

An Islamic Approach to Environmental Protection and Ecologically Sustainable Peace *Zuleyha Keskin*

Islamic literature to date has been focusing on the human role as the vicegerent (*caliph*) on earth with the duty to look after the environment and other life forms. There is, however, a need to further develop this literature towards action and the broader concept of ecologically sustainable justice. This chapter examines the three concepts of potential, value and interdependent purpose from an Islamic perspective to illustrate that the earth with all its inhabitants and its ecosystems is an intrinsic part of God's plan. These three concepts apply to humans, animals and the environment from a theological perspective. This worldview generates affinity and empathy towards all of creation, whereby seeking its protection becomes a natural response. Creation displays the infinite creativity and beauty of God and everything in the natural world worships God in a unique way. Furthermore, just like humankind, animal species along with their ecosystems form communities and have a right to live peacefully within their communities. Hence, all forms of life on earth must be preserved and humans are charged with that responsibility. Ultimately, the Islamic concept of accountability in achieving justice and balance on earth charges human beings to establish a just and ecologically sustainable peace.

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