

FRIDAY KHUTBA OF TOKYO CAMII

April 30th, 2010

ISLAM AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Dear Mumins!

There is a splendid order, integration, and balance in the universe. Allah, the Exalted, has created the earth in the most convenient conditions for all creatures, and He has entrusted it to human beings. Man was created as khalifah, namely as a representative of Allah. Everything in the world was put under his order. Therefore, humans must conserve the natural life, which is entrusted to them. Likewise, this responsibility has been decreed in the Qur'ân, as follows: "... **He brought you forth from the earth and settled you therein (charged you with development of there.)**"¹ Hence, every theory or action that would harm the natural balance is against this message of the Qur'ân. Thus, a Muslim, who is aware of his/her responsibility, does the best to conserve the flawless order, integration, and balance in the universe. He also strives to transfer this balanced nature to the next generation without devastating it.

Dear, Muslims!

Understanding Islam and the environment is based on faith. Any individual, who thinks and believes, can understand that from very small creatures to the largest ones, both on the earth and in the sky, be animate or inanimate, everything has a divine value beyond their physical worth. This divine value is because all are created by Allah (s.w.t.). Everything in nature is His work. It has been expressed in the Qur'ân that all beings in nature glorify (tasbîh) Allah somehow², and the beasts on the earth and the birds in the sky are communities (ummah) just like human beings are³. So protecting nature is regarded as an appreciation of its value, namely as an indication (ayah) of Allah (s.w.t.). On the contrary, devastating it is regarded as an ingratitude showed towards Allah (s.w.t.).

The laws of nature have been implemented by Allah (s.w.t.). This matter was decreed in the Qur'ân by saying, "**He has created everything and has measured it exactly according to its due measurements.**"⁴ Under normal conditions, nature protects its own ecological balance. However, this balance has been ruined gradually since nature has been devastated and polluted by man. That's why every action, aimed at devastating nature, should be perceived as an attempt to destroy Allah's laws.



The Prophet (s.a.w.) declared Makkah, Madinah, Taif, and its environment as "Haram territory", just like a "protected area" in present days. The blood is not shed; the beasts are not killed; grass is not pulled up; and trees are not cut there. This is one of the first sample measures that Islam

took to preserve the environment and to prevent the devastation of inhabited places, as well as to protect the natural balance of the earth. In addition to preserving the environment and not allowing it to be polluted or developed, there are many remarks, practices, and messages of the Prophet (s.a.w.) that have been declared to us. He implemented environmentalism in His era as a public policy. In this context, He utilized vacant lands as agricultural fields and urged the Muslims to do this as well.

Dear, Brothers and Sisters!

Let us show sensitivity in regards to preserving the environment and not wasting the natural resources that have been given to us. Let us share and convey the importance of this sensitivity to new generations. Let us support the campaigns and organizations relevant to this subject. Moreover, let us not forget that the environment, like health, children, and riches is a trust and boon of Allah that has been given to us. Thus, we must accept our responsibility and work together to protect the precious gift of our environment.

¹ Hûd, 61.

² Al-Hashr, 24.

³ Al-An'âm, 38.

⁴ Al-Furqân, 2.