



PAPER DERIVED FROM THESIS

A Study on the Impacts of Islamic Lifestyle on Reducing Environmental Migration

Javad Salemi^{1*}, Asghar Arabiyan², Ali Zare²

1. * Department of Private Law, Faculty of Law, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. (Corresponding Author).

2. Department of Private Law, Faculty of Law, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran. a.rabian42@gmail.com, dr.alizare@gmail.com

ARTICLE INFO		ABSTRACT			
Article History: Received: 05 February 2025 Revised: 07 April 2025 Accepted: 03 May 2025		SUBJECT & OBJECTIVES: The crisis of forced migration driven by environmental degradation and climate change has emerged as one of the most complex challenges confronting the global community in the 21st century. While dominant policy discourses tend to locate solutions primarily in green technologies, climate policies, and humanitarian assistance, this article advances a novel interdisciplinary argument: at its core, the crisis is rooted in a profound moral and spiritual rupture in the modern human–nature relationship. Effective engagement with this challenge, therefore, requires the revitalization of a comprehensive, meaning-giving framework for living on Earth. METHOD & FINDING: Employing an analytical–descriptive methodology and drawing upon foundational Islamic sources—the Quran and the Sunnah—as well as contemporary interdisciplinary literature on environmental ethics, this study proposes and explicates a conceptual model of a sustainable Islamic lifestyle. This model is presented as a human, value-oriented approach that complements conventional policy solutions. Grounded in Islam’s divine unity (<i>tawhīd</i>)-centered ontology, the model organizes the key components of lifestyle across three interrelated levels: the individual, the social, and the governance spheres. CONCLUSION: The findings of the article demonstrate that this integrated framework—by institutionalizing principles such as <i>tawhīd</i>-orientation, trusteeship (<i>amānah</i>), moderation (<i>i’tidāl</i>), contentment (<i>qanā’ah</i>), intergenerational justice, and shared responsibility—can systematically reduce pressure on natural resources, enhance community resilience, and mitigate the principal drivers of forced environmental migration. The article concludes that reviving a lifestyle rooted in practical wisdom (<i>hikmah ‘amaliyyah</i>) of Islam is not merely a cultural option but an ecological and ethical imperative for navigating the current crisis and building a just and sustainable future for all inhabitants of the Earth.			
Key Words: Environmental Migration Islamic Lifestyle Environmental Ethics Governance Intergenerational Justice Sustainable Development					
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22034/imjpl.2025.12060					
This is an open-access article under the CC BY license (http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/). 					
* Corresponding Author: Email: jawadsalemi@yahoo.com ORCID: 0009-0006-0351-6821		Article Address Published on the Journal Site: http://p-l-journals.miu.ac.ir/article_12060.html			
NUMBER OF REFERENCES	18	NUMBER OF AUTHORS	3	NATION‘ALITY OF AUTHOR	(Iran)

Article Address Published on the Journal Site:
http://p-l-journals.miu.ac.ir/article_12060.html

Introduction

In recent decades, environmental migration has become one of the most visible human consequences of ecological degradation and climate change. Estimates by international organizations indicate that by 2050, between 25 million and 1 billion people may be compelled to leave their homes due to rising temperatures, sea-level rise, desertification, ecosystem collapse, declining water resources, and intensified natural disasters (IOM, 2021; IPCC, 2022). These vast populations—concentrated largely in developing countries and among groups with the least contribution to the drivers of migration—face the loss of housing, livelihoods, and socio-cultural networks, exposing them to complex forms of human insecurity, structural poverty, and violations of fundamental rights.

Despite this, global responses remain primarily oriented toward managing the consequences of displacement, including humanitarian assistance, resettlement programs, climate-adaptation policies, and technological interventions. While such measures are indispensable in the short term, this one-sided focus on consequences leaves a fundamental question unaddressed: how can the conditions that compel people to migrate be prevented in the first place? Put differently, what factors at deeper epistemic, ethical, and cultural levels

continue to reproduce unsustainable patterns of human interaction with the natural world?

In addressing this question, the article engages critically with the classical thesis "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" compiled by Lynn White (1967)—who attributed the roots of the ecological crisis to certain anthropocentric interpretations of Western religious traditions—yet adopts a constructive, reformative reading. It argues that contemporary environmental crises, including forced migration, reflect at a deeper level a “crisis of spirituality and ethics” within modern civilization. The dominance of an extreme anthropocentric paradigm, reductionist materialism, and consumerist moral frameworks has severed the ethical bond between humans and nature, reducing the latter to a mere resource or commodity for exploitation (Naşr, 2001). This epistemic and normative rupture has facilitated the over-extraction of natural resources, intensified environmental inequalities, and ultimately destabilized the ecosystems that underpin human habitation.

In contrast to this prevailing paradigm, Islam—as a comprehensive meaning-giving system with a distinct ontology and anthropology—can offer an alternative model for living on Earth. Islamic teachings, through their emphasis on *tawhīd* (divine unity), *khilāfah* (human stewardship), and *amānah* (trusteeship), establish an intrinsic link between ethics, spirituality, and

ecological responsibility. This linkage provides a normative framework capable of restraining unsustainable patterns of production, consumption, and governance. From this perspective, the Islamic lifestyle is not merely a set of individual rituals but an integrated system of values and practices that shapes human interaction with nature, society, and future generations.

Accordingly, this study seeks to extract and articulate an integrated conceptual model of a “sustainable Islamic lifestyle”. This model aims to address the moral-cultural roots of the environmental crisis by institutionalizing ethical and behavioral principles across three interconnected levels: the individual-ethical, the social-institutional, and the governance-macro. Hence, it targets one of the most significant structural drivers of forced migration. The main research question is therefore: "What are the key components of a sustainable Islamic lifestyle, and how can these components—when organized into an integrated conceptual model—contribute to addressing the root causes of environmental migration?"

Conceptual Framework

A preliminary elucidation of foundational concepts is necessary. Some of these are as follows:

1. Environmental Migration

Environmental migration refers to the movement of individuals or groups of persons who, predominantly due to

sudden or progressive changes in the environment that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently, and who move either within their country or abroad. This definition, proposed by IOM (2007) and widely referenced, encompasses both forced displacement and voluntary relocation triggered by factors such as climate change, desertification, sea-level rise, and natural disasters. It includes climate migration as a subcategory but emphasizes that such movements are often internal, multi-causal, and not always strictly forced. Reports from IOM (2021) and IPCC (2022) project that hundreds of millions might be affected by 2050, particularly in developing countries.

2. Sustainable Islamic Lifestyle

A sustainable Islamic lifestyle is an integrated model of values, attitudes, and behaviors at individual, social, and governance levels, rooted in the monotheistic foundations of Islam, particularly *tawhīd*, *khilāfah*, and *amānah*. It seeks to achieve a balance between human needs and the Earth's ecological limits by emphasizing principles such as moderation, contentment, justice, and shared responsibility. This lifestyle serves as a transcendent and complementary framework to conventional

technological solutions and policy approaches in addressing environmental crises, promoting harmony with nature as part of religious duty and ethical living (Izzi, 2000).

3. Environmental Ethics

Environmental ethics encompasses the normative principles and values that guide human interaction with the natural world, stressing moral responsibility toward the preservation, respect, and non-exploitation of the environment. In the Islamic context, it critiques the modern disconnection from nature (stemming from extreme anthropocentrism and consumerism) and, drawing on the sanctity of nature as divine signs (*āyāt*), promotes responsible, restrained, and justice-oriented behavior (Foltz et al., 2003). This ethic positions environmental care as integral to faith, accountability before God, and intergenerational equity (Quran, 51:20-21; Izzi, 2000).

4. Governance

Governance in this article refers to the overarching system of administration and policymaking at national and transnational levels, encompassing legal, institutional, and policy frameworks. In the model of a sustainable Islamic lifestyle, ecological governance is responsible and rooted in principles such as intergenerational justice, the prohibition of *fasād fī al-ard* (corruption on the Earth), and the

prioritization of the long-term public interest (Quran, 5:33; 28:77). It shapes development policies, resource use, and international cooperation with consideration for environmental impacts and the rights of future generations (Nasrullah et al., 2025).

5. Intergenerational Justice

Intergenerational justice is the ethical principle ensuring equitable access to natural resources, a healthy environment, and quality of life for both present and future generations. It obliges the current generation to manage resources in a way that preserves the same opportunities for posterity. In Islamic thought, this principle is intertwined with trusteeship of the Earth and accountability to God (Ode et al., 2025), forming part of broader divine justice and making environmental protection a religious and moral imperative (Quran, 57:7; 2:29).

6. Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is a pattern of progress that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It rests on three pillars: economic, social, and environmental. From an Islamic perspective, sustainable development aligns with principles of moderation, trusteeship, and justice, defining prosperity not as unlimited growth but as equitable and ecologically compatible stewardship of the Earth.

Literature Review

The discourse on the relationship between religion and the environmental crisis began in the 1960s with Lynn White Jr.'s influential article "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis" (White, 1967), which partially attributed ecological degradation to anthropocentric interpretations in Western religious traditions. While controversial, this critique prompted reformist responses across religions, including environmental theology in Christianity, green Buddhism, and interfaith dialogues on ecological ethics. In the Islamic context, Sayyid Ḥusayn Naṣr (2001) highlighted the monotheistic worldview and the sanctity of nature as divine signs, positioning Islam as a rich source for environmental ethics capable of correcting extreme modern anthropocentrism.

Subsequent scholarship, including the edited volume *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust* (Foltz et al., 2003) and works by scholars such as (Izzi, 2000; Khalid, 1992), systematically explored Islamic concepts like *khilāfah*, *amānah*, *i'tidāl*, and *fasād fi al-arḍ* as foundations for environmental ethics. These studies demonstrated that Islam is not an obstacle to sustainable development but provides a normative framework for redefining human-nature relations,

production, consumption, and governance.

Regarding environmental migration, reports by IOM (2021) and IPCC (2022) have underscored its human dimensions as a major consequence of climate change, with projections of massive displacement. Most research has focused on technical, adaptive, and humanitarian responses. Fewer studies have addressed the role of culture and ethics in root-cause prevention (Naṣr, 2001). The present article fills this gap by proposing an integrated conceptual model based on authentic Islamic sources, operationalized across individual, social, and governance levels. Unlike prior predominantly descriptive or critical works, this model offers a practical framework applicable in Muslim-majority societies and beyond, framing environmental migration not merely as a natural-economic phenomenon but as a reflection of a deeper ethical-spiritual crisis.

This background illustrates that while interdisciplinary literature on religion, environmental ethics, and sustainable development is expanding, comprehensive conceptual models grounded in primary Islamic sources that directly target the mitigation of environmental migration remain scarce. The current study advances this field by presenting a novel, actionable contribution.

1. Ethical Foundations of the Environmental Crisis and the Return to Religion

1.1. The Environmental Moral Crisis: From Anthropocentrism to Consumerism

Any analysis of the roots of the environmental crisis that overlooks the profound philosophical and ethical transformations of the modern era remains necessarily incomplete and reductionist. Among the most significant of these transformations is the emergence and consolidation of the anthropocentric paradigm during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment eras. Although this paradigm played a crucial role—particularly in reaction to the authoritarianism of the medieval period—in reviving human dignity, rationality, and autonomy, its more extreme and secularized formulations had unintended consequences. They ultimately produced a worldview in which the human being became the absolute center of existence, and nature was reduced to a mere instrument for satisfying human needs and desires.

Within this framework, Francis Bacon's famous dictum that "knowledge is power" redefined nature as an object to be dominated, controlled, and extracted. He even employed metaphors such as "interrogating" or "torturing nature" to uncover its secrets (Bacon, 2023, p. 89). Subsequently, René Descartes, through his mind-body dualism,

reduced the material world and non-human beings to soulless machines devoid of intrinsic value—a perspective that weakened any sense of moral responsibility toward the natural world (Kureethadam, 2017). These epistemic foundations provided the philosophical scaffolding for the Industrial Revolution and the linear model of development premised on unlimited growth and intensified resource extraction.

By the twentieth century, this instrumental view of nature reached its apex in the ideology of consumerism. Within the consumerist paradigm, happiness, meaning, and even personal identity are defined not primarily through virtue, self-restraint, or social participation, but through the continuous acquisition and consumption of goods. Contemporary capitalist systems, by generating "artificial needs" and engineering desires through media and advertising, have created an accelerating cycle of production–consumption–disposal.

The consequences of this cycle include unprecedented pressure on ecosystems, the degradation of life-supporting resources, rising pollution, and global environmental instability.

Against this backdrop, environmental migration can be understood as one of the ultimate human manifestations of the moral crisis of modernity. Societies that lose their vital resources—such as water,

fertile soil, forests, and biodiversity—due to unsustainable patterns of development and consumption gradually lose their capacity to sustain livelihoods and stable habitation. As a result, they become trapped in cycles of displacement and forced migration. From this perspective, environmental migration is not merely a natural or economic phenomenon; it is a direct reflection of a moral crisis and an unsustainable lifestyle.

1.2. Returning to Religion: A Source for a Global Environmental Ethic

In response to the inadequacies of modern secular ethics in confronting the environmental crisis, recent decades have witnessed growing attention to religion as a rich reservoir of meaning and normative guidance for redefining the human–nature relationship. Even Lynn White—whose influential article initiated the critique of religious roots of the ecological crisis—concluded his work by pointing to Francis of Assisi as an alternative model of non-anthropocentric, nature-affirming religious life (White, 1967). This intellectual shift has contributed to the emergence of movements such as Christian ecological theology, Green Buddhism, ecofeminism, and interfaith dialogues on ecological ethics.

The common thread among these approaches is the effort to retrieve and revitalize those religious teachings that

emphasize the interconnectedness of all beings, the limits of human power, moral responsibility toward the Earth, and the sanctity of life. These perspectives demonstrate that religion—contrary to reductionist interpretations—can serve not merely as a driver of ecological degradation but as part of the solution, particularly in transforming worldviews, values, and modes of living.

Within this broader landscape, Islam—by virtue of its global presence and its rich scriptural corpus of ethical teachings—possesses significant potential to contribute to the development of a global environmental ethic. Islamic teachings, with their emphasis on concepts such as *mīzān* (balance), *i'tidāl* (moderation), *amānah* (human trusteeship) over the Earth, and responsibility toward future generations, offer a coherent framework for shaping a lifestyle attuned to ecological limits (Naṣr, 2001; Foltz et al., 2003). From this perspective, Islam is not an obstacle to sustainable development but a normative resource for rethinking patterns of production, consumption, and governance.

2. The Ontological Foundations of Islam: A Meaning-Generating Framework for Lifestyle

Every ethical system and every model of lifestyle rest upon a particular ontology—that is, an implicit or

explicit answer to the questions “What is the world?” and “What is the human being’s place within it?” (Nasr, 2001). The fundamental distinction between the Islamic lifestyle and dominant secular models lies not merely in a set of behavioral prescriptions but in this deeper ontological layer. Within the Islamic worldview, the human–nature relationship is situated within a *tawhīd*-based system of meaning whose two central principles are the conception of nature as *āyāt Allāh* (divine signs) and the definition of the human being as a *‘abd* (God’s servant) who is morally responsible and appointed as *khalīfah* (God’s vicegerent) on Earth (Quran, 2:30). These two principles provide the theoretical foundation for a lifestyle compatible with ecological limits.

2.1. Nature as Divine Signs and an Entity Possessing Sanctity

In the Quranic worldview, nature is not merely a collection of material objects or exploitable resources; rather, it is understood as a network of *āyāt*—signs that point beyond their material form to the attributes and wisdom of God. The Quran repeatedly refers to natural phenomena as *āyāt*. In this respect, Allah said, “*Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for those who possess intellect*” (Quran, 3:190).

In this context, the term *āyah* (signs) signifies a sign that elevates human perception beyond the surface of material phenomena and guides it toward recognition of divine qualities and cosmic order. Mountains, seas, plants, and animals thus carry epistemic meaning and intrinsic value, transforming nature into a “Book of Creation” that stands alongside the revealed scripture as an object of contemplation (Nasr, 2001).

This conception attributes to nature an inherent dignity and non-instrumental sacredness—one that prevents it from being reduced to a mere commodity within cycles of production and consumption. This meaning is reinforced in other Quranic verses, such as ones that describe all beings as engaged in praise and worship of God, e.g., “*There is nothing that does not glorify Him with praise, but you do not comprehend their glorification*” (Quran 17:44).

According to the mentioned verse, nature is neither passive nor silent; rather, it is part of the cosmic community of worship. This understanding stands in stark contrast to secular views that perceive nature as inert matter, devoid of inherent meaning or spiritual resonance. From this perspective, environmental destruction is not merely a technical or managerial failure but a moral rupture and a form of “spiritual blindness” that ignores the sacredness of creation and

constitutes ingratitude toward divine blessings (Foltz et al., 2003).

Such an understanding of nature provides a crucial ethical foundation for the Islamic lifestyle: the use of natural resources must always be accompanied by reverence, restraint, and awareness of the consequences for the whole system of creation. This principle directly influences patterns of consumption, production, and human intervention in the natural world.

2.2. The Human Being as Divine Vicegerent and Morally Responsible Servant

The second foundational pillar of the Islamic ontological framework concerns the position of the human being in relation to God and the created world. The Quran describes the human not as the absolute owner of the Earth but as God's *khalīfah*—a vicegerent or steward entrusted with responsibility. In this regard, Allah said, “*And when your Lord said to the angels: Indeed, I am placing a vicegerent on Earth*” (Quran 2:30).

The concept of *khilāfah* implies representation, accountability, and moral responsibility, and it negates any interpretation of human status grounded in domination or self-sufficiency. This position carries at least three fundamental ethical and environmental implications.

First is the principle of *amānah* (trusteeship). Within the Islamic

worldview, the Earth and its resources do not belong to humans in an absolute sense; rather, they are a divine trust that must be used in accordance with justice, wisdom, and the common good. This principle provides a crucial ethical basis for limiting excessive resource extraction and for recognizing the rights of future generations.

Second, *khilāfah* is intrinsically linked to the notion of moral testing and accountability. The Quran states that the purpose of human life is to be tried in the quality of one's deeds: “*He who created death and life to test which of you is best in conduct*” (Quran 67:2).

In this framework, *aḥsan ‘amalan* (best in conduct) is not confined to economic or technical efficiency; rather, it encompasses the moral quality of action and its social and environmental consequences. This perspective highlights human responsibility for the long-term impacts of decisions, including ecosystem degradation and conditions that lead to forced migration.

Third, Islam establishes an intrinsic connection between *‘ubūdiyyah* (servitude to God) and *‘imārah* (the cultivation of the Earth). In this regard, Allah said, “*He brought you forth from the earth and made it your habitation*” (Quran 11:61).

The task of building and cultivating the Earth is a divine mandate and an integral dimension of human servitude. In this sense, *‘imārah* does not signify

unlimited development but rather just, sustainable, and ecologically attuned flourishing. Consequently, environmental protection and the prevention of ecological destruction are not peripheral activities but essential components of Islamic religiosity and lifestyle.

Taken together, these two ontological foundations—the conception of nature as divine *āyah* and the definition of the human being as a morally responsible *‘abd* and *khalīfah*—form a meaning-generating framework in which environmental ethics is embedded at the heart of lifestyle. Within such a framework, neglecting the environment and its human consequences, including environmental migration, is not merely a managerial failure but a profound violation of human moral and religious responsibility.

3. The Conceptual Model of the Sustainable Islamic Lifestyle: An Integrated Three-Level Framework

The conceptual model proposed in this article conceptualizes the Islamic lifestyle not as a collection of isolated ethical recommendations but as a dynamic, multi-layered, and interconnected system. The model’s foundational assumption is that the environmental crisis—and its ultimate human manifestation, i.e., environmental migration—is the product of interactions among individual, social, and structural factors. Consequently, any effective response must involve

simultaneous intervention across all three levels. Each level is both a necessary condition for, and a reinforcing element of, the others; and the model’s effectiveness depends on the coherence and alignment among all levels.

3.1. The Individual–Ethical Level: Inner Transformation and the Formation of the Ecological Self

This level constitutes the cornerstone of the conceptual model of a sustainable Islamic lifestyle, for without transformation in personal attitudes, motivations, and consumption patterns, no policy or institution can achieve lasting sustainability. This level emphasizes cultivating the human being as a moral agent, responsible and accountable before God, society, and the natural world. The components of this level come as follows:

3.1.1. *I’tidāl* (Moderation) and *Qanā’ah* (Contentment) in Consumption

The Quran explicitly identified moderation as the normative principle governing consumption and said, “*Eat and drink, but do not waste; indeed, He does not like the wasteful*” (Quran 7:31).

For instance, leaving the tap running while brushing teeth or heating a room excessively when no one is present are everyday examples of *isrāf* (wastefulness), whereas turning off unnecessary lights or using only as much water as needed reflect the spirit of *qanā’ah* (contentment). *Isrāf*—exceeding genuine need—is

directly linked to increased pressure on natural resources and heightened ecological instability. In contrast, *qanā'ah* is not merely an economic virtue but an inner disposition that frees the individual from the endless cycle of manufactured desire and conspicuous consumption. Institutionalizing these two principles reorients consumption patterns toward genuine needs and directly reduces the ecological footprint of individuals and communities (Naṣr, 2001).

3.1.2. *Ṭahārah* (Purity) and Environmental Cleanliness

Prophet Muḥammad said, “Cleanliness is part of faith” (Majlisi, 1983).

This tradition extends naturally to the ecological sphere. Within this framework, preserving the cleanliness of water, soil, and air becomes an integral aspect of religious practice. Behaviors such as polluting public resources, wasting energy, and generating excessive waste constitute violations of the principles of *ṭahārah* and *amānah*. This ethical understanding, when translated into daily habits, contributes to the gradual reduction of environmental degradation (Foltz et al., 2003).

Ultimately, observing *ṭahārah* (ritual purity) in environmental practice—such as avoiding pollution and keeping natural resources clean—embodies *taqwā* (piety) in action and directly decreases human

pressure on ecosystems by preventing harm before it occurs.

3.1.3. *Shukr* (Gratitude) and *Zuhd* (Spiritual Detachment)

In Islamic thought, *shukr* entails the proper, just, and non-destructive use of divine blessings (cf. Quran, 14:7). Islamic *zuhd* does not signify world-renunciation but rather freedom from attachment to luxury and ostentatious consumption. This orientation curbs the psychological drivers of consumerism—such as status competition and social comparison—and fosters a lifestyle that is materially modest yet spiritually meaningful (cf. Quran, 7:31).

3.1.4. *Taqwā* (God-wariness) and Personal Accountability.

Belief in ultimate accountability before God constitutes the strongest internal mechanism for ethical conduct toward nature (Zaidi, 1981). In this respect, Allah said, “By your Lord, we will surely question them all about what they used to do” (Quran 15:92–93).

Taqwā, functioning as a moral radar, restrains the individual from violating the divine trust, harming creation, or infringing upon the rights of others, including future generations (Alani, 2025). This level provides the ethical foundation necessary to reduce human pressure on ecosystems and, consequently, mitigate the drivers of environmental migration.

3.2. The Social–Institutional Level: Building a Just and Resilient Society

Individual transformation, without supportive social and institutional structures, remains fragile and unsustainable. The social–institutional level of the model focuses on mechanisms that elevate environmental ethics from the personal sphere to collective norms and institutionalized practices. The components of this level come as follows:

3.2.1. Environmental *Amr bi-l-Ma'rūf* (enjoining good) and *Nahy 'an al-Munkar* (forbidding evil)

This Islamic principle serves as informal social oversight and participatory governance over shared resources. In a community where members feel a collective responsibility to prevent water waste, environmental pollution, or the destruction of natural spaces, the “tragedy of the commons” is significantly mitigated (Ostrom, 1990). Such mechanisms strengthen social capital and reduce the financial and administrative burden of formal monitoring and enforcement of law.

For example, in water-scarce rural or peri-urban communities, *amr bi-l-ma'rūf* (enjoining the good) and *nahy 'an al-munkar* (forbidding the evil) can help prevent environmental migration by shaping responsible water use. If a farmer uses wasteful flood irrigation

while groundwater is declining, a neighbor or local religious leader may gently remind him that such excess conflicts with the Islamic values of *iṣlāḥ* (reform) and *rifq* (kindness); this is *nahy 'an al-munkar*. On the other hand, when a household practices rainwater harvesting or repairs leaks and encourages others to do the same, this is *amr bi-l-ma'rūf*. Repeated examples of discouraging waste and promoting conservation gradually establish shared community norms, protect local livelihoods, lessen the need for costly external enforcement, and reduce one of the main causes of forced displacement.

3.2.2. Green Endowment and Charity Institutions.

Waqf (endowment), as a historic institution in Islamic civilization, possesses immense potential for the long-term protection of natural resources. Endowing forests, springs, sustainable agricultural lands, or renewable-energy projects can remove natural capital from the logic of short-term profit and anchor it within the realm of enduring public benefit. Green *ṣadaqah jāriyah* (continuous charity) likewise enables community-based financing for ecological restoration projects and enhances local community resilience (cf. Quran, 2:261).

3.2.3. An Ethically Grounded, Low-Consumption Economy

Islamic economic principles—such as the prohibition of *ribā* (usury), the ban on

ihtikār (hoarding), and the emphasis on fairness, partnership, and interest-free lending—are structurally incompatible with artificial, consumption-driven growth models. These principles support resilient local economies, shorter supply chains, and production based on genuine need, in accordance with the Quranic command to "prosper the earth" (cf. Quran, 11:61). Such an economic orientation reduces dependence on resource-intensive global markets and strengthens livelihood security.

3.2.4. Distributive Justice and Support for the Vulnerable

The systems of *zakat* (a fixed religious levy on wealth) and *infāq* (spending voluntarily in God's path) create a natural network of social support that reduces the vulnerability of the poor and marginalized to environmental shocks. Since these groups are the first to suffer from climate change and ecological degradation, their economic empowerment plays a direct role in reducing forced migration, in accordance with the Quranic principle that *zakat* is prescribed for the needy and those in displacement (cf. Quran, 9:60).

3.3. The Governance–Macro Level: Establishing Responsible Ecological Governance

The governance level provides the legal, policy, and institutional frameworks necessary for sustaining the individual and social dimensions of the model. It plays a decisive role at both national and

transnational scales. The components of this level come as follows:

3.3.1. Integrating Reverence for Āyāt (Divine Signs in Nature) into Development Policy: From Ethical Principle to Assessment Criterion

Every development project must be evaluated through an environmental and social impact assessment grounded in Islamic ethical principles. Such an assessment considers the project's implications for nature, distributive justice, local livelihoods, and the rights of future generations. Within this framework, long-term public welfare takes precedence over short-term private gain, in accordance with the Quranic understanding of nature as *āyāt Allāh* (divine signs) (cf. Quran, 51:20-21; Nasrullah et al., 2025).

3.3.2. Preventing Corruption in Earth and Enforcing Environmental Justice

The Quranic concept of *ifsād fī al-arḍ* (Quran 2:205; 28:77) provides a legal-ethical foundation for criminalizing systematic environmental destruction (Nasrullah et al., 2025). Firm action against deliberate pollution, illegal deforestation, and land grabbing constitutes part of the state's duty to safeguard the public's right to a healthy environment.

3.3.3. Intergenerational Justice and Future-Oriented Governance

An Islamic government, as the trustee of future generations, is obligated to

preserve natural capital and invest in clean energy, low-carbon technologies, and long-term planning. This principle directly contributes to reducing environmental risks and mitigating future waves of ecological displacement and migration, in accordance with the Quranic principle that believers are "trustees" of what God has provided (cf. Quran, 57:7).

3.3.4. International Cooperation Based on Shared but Differentiated Responsibility

Islam's emphasis on the unity of humankind— "*O humankind, we created you from a male and female...*" (Quran 49:13)— provides an ethical basis for equitable environmental diplomacy. Recognizing the historical responsibility of industrialized nations and supporting vulnerable countries through technology transfer and climate finance are essential conditions for curbing environmental migration on a global scale (Foltz et al., 2003).

4. Applying the Conceptual Model of the Sustainable Islamic Lifestyle to Mitigate the Environmental Migration Crisis: From Theory to Practice

The crisis of environmental migration results from a multilayered causal chain that begins with ecosystem degradation, intensifies through the erosion of local livelihoods and rising social vulnerability, and ultimately culminates in the forced displacement

of populations. Any effective strategy for addressing this crisis must therefore intervene at multiple points along this chain. The three-level model derived from the Islamic lifestyle (individual, social, and governance) provides a framework for simultaneous intervention across the various stages of the crisis cycle, drawing on ethical principles, social institutions, and justice-oriented principles.

4.1. The Prevention Stage: Addressing the Environmental Roots of Migration

In the pre-crisis stage—before environmental degradation reaches critical thresholds—principles such as moderation, contentment, and the avoidance of *isrāf* (wasteful expenditure) at the individual level, together with the prohibition of *ifsād fī al-arḍ* at the governance level, play a decisive role in reducing pressure on natural resources. Research consistently shows that unsustainable consumption patterns are among the most significant indirect drivers of climate change and ecological degradation. Within the Islamic lifestyle framework, consumption is not a tool for identity construction but an ethical and responsible act that must remain within the boundaries of genuine need and collective welfare (cf. Quran, 7:31).

At the governance level, translating these individual ethics into public

policy—such as restricting destructive extractive projects, protecting common resources, and supporting sustainable agriculture—can prevent the emergence of “environmental hotspots” that serve as primary triggers of migration. In other words, this stage reduces the likelihood of crisis and prevents forced migration from becoming the last remaining survival strategy (Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2020).

4.2. The Vulnerability-Reduction Stage: Enhancing the Resilience of Origin Communities

Even when natural hazards are unavoidable, migration is not an inevitable outcome of environmental crisis. Studies indicate that social and economic vulnerability plays a more decisive role than the hazard itself in shaping migration decisions. At this stage, the social components of the Islamic lifestyle—particularly distributive justice, resilient local economies, and networks of mutual support—can significantly strengthen community adaptive capacity.

Institutions such as *zakāt*, *infāq*, and *waqf*, functioning as indigenous mechanisms of wealth redistribution, operate similarly to “social safety networks” recognized in sustainable development literature as key factors in reducing vulnerability. By supporting local livelihoods, preventing household economic collapse, and reducing

inequality, these institutions enable populations to remain in their homelands—even amid environmental tensions (cf. Quran, 59:7).

4.3. Crisis Management Stage: Preventing the Transformation of Natural Disasters into Migration Crises

When major environmental disasters occur, the speed and quality of social response determine whether a natural hazard escalates into a large-scale humanitarian and migratory crisis. Global experience shows that community-based responses are often faster, more targeted, and more legitimate than highly centralized state interventions.

In this context, institutions such as *waqf* and *ṣadaqāt khadrā'* (“green alms” or alms paid from impure properties), combined with the social capital generated by religious and ethical solidarity, enable decentralized mobilization of resources, temporary shelter, and livelihood support for affected populations (Islamic Relief Worldwide, 2025). Likewise, concepts such as *amr bi-l-ma'rūf* (enjoining good) and *nahy 'an al-munkar* (forbidding evil) can serve as mechanisms of social oversight to prevent hoarding, the exploitation of crises, and the inequitable distribution of aid. Such an approach significantly reduces the likelihood of involuntary and hasty migration.

4.4. Reconstruction and Resettlement Stage: Breaking the Cycle of Degradation and Displacement

The reconstruction phase is one of the most sensitive points in the environmental migration cycle. Unsustainable reconstruction can produce settlements that remain vulnerable to future hazards, thereby reproducing the vicious cycle of “degradation–displacement–unsustainable resettlement.” At this stage, Islamic principles of intergenerational justice, trusteeship, and future-oriented governance play a strategic role (Ghorbanzadeh & Soleimani, 2024).

Reconstruction grounded in these principles requires simultaneous attention to the region’s ecological capacity, sustainable livelihoods, and the dignity of displaced populations. Such an approach—aligned with the goals of sustainable development—enables the safe return of affected communities or their sustainable resettlement and prevents the recurrence of crises for future generations.

Taken together, this conceptual model demonstrates that the Islamic lifestyle is not merely an ethical reaction to crisis but a structural strategy for cultivating deep socio-ecological resilience (Ghorbanzadeh & Soleimani, 2024). This resilience is rooted not only in technical infrastructure but also in ethics, social capital, and institutional justice, and it can effectively disrupt the cycles that

generate environmental migration across multiple levels.

Conclusion

The crisis of environmental migration—one of the most urgent human consequences of ecological degradation—can be understood as a profound manifestation of the broader civilizational crisis of the modern age. This civilizational crisis, in turn, serves as a major driver of environmental displacement. Its roots lie not merely in climate change or resource scarcity, but in the moral rupture that has distanced modern humanity from the Earth, reducing nature to an object of limitless exploitation. Theoretical and empirical evidence demonstrates that technical, economic, and managerial policies—although indispensable—are insufficient on their own to contain the complex dynamics that lead to environmental migration. Thus, rethinking values, worldviews, and lifestyles emerges as a foundational layer of any meaningful response to this crisis.

Drawing on the ontological and ethical foundations of Islam, this article has shown that religion can function not only as a source of personal inspiration but also as a meaning-generating framework for structuring relationships among human beings, society, and the natural world. The conceptual model of a sustainable Islamic lifestyle developed in this study offers an integrated, three-level

framework (individual, social, and governance) capable of intervening across the various stages of the causal chain of environmental migration—from prevention and vulnerability reduction to crisis management and reconstruction.

Reviving concepts such as nature as *āyāt Allāh* (divine signs), the human being as divine *khalifah* (vicegerent) and *amīn* (trustee), moderation and contentment in consumption, intergenerational justice, and the prohibition of *ifsād fī al-ard* (corruption on Earth) demonstrates that environmental protection, within this framework, is not an optional preference or a short-term expediency but an intrinsic dimension of ethics, worship, and social responsibility. Such a perspective reduces structural pressure on natural resources, strengthens social capital, and enhances the resilience of local communities—thereby addressing one of the most significant drivers of forced migration at its roots.

Theoretically, the findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on the intersection of religion, environmental ethics, and sustainable development, illustrating that religious traditions—particularly traditions of Islam—can play an active role alongside modern scientific knowledge in shaping alternative development paradigms. Practically, the model offers a context-sensitive yet

globally relevant framework for policymaking, education, and social action in Muslim societies and beyond.

Ultimately, a sustainable future belongs to societies capable of integrating modern instrumental rationality with ethical and spiritual wisdom. The Islamic lifestyle—when understood and implemented dynamically, free from reductionism—can meaningfully contribute to the formation of a civilization in which living on Earth is not achieved at the cost of its destruction, but through just and harmonious coexistence with all creation.

Acknowledgment

I am sincerely grateful to all those who assisted me during the course of writing my research work. I wish them success in their endeavors.

Funding

This research received no financial support from any organization, constituting the authors' intellectual endeavor exclusively.

Author Contributions

Research conceptualization, data collection, content analysis, and primary composition were undertaken by the corresponding author. The co-authors contributed supplementary references and critical revisions. All three authors participated in revisions and approved the final version.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

Negative AI Statement

The author(s) declare that no AI tools or services were used or heavily applied during the preparation of this work.

OPEN ACCESS

©2025 The author(s). This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License, which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made. The images or other third-party material in this article are included in the article's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the article's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder. To view a copy of this license, visit:

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

References

- The Holy Quran.
- Alani, U. A. M. (2025). Environmental Sustainability in the Prophetic Sunnah: A foresight perspective. *Journal of King Abdulaziz University: Islamic Economics*, 38(3), 19–36. <https://doi.org/10.64064/1658-4244.1010>
- Bacon, F. (2000). *The New Organon* (L. Jardine & M. Silverthorne, Eds.; M. Silverthorne, Trans.). Cambridge University Press.
- Foltz, R. C., Denny, F. M., & Baharuddin, A. (Eds.). (2003). *Islam and Ecology: A Bestowed Trust*. Harvard University Press.
- Ghorbanzadeh, M., & Soleimani, S. (2024). Vākāvī-ye Mo'allefehā-ye 'Edālat-e Beyn-e Naslī dar Hoqūq-e Beyn al-Melal va Farhang-e Razavī [Analyzing the Components of Intergenerational Justice in International Law and Razavi Culture]. *Journal of Razavi Culture*, 12(48), 221–256. <https://doi.org/10.22034/farzv.2024.405492.1892>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*. (Working Group II Contribution to the Sixth Assessment Report). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009325844>
- International Organization for Migration (IOM). (2021). *World Migration Report 2022*. <https://doi.org/10.18356/9789292680763>
- Islamic Relief Worldwide. (2020). *Climate Change and Environmental Degradation: A Muslim Response*. Islamic Relief Academy.
- Izzi Dien, M. (2000). *The Environmental Dimensions of Islam*. Lutterworth Press
- Khalid, F., & O'Brien, J. (Eds.). (1992). *Islam and Ecology*. Cassell
- Kureethadam, J. I. (2017). *The Philosophical Roots of the Ecological Crisis: Descartes and the Modern Worldview*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Majlisi, M. B. (1983). *Biḥār al-Anwār* [Seas of Lights] (Vol. 59, p. 291). Dar Ihya al-Turath al-Arabi.
- Naṣr, S. H. (2001). *Religion and the Order of Nature* (E. Raḥmatī, Trans.). Sohrawardi Research and Publication Office.
- Nasrullah, A. C., Fikri, H. M., Alfindo, G. H., & YUSDANI, Y. (2025). Green Maqashid: Reconstructing the Purpose of Islamic Law to Face the Global Ecological Crisis. *Unisia*, 43(2). <https://doi.org/10.20885/unisia.vol43.iss2.art13>
- Ode, H., Zulaekah, Z., & Zahro, A. (2025). Green Maqasid and Islamic Ethical Foundations for Sustainable Economic Development. *Journal Islamic Economic Minangkabau*, 3(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.70177/jiem.v3i1.2586>
- Ostrom, E. (1993). *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge University Press.
- White, Lynn. (1967). The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis. *Science*, 155(3767), 1203–1207. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.155.3767.1203>
- Zaidi, I. H. (1981). On the Ethics of Man's Interaction with the Environment: An Islamic Approach. *Environmental Ethics*, 3(1), 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.5840/enviroethics19813132>

AUTHOR BIOSKETCHES

Javad Salemi. *Department of Private Law, Faculty of Law, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.*

✓ Email: jawadsalemi@yahoo.com

✓ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-0351-6821>

Asghar Arabiyan. *Department of Private Law, Faculty of Law, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.*

✓ Email: a.rabian42@gmail.com

✓ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1555-7253>

Ali Zare. *Department of Private Law, Faculty of Law, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.*

✓ Email: dr.alizare@gmail.com

✓ ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8957-1376>

CITE THIS ARTICLE

Salemi, J., Arabiyan, A., & Zare, A. (2025). A Study on the Impacts of Islamic Lifestyle on Reducing Environmental Migration. *International Multidisciplinary Journal of Pure Life (IMJPL)*, 12(44), 69-88.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22034/imjpl.2025.12060>

URL: http://p-l.journals.miu.ac.ir/article_12060.html