and Applications*, Washington DC, Island Press, 2004; Sen, A. *Development as Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

¹⁸¹ New Economics Foundation (www.nef.co.uk/)

¹⁸² Aström, Z.H., ‘Paradigm Shift for Sustainable Development: The Contribution of Islamic Economics’ in: *Journal of Economic and Social Studies*, Vol 1, No 1, 2011; Ibrahim, P., Basir, S.A., Rahman, A.A., ‘Sustainable Economic Development: Concept, Principles and Management from an Islamic Perspective’ in: *European Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol 24., No. 3, 2011; Iqbal, M., eds. *Islamic Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005; Hassan, Zubair., ‘Sustainable development from an Islamic Perspective: meaning implications and policy concerns’, in: ‘J.KAU: Islamic Economics, Vol 19.,No1,pp3-18, 2006.

¹⁸³ Report Brands, *Islam and the New Muslim Consumer*, 2010. Article Ogilvy & Mather’s Research Defines the Global Rise of the ‘New Muslim Consumer’, May 20,2010: <http://www.ogilvy.com/News/Press-Releases/May-2010-The-Global-Rise-of-the-New-Muslim-Consumer.aspx> (accessed January 2012).

¹⁸⁴ Zinkin. John, ‘Islam and CSR: a Study of the Compatibility Between the Tenets of Islam, the UN Global Compact and the Development of Social, Human and Natural Capital’ in: *Corporate Social - Responsibility and Environmental Management*, Chichester: Sep 2007. Vol. 14, Iss. 4, p. 206.

Some indication of the potential impact in these spheres is provided by Abdul Matin, who in his *Green Deen* is also pointing out potentially powerful synergies between organic foods and *halal* food.

You can see American Halal manifest itself in the choices consumers are willing to make, demanding from companies higher-quality food – quality with the triple bottom line of profit, benefit to people and benefit to the Earth. Consumers want to have food that is anti-biotic-free, ethically packaged, free-range, fair trade, tasty and *halal*. Opportunity exist for the edgy and savvy producer of a product with all the right mix of social justice, eco-friendly and high quality characteristics – a producer that markets to a powerful audience: Muslim consumers¹⁸⁵.

Thus far, the *halal* certifying bodies do not seem to have latched on to this ‘sustainable’ development.

9.5 (Islamic) Developmental sector: linchpin?

The Islamic developmental sector might turn out to become one of the linchpins, capable of welding some of the above mentioned trends together, especially in the area of finance. We have already mentioned the active involvement of this sector in innovative finance forms (such as *waqf* for development, green *sukuk*, *takaful*, microcredit schemes etc)¹⁸⁶.

In this sense, it is significant, that one of the largest and most established Islamic humanitarian organizations, *Islamic Relief Worldwide* set out to draft policy papers on the ‘environment’ and on ‘fair trade’ in 2009¹⁸⁷. In this paper *Islamic Relief* noted that this more pro-active engagement with the environment was relatively new. It triggered the establishment of new strategic ‘environmental’ alliances with parties, such as the United Nations, the European Union, UK government, the *Red Cross*, the *Red Crescent* and *Stop Climate Chaos Coalition*. These networks are illustrative of the emergent ‘globalized’ civil society in the fields of environmental action.

The environmental policy paper is also a highly interesting example of how Islamic environmental tenets are called into play to support and legitimate environmental action. Interestingly, *Islamic Relief* noted that this need to legitimate action on basis of Islamic tenets was also a relatively new phenomenon: ‘There has been relatively little analysis on how and to what extent Islamic theological principles are translated into the operational philosophy of Muslim charities’¹⁸⁸.

The paper refers to a number of key principles and tenets which reverberate with the other sets of principles, calling on: the unity of creation (*tawheed*), humanity’s accountability to God, divine ownership of the earth and heavens, humanity’s role as steward or guardian of creation (*khalifa*),

Winter, de, G., Maatschappelijk verantwoord Ondernemen vanuit Islamitisch Perspectief, BoekScout.nl, 2009.

¹⁸⁵ Abdul Matin, *Green Deen*, p182.

¹⁸⁶ The significance of finance was presented at the seminar *Islamic Finance for Development* in The Hague on 9 February 2009. Ajaz Ahmed Khan, Microfinance Advisor CARE International was one of the key presenters. Presentations: *What role for Islamic finance in promoting development* by dr.; *The challenge of Islamic microfinance programming for poverty reduction and development: The Islamic Relief Experience* by Atallah Fitzgibbon, Policy & Strategy Manager at Islamic Relief Worldwide; *The invisible worlds of religion and economy* Farewell speech by Gerrie ter Haar. See Kenniscentrum Religie & Ontwikkeling: <http://www.religion-and-development.nl/news/47/presentations-seminar-islamic-development-finance> (accessed February 2012).

¹⁸⁷ Islamic Relief policy papers: *Islamic Relief Environmental Policy*, February 2009 (<http://www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/Default.aspx?depID=6>); Ajaz Ahmad Khan and Laura Thaut, *An Islamic Perspective on Fair Trade*, August 2008. (http://www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/fair_trade.aspx. p. 14).

¹⁸⁸ Ajaz Ahmed Khan, *Islamic Relief Translating Faith into Development*, June 2009: <http://www.islamic-relief.com/Indepth/translating-faith.aspx>

the concept of balance (*mizan*), the natural state (*fitra*), trust (*amanah*), justice and injunction to use and not abuse the earth resources.

Islamic Relief is inspired by the teachings of Islam in all of its work. Islam's environmental worldview is a holistic one. It assumes a fundamental link and interdependency between all natural elements and bases its teachings on the premise that if humanity abuses or exhausts one element, the natural world as a whole will suffer direct consequences. Ultimately, none of the five major aims (*maqasid*) of the *Shariah* (protection of religion, life, mind, offspring and property) can be sustained if the world's environment – God's Creation - does not allow for survival.

Islamic Relief recognizes that poverty and environmental degradation need to be tackled simultaneously to achieve long-term alleviation of the suffering of the world's poorest people and to be true to the Muslim faith¹⁸⁹.

Interestingly, despite the clear resemblances, the paper did not refer to any of the work done on this subject by earlier proponents of Islamic environmentalism (discussed in previous chapters). Instead, the only reference is to a 1991 Washington Post article of an unknown Bangladesh born American physicist Hasan Zillur Rahim¹⁹⁰. Possibly, others were consulted in the process but this will need to be verified as part of future research.

A comparative analysis of this paper with the other sets of principles is worth more systematic research.

¹⁸⁹: *Islamic Relief Environmental Policy*, p5-8.

¹⁹⁰ Based on article by Dr. Hasan Zillur Rahim, Ecology in Islam: Protection of the Web of Life a Duty for Muslims, Washington Report on Middle East Affairs, October 1991, Page 65;
www.wrmea.com/backissues/1091/9110065.htm

10 The Religious Establishments

10.1 Absent voices: Where are the scholars?

Where are the *ulama*, *fuqaha* and *mufti*'s, the theologians and jurists in the ecological discourse? The 'traditional religious scholars' have barely been visible in the Islamic ecological debates that were explored here. We have seen how some scholars and Fiqh Councils supported green initiatives in South Africa, Indonesia and Istanbul. And possibly, they played a role behind the scenes with the nature conservation programs with the IUCN, WWF and ARC as is suggested by the engagement of the Muslim World League and the Saudi Arabian administration. They might also have contributed to the ISESCO work on sustainable development, considering its close alliance with the influential Fiqh Councils.

At platforms provided by the academic Religion and Ecology movement, the Muslim scholars were notoriously absent. Only one 'scholarly' text was listed on the bibliography of the Forum of Religion and Ecology for example, a short text of the former Australian *mufti* Alhilaly Tajuddin¹⁹¹. References to religious scholars are seldom found in the English literature.

This is particularly surprising considering the emerging new disciplines of Islamic environmental law. One would expect that scholars play a considerable role in this development. However, authors specialized in Islamic Environmental Law (*Fiqh as Bi' ah fil-Islam*), such as Llewellyn, Mustafa Abu-Sway do not appear to have been formally trained at traditional institutions, although will need to be verified¹⁹².

For an outsider (not Muslim, not trained in the Islamic sciences) it is difficult to hear the scholars speak out for themselves. The question is: *why*? One seemingly obvious explanation would be that 'scholarly' *theological* discourse is conducted in Arabic (or Urdu Asian world) and will therefore not be easily accessible to the non-Arabic audiences. This would mean that a more thorough search through Arabic may disclose the contributions of the religious establishment. But why are so few references in non-scholarly contributions to scholars found either?

Another explanation would be that this 'scholarly' discourse about environmental issues has simply not taken place (yet). Uthman Llewellyn, who must have worked closely with the Saudi *ulama* on conservation issues (*hima*) noted for example that 'Muslim jurists have lagged far behind in contributing solutions to the environmental problems'.

Tariq Ramadan deeply criticized the lack of 'ecological' discourse in Muslim world and specifically criticized the religious authorities – the *ulama* and *fuqaha* – for their absence in contemporary debates.¹⁹³

One cannot but observe that it is strangely – albeit most significantly – absent from some contemporary essential debates, or, at least lagging far behind developments.

This ... is most glaring in the matters related to the economy and ecology.

¹⁹¹ Islam and Ecology, Imam Tajuddin H. Alhilaly <http://www.speednet.com.au/~keysar/ecology.htm>
Answers provided by Imam Tajuddin H. Alhilaly, Mufti for Australia (~1993). Translated and some comments added with permission by Keysar Trad

¹⁹² Such as Bagader/ IUCN, Llewellyn 2003, Ahmad 2005, Amery 2001, Faruqui 2001, Husaini 2006 and others (see full bibliography, available on request). Abu-Sway, Mustafa, 'Towards an Islamic Jurisprudence of the Environment.' Lecture presented at Belfast mosque, February 1998. Updated 20 June 1999. <http://homepages.iol.ie/~afifi/Articles/environment.htm>

¹⁹³ Ramadan, Tariq, *Radical Reform, Islamic ethics and Liberation*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. Chapter 14: Ecology and Economy (p233-258); Ramadan, Tariq, *Western Muslims and The Future of Islam*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004. (Especially: Chapter 1 on Book of Nature as Revelation and Source of Knowledge. Chapter 7 Social Commitment and political participation, Chapter 8 Economic Resistance). P233, 240, 253

The participation of Muslim scholars and thinkers is marginal or virtually absent, while debates, standpoints and arguments have developed considerably since the 1970s and in particular since the 1992 Rio de Janeiro Summit.

Muslims' silence over the great contemporary ecological issues is indeed highly significant: in effect, it deeply betrays the revealed message.

It should be noted that Ramadan did not appear aware of the existence of the OIC publications on sustainable development (chapter 4).

Problematic in this respect is that it takes some understanding of the way the 'religious establishment' is organized in the Muslim world. It is often said that there is no 'establishment as such' at least not a hierarchically organized one such as for example in the Catholic Church. There are no fixed rules for using qualifiers such as 'mufti' or 'sheikh', so virtually anyone can call himself a 'mufti'. As such this does not indicate authority. The 'crisis of social authority' is a well-documented phenomenon¹⁹⁴. For many outsiders who are interested in Islamic views about the environment, this is confusing.

Even so, a number of Islamic institutions and persons that are vested with religious authority. These include the regional *Islamic Fiqh Councils*, institutions such as the *Al Azhar* in Egypt, the religious establishment of the Shia world, and influential scholars like Al-Qaradawi and other scholars mentioned for example on the *500 Most Influential Muslim Leaders*¹⁹⁵.

Their involvement is relevant, because their opinions matter to the majority of Muslims. So the question remains, where are these scholars in the debates about the environment and sustainable development? What do they have to say about the environmental crisis?

10.2 Increasing active engagement

The scholars have not been completely silent and some have spoken out on global platforms. The 'Global Mufti' Yusuf al Qaradawi (1926), one of the 'best known and most influential contemporary Muslim clerics of our time'¹⁹⁶ published *Environmental Protection in Islam (Ri'ayat al-bi'a fi shari'at al-islam)* in 2001¹⁹⁷. However and possibly significantly, this has not been translated into English (as far as I know). It is also hardly mentioned by others who have an interest in the field, or by the many Eco-Muslim who are active on blogs or forums. Apparently this specific publication failed to attract wider attention (in the non-Arabic speaking world) thus far. A review of his book did however provide some insight in his views. Like many others he defined a series of guiding principles to underpin environmental action. These reverberate the

¹⁹⁴ Roy, O., *Globalized Islam, the Search for a new Ummah*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2004.

¹⁹⁵ 500 Most Influential Muslims, 2009, John Esposito, Ibrahim Kalin, The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre. P36.

¹⁹⁶ According to Esposito and Kalin, who rank Qaradawi on number 9 of the Top 500 most influential Muslims in: 500 Most Influential Muslims, 2009, John Esposito, Ibrahim Kalin, The Royal Islamic Strategic Studies Centre. P36. It mentions that Qaradawi is 'well known for his popular Al Jazeera program 'Ash-Shariah wal-Hayat' (Islamic Law and Life) that is watched by an estimated 40 million people worldwide'. He is also 'one of the intellectual leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood movement and a founder of the website IslamOnline'. His is praised for his ability to combine the traditional knowledge of Islamic law with a contemporary understanding of the issues that Muslims face today.

¹⁹⁷ This term 'Global Mufti' is used by researchers Jakob Skovgaard-Peerstern and Bettina Gräf in their recently published volume about Yusuf al-Qaradawi: *Global Mufti, the Phenomenon of Yusuf al-Qaradawi*, London: C. Hurst&Co. Ltd. 2009. The publication about the environment has not been translated yet:

Ri'ayat al-bi'a fi shari'at al-islam (Environmental protection in Islam), Cairo: Dar al-Shuruq, 2001.

Review by Nur Elmessiri in: Al-Ahram Weekly Online, 11 - 17 October 2001, Issue No.555

'To love and cherish: Ri'ayat Al-Bi'a fi Shari'at Al-Islam (Care of the Environment in Islamic Law),

Youssef El-Qaradawi, Cairo: Dar Al-Shorouq, 2001. pp260: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2001/555/bo4.htm>

earlier sets of principles, but he does not seem to refer to the 1994 IPCNE, ISECO and other principles¹⁹⁸. He also criticized the destructive production and consumptions patterns.

In 2009 Ali Gom'aa, the grand mufti of Egypt published *Environmentalism and Islamic Perspective*¹⁹⁹. Other scholars participated in the Istanbul initiative, such as Ekrama Sabri (Mufti of Palestine, Dr. Salman Alouda (Saudi scholar) and Said Ali Mohamad Hussein FadlAllah (grand ayatollah Shi'a Lebanon). Other references were found as well, such as to the Iranian scholar Mostafa Mohaghegh- Damad²⁰⁰.

Other examples include the allegedly popular Syrian imam, Muhammad Al-Yaqoubi who is said to preach regularly about environmental issues²⁰¹.

It was not possible to delve into these highly significant scholarly expositions during this survey, but these are certainly worth analyzing in more detail as part of future research. It is also expected that a more systematic search of Arabic sources will uncover more scholarly theological and juridical work.

¹⁹⁸ Review by Nur Elmessiriin: Al-Ahram Weekly Online, 11 - 17 October 2001, Issue No.555

'To love and cherish: Ri'ayat Al-Bi'a fi Shari'at Al-Islam (Care of the Environment in Islamic Law), Youssef El-Qaradawi, Cairo: Dar Al-Shorouq, 2001. pp260: <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2001/555/bo4.htm>

¹⁹⁹ Gom'aa, Ali, *Environmentalism and Islamic Perspective*, Cairo: Al-Wabel Al-Sayyeb, 2009.

²⁰⁰ Mohaghegh- Damad, Mostafa, *A Discourse on Nature and Environment from an Islamic Perspective*. Tehran: Department of the Environment, 2001.

²⁰¹ Article 'The Invitation, Islamic Community Magazine, 'Meet the Green Shaykh – An Interview with Muhammad al-Yaqoubi', October 2010, <http://www.invitation-magazine.com/2010/meet-the-green-shaykh-an-interview-with-muhammad-al-yaqoubi/>

11 Conclusion and Discussion

This study aimed to identify, describe and (roughly) analyze contemporary Islamic environmentalist contributions to global debates and practices. This first of all required demonstrating that a distinct type of ‘Islamic’ debate or practice exists at all. The considerable number of actors, ideas and activities taking an Islamic approach to environmental or sustainability issues as main focal point, presented and discussed in the previous chapters substantiates the claim that Islamic environmentalism indeed *exists*. Moreover, the findings suggest that various kinds of Islamic environmentalism have emerged over the past decades. In this chapter, we will summarize the findings. We will also tentatively reflect on possible ways of understanding and on the potential implications of these findings. Chapter 12 will point out a few of the most promising areas for future research.

11.1 Globalized Eco-Islam: an emergent movement?

The first decades (from the 1970s to 2000) were characterized by a more or less theoretical approach, concentrating on Islamic theories of nature and its implications for understanding and solving the environmental crisis. The past ten years (2000-2010) were characterized by a more practical orientation: principles were put to practice.

The first phase (1970s-2000)

Coinciding with an increased global awareness of environmental problems, a number of Muslim intellectuals (such as Nasr, Sardar, Manzoor) started to reflect on the ‘environmental crisis’ from a distinctly ‘Islamic perspective’ in the 1970s. In the 1980s, the Saudi government developed ‘Islamic Principles’ which outlined the Islamic theological and ethical position on environmental protection and nature conservation and which also indicated how the juridical-ethical framework of Islamic Law (*sharia*) could be appropriated to support environmental policy making. A large nature conservation organization, IUCN, actively supported this process. Two academics (Mawil Izzi Dien, Llewelyn) were the main theorists behind these Principles. Roughly during that same period, another nature conservation organization, the WWF, called upon the faith communities to contribute more actively to the environmental debates. The resultant 1986 *Assisi Declarations* included a *Muslim Declaration on Nature* by the Muslim World League. In 1994 and 1995 the ‘Principles’ and declarations were re-emphasized. A subsequent WWF series on *Religion & Ecology* allowed some of the most prominent theorists with some new voices (e.g., Khalid) to elaborate their views in *Islam and Ecology* (1992). In the mid nineties, the academic community picked up on this work. A series of conferences was organized contributing to the emergence of a new academic subfield on *Religion and Ecology*. For the first time, Muslim voices from across the Islamic world assembled to discuss Islamic views about the environment. This resulted in a landmark publication: *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* (2003), which included many of the leading voices in the debate of that time (Nasr, Izzi Dien, Llewelyn, Khalid, Nomanul Haq, Özedmir, Parvaiz, Safei-Eldin A. Hamed and others).

The second phase (2000-2010)

At the turn of the century practice became more central. Islamic environmental principles and theories were used to legitimize or motivate practical action. Several practical ‘approaches’ emerged each carried by different ‘agents’ or actors.

- Nature conservation practices based on *sharia* principles and institutions (such as *hima* and *waqf*) were picked up and promoted by conservation organizations. These collaborated with international organizations such as WWF, IUCN and Conservation International.

- An 'Islamic sustainable development' framework was developed by ISESCO, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization of the Organization of Islamic Conferences (OIC) to substantiate and legitimate global strategies and policy action of the 'Islamic World'.
- A search for common ground among the world religions was carried by Iran between 1998-2006 and by the Parliament of World's Religions, the UN, and the Earth Charter to legitimate cooperative action and faith community engagement.
- A globalized *Muslim civil society* emerged, that used the Islamic principles to mobilize the Muslim world, the religious establishment, policy makers, governments, communities and individuals into action.

In the past several years, 'Islamic environmentalism' seems to reverberate more widely, inspiring larger audiences from across the Muslim world. Globalized networks are emerging.

- Individuals, local groups and communities *Greening their Deen*, promoting green lifestyles, a green economy based on renewable energy and clean technologies and organic regionally grown food. Eco-Muslims, green prophets and green *jihadi's* have recently invaded the blogosphere calling for Green Muslim action.
- On the more radical end of the spectrum, Islamic environmental theories are put to practice as alternative monetary systems based on the Gold Dinar and intentional Islamic eco-communities. Sharia inspired theories such as the ban on interest (*riba*) underpin this development. Interestingly, such 'radical' ideas share affinity with radical environmentalism and the eco- and climate justice movements. More radical political movements are also starting to engage in the environmental discourse (*Hizb ut-tahrir*).
- Most interesting – in my view – are the substantial trends in the Muslim world on Islamic ethical finance, economy and business. These converge with trends of the non-Muslim world on ethical investment, ecological economy, and corporate social responsibility and ethical trade. Malaysia is the 'hot spot' for these 'finance' activities, whilst Indonesia is a hot spot for conservation activities and civil society action.

To summarize, what started with a few pioneers, mainly intellectuals who lived in the West, is currently seen to have developed into a (loosely organized) social movement involving intellectuals, academic scholars, groups of activists, conservationists, environmentalists, life style conscious individuals, religious scholars, and Muslim business people, from across the Muslim world. Many of them live in the Europe, the United States, the United Kingdom, or South Africa, with strong ties in Muslim majority countries. This is in part a global(ized) movement, with networks of Indonesian groups and British groups, Senegalese neo-brotherhoods and Muslim *Green Deen* Americans. A trend towards more active involvement of Muslims on the globalized sustainability stage is definitely discernable.

As a hypothesis, it can be argued that the 'movement' identified in this survey is a new manifestation of what Olivier Roy dubbed 'Globalized Islam', which 'refers to the way in which the relationship of Muslims to Islam is reshaped by globalization, westernization and the impact of living as a minority'²⁰². This survey may indicate what could be coined as **Globalized Eco-Islam**.

11.2 Missing links

It is always most difficult to identify what is missing. However, some voices are conspicuously absent in this survey. In part this reflects the limitation in scope of this explorative survey which was confined to (publicly accessible) English sources. However, some voices may also be missing, because they have not spoken up about environmental issues.

²⁰² Roy, O., *Globalized Islam, the Search for a new Ummah*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2004. p. ix

- The Islamic religious establishment is not seen to have actively participated in (global) environmental debates. Possibly, the language barrier muffled their voices. Most theological and juridical discourse is carried out in Arabic (or Urdu). Yet prominent scholars such as Tariq Ramadan have also criticized the *ulama* for remaining silent about sustainability issues. The attempts to formulate Islamic environmental ethics was largely dominated by academic scholars and scientists e.g. lay people. This is surprising, because traditionally, of course, this is the terrain of religious scholars. Some influential religious scholars, such as Qaradawi and Al-Goma'a have now started to publish about environmental protection. They also support high level initiatives such as the Istanbul meeting on Climate Change. So, where are the scholars?
- We identified some geographical hot spots: Middle East, Indonesia, Africa and to some extent Turkey. Surprisingly, the Indian subcontinent is also missing in this survey. *Why?* This is surprising, because the subcontinent is noted for its proactive environmental movements, most of which publish in English. We would expect a more prominent position of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi voices. The engagement of British Muslims with a Pakistani or Indian background which is very prominent (e.g. Sardar, Khalid), would also suggest a more active connection with an Indian (Muslim) 'eco-movements'. Yet, the activities highlighted in this LUF study did not show many direct or explicit links with any Indian or Pakistani 'Islamic' eco-movements. More systematic research may uncover new links. Some Indian or Pakistani Muslims contributed to the *Islam and Ecology* series. These focus on the 'science' debate (such as Parvaiz), or set out to derive Quranic environmental ethics (such as Haq) (chapter 2). The science debate developed somewhat separately from the other approaches. It is still a prominent debate in the Muslim world, but its relation to environmental concerns did not appear to have received a very wide response. This might also be a reason why these voices did not turn up prominently in this survey. Pakistani voices have dominated the Islamic finance and economy debates that have only recently started to incorporate sustainability and environmental issues into their scope of concern. Munawar Iqbal is a prominent representative of this sector.
- Another group that is missing are the 'sceptics'. Some references were found to Islamic groups who criticize the climate and environmental debates for example for being yet another way of the West to dominate the developing world. Even so, skeptical critics and 'climate deniers' are very vocal among Evangelical movements in the US for example. It would be interesting to search Turkish, Arabic and other sources to see if an Islamic skeptical strand can be found.

11.3 Islamic Environmentalist Discourses: varieties and blends

This study only allowed a rough first analysis of the discourses (ideas, views, arguments) and practices. It suggests that several distinct approaches appear to have emerged over the years..

A first group of authors is primarily concerned with formulating Islamic environmental theology, law and ethics. They vary in the way they use, refer to and interpret the primary sources (Quran, hadith and classical juridical Islamic law or *sharia*). Quite a few refer to the Quran and hadith only as a basis for deriving what could be referred to as 'Quranic environmental ethics'. Some agreement on the most prominent verses and hadith appears to exist.

Others also include sources from the classical law schools, the jurisprudence and the underlying framework of ethical lawmaking, working on new discipline of Islamic environmental law (*Fiqh al-Bi' ah*). This has a strong focus on land and resource management and nature conservation. Some authors also refer to mystical-philosophical schools of thought, leading to distinctly

mystical interpretations of the environmental crisis (such as Nasr). There is some agreement on the most prominent key concepts and principles, but variations exist which call for more deeper conceptual analysis.

A second group of authors is less concerned with the ethical base, and more with the practical implications (applying ethics). They focus on understanding and analyzing the root causes of the environmental crisis and search for Islamic solutions consistent with the sources. They criticize the modern secular paradigm, the scientific mechanistic, technological and economical worldview and its blindness for 'ethics', or the capitalist, neo-liberal system for example. Depending on what is seen as the root cause of the crisis, the authors propose to reform science and technology, the social political governance systems, the economical and finance systems or life styles. The social-political orientation is most radical, because it aspires radical system reform. The influence of contemporary social-political Islamist thought is most prominent here, whilst it also has much affinity with radical environmentalism, the eco- and climate justice movements.

Islamic environmental *discourses* draw from the spectrum of contemporary Islamic *and* environmentalist discourses. Other types of discourses also blend in, e.g. on universal, global ethics, human rights, social justice, globalization, western imperialism, capitalism etc. This leads to intriguing eclectic fusions of discourse types. The most vivid examples are the fusions of environmentalist 'deep ecology', and Islamic Sufism (Nasr), and of 'radical political environmentalism' and 'Islamist' thought (Khalid).

Future research will need to analyze this spectrum of Islamic environmentalist thought in more detail. Theoretical and conceptual frameworks used for analysis of sustainability discourses and movements, as well as Islamic movements can be used to analyze, contextualize and understand Islamic environmental discourses and movement²⁰³.

To summarize, the survey indicates the existence of the following types of approaches.

1. Theological and Islamic law based (classical normative).
2. Mystical philosophical nature or eco-philosophy (ethical)
3. Reform of science and technology (Islamic science)
4. Social political reform (Eco-Islamist)
5. Land- water resource management, nature conservation (conservationist)
6. Green lifestyles and the economy (Green Deen)
7. Sustainable Islamic Finance and economics, commerce and trade

11.4 The role of Islam in sustainable futures?

We started this report with an observation made by Olav Kjørven. He had high expectations about the role Islam could play in support of sustainability. Many Islamic environmentalists also argue that Islam has a pivotal role to play in global sustainability debates.

What role is envisaged for Islam? What other roles are conceivable? This is an intriguing question.

We suggest the concept of sustainable development, which incorporates social, environmental and economical concerns, is conducive to draw out this (potential) Islamic contribution to global debates and practices. Contemporary Islamic social political thought, for example, has a lot to say about 'social justice', which is a central concern to Islamic thought. It is also one of the central pillars of 'sustainable development'. Islamic environmentalist discourses strongly emphasize the social dimensions of the environmental crisis (Foltz 2003). Munawar Iqbal points out how from an Islamic perspective the emphasis on justice, equity and redistribution in sustainable

²⁰³ For example, a comparative argumentative discourses analysis approach to environmental discourses was developed by Hajer 2006, Hopwood 2005, Dryzek 2005 and Wardekker 2009. Islamic activism is analyzed with similar tools (framing analysis) by Wicktorwicz 2009, Roy and Fuller .

development philosophy is ‘a move in the right direction’²⁰⁴ (2005). This strong Islamic focus on social justice may infuse global sustainability debates, that tend to (over)emphasize the economical and environmental concerns.

Islam also has a lot to say about economics and finance, another key pillar of sustainable development. Grounded on principles of equity and social justice, these fields are currently developing very rapidly. The financial crisis has reinvigorated worldwide debates about alternatives to the economical and financial systems, boosting Muslim world confidence in propagating the benefits of Islamic systems based on the prohibition of usury, interest and speculation (Islamic Development Bank 2011)²⁰⁵. Increasingly, the apparent synergy in terms of goals and practices, between Islamic systems and ‘ethical’ sustainable finance or ‘alternative’ economics is pointed out. We argue this may be one of the most fruitful areas worthy of future research.

11.5 Understanding Eco-Islam: a countercultural revival of social ethics?

To understand *why* the interest in the ‘Islamic’ legitimization of environmental action is emerging at this point in time in these particular forms is another intriguing question. We propose it can be understood as a new manifestation of the *Islamic Resurgence, Reform or Revivalism*, a trend that emerged in the Muslim world in the 1980s, roughly during the same time when environmentalism started to inspire social movements worldwide. The *Revival* movement is expressed in a great variety of views and positions - radical to moderate, democratic to authoritarian, fundamentalist traditionalist to modernist, but is characterized by its strong assertion that Islamic values are highly relevant for organizing personal lives, as citizens, members of their communities (Fuller 2003). The Islamic environmentalists argue that Islam has something valuable to offer in facing environmental challenges.

The strong presence of Islamic ‘converts’ in the Islamic environmental movement may be significant in this respect. It can be argued that the Islamic environmentalist converts embody the affinity of thought and practice of two prominent contemporary global trends defining our age: the social-environmental and Islamist revivalist movements.

A interesting hypothesis would be that both can be understood as ‘*global countercultural*’ trends. ‘Counter cultural’ in the sense of opposing the dominant western secular *global culture*. Such a countercultural attitude characterizes much of modern Islamic thought, *as well* as environmentalist thought. Nasr’s thought, for example, especially its mystical interpretation of Islam, has close affinity to some contemporary forms of Western ‘spirituality’. If seen in this way, his thought can be understood in terms of significant cultural changes in the West that have taken place since the sixties and that have been described by the sociologist Colin Campbell for example, in *Easternization of the West* (2007) as ‘counter cultural’.

Both movements are globalized in scope, challenge the predominant global culture and at the same time search for alternatives and ‘better futures’ (Hawken 2007, Roy 2004). Both manifest a conscious ‘search for meaning’, an increased interest in spirituality, and a desire to for a ‘better world’. They share a focus on practice, conscious life styles (*praxis*), which inspire some people to live in intentional communities. The existence of Islamic eco-communities is an expression of this convergence. Both movements are essentially value driven and firmly re-assert the relevance of ‘ethics’ in the public domain. These movements are comprehensive in scope, linking ethics to practical action in all spheres of life.

Social analyst Paul Hawken (2007) argues that social and environmental movements worldwide are converging into one global social movement. Although diverse, these all share similar concerns (a sense of ‘blessed unrest’) about the course of global events. These also share an ambition to

²⁰⁴ Iqbal, M., eds. *Islamic Perspectives on Sustainable Development*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2005

²⁰⁵ Islamic development Bank (www.isdbforum.org)

search for more constructive alternatives, ‘better’ models and systems to organize our societies and our lives²⁰⁶. Islamic environmentalism may indicate that parts of the Islamist revival movements may be aligning with this large global *Blessed Unrest* movement. Social analyst, Graham Fuller, has also noted a ‘convergence between the modern Western world and religious traditions’ (see chapter 5). We argue Islamic environmentalism is a manifestation of this trend. Future research will need to support this hypothesis.

Many Islamic environmentalists are convinced that Islam is essentially a ‘green religion’. A similar ‘greening of faith’ is seen with Christian communities and a comparison with Christian eco-theologies may help understand Islamic greening of faith.

Distinctive of Islamic approaches may be its strong emphasis on *praxis*. For example, several scholars are developing an Islamic environmental law, drawing out *shari’ite* principles and injunctions that have practical implications and that are already being tested and tried in various places in the world, especially in water resources, land management, and nature conservation. Similar proposals in the fields of commerce, trade and economics (collective *praxis*) may merge with trends in the fields of Islamic finance, business and economics. A similar focus on *praxis* is found in the concerns to green individual lifestyles (individual *praxis*).

11.6 Practical relevance: Islamic ethical finance, trade, food and markets?

Is it relevant to take note of ‘Islamic environmentalism’? We argue it is. Islamic visions of a sustainable future have the potential to inspire a great number of Muslims. A significant part of the world’s population is Muslim and Islamic values are recognized to be a powerful motivating forces in many Muslim’s lives (Gallup 2010)²⁰⁷. We have not investigated the actual potential of the environmentalist ideas to mobilize Muslim communities, but have found indications that Islamic visions of sustainable green and just societies are starting to trigger the Muslim imaginations.

Most relevant in my view is the potential impact of Islamic environmentalism on Muslim consumer markets. If larger numbers of Muslims become sensitive to environmental concern and start to adapt their life styles accordingly this will impact the interest of (transnational) corporations and trade organizations. These recognize that ‘branding and marketing needs to take Islamic values into account’. Food producers such as Nestlé and Campina already cooperate with Halal certifiers. Others have noted the ‘parallels between the evolution of business practices toward sustainability and the values of *Shariah* compliance’ (Ogilvy & Mather, 2010)²⁰⁸.

Another highly relevant sector is the finance sector and the observed convergence of ethical, social and environmental sustainable finance and Islamic finance. If Islamic investments – still a niche but seen to develop rapidly - are mobilized in support of social and environmentally ethical investments, this may also have considerable impact the near future.

Other areas are:

- International affairs, politics and policymaking: The increased assertiveness of developing countries, prominence of Muslim majority countries and increased influence of Islamized discourse, Islamic views about sustainability may also influence global sustainability debates.

²⁰⁶ Hawken, P., *Blessed Unrest: How the largest social movement in the world came into being and why no one saw it coming*, Penguin Books, 2007

²⁰⁷ Gallup Survey 2010: When Asked whether religion is a significant part of their daily lives, 99% of the respondents of Muslim countries answered yes. article *Religiosity Highest in World's Poorest Nations*: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142727/religiosity-highest-world-poorest-nations.aspx#2>

²⁰⁸ Report *Brands, Islam and the New Muslim Consumer*, 2010. Article *Ogilvy & Mather’s Research Defines the Global Rise of the ‘New Muslim Consumer’*, May 20,2010: <http://www.ogilvy.com/News/Press-Releases/May-2010-The-Global-Rise-of-the-New-Muslim-Consumer.aspx>

- The human rights debates in the 1990 showed that Islamic views can significantly impact the tone and topics of international discourses.
- The non-governmental nature conservation, environmental organizations have long recognized the significance of religious worldviews and ethics (WWF 2005, ARC/ World Bank 2006). Large organizations such as IUCN and WWF in fact facilitated Muslim world participation in environmental debates (Assisi 1986, IUCN 1994).
 - Humanitarian and developmental organizations are increasingly sensitive to the significance of religious worldviews (Ter Haar 2012, Renkema 2009, Berger 2006, also: Knowledge Centre Religion and Development).

12 Future research

Future research can approach Islamic environmentalism from several directions, focusing on the theology, discourses and/ or movements.

- (1) Islamic theology, ethics and law approach: The objective is to identify, discuss and analyze the theological, ethical and juridical foundations of Islamic sustainability concepts. This could include a comparative analysis with Christian theologies of nature.
- (2) Discourses approach (comparative discourse analysis): The objective is to analyze and compare the content of the varieties of discourses and approaches with respect to each other and with respect to various forms of contemporary (Western) environmental thought. This will not delve too deeply in the theology but will analyze how the ethical principles are used to substantiate views about the environmental crisis and its solutions.
- (3) Social movement approach: The objective is to understand 'Islamic environmentalism' as a contemporary Islamic movement, and as part of and influenced by larger global social movements (see hypothesis above: Globalized Eco-Islam). It aims to understand why Islamic environmentalism is emerging at this point in time and as in particular forms.

Specific topics:

- (4) Islamic social justice and social sustainability.
- (5) Islamic and ethical sustainable finance: focus on the synergies between Islamic finance and ethical finance.
- (6) Islamic and 'alternative, ecological or sustainable economics and sustainable development: focus on the synergies between Islamic economics and the emerging fields of alternative, ecological or sustainable economics. Both worlds have developed in parallel spheres but share similar concepts, ideas (interest, risks, currencies, etc).
- (7) Islamic ethical commerce and trade: focus on synergies between Islamic ethics on trade and commerce and related practices in the sphere of corporate social responsibility (CSR), social and environmental performance, fair trade standards etc.
- (8) Environmentalism and the Islamization of Science debates: focus on the role of 'Islamization of science' debates and its relation to environmental debates. This is related to debate about 'science and religion' within the other faith traditions, and debates about 'science and ethics' (Kuhn, Feyerabend) that also influence the environmental movements and New Age movements.
- (9) Country studies, work on the ground: This would focus on environmental practices in some of the Muslim majority countries and result in a set of country policy papers. For example, the LUF pilot study pointed out that a lot of work is being done in Indonesia, East Africa, Lebanon and Saudi Arabia. Many NGOs are said to be active in Iran.

Leiden University submitted a research program proposal to the NWO (Netherlands Scientific Research Fund) in February 2012. This program builds on this preliminary research project and aims to explore Islamic perspectives on sustainable development: *Green Islam: balancing social justice, environment and economics in a context of Sustainable Development*. A decision is expected mid 2012.

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