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**THE ETHICAL ASPECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN
SHAPING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

КЛИМАТТЫН ӨЗГӨРҮШҮНҮН ЭТИКАЛЫК АСПЕКТИЛЕРИ ЖАНА ЭКОЛОГИЯЛЫК
АҢ СЕЗИМДИ КАЛЫПТАНДЫРУУДА ДИНДИН РОЛУ

ЭТИЧЕСКИЕ АСПЕКТЫ ИЗМЕНЕНИЯ КЛИМАТА И РОЛЬ РЕЛИГИИ В
ФОРМИРОВАНИИ ЭКОЛОГИЧЕСКОГО СОЗНАНИЯ

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THE ETHICAL ASPECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN SHAPING ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Abstract

Relevance. Climate change and environmental problems have recently emerged as some of the most pressing global issues, discussed not only from ecological but also from ethical, social, and political perspectives. This crisis, which has arisen as a result of humanity's relationship with nature, has also drawn the attention of religions, engaging clerics and scholars connected to faith in seeking possible solutions. Indeed, such individuals play an important role in society. The decisions and statements they make can significantly influence public opinion and contribute to the formation of environmental and climate awareness within communities. Viewing climate change and environmental issues from this perspective moves the problem beyond being merely a technical matter; it demonstrates that these challenges belong to the realm of values that humanity must protect. This article discusses the current condition of Muslims around the world, the proposed ideas, actions, and solutions for addressing these issues, and analyzes the ethical aspects of climate change and the formation of ecological awareness based on the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad. As a result, eco-theological and eco-ethical elements have spread among the population in our country, and not only the issues mentioned above but also the role of religion in cleanliness and environmental protection is being emphasized.

Keywords: Islam, climate, Muslim, ethics, ecology.

Климаттын өзгөрүшүнүн этикалык аспектилери жана экологиялык аң сезимди калыптандырууда диндин ролу

Medico-social importance of a healthy lifestyle in shaping the health of students

Аннотация

Маанилүүлүк. Климаттын өзгөрүшү жана экологиялык проблемалар соңку учурларда эң олуттуу глобалдык көйгөйлөрдүн бири катары бир гана экологиялык эмес, ошол эле учурда этикалык, социалдык жана саясий өнүттөрү менен да талкууланууда. Адамзаттын табият менен курган мамилесинин натыйжасында келип чыккан бул кризис, диндерди да өзүнө тартып, дин кызматкерлеринин жана дин менен байланышы болгон окумуштуулардын кызыгууларын жаратып, алардын кандайдыр бир чечимдерди алууларына түрткү берип келүүдө. Чындыгында мындай адамдардын коомдогу орду чоң. Анкени алар тарабынан берилген кандайдыр бир чечим белгилүү деңгээлде коомдук пикирди жаратып, климат жана экологияны коргоо маселесинде коомдук аң сезимдин калыптанышына өз салымын кошот.

Климаттын өзгөрүшү жана экологиялык проблемаларга бул перспективадан кароо, көйгөйдү жөн гана техникалык маселе болуудан чыгарып, аны адамзаттын коргоосу керек болгон баалуулуктар дүйнөсүндө орду бар экендигин далилдейт.

Ачык сөздөр: ислам, климат, мусулман, этика, экология.

Аннотация

Актуальность. Изменение климата и экологические проблемы в последние годы рассматриваются как одни из самых серьезных глобальных вызовов. При этом они обсуждаются не только с экологической точки зрения, но и в контексте этических, социальных и политических аспектов. Этот кризис, возникший в результате взаимодействия человечества с природой, затронул и религии, вызвав интерес у религиозных деятелей и учёных, связанных с религией, и побуждая их к поиску определённых решений. Действительно, роль таких людей в обществе велика, поскольку принимаемые ими решения в определённой степени формируют общественное мнение и вносят вклад в развитие общественного сознания в вопросах защиты климата и окружающей среды.

Рассмотрение изменения климата и экологических проблем с этой точки зрения выводит их за рамки чисто технической проблемы и показывает, что они занимают важное место в системе ценностей, которые человечество должно защищать.

Ключевые слова: ислам, климат, мусульман, этика, экология.

Introduction

Environmental and climate scientists have repeatedly stated that climate change will lead to significant consequences in the future, and the impacts it will cause are not only local but also global in scale, as they are already emerging. These issues, which have begun to manifest themselves especially through rising atmospheric temperatures, the warming of ocean and sea waters, the melting of glaciers and icebergs, and the rise in sea levels, are further continuing with consequences such as forest fires in various regions, a decrease in humidity and rainfall, or heavy rains accompanied by floods, as well as drought. These changes are further accompanied by regional consequences such as forest fires, reduced humidity and rainfall, extreme downpours leading to floods, and persistent droughts.

Undoubtedly, there are ethical dimensions to this global issue. In essence, humanity's uncontrolled desire to exploit nature—driven by insatiable greed and the neglect of moral and religious values—has been a major factor leading to the current crisis. Viewing nature merely as a resource to be consumed is among the root causes of climate change and ecological degradation. However, nature is far more than that. In other words, nature should not be seen merely as something to be consumed; it must be understood as a sacred homeland to be preserved and lived in together, a trust to be passed on to future generations, a shared heritage, and a source of order, balance, and harmony within the ecosystem.

For this reason, many cultures have developed expressions such as “Mother Nature,” “Mother Earth,” and “Fatherland,” which symbolize the deep respect owed to the natural world as to one's own parents. Forests, therefore, should not be valued merely as sources of timber but as living ecosystems; rivers should not be viewed only in terms of hydroelectric potential but as the lifeblood of nature and the source of life itself.

Many religions and theological traditions emphasize humanity's responsibility and place within nature, urging respect and care for the environment in which people live. Therefore, in shaping ecological awareness and culture, we must make use of the values of Islam along with those of other religions and contribute to preserving the liveliness of the world we live in.

Methods

In this article, in addition to briefly describing the current climate and ecological situation, explanatory and analytical research methods are employed. It should be emphasized that references to the primary sources of Islamic theology are made to ensure that the significance of the issue is deeply felt within the Muslim community. At the end of the study, important strategic recommendations that need to be implemented are also presented.

Islam and Natural Balance

It is impossible for Muslims to remain indifferent to climate change and its ecological consequences, which are directly linked to the destiny of humanity. Especially over the past 50 years, the calls made and the decisions adopted at the international level have made many Muslims reflect. Creating public awareness to eliminate the ecological problems that have emerged in nature and to ensure that necessary decisions are made should be the main goal. This is because ecological awareness has not yet developed sufficiently among most ordinary people.

Islam places profound emphasis on the protection of the environment and the preservation of the natural balance. In this regard, the concept of *Mīzān* (balance) mentioned in the Qur'an—specifically in Surah *Ar-Rahman* (Ar-Rahman, 55:7–8)—holds great importance. The term points to the equilibrium established in nature and calls on humanity to maintain it. When we recall the hadith that encourages believers to plant a tree even at the onset of the Day of Judgment (Ibn

Hanbal, 1992), we clearly see how deeply Islam values nature and the preservation of balance within it.

This emphasis is not limited to the word *Mizān* alone. Other Qur’anic and Islamic terms such as *āyah* (sign), *isrāf* (wastefulness), *qadar* (measure, destiny), *khilāfah* (stewardship), *mawzūn* (measured), and *tawhīd* (divine unity) also play crucial roles (Kalyoncu & Tash, 2024).

The Qur’an explains that after the creation of the universe and the establishment of laws ensuring balance among living and non-living beings, God entrusted humanity with the duty of preserving this equilibrium. Ecology, in modern scientific terms, examines precisely this relationship between living beings and their environment. Unfortunately, even today, the main culprit behind the ongoing and increasing climate change and ecological problems is humankind itself. Especially concerning the ecological issues whose harmful effects began to be felt in the second half of the 20th century, the Qur’an, which was revealed 15 centuries ago, informed humanity that any hardship or calamity that befalls them is a consequence of what their own hands have done (Ash-Shura, 42:30). As a result, it also warned that due to their own mistakes, various forms of corruption and negative consequences would appear in their environment—namely, on land and at sea (Ar-Rum, 30:41).

Classical exegesis interprets these verses as referring to natural calamities—droughts, declining harvests, dried-up springs, and scarcity of fresh water—as punishments for human sinfulness (Al-Maturidi, 2008). In contemporary understanding, these verses are also read in the context of climate change and the disruption of ecological balance.

Tawhīd (the Oneness of God) is not merely a theological belief but an ontological thesis about the unity of existence. The created world is not simply a source for satisfying material needs; it is a divine *āyah* (sign) pointing to God’s existence and unity (Al-A‘raf, 7:54; Yunus, 10:5; Ar-Rum, 30:46). *Khilāfah* (stewardship) or *istikhlāf* emphasizes that human dominion over the earth implies responsibility, not ownership. Humans are not the “masters” of creation but its caretakers (Al-Bukhari, 1992).

Among the most significant terms related to climate change and ecological crises are *qadar* (measure) and *isrāf* (wastefulness). Maintaining balance in nature requires moderation and the avoidance of excess. Several verses in the Qur’an affirm this, stating that everything has been created in due measure (Al-Qamar, 54:49), that after the earth was made suitable for living, it should be used properly (Al-A‘raf, 7:31), and that it must be preserved without causing corruption on it (Al-A‘raf, 7:56).

Prophetic traditions reinforce these principles, forbidding the waste of water (Ibn Majah, 1992) and considering the planting of trees as an act of charity (Al-Bukhari, 1992).

Altogether, these concepts form a hierarchy of values that can strengthen ecological awareness in Muslim societies and serve as a framework for environmental ethics. The sequence can be summarized as follows: **Tawhīd** → **Amānah / Khilāfah** → **Mizān** → **Qadar (Measure in all things)** → **Avoidance of Isrāf** → **Justice (‘Adl) and Mercy (Raḥmah)** → **Attainment of Divine Pleasure and Harmony**.

Current Initiatives and Actions within Muslim Communities

The ecological transformations accompanying global climate change have undoubtedly become a matter of concern for ordinary people as well. Meanwhile, religious figures who call for the protection of the environment first urge that the issue be addressed through eco-theological and eco-ethical approaches, and then propose solutions, fatwas, declarations, and initiatives that draw the attention of the wider public.

In particular, it is important to highlight the speech delivered by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, His Excellency Sadyr Nurgozhoevich Japarov, at the General Debates of the 80th session of the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2025. In his address, the President of Kyrgyzstan touched upon the emerging threats to biodiversity resulting from drought, the melting of glaciers, and changes in the ecosystem. He emphasized the importance of taking necessary steps and prioritizing support for various agreements aimed at protecting global ecosystems in order to prevent these threats. (Kyrgyz National News Agency, 2025)

This was neither the first nor the last time the President addressed these concerns. He has repeatedly proposed initiatives and continues to oversee related environmental actions and reforms.

In addition to individual religious opinions, a significant milestone was the **Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change**, adopted at a conference held in **Istanbul on August 17–18, 2015**, where Muslim leaders from over twenty countries gathered with scientists and policymakers. The declaration emphasizes that all countries, especially developed states, should exert all possible efforts and take the necessary steps to prevent environmental consequences. It proposes that the actions, recommendations, and opinions to be implemented should be carried out under the supervision of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). (Demir, 2021)

Strategic Recommendations: An Islamic Principles-Based Roadmap

A. Mosques and Religious Institutions

- **“Green Mosque” standard:** promoting energy efficiency (LED lighting, thermal insulation), installing rooftop solar panels, and integrating “green khutbah” practices.
- **Training for Imams:** environmental and climate education programs encouraging local cooperation between imams, village administrations, and teachers.

B. Islamic Finance, Zakat, and Waqf

- **“Green Zakat” model:** directing zakat funds to support vulnerable communities against drought and floods, financing efficient irrigation systems, and establishing interest-free agro-credit funds.
- **Reviving the Waqf system for ecological restoration:** designating local *himā* (protected areas) for pasture and water source preservation; creating waqfs for urban tree planting.
- **“Green Sukuk”:** implementing Sharia-compliant investment models for solar, wind, waste-to-energy, bioenergy, and water conservation projects.

C. Legal and Regulatory Measures

- **Eco-Fatwa Councils:** issuing non-binding yet influential guidance and rulings on issues like single-use plastics, illegal logging, and excessive water consumption.
- **Modernization of Hima zones:** recognizing and revitalizing traditional conservation areas as part of Islamic heritage through local fatwa councils.
- **“Polluter Pays” (Kaffārah Mechanism):** using Islamic principles of *kaffārah* (expiation) and *damān* (liability) to establish a framework for ecological justice and restoration.

D. Education and Culture

- **Integration into curricula:** A course on “Islam and Ecology” in madrasas and faculties of theology; teaching by analyzing the verses in the Qur’an related to nature and the themes of water, plants, animals, mercy, compassion, and kindness in the hadiths.
- **Youth Engagement:** launching youth-driven environmental projects, seasonal tree-planting campaigns, and community cleanup days.

- **Communication and Awareness:** promoting “Green Khutbahs” focusing on moderation, anti-wastefulness, balance (*mīzān*), and stewardship (*amānah*). Small actions can have large social impacts.
- **Family and Early Education:** reducing single-use plastics, preventing food waste, and teaching environmental ethics in schools. Such practices, already implemented in some developed countries, help foster a green economy, ecological awareness, and respect for nature.

Conclusion

Language and values grounded in religious and national identity can accelerate behavioral change and reinforce practical ethics. In particular, Islamic concepts provide moral motivation that complements technical regulations. Terms such as *tawhīd* (divine unity), *āyah* (sign), *isrāf* (wastefulness), *qadar* (measure), *taqdīr* (destiny), *mawzūn* (balance), *amānah* (trust), and *khilāfah* (stewardship) nurture an inner ecological awareness that promotes cleanliness and combats excess.

As a result, eco-theological and eco-ethical consciousness within Muslim societies can elevate religion’s role in environmental protection to a global level. *Fatwa* councils’ rulings and the application of *kaffārah* principles provide the legal and ethical foundations for such initiatives, ensuring their legitimacy and effectiveness.

Islam, at its core, advocates moderation (*wasatiyyah*) and balance (*mīzān*) in all aspects of life. These concepts encompass avoiding excessive use of natural resources, resisting consumerist lifestyles, rejecting luxury driven by greed, and sharing surplus goods with others rather than hoarding them.

In fact, fundamental values in religious traditions—such as avoiding excess, refraining from waste, justice, and compassion—are not merely rules established to prevent ecological crises; they are also a moral compass guiding human self-discipline. These principles awaken a spiritual depth that science alone cannot achieve and a strength of conscience that politics cannot stimulate.

Climate change is not merely an ecological issue limited to scientific reports; it is one of the greatest moral tests directed at humanity’s conscience. Humans fail to notice that, while consuming the Earth’s resources, they are gradually undermining the foundations of their own future. Therefore, the climate crisis has become a profound ethical call that goes far beyond technical measures, requiring humans to reconsider and reflect on their relationship with themselves, nature, and the Creator.

In summary, the fight against climate change does not begin solely in laboratories or conference halls; it begins in the heart of every individual. When the guidance of science is combined with the moral voice of religion, humanity gains the potential to restore not only nature but also its own inner meaning.

Therefore, just as we strive to maintain cleanliness and order within our own homes, we must also extend the same care to our greater home—the Earth. Challenges undoubtedly exist, foremost among them human greed and the pursuit of luxury, as noted by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him):

“If the son of Adam had a valley full of wealth, he would desire a second one. Nothing will fill the belly of the son of Adam except dust.”

At the root of all problems lies human greed and the desire to attain a luxurious lifestyle. However, with tireless effort and virtues based on religious and national values, these obstacles can be overcome.

Research shows that scientific data can explain the scale and depth of the climate crisis. However, on their own, they cannot generate the inner motivation necessary to change human behavior. Likewise, political and legal regulations, although they possess enforcement power,

cannot ensure lasting and long-term transformation unless they are supported by conscience. It is precisely at this point that religious values awaken a sense of responsibility within the individual's inner world and help sustain ecological ethical awareness.

The climate crisis is forcing humanity to reconsider its responsibility not only toward nature, but also toward itself and the Creator. A person who consumes nature without limits is, in fact, destroying their own future. By disrupting ecological balance, humanity is simultaneously losing its moral balance. Therefore, climate change is not merely the greatest environmental problem of our era; it is also a global test directed at the conscience of humankind.

In conclusion, the struggle to protect the environment cannot succeed through technological development or legal regulations alone. A genuine and sustainable solution is possible only when the guiding role of science and the moral call of religion are implemented together. Through such a comprehensive approach, humanity can repair its relationship with nature and build a sustainable future. Otherwise, the climate crisis will remain a symbol not only of ecological collapse, but also of moral decline.

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