

NATURE CONSERVATION IN ISLAM

There may not be a formulated policy on environmental protection documented by any religion. If the religious tenets are really put into practice the question of environmental destruction will never arise. Almost all major religions enshrine a few scriptural statements on the conservation of nature. There is no religion which allows the destruction of environment. Till the advent of the industrial civilization the world was relatively free from ecological problems. Within a century, the materialistic world view of the industrial society began to bring about environmental problems. The terms 'Environmental Protection', 'Environmental Awareness' and 'Conservation of Nature' are, therefore, of recent origin in science literature.

Tawhid in Islam exemplifies the foundation stone of religion. From *Tawhid* emerges the concept of khilafat. The entire nature of an Islamic environmental ethics is based on Quranic Concept of *Khilafat*. Man is the trustee who has the responsibility of looking after the vast panorama of God's creation. Man is accountable for the misuse of his trust and is liable to pay a price both in the world and in the life hereafter.

Islam approaches environmental problems from a holistic stand point. The interaction between physical, biological and social environments on the one hand and human activities on the other form an essential part of the faith. Be it daily life or routine work or prayers, in almost every facet of life there is adequate guidance provided by Islam regarding man's use of the environment.

According to the Quran, nature is created on the principle of equilibrium and the entire systems in nature exist and function in harmony with this balance.

"The earth.....We caused all kinds of things to grow therein in due