

AIR POLLUTION MANAGEMENT: HARMONIZING ENVIRONMENTAL AND ISLAMIC VIEWPOINT

1. Dr. Abdul Manan Cheema

PhD Islamic studies, University of Sargodha

Email: abdulmanan522@gmail.com

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5529-9634>

Muhammad Fiaz Majeed

Lecturer

Lahore Business School

The University of Lahore

fiaz.majeed@lbs.uol.edu.pk

Dr. Ayesha Iftikhar

Assistant Professor, Lahore Business school, The University of Lahore

Ayesha.iftikhar@lbs.uol.edu.pk

Abstract:

Air pollution is a global concern of the modern scientific world. It is a challenge, affecting the health of people worldwide. Industries, power stations, atomic power plants, brick kilns and toxic wastes of industries are polluting atmosphere. Emission of different types of harmful gases (carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, lead) is causing dangerous diseases. It is a sad fact that industries, brick kilns and power plants are running without environmental facilities (Treatment plants). Air is the natural blessing of Allah that is basic source of life. Life cannot be continued without oxygen (O₂) even a moment. Research reports show that air pollution is on rise in the world as well as Pakistan. The management of air pollution requires not only scientific and technological solutions but also a religious and ethical framework. Islam is a complete code of life that offers a comprehensive approach to environmental management. Islamic concept of environment harmonizes environmental sciences with ethical responsibilities, providing a unique and holistic viewpoint on environment. No doubt, Air pollution has become a big global concern, affecting human health, ecosystems, and the natural environment. Effective management is essential to mitigate its effects. This article discovers the integration of environmental sciences with Islamic perspectives to produce a holistic attitude to air pollution management. By proving both modern scientific strategies and religious instructions, we aim to propose an incorporated framework for addressing air pollution that esteems both ecological and Islamic dimensions.

Key Words: Islam, Air Pollution, management, Sources Impacts, Plantation.

Introduction

Air is a vital component of the survival of every living thing on Earth planet. A rise in the industrialization and the misuse of natural resources is affecting the natural environment. Air pollution is a severe threat to human life, health, biodiversity, and the climate. It is stated that ninety percent population of the world takes breath in polluted air, which results in more than seven million deaths per year.¹ Air pollution is mostly caused by the combination of several complex pollutants (toxic gases), which is termed as particulate matter (PM).² The major reason of air pollution is the combustion of fossil fuels to meet the energy requirements. The excessive emission of greenhouse gases affects human health. Islam is an eco-friendly religion and introduces durable environmental ideologies. Islam offers comprehensive management in every walk of human life. Islamic strategies for the prevention of air pollution are very unique, sustainable, lasting and universal. But Islamic principles of cleanliness are seldom applied in Muslim societies today. Modern environmental science has prepared various strategies to contest air pollution, focusing on decreasing emissions of toxic gases, monitoring air quality, encouraging plantation and stimulating sustainable practices. However, these strategies often lack religious thoughts that can play a central role in their acceptance and implementation. Islamic viewpoint on protection of the Earth and the environmental sciences offer valuable insights into air pollution abatement. By incorporating Islamic principles with scientific approaches, we can develop more sustainable and effective air pollution management strategies.

Literature Review

Many scholars and authors have done praiseworthy research work on environmental protection. “A perspective of environmental pollution”³ is a conspicuous book on environmental protection which sheds light on environmental pollution’s harmful impact on human life and its prevention. ‘Izz al-Dīn, Mū’īl Yūsuf’s book “The environmental dimensions of Islam”⁴ provides significant information about environmental conservation in the light of Islamic experiences. Additionally, it presents a brief overview of the impact of the degraded environment on human life. It is a very informative research on environmental conservation. “Islam and the Environment”⁵ is a prominent book authored by A. R. Agwan. “Natural Resources and Their Use: In Islamic and Scientific Perspectives”⁶ is a thought provoking book that provides comprehensive guidelines about proper management of natural resources in the light of modern science and Islamic insights. The research paper titled “Islam and environmental ethics”⁷ aims to present an Islamic balancing attitude to the environmental preservation. Research paper “The Role of Plantation in Controlling Environmental Pollution: An Islamic Perspective”⁸ discusses ecological protection strategies. Moreover, it describes the impact of environmental change on human life and its Islamic solution. “Recent Rise of Climate Change and Islamic Perspectives: A Research Review”⁹ is a valuable work on the subject of the climate change and its harmful impact. It provides information about environmental institutions and environmental conferences. Furthermore, the paper analyzes the role of Islamic guidelines to mitigate climate change.

No doubt, in above mentioned research works, all of the authors and scholars have done their best to mention significance of environmental conservation. However, there is found specific need to work on management of air pollution in Islamic perspective. Therefore, title “Air Pollution Management: Harmonizing Environmental and Islamic Viewpoint” has been selected.

Research Methodology

In this research paper, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies have been adopted. It has been tried to use Primary sources. However, some authentic secondary references have also been consulted. Research material has been collected from virtual libraries, environmental dictionaries, and Encyclopedias. Discussions with experts have also been done. In the contemporary era, the price of air pollution is being paid through health issues, leading to the high death rate. Therefore, international attention has been focused on the environmental sustainability. The efforts were done to bring forth the Islamic viewpoint that supports environmental management. Islam introduces ecological ethics for sustainable development and pollution free environment. Various diagrams were designed to elaborate the issue and its solution. The translation of Quranic texts is taken from Mufti Taqi Usmani’s English translation¹⁰ of Holy Quran.

Significance of Air

Air is a compulsory component of Earth's atmosphere and plays a vigorous role in sustaining life and various ecological processes. It is an essential source of human life. It comprises of various gases. Oxygen is also part of it. A human being cannot survive a moment without oxygen. Oxygen is essential for the survival of living organisms on Earth. Humans and animals inhale oxygen to sustain respiration. The main source of oxygen is the plantation but modern man is clearing the trees. In this way there is a severe shortage of oxygen happens in the atmosphere.

11• A person inhales almost 16 kg of air every day.

• We need 10 times more air than water and food.

• The weight of the air creates atmospheric pressure.

• An atmosphere with less than 16% oxygen can be life-threatening.

• Air can be contaminated with some gases (such as carbon monoxide), smoke

• Air pollution kills 800 people every hour or 13 every minute, accounting

the amount of people who die from malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS combine

Table 1: Significance of Air

Air is mixture of numerous gases containing the Earth's atmosphere. Air is one of the four important elements with which God has produced the universe. The air in Earth's atmosphere is consisted of approximately 78 % nitrogen and 21 % oxygen. Air also has small amounts of some other gases (carbon dioxide, argon, methane, water, neon, hydrogen). The carbon dioxide exists in air is indispensable for the green plantation to produce their own food by the procedure of photosynthesis.

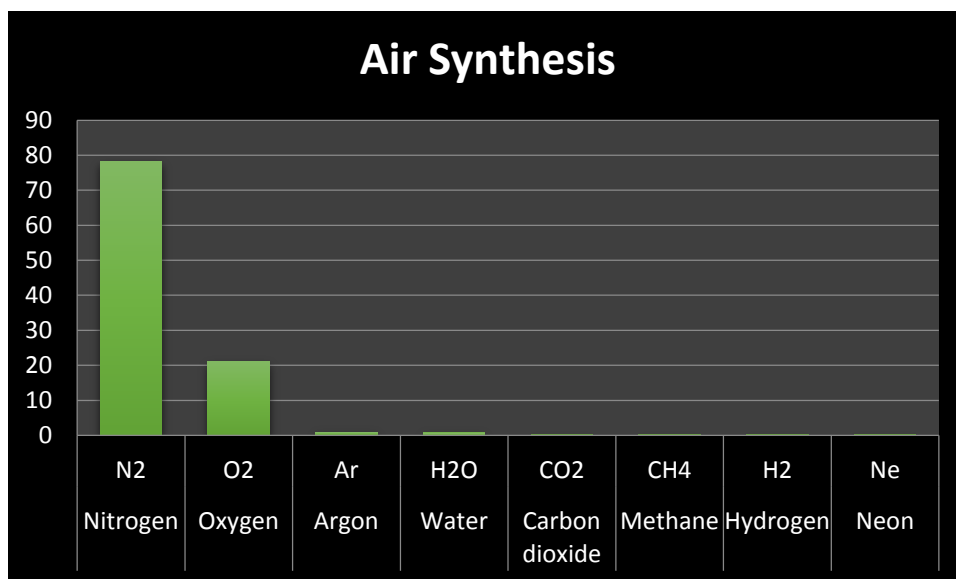


Chart 1: Air Synthesis¹²

The above table of air synthesis indicates that atmosphere is a mixture of different gases and contains the highest amount of nitrogen gas while the second most abundant gas is oxygen which runs the wheel and system of human life. Air is an important natural resource that is found between heaven and earth. The air is found between the earth and the sky. Air is combination of several gases containing the Earth's atmosphere. The combination comprises a group of gases. It is one of the four fundamental elements (air, water, soil, and fire) with which Allah Almighty has created the entire universe.

In this regard, Al-Jahiz expresses:

“The earth is one of the four corners, which are water, earth, air and fire.”¹³

Like the universe, air is a fundamental element in the structure of the human body. According to Imam Ibn al-Qayyim:

“The human body consists of soil, water and air.”¹⁴

The wind was considered sacred in ancient times and religions. In the Vedic period, the wind was known as “Devta” while it was worshiped in ancient India.¹⁵ Parsis establish celebrations in honor of air and other natural blessings and pay homage to these natural objects but it is a wonder and amazement that they ignore Allah Almighty who is the real creator of all these natural objects.

A. R. Agwan states:

“They revere and remember fire, water, the animal and the vegetable kingdoms, the earth, the minerals and metals in the earth and the air in their ceremonies.”¹⁶

Air has been also given much importance in Islamic literature. Thus, it is mentioned in several Quranic verses.

It is stated in Holy Quran:

”وَهُوَ الَّذِي يُرْسِلُ الرِّيحَ بُشْرًا بَيْنَ يَدَيْ رَحْمَتِهِ ، حَتَّىٰ إِذَا أَقْلَتِ سَحَابًا ثِقَالًا سُفِّنَهُ لِبَدٍ مَّيِّتٍ فَأَنْزَلْنَا بِهِ الْمَاءَ فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ مِنْ كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ ، كَذَٰلِكَ نُخْرِجُ الْمَوْتَىٰ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَذَكَّرُونَ۔“¹⁷

“He is the One who sends the winds carrying good news before His blessings, until when they lift up the heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land. Then, there We pour down water. Then, We bring forth with it all sorts of fruits. In similar way, We will bring forth all the dead. (All this is being explained to you), so that you may learn a lesson.”

The above Quranic verse indicates that winds are as good news. According to modern science, the natural system of clouds and winds is very organized and coherent. Birds do not have the power to fly without air. Air is a powerful natural resource which has superiority over many other natural resources in terms of strength. According to tradition of Holy prophet (SAW), the wind is a more powerful natural resource than mountains, iron, fire and water.¹⁸ Therefore, there are many economic benefits associated with wind. Energy can be generated through wind without disturbing environment. The main advantage of wind energy is that it does not spread toxic substances into the atmosphere. In the West, wind (air) is becoming a major source of energy. In California, 15,000 wind turbines generate 2.5 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually.¹⁹ No doubt, wind energy is a renewable energy resource and it is an environment friendly energy.

Air Pollution: Sources and Impacts

Air pollution, mainly caused by industrial actions, vehicular emissions, and the use of fossil fuels, poses significant threats to human life and the surroundings. It leads to breathing diseases, cardiovascular harms, and contributes to weather change. Advancement in science and technology has led to luxurious lifestyles as well as environmental pollution, which is a wake-up call for the survival of all creatures. Modern man has set up factories to manufacture goods for his comfort and convenience. But he has not installed treatment filters on smoke chimneys. No doubt, it is human being who is accountable for causing disorder/imbalance/ in the ecological system of Earth. The number of particulate matter (PM) pollutants is alarming. The sad fact is that air pollution in Pakistan is much higher than the world standard.

Air pollution ascends from both natural and anthropogenic sources. Main pollutants include particulate matter (PM), Carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrogen oxides, sulfur dioxide (SO₂), carbon monoxide (CO), greenhouse gases and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). These pollutants are emitted from industries, transportation, agricultural activities, and wildfires.

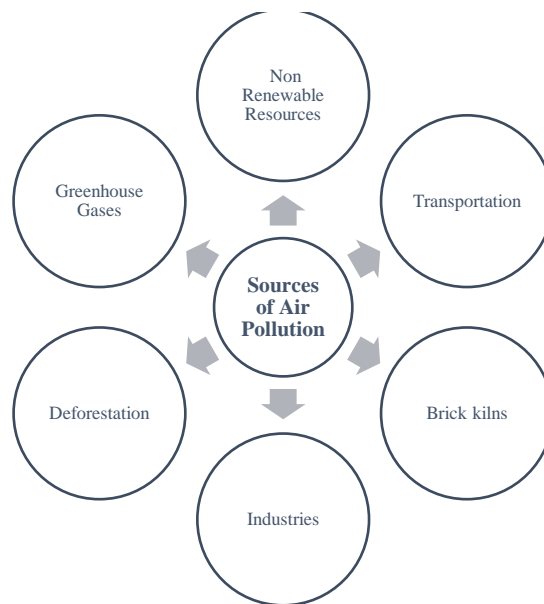


Diagram 1: Main Sources of Air Pollution

Man is responsible for the instabilities in the atmosphere of the Earth. In modern times, air pollution management is becoming complicated due to the industrial revolution. The lack of interest in proper disposing of industrial wastes is a main source of air pollution. The industry emits approximately 20,000 million tons of waste, of which 10% is hazardous substances. Global warming is growing due to greenhouse gases (chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and carbon dioxide. Billions worth of sprays are used worldwide annually. Emission of smoke in the atmosphere is a major cause of air pollution.

Gardeep Raj notes:

“Smoke is an aerosol of minute solid or liquid particles (most less than 1 micron in diameter) formed by the incomplete combustion of a fuel. In air pollution it is mainly associated with the burning of coal.”²⁰

Air pollution arises due to smoke of transportation, including airplanes and warplanes. Exhausting fumes from rickshaws, motorbikes, cars, buses and trucks are higher than required limits. Industrial fumes are polluting atmosphere badly in every corner of country.

Fazal Karim Khan writes:

“The vehicles like automobiles, trucks, rickshaws and other transport running by internal combustion engines are responsible for carbon monoxide, hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, and lead pollution.”²¹

Brick Kiln without zigzag technology emits toxic smoke in the atmosphere. Usage of low-grade fuels in brick kilns produces dense black soot and other kinds of toxic gases. Smoke in the atmosphere combines with pollution to form smog. It contains various poisonous elements. The deforestation is also main source of air pollution and climate change. Pakistan is misplacing 42,000 hectares of green area annually. In recent times, it is one of the low forest covered states.

The impacts of atmospheric pollution are far-reaching. Health issues include respiratory diseases, cardiovascular problems, and premature losses. Ecological consequences involve acid rain, and harm to human life as well as wildlife. Climate change is intensified by greenhouse gases.

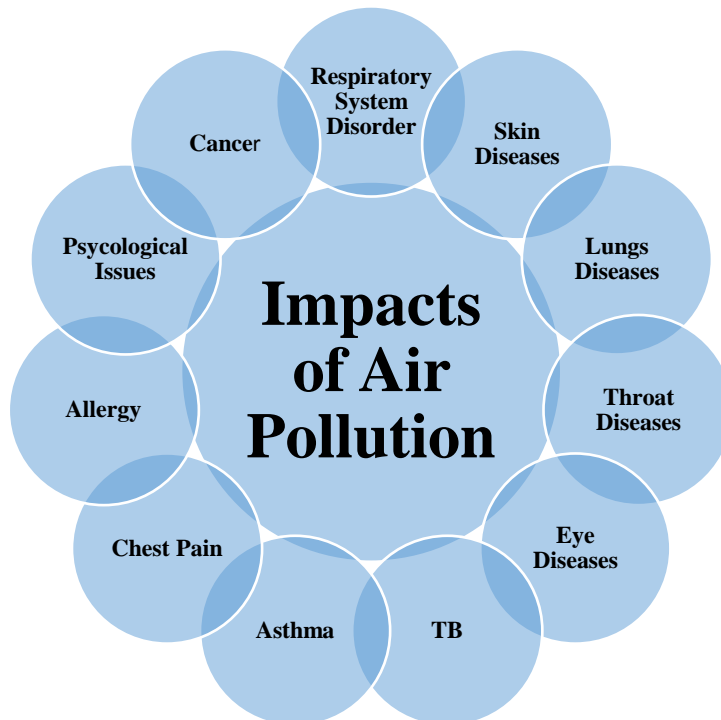


Diagram 2: Impacts of Air Pollution

Air pollution is having a devastating effect on human health. Breathing in polluted air can quickly affect the human respiratory system. Children under the age of five are more affected and die in early age. Ninety percent of diseases are due to living in polluted environment. Air pollution exterminates millions of the people at global level every year. The health impacts of air pollution ranges from skin and eyes frustration to severe neurological diseases.

Barasa notes:

“Overall, the bulk of the world’s GHGs emissions come from electricity generation, manufacturing, domestic sources, transportation, livestock production where Methane is the dominating greenhouse gas and other forms of energy production and consumption. Climate change is a serious disaster with multi-sectoral impacts in many economies. Amongst these comprise impacts on: agricultural production systems; global disease vectors; epidemiological characteristics of diseases; extreme weather conditions such as floods, droughts, tropical storms and elevated temperatures.”²²

Children's IQ level may decline due to breathing in polluted air.²³ Rise of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere is causing global warming. Respiratory diseases, asthma, TB, chest pain, cold fatal diseases such blood pressure, hepatitis, skin diseases, eye diseases, allergies and cancer are on the rise due to air degradation. Carbon monoxide in the atmosphere and smoke from industrial units combine with fog to form a mixture that accumulates on the eyes, nose, throat and lungs. Presence of particulate matter (PM) in air not only causing poor visibility but also leading to increased cases of asthma, allergy and lungs diseases

Kampa notes:

“Air pollution has both acute and chronic effects on human health, affecting a number of different systems and organs. It

ranges from minor upper respiratory irritation to chronic respiratory and heart disease, lung cancer, acute respiratory infections in children and chronic bronchitis in adults, aggravating pre-existing heart and lung disease, or asthmatic attacks.”²⁴

The main source of allergies/skin diseases is spending time in dust particles. Man's existence is in danger because of air pollution. Due to polluted air, the survival of man is at stake. The main cause of climate change is also air pollution. Use of fossil fuels for energy production is considered main source of air pollutants.

Patz notes:

“Fossil fuels combustion is common source of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.”²⁵

Polluted air harms not only humans but also animals, plants and everything in nature. It affects human body and causes severe breathing difficulties, which can lead to death in some cases. It harms climate also. Global warming is increasing.

Nathanson writes:

“One of the most significant effects of air pollution is on climate change, particularly global warming. As a result of the growing worldwide consumption of fossil fuels, carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere have increased steadily since 1900, and the rate of increase is accelerating. It has been estimated that if carbon dioxide levels are not reduced, average global air temperatures may rise another 4 °C (7.2 °F) by the end of the 21st century.”²⁶

Ozone is constantly being harmed by air pollutants in the atmosphere. Industry person is polluting air in the name of development and prosperity but it cannot be called sustainable development. It is wonder that Pandemic Covid-19 lockdown had played constructive role in ozone layer recovery. Air pollution is a global issue that requires a multifaceted approach that includes controlling measures, scientific innovations, and public awareness. Campaign on Social media, electronic media and print media can play a solid role in addressing this issue.

International Role

In the present era, air pollution is a global challenge. United Nation Organization has focused on management of air pollution. International Clean Air Day is celebrated on 8th October every year to provide awareness about significance and protection of air. The most dangerous type of environmental pollution is air pollution. Global environmental conferences are held to address the environmental degradation issue. UN seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) include the prevention of environmental pollution.

Islamic Viewpoint

Modern man seems to be trying to hold his breath with his own hands. Man's negative activities are disturbing the natural balance of Earth. Islam provides eco-principles for the protection of natural environment.

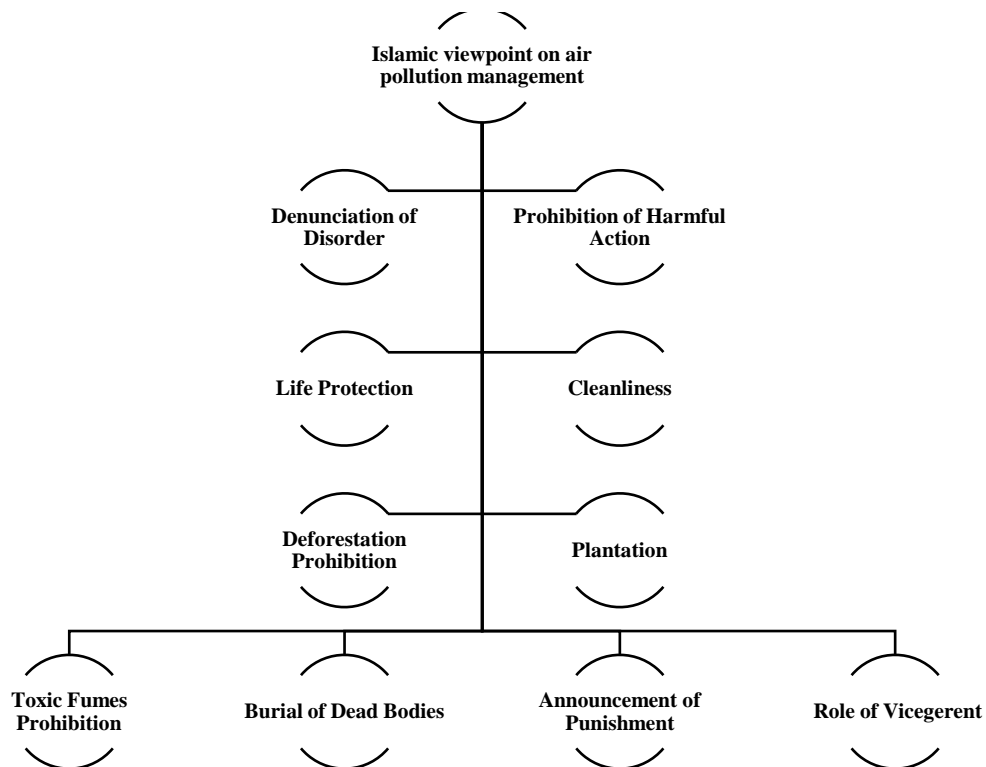


Diagram3: Islamic Viewpoint on air pollution management

Man is not authorized to use his powers and inclinations without the guidance of God Almighty. Islamic viewpoint on management of air pollution is as follows:

Denunciation of Pollution

Air pollution is the source of imbalance, disorder, and disturbance on earth. In fact, this issue is the result of negative activities of modern man in the race of economic prosperity. Various verses of the Holy Qur'an prove that disorder/imbalance in the land and sea is the cost of human activities. Pollution (disorder/disturbance) is denounced in holy texts of Holy Quran.

It is stated in Holy Quran:

"ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ
يَرْجِعُونَ" ²⁷

“Calamities have appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of the people have earned, so that He (Allah) makes them taste some of what they did, in order that they may return (to the right way).”

The above Quranic verse illustrates that Corruption/disturbance on planet Earth has been denounced and it happens due to destructive activities.

In this regard, Imam Ibn-e- Kathire explains as under:

The disturbance of land and sea is that human being suffers from shortage of fruits, crops because of his own wrong deeds, sins and violations of divine commands.²⁸

Prohibition of Harmful Action

The Holy Prophet (SAW) prohibited every harmful action to human health (pollution, smoke etc.).Lighting a lamp unnecessarily may cause smoke in the air so it is prohibited by Holy

prophet (SAW). Sources of smoke, radioactive rays and toxic gases which are harmful to human health, are prohibited. The means (factories and transportation) of smoke are also included in this prohibition.

Holy Prophet (SAW) states:

“When the wings of the night (spread) or it is night, restrain your children (from going out), for the Satan is abroad at that time, and when a part of the night is passed, free them and shut the doors, making mention of God's name, for the Satan does not open a closed door; and tighten the (mouths of water skins and mention the name of Allah, cover your utensils and mention the name of Allah even though you should just put something on them, and extinguish your lamps.”²⁹

Above tradition indicates that the use of unnecessary energy is unlawful in Islam, especially that which causes pollution/smoke/smog in the atmosphere.

Life Protection

Air is the most important source of life. Therefore, protection of clean air is actually protection of life. Human life is a blessing of Allah Almighty and life of every human is precious. Emission of toxic fumes into human populations is actually killing and destroying human life. According to the teachings of the Qur'an, killing one person is tantamount to killing the whole of humanity. Consequence of mischief or imbalance on land is death of common people. So if a person is killed by the effects of a poisonous smoke, then his killer and culprit is a smoke emitting manufacturer. It is an immoral and illegal activity. Legal action against such crimes can reduce air pollution.

It is stated in Holy Quran:

”مَنْ قَتَلَ نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا. وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا. وَلَقَدْ جَاءَتْهُمْ رُسُلُنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ. ثُمَّ إِنَّ كَثِيرًا مِّنْهُمْ بَعَدَ ذَلِكَ فِي الْأَرْضِ لَمُسْرِفُونَ.“³⁰

“Whoever kills a person not in retaliation for a person killed, nor (as a punishment) for spreading disorder on the earth, is as if he has killed the whole of humankind, and whoever saves the life of a person is as if he has saved the life of the whole of humankind.”

The above text of Holy Quran indicates that who kills anybody unjustly as if he has killed all the people of world where as who tried to save life of one person is as if he saves life of entire mankind. The security of human life depends on the principle that respect for the lives of other human beings should be present in the heart and mind of every human being. The person who kills someone unjustly not only oppresses one person but also proves that his heart is devoid of respect for human life and empathy, therefore he is the enemy of all humanity, because if this attitude and attribute found in all individuals, the whole of mankind would be annihilated. On the contrary, the person who helps in the establishment of human life is in fact he is a supporter of humanity, because it contains the attribute on which the survival of humanity depends.

The factories all over the country are spreading toxic fumes in their surroundings. Consequently, their action is causing diseases in the common people i.e. they are allegedly causing their deaths and diseases. Unlike developed countries, small and large industries are set up without caring of environmental facilities and no arrangements are made for reasonable disposal of toxic chemicals. According to a research, only a few factories in the country dispose of toxic materials properly.

Cleanliness

Islam strictly prohibits the throwing dirt and impurities in the plains. But we face unpleasant odor from piles of dirt entering every city, village and town in our homeland. People are disturbed due to garbage on both sides of highways, intersections and plains. Their stench makes the life of passers and surrounding population miserable. There are piles of dirt on the roadsides, sidewalks and doors and there is no arrangement at the government level to remove it. The Holy Prophet (SAW) forbade throwing dirt at public places so that the health and life of the people could be protected from its stench.

The Holy Prophet (SAW) says:

“Clean your yards and your yards.”³¹

Courtyards, grounds and public places must be cleaned because it is a religious obligation in the light of above saying of Holy Prophet (SAW). Various sayings of Holy prophet (SAW) indicate the encouragement to keep the atmosphere neat and clean. In Islam, the arrangement of cleanliness in the environment has been declared as the axis of faith of a Muslim. In Islam, a clean and pure environment has the status of half faith, which gives a true Muslim the impetus to keep the atmosphere clean from various kinds of pollutants.

Holy Prophet (SAW) states:

“Cleanliness is half of faith.”³²

Islam encourages and motivates the believers to keep the atmosphere clean. People who keep the environment clean from dirt and pollution is loved by Allah Almighty.³³ Many traditions of prophet (SAW) indicate that attaining the love of God is impossible without creating a clean environment. The Holy Qur'an commands people to stay away from polluted environment.

Deforestation Prohibition

Deforestation results more production of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and rise of environmental degradation. The impact of environmental degradation on human life is very dangerous.³⁴ Gardens, forests and trees are natural air filtration plants. Unnecessary damage of trees is strictly prohibited in Islam. Air pollution and climate change issues are linked to widespread deforestation. The main source of global warming and climate change is deforestation, while Islam strictly forbids cutting down trees. Islam also forbids cutting down trees during war. First caliph Hazrat Abu Bakr (RA) prohibited cutting down trees even during war.

Imam Al-Tabri expresses:

“Do not cut down trees, do not burn them, and do not cut down fruitful trees.”³⁵

Deforestation is an undesirable and despicable act in the eyes of Islam. According to the United Nations, deforestation and forest cover in Pakistan is only 2.2% of the total area, But according to international standards, each country must have forests at least 25% of its area.

The release of toxic fumes into the atmosphere is causing climate change, which is one of the biggest scourges of modern times. Modern man is trying to suffocate another human being with his own hands. He has disturbed the natural balance of the gases found in the air by his corrupt actions and no element has remained in its original and natural state. Causing climate change is a kind of mischief in the earth.

Leaving smoke in the air under the excuse of development cannot be permitted because it causes imbalance in the natural atmosphere. Islam teaches caution and moderation at every stage of life. Modern man is overstepping his bounds in the race for comfort and ease and

spreading pollution in the atmosphere which is causing pain and suffering to God's creature. Factories of the toxic fumes are disturbing the natural balance of the atmosphere, which is prohibited in Islam.

Plantation

Trees and plants are a natural source of air purification. Islam has encouraged tree planting because trees are the natural factories of absorption of toxic gases. The Prophet (SAW) encouraged to plant as many trees as possible. Orchards of lush trees are capable of absorbing 70% of the carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitric acid and other toxic gases in the air of industrial areas.

Holy Prophet (SAW) states:

“If the Resurrection was established upon one of you while he has a sapling in his hand, he should plant it.”³⁶

The best example of cultivating horticulture and gardening in Islam exists in above tradition. In the present era, the emphasis on planting new trees is not only essential for the release and production of oxygen but also for the natural absorption of toxic gases.

Burial of Dead Bodies

Burial of human dead bodies is an Islamic and natural method. In addition to respecting human beings, there is also a philosophy of measures to prevent the spread of air pollution exists in this method. The Quran teaches the method of burial of human dead bodies.

It is stated in Holy Quran:

“فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ غُرَابًا يَبْحَثُ فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُرِيَهُ كَيْفَ يُورَثُ سَوْءَةَ أَخِيهِ ، قَالَ يُوثِقُ أَعْجَزْتُ أَنْ أَكُونَ مِثْلَ هَذَا الْغُرَابِ فَأُورَثِيَ سَوْءَةَ أَخِي ، فَاصْبِرْ مِنَ النَّدِيمِينَ-”³⁷

“Then, Allah sent a crow that scratched the earth to show him how he should conceal the corpse of his brother.”

Imam al-Razi writes:

“When Qabil killed his brother Habil and left him, God sent crow scattering soil on the dead body and taught how to bury a dead body.”³⁸

Qabil killed his brother Habil and left him in the field. Then Allah Almighty sent crow to understand Qabil how to bury human dead body in the earth through a crow because human body is honorable even after death. In addition to human respect, the purpose of burial is to prevent the pollution in the atmosphere.

Toxic Fumes Prohibition

Islam prohibits spreading poisonous or offensive odors at public places. Human beings as well as angels feel disgust and discomfort from the stinking atmosphere.

The Prophet of Allah (SAW) said:

“He who eats of this (offensive) plant, i. e garlic, and sometimes he said: He who eats onion and garlic and leek, should not approach our mosque for the angels are harmed by the same things as the children of Adam.”³⁹

It is noteworthy that the religion which does not harass the people in public places with the slight stench of raw garlic and onion, how this religion would allow industrial persons to play with the health and lives of the common people with the deadly chemical toxic fumes of the

factories. Islam has ordered the removal of all kinds of dangerous things (pollution) from public highways. Factories on the roads are a source of toxic fumes in the air which cause difficulty in breathing for the people passing through them. Removing a harmful thing from the way was encouraged.

Announcement of Punishment

Disturbing natural environment is an irreparable sin and doing so is corruption on earth. Emission of polluted and toxic fumes into the air is a mischief which causes damage to the human respiratory system of human beings.

It is warned in Holy Quran:

”وَالَّذِينَ يَبْقُضُونَ عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ مِيثَاقِهِ وَيَقْطَعُونَ مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوصَلَ وَيُفْسِدُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ“⁴⁰

“As for those who break their pledge with Allah after it has been made binding, and cut off the relationships Allah has commanded to be joined, and make mischief in the land, those are the ones for whom there is the curse, and for them there is the evil abode..”

Commitment of mischief (air pollution, water pollution, sound pollution, and land pollution) in the land has been prohibited at all in Islam. Hence, the above mentioned text of Holy Quran is a warning for the industry person/polluters who contaminate the atmosphere.

Role of Vicegerent

Modern man has started to pollute the earth under the guise of so-called development. It is man's responsibility to protect the atmosphere from pollution. Allah Almighty has sent man to earth with the status of vicegerent/custodian.

It is stated in Quran:

”وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَنْ يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ“⁴¹

“(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels, I am going to create a deputy on the earth! They said,: Will You create there one who will spread disorder on the earth and cause bloodshed, while we proclaim Your purity, along with your praise, and sanctify Your name? He said, : Certainly, I know what you know not.”

Ahmad ibn Mustafa al-Maraghi illustrates:

“Many interpreters believe that the term ‘Khalifa’ refers to the vicegerent on behalf of God in carrying out His commands among people. Hence, it has become well-known that man is God's caliph on earth.”⁴²

Contributing to the prevention of air pollution is the greatest responsibility of the present age. Prevention of environmental pollution is a significant duty of man as vicegerent. Therefore in the eyes of Islam it is necessary to cooperate with the environmental organizations that protect the environment and the atmosphere from pollution.

The Islamic perspectives depict that a person should help one another in activities of righteousness and piety(air management measures),on the contrary ,avoid helping one another in sin and evil activities(air pollution).Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of maintaining balance and harmony in the natural world. The Quran and sayings of the Prophet

Muhammad (SAW) contain numerous references to the environment, advocating for its protection and sustainable use. The Islamic concept of stewardship is central point of Islamic environmental ethics. Muslims are reflected as stewards of the Earth, entrusted with its care and preservation for future generations. The concept of vicegerent extends to the environment, urging humans to avoid actions that disrupt the natural equilibrium, such as excessive pollution and over exploitation of natural resources.

No doubt, Islamic ethics can significantly contribute to the strategies for management of air pollution. Islamic viewpoints can be integrated into environmental practices and policies. Islam encourages the usage of resources in a sustainable manner. Transitioning to renewable energy sources, such as solar and wind power, aligns with the Islamic principle of preserving resources and reducing harm to the environment. Muslims are advised to avoid extravagance. Implementing comprehensive recycling programs and encouraging the reduction of CO₂ can help mitigate air pollution.

Public Awareness is essential to address the issue of air pollution. Islamic institutions can play a pivotal role in providing public awareness about air pollution and its harmful effects. Sermons and educational platforms can highlight the prominence of environmental stewardship as a religious responsibility. Governments in Muslim-majority countries can integrate Islamic environmental ethics into national policies. This comprises enacting stricter emissions regulations, promoting green technologies, and supporting research on sustainable practices. Inspiring community active participation in environmental protection efforts can foster a collective sense of obligation. Community-led initiatives, such as plantation campaigns and cleanness drives, reflect the communal aspect of Islamic experiences. Several Muslim-majority countries and organizations have already initiated to incorporate Islamic principles into their environmental strategies. For example, Indonesia has implemented policies to reduce deforestation and promote sustainable development. In Saudi Arabia, the Vision 2030 plan contains ambitious targets for renewable energy development and environmental management. Islamic environmental groups, such as the Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES), perform globally to raise awareness and provide resources for integrating Islamic teachings into environmental practices. These initiatives determine the practical application of Islamic viewpoint in addressing contemporary air pollution management challenge.

Conclusion

Air pollution management needs a multifaceted approach that combines scientific rigor with religious sensitivity. By harmonizing environmental values with Islamic viewpoint, we can develop wide-ranging strategies that not only address the technical features of pollution control but also resonate with the spiritual and moral standards of communities. This unified approach can improve the effectiveness of air pollution management determinations and foster a deeper commitment to conserving the environment for upcoming generations. This approach not only stimulates the natural environment recovery but also ensures the socio-economic betterment of society.

Recommendations

1. Eco-friendly transportation and energy sources should be planned.
2. Basic health and education facilities should be extended to the villages so as to prevent migration to the cities.
3. Tall and regional trees should be planted as many as possible.
4. Deforestation should be prevented.
5. Clean Air Act should be implemented.
6. Zigzag technology should be installed in brick kilns as soon as possible.
7. Solid Waste Management Authority and Environment Protection Agency should play a positive role to control air pollution.
8. Public awareness about air pollution impacts must be planned.

References

- ¹ Jiang, Xu-Qin, Xiao-Dong Mei, and Di Feng. "Air pollution and chronic airway diseases: what should people know and do?." *Journal of thoracic disease* 8, no. 1 (2016): E31.
- ² Chen, Lung Chi, and Morton Lippmann, "Effects of metals within ambient air particulate matter (PM) on human health." *Inhalation toxicology* 21, no. 1 (2009): 1-31.
- ³ Holdgate, Martin W. *A perspective of environmental pollution.* (Cambridge University Press, 1979), 2.
- ⁴ Izz al-Dīn, Mū'īl Yūsuf. *The environmental dimensions of Islam.* (James Clarke & Co., 2000), 2.
- ⁵ Agwan, A. R., ed. *Islam and the Environment.*(New Dehli: Institute of Objective Studies, 1997),1.
- ⁶ Abdul Manan Cheema, *Natural Resources and Their Use: In Islamic and Scientific Perspectives,* (Islamabad: Asian Research Index, 2023), 1.
- ⁷ Sayem, Md Abu. "Islam and environmental ethics." *Islamic Studies* 60, no. 2 (2021): 157-172..
- ⁸ Cheema, Abdul Manan Cheema, and Riaz Ahmad Saeed. "ماحولیاتی آلودگی پر قابو پانے میں شجر کاری کا کردار: اسلامی نقطہ نظر: The Role of Plantation in Controlling Environmental Pollution: An Islamic Perspective." *Research Journal Ulūm-e-Islāmia* 30, no. 01 (2023): 55-74..
- ⁹ Alvi, Farhat Naseem, and Abdul Manan Cheema. "Recent Rise of Climate Change and Islamic Perspectives: A Research Review." *MEI* 22, no. 2 (2023), 1.
- ¹⁰ Usmani, Mufti Muhammad Taqi, *The Noble Quran: Meaning with Explanatory Notes,* (Turāth Publishing: 2020), 2.
- ¹¹ <https://www.airbreath-oxy.com/en/why-is-air-important/> Accessed June 08 2024.
- ¹² *The New Encyclopedia Britannica,* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1990), 1:173
- ¹³ *Al-Jāhiz, Al-Ḥayawān,* (Beirut: Dār ul Kuttāb ul Ilmiyyah, 1424 AH), 1:24
- ¹⁴ *Ibn Al-Qayyim, Tibb-E-Nabawi.* (Beirut: Dār al Hilal, N.D.), 1:16
- ¹⁵ Ahmed Deedāt, Trans: Misbah Akram, *Yahudiāt, Esaiyat Aur Islam,* (Lāhore: Abdulllah Academy, 2010), 35
- ¹⁶ A. R. Agwān, *Islam and the Environment,* 9
- ¹⁷ *Al Quran,* 57:7
- ¹⁸ Muḥammad ibn 'Īsā, *Sunan At-Tirmidhi,* (Egypt: Dār al-Gharb al Islāmi. 1998), H:3369

- ¹⁹ Mumtāz Hussain, ,(Lāhore: Azād Book Depot, N.D.), 83
- ²⁰ Gurdeep Raj, Dictionary of Environment, (New Delhi: Anmol publications, 1992), 195
- ²¹ Fazle Karim Khan, A Geography of Pakistan: Environment, People and Economy, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 69
- ²² Barasa, Beatrice. "Increased incidences, intensity and scope of disasters: Manifestation of unsustainable development practices." *Environment Pollution and Climate Change* 2, no. 2 (2018): 1-9.
- ²³ Loftus, Christine T., Marnie F. Hazlehurst, Adam A. Szpiro, Yu Ni, Frances A. Tylavsky, Nicole R. Bush, Sheela Sathyanarayana, Kecia N. Carroll, Catherine J. Karr, and Kaja Z. LeWinn. "Prenatal air pollution and childhood IQ: Preliminary evidence of effect modification by folate." *Environmental research* 176 (2019): 108505.
- ²⁴ Kampa, Marilena, and Elias Castanas. "Human health effects of air pollution." *Environmental pollution* 151, no. 2 (2008): 362-367.
- ²⁵ Patz, Jonathan A., and John M. Balbus. "Global climate change and air pollution." *Ecosystem change and public health. A global perspective.* The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore (2001): 379-408.
- ²⁶ Nathanson, J. A.. "air pollution." *Encyclopedia Britannica*, June 6, 2024. <https://www.britannica.com/science/air-pollution>.
- ²⁷ Al-Quran,30:41
- ²⁸ Abū l-Fidā' Ismā'īl ibn 'Umar ibn Kaṭīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*, (Beirūt: Dār ul Kuttāb ul Ilmiyyah. 1412 AH), 6:287
- ²⁹ Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, *Sahih Muslim*, (Beirut: Dār Ihya al-Turāth al-'Arabi, N.D.),H.:2012
- ³⁰ Al Quran, 5:32
- ³¹ Abū Yala, Ahmed bin 'Ali, *Musnad Abu Yala*, (Damascus: Dār al Māmoon Lil Turāth, N. D.), .H:791
- ³² Muslim Ibn Al-Hajjāj, *Sahih Muslim*, H:223
- ³³ Al Quran, 9:108
- ³⁴ Cheema, Abdul Manan, and Farhat Naseem Alvi. "Management of Natural Resources and Sustainable Development: An Islamic Perspective." *Al-Tabyeen* (2023), 11
- ³⁵ Al-Tabari, Muhammad ibn Jarir, *Tārikh al-Tabari*,(Beirūt: Dār Ihya al-Turāth al-'Arabi.1387AH), 3:227

³⁶ Ahmed ibn Hanbal, Musnad Ahmed, (Beirūt: Muasisatur-Risālah.1421AH), H:12902

³⁷ Al Quran,5:31

³⁸ Al-Rāzi, Fakhr al-Din, Mafatih al Ghaib, (Beirūt: Dār Ihya al-Turāth al-‘Arabi.1420AH),
11:341

³⁹ Muslim ibn al-Hajjāj, Sahih Muslim, H:564

⁴⁰ Al Quran, 13:25

⁴¹ Al Quran,2:30

⁴² Ahmad ibn Mustafa al-Maraghi, Tafsir al-Maraghi, (Egypt: Mustafa al-Babi al-Halabi and
Sons, 1365AH), 1:80