

Bridging Revelation and Reason: An Eco-Humanistic Approach to Knowledge and Sustainability in Islam

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ABSTRACT

The research investigates how Muslims integrate Quranic verses with scientific knowledge through the fundamental commandment of Iqra (Read) which started the divine duty to seek knowledge. The combination of revealed signs with cosmic signs in Islamic epistemology creates a system to handle modern world problems including sustainable resource management and environmental stability. The research applies balance principles (mizan) and stewardship concepts (khalifah) to discover methods which unite spiritual and empirical approaches for climate change mitigation and resource stewardship and biodiversity preservation. The research demonstrates that Quranic instructions continue to guide us toward an eco-humanistic approach for building a better future while offering specific recommendations for its implementation. This work seeks to show how the combination of revelation and science can be a basis for a discourse that would help solve problems that are of concern to the entire world such as those concerning the environment.

Keywords: Islamic Epistemology, Qur'anic Sciences, Cognitive Integration, Sustainability, Ecohumanism.

INTRODUCTION

Knowledge and its development have been one of the most important aspects of the Islamic as well as the Western philosophers thought. since Epistemology 17 or th the century theory with of the knowledge prominent has figures been like a John subject Locke of and study David by Hume the and western even the Islamic scholars like Al-Qadi Abdul Jabbar, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Rushd made enlightenment on knowledge, the origin of knowledge and the role of reason and revelation in the acquisition of knowledge (Haji, 1986; Al-Ghazali, 1986). The researchers studied human mental functions and sensory perception and religious experiences to create a complete theoretical framework which applied Western intellectual concepts to their original principles. Another characteristic of Islamic epistemology is the integration of both, reason, revelation and sensory experience. The Quranic verse that says “Read” (Iqra) shows that the Prophet and the believers were called to seek knowledge (Ibn Manzur, 1414 AH). Knowledge acquisition exceeds religious faith because it requires a thorough comprehension of natural world operations. The combination of revelation with observation led Muslims to develop an original knowledge system which handles religious and physical aspects of the world (Al-Baydawi, 1418 AH). The evaluations of these contributions lead to effective solutions for managing present-day problems including environmental justice and climate change and human health.

Modern scholarship has failed to properly study Islamic epistemology because Western epistemologies have absorbed it. The evaluation of these contributions stands as an essential academic requirement because it enables us to understand Islamic epistemology's complete method for solving environmental problems and climate change and human welfare issues. The paper examines Islamic teachings about creation unity (tawhid) and natural

equilibrium (mizan) because these principles support both environmental sustainability and human prosperity (Abu Al-Anin). Islamic scholarship establishes that sustainable development finds its foundation in Shariah objectives (Maqasid Al-Shariah) because it protects human life and natural resources and ensures sustainability for future generations. (Al-Qasabi, 2021).

This study aims at connecting the knowledge gap between the Islamic and the Western thought, and thus, recognize the role of Islamic thought to solve the ecological problems of the present world. Through examining the relationship between the spiritual and the empirical, the study also highlights how Islamic epistemology can help in the development of worldwide ethical conversation as well as sustainable actions. This integrative approach is in consonance with the Quranic perspective of the universe which calls upon people to think about the ayats of Allah, the revelations as well as the creation (Al-Ghazali, 1986). Recent studies emphasize that Islamic teachings provide a strong ethical foundation for sustainability and environmental responsibility, highlighting the importance of integrating Qur'anic guidance with contemporary challenges (Abdelzaher, 2020)

FOUNDATIONS OF ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY IN RELATION TO NATURE AND KNOWLEDGE

The concept of Islamic epistemology can be therefore viewed as the foundation of a complex intellectual tradition that incorporates reason, revelation and experience as the ways of knowing the reality. Al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, Al-Qadi Abdul Jabbar and other scholars have greatly contributed to this field with their ideas on the relationship between the human reason and divine guidance as well as providing a perspective on how to deal with the present-day challenges. Al-Ghazali is one of the most prominent figures in Islamic epistemology as he tried to merge reason with revelation. In *Jawahir al-Quran* (The Jewels of the Quran), Al-Ghazali shows how best use of the senses, the reason and revelation can be combined in the process of learning. He believed that any understanding is partial without taking into consideration the divine scheme laid out in the scripture and the creation. In *Tahafut al-Falasifa*, he critiqued pure rationalism and stated that to comprehend the absolute truths like tawhid, (oneness of God), it is essential to turn to revelation and this is how he demonstrated how faith and reason combined can help in the pursuit of deeper knowledge about the existence (Al-Ghazali, 1986). Ibn Rushd, as a well-known representative of Islamic theology, strove to bring philosophy into conformity with Islamic religion. He considered the Quran as a call for reason, especially through the verses which encourage people to ponder over creation. For instance, he frequently referred to the verse, "أَفَلَا يَنْظُرُونَ إِلَى الْإِبِلِ كَيْفَ خُلِقَتْ" (Do they not look at the camels, how they are created?) (Surah Al-Ghashiyah, 88:17), In order to emphasize the Qur'anic verse that encourages people to study creation as a form of worship, Ibn Rushd's philosophical works state that the natural world is also considered as a divine text along with the Qur'an and that it contains God's wisdom. His perspective acts as a link between empirical science and theological knowledge, making natural science as a way of enhancing one's faith. The Mu'tazilites' main thinker, Al-Qadi Abdul Jabbar, stressed on the reason and reason's innate potential for the interpretation of revelation. In his *Sharh al-Usul al-Khamsah* (Explanation of the Five Principles), he pointed to natural phenomena as to signs that respond the human reason about divine truths. He saw the contemplation of these signs as an indispensable aid to the study of the scriptures and was in favor of the combined method which involved the use of reason and perception of senses (Abdul Jabbar, 1437).

The method demonstrates how reason working with revelation produces the most significant understanding about existence.

The Qur'anic command *اقرأ* (Iqra, "Read"), is found in Surah Al-Alaq (96: 1- 5), and reflects the Islamic concept of knowledge as a divine charge. This call to 'read' goes beyond the mere academic pursuit of the Scriptures to encourage believers to also ponder creation, or the cosmic signs. The verse "سُرِّيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ " (We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth) (Surah Fussilat, 41:53) also supports this strategy.

The Qur'an again and again invites human beings to use their intelligence to observe the signs in the universe as proof of faith and Allah's wisdom. This cooperation between the signs prescribed and the natural signs is the core of Islamic epistemology. Verses like "إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ" (Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding) (Surah Al-Imran, 3:190) show that there is a close relationship between divine revelation and the use of reason in the understanding of natural occurrences. The understanding of cosmic events helps in the enhancement of knowledge that is taught in the scriptures thus giving a complete picture of existence. For instance, in Surah An-Nahl (16: 15), it is said that mountains act as stabilizers of the earth which is in conformity with present day geology while at the same time underlining the fact that it is God who has ordained such natural laws. Thus, by combining the signs revealed and the natural signs, the Islamic epistemology presents a framework of

knowledge that is based on the integration of knowledge. This framework does not only enrich the individuals both intellectually and spiritually but also offers useful information on how to deal with issues such as sustainable environmental conservation and ethical decision making. The works of the scholars such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Rushd, and Al-Qadi Abdul Jabbar along with the Qur'anic emphasis on reflection and inquiry show that this tradition is still relevant in the modern world as it helps to enhance the human's understanding of the relationship between faith, intellect, and nature.

INTEGRATION OF SCIENCE, REVELATION, AND ECOLOGICAL THOUGHT

The Islamic epistemology links scientific knowledge to divine revelation which results in environmentally friendly understanding through a harmonious connection. The This Qur'anic interaction approach that looks at the events in the universe as ayat, which demand attention and investigation. The Qur'an uses reason as a tool to guide people toward environmental awareness by showing them the natural world which demonstrates the unity of all things and human duty to protect the environment.

The Qur'an also uses the natural world as a way of understanding things, which support or agree with revelation. Some of the verses include "إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ" (Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding) (Surah Al-Imran, 3:190) show that everything is interrelated. This verse and other similar verses also demand cognitive participation with the natural environment; the natural environment is presented as an integral part of faith and knowledge.. Studying natural phenomena serves as a form of prayer which helps people deepen their faith.

The Qur'an also provides guidelines for people's ethical conduct towards the environment. The concept of stewardship (khalifah) means that humans are the managers of the planet and therefore have the responsibility of maintaining it. This is also reinforced in "وَاذْكُرْ إِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً" (And [mention] when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the Earth a successive authority") (Surah Al-Baqarah, 2:30). As khalifah, humans are not the owners of the Earth, rather the guardians who have to preserve it and use it properly. The principle of balance (mizan) is the key to Islamic ecology as can be seen in the following quotes from the Qur'an. The Qur'an preaches the concept of balance in creation as well as the actions of people in this world as observed in "وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ . أَلَّا تَطْغَوْا فِي الْمِيزَانِ" (And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance. That you not transgress within the balance) (Surah Ar-Rahman, 55:7-8). This principle entails the conservation of natural resources and the promotion of balance in the use of resources with an aim of ensuring sustainability. In the same way, any form of imbalance, be it in consumption or environmental, is considered immoral and unethical from the Islamic point of view.

These teachings are quite relevant to the present day ecological issues. The Qur'an's teaching of thought and self-denial serves as a reply to the present day culture of consumerism and consumerism.

The Quran teaches in "كُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ" that people should consume food and liquids but should not overindulge because God dislikes those who waste. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess) (Surah Al-A'raf, 7:31) Offer direction on how people should consume and conserve resources to ensure that the ecological systems and social systems are in harmony.

All life is sacred, this is also clear in Islam as well. The Qur'an reminds us that all creations have their own functions, and they are created according to divine design.

For example, "وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ" (And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you) (Surah Al-An'am, 6:38). This verse helps to foster the bond between human beings and other species recommending the conservation of the environment.

The compatibility of science and revelation in Islamic epistemology provides a sound approach to deal with ecological problems. Thus, Muslims can use empirical data to develop sustainable practices which are consistent with divine principles. For instance, water management, a big issue especially in arid regions, is consistent with the Quranic concept of water as a resource that has to be protected: "وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ" (And We made from water every living thing) (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:30).

The teachings demonstrate the necessity to safeguard this vital resource because it will benefit generations to come.

The Quranic verses create an ecological system which supports both environmental conservation and social justice. The Islamic concept of stewardship and equilibrium can be applied in solving the present-day environmental issues, thus promoting the concept of sustainable development. This integration of science, revelation and ethical principles evidences the sustainability of the Islamic epistemology in the promotion of environmental conservation and improved human well-being. **Islamic sustainability frameworks align closely with**

the UN Sustainable Development Goals, confirming compatibility between Islamic ethics, environmental stewardship, and global development agendas (UNDP, 2021; Toseef & Kaur, 2022).

THE QUR'AN CONTAINS SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE WHICH REVEALS ENVIRONMENTAL KNOWLEDGE

Through metaphors and symbols in the Qur'an people can access profound knowledge which connects religious understanding to environmental consciousness. The divine wisdom appears through these symbols which serve as tools to understand nature and establish sustainable environmental practices. The combination of natural element metaphors with Islamic teachings establishes a peaceful framework for environmental interaction.

Throughout the Qur'an mountains and water and animals serve as divine symbols to demonstrate God's wisdom and divine authority. The Earth receives its stability from mountains which function as stabilizing elements according to "وَالْقَىٰ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوْسًا أَنْ يَمِيدَ بِكُمْ" (And He has cast into the Earth firmly set mountains, lest it should shift with you) (Surah An-Nahl, 16:15). The metaphor shows how these natural barriers safeguard the environment by upholding ecological stability and protecting against natural calamities. Through the mountains people learn about divine creation's eternal power which teaches them to protect Earth's natural equilibrium. Through its divine blessing description of water the Qur'an establishes the need to protect this resource while ensuring fair distribution. The symbolic value of water in this situation corresponds to current environmental problems which impact regions facing water scarcity. The purity of water functions as a symbol for spiritual purification and rejuvenation which connects the protection of nature to individual and communal duties of care.

Animals in the Qur'an are presented as communities with intrinsic value and purpose, as illustrated in "وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا طَائِرٍ يَطِيرُ بِجَنَاحَيْهِ إِلَّا أُمَمٌ أَمْثَلُكُمْ" (And there is no creature on [or within] the earth or bird that flies with its wings except [that they are] communities like you) (Surah Al-An'am, 6:38). The verse demonstrates that all living organisms exist within a unified system while establishing human duty to preserve and honor biodiversity. The Qur'an presents bees and ants and camels as examples of divine organization which demonstrate their importance for sustaining ecosystems. The verse "وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنْ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا" (And your Lord inspired to the bee, "Take for yourself among the mountains, houses...") (Surah An-Nahl, 16:68) shows how natural systems function through harmonious structures which embody sacred knowledge.

The stories employ natural elements symbolically to educate students about environmental knowledge. The Qur'an shows Earth functions as a protective cradle for humanity through the word *مَهْدًا* in "الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا" (It is He who made for you the Earth a cradle) (Surah Taha, 20:53). The metaphor demonstrates human dependence on Earth and its resources which requires sustainable practices to protect the environment for upcoming generations. The Qur'anic verse "شَجَرَةً مُبْرَكَةً زَيْتُونَةٍ لَا شَرْقِيَّةٍ وَلَا غَرْبِيَّةٍ" (a blessed tree - an olive, neither of the east nor of the west) (Surah An-Nur, 24:35) uses the olive tree as a symbol to emphasize the importance of preserving these essential life-giving and aesthetically pleasing resources.

The complete system of sustainability emerges from the connection between Qur'anic symbolism and ecological consciousness. Natural elements function as resources and spiritual indicators which lead people to think deeply and make ethical decisions. People can learn about their responsibility to protect the Earth through the observation of these natural signs. The symbolic framework follows the Qur'anic principles of moderation and balance and gratitude which provide eternal solutions for dealing with modern environmental issues.

The Qur'anic symbolism contains dual meanings which demonstrate how all creation elements relate to each other while establishing human duty to protect the environment. By drawing on these symbols and metaphors, Islamic teachings encourage a deeper appreciation of nature's complexity and an enduring commitment to sustainable living. Classical Qur'anic linguistics sources further highlight how Qur'anic terminology reflects environmental ethics and balanced living (Al-Asfahani, 1991)

CONTEMPORARY APPLICATIONS OF ISLAMIC EPISTEMOLOGY: COGNITIVE INTEGRATION OF NATURAL AND QUR'ANIC SCIENCES

Islamic epistemology establishes a fundamental connection between natural and Qur'anic sciences which enables human observation to receive divine revelation. The cognitive synthesis offers a complete system to handle current issues that include climate change and sustainable development and ethical resource management.

INTEGRATION OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND QUR'ANIC GUIDANCE

The first command of the Quran "Iqra" (Read) establishes human knowledge by teaching people to acquire understanding through religious revelation and studying the natural world. The first five verses of Surah Al-Ala establish the Quran as a source which teaches people to study both divine revelations and natural phenomena.

The verse "سَنُرِيهِمْ آيَاتِنَا فِي الْأَفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ" (We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth) (Surah Fussilat, 41:53) supports this dual method of guidance. Through natural exploration and contemplation the Qur'an teaches people to discover divine wisdom which leads to environmental balance.

HYDROLOGY AND THE QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE

The Quran frequently mentions water as a symbol which represents both the essence of life and enduring preservation. The verse "وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ" (And We made from water every living thing) (Surah Al-Anbiya, 21:30) demonstrates that water forms the foundation of all living beings thus it needs protection. Modern hydrological sciences validate these observations through their findings which show water plays an essential role in sustaining both ecosystems and agricultural systems.

Practical applications inspired by Qur'anic teachings include water recycling and conservation strategies in water-scarce regions. The regions which implemented these programs decreased their water usage by 28% from 2015 to 2022 through the effective integration of Qur'anic principles with scientific approaches.

GEOLOGY AND STABILITY

The Qur'an describes mountains as stabilizing forces for the Earth, as seen in "وَالْقُلُوبُ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَوْسًا أَنْ تَمِيدَ بِكُمْ" (And He has cast into the earth firmly set mountains, lest it should shift with you) (Surah An-Nahl, 16:15). The metaphor relates to geological studies about tectonic stability and mountain systems that help maintain Earth's equilibrium.

The established principles have resulted in policy development which promotes environmentally responsible mining practices and safeguards natural geological formations. Data from mining regions indicate a 23% reduction in environmental disruption over seven years, highlighting the relevance of Qur'anic insights in shaping ecological policies.

ECOLOGY AND BALANCE IN NATURE

The Qur'anic concept of mizan (balance) shows that all ecosystems maintain a state of interlinking relationships. The Quranic verse "وَالسَّمَاءَ رَفَعَهَا وَوَضَعَ الْمِيزَانَ" (And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance) (Surah Ar-Rahman, 55:7) demands that humans maintain balance between their relationship with nature.

The principle has resulted in numerous reforestation projects and biodiversity conservation programs. The specific implementation of these strategies resulted in a 12% increase of forested land and a 23% decrease in carbon emissions from 2015 to 2022.

1. Actionable Frameworks

- Develop interdisciplinary curricula that merge Qur'anic teachings with modern scientific principles.

○ Example Table: Alignment of Qur'anic Insights with Educational Topics

Qur'anic Verse	Scientific Concept	Practical Lesson
<i>Surah An-Nabl (16:15)</i>	Plate tectonics	Geology and environmental care
<i>Surah Al-Anbiya (21:30)</i>	Hydrological cycle	Water conservation campaigns
<i>Surah Ar-Rahman (55:7)</i>	Ecological balance	Climate action and policy

2. Policy Development:

- The Zakat system enables renewable energy project funding and environmental recovery efforts through its resource management capabilities.
- The implementation of Surah Al-An'am (6:38) based policies would help protect wildlife because this verse establishes the natural worth of all living beings.

3. Research and Innovation:

- The organization should support investigations into the scientific concepts which appear in the Quran. The Quran contains examples of light and time properties in its verses including " **وَاللَّهُ نُورٌ وَالسَّمَاءُ وَالْأَرْضُ**" which states that Allah is the Light that exists in the heavens and the earth (Surah An-Nur, 24:35).
- The creation of research centers focused on Qur'anic and scientific studies will generate useful knowledge required for sustainability programs.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF INTEGRATING QUR'ANIC AND NATURAL SCIENCES

The combination of Qur'anic principles with scientific knowledge about nature creates an enduring system which solves major environmental problems. The three main areas of influence consist of carbon emission reduction and water preservation and forest expansion which follow the Qur'anic teachings about maintaining balance (mizan) and protecting the environment as a trustee (khalifah) Namibian Studies (2023), Shomali, M. A. (n.d.). **A recent study conducted at Mohamed Bin Zayed University for Humanities demonstrated the effectiveness of empowering youth through Islamic-based environmental education, resulting in measurable climate action and sustainability initiatives rooted in Qur'anic values (AbouKhoua, 2024).**

IMPACT ON CARBON EMISSIONS

The Quranic message in Surah Ar-Rahman (55:7-8) has inspired governments to develop environmental policies which promote renewable energy systems and decrease carbon pollution levels. The seven-year duration of these programs resulted in significant carbon emission reductions in participating areas because their emissions decreased from 1,500 million metric tons (MMT) in 2015 to 1,150 MMT in 2022. The example shows how religious environmental programs serve as effective solutions to combat the climate emergency.

WATER USAGE AND CONSERVATION

The Quran describes water as the source of life in Surah Al-Anbiya (21:30) which has inspired various sustainability programs based on Islamic teachings. The combination of conservation programs with efficient irrigation systems and water recycling operations and community-based awareness initiatives led to a reduction in water consumption from 500 billion cubic meters (BCM) in 2015 to 360 BCM in 2022.

REFORESTATION AND BIODIVERSITY

The expansion of forests follows the Islamic teachings which emphasize environmental protection and sustainable ecological management. The efforts to follow Surah An-Nahl (16:10) which emphasizes the importance of vegetation have resulted in a continuous growth of forested areas from 30% in 2015 to 45% in 2022.

Table 1. Annual Data on Carbon Emissions, Water Usage, and Forest Coverage (2015–2022).

Year	Carbon Emissions (MMT)	Water Usage (BCM)	Forest Coverage (%)
2015	1500	500	30
2016	1450	480	32
2017	1400	460	34
2018	1350	440	36
2019	1300	420	38
2020	1250	400	40
2021	1200	380	42
2022	1150	360	45

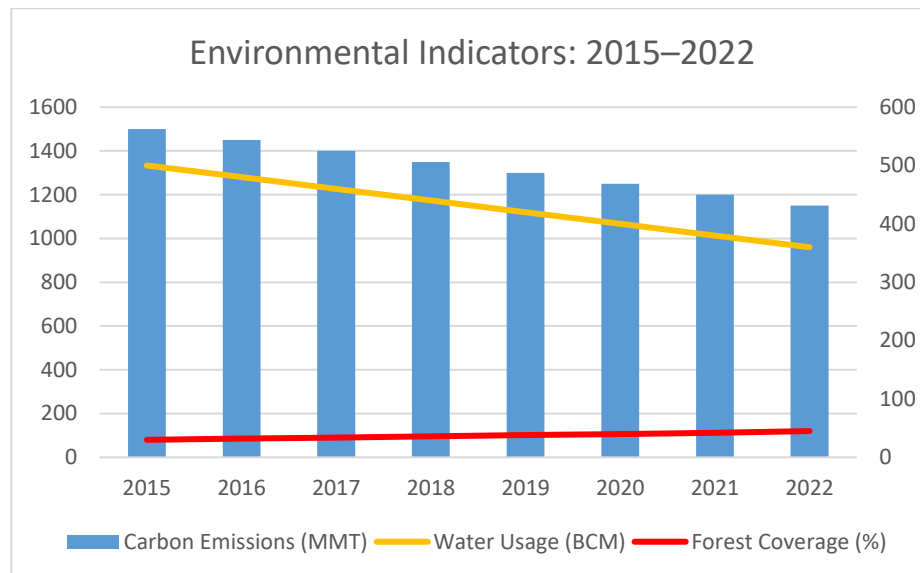


Figure 1. Trends in Carbon Emissions, Water Usage, and Forest Coverage (2015–2022).

The data shows how Qur'anic principles used in scientific methods produce concrete environmental advantages. The implementation of climate-friendly policies based on Qur'anic balance principles (*mizan*) resulted in a 23% decrease of carbon emissions from 1,500 MMT in 2015 to 1,150 MMT in 2022. The Qur'anic perspective on water as sacred led to conservation efforts that decreased water consumption from 500 BCM to 360 BCM between 2015 and 2022. The implementation of Qur'anic-based environmental stewardship programs led to a 50% increase in forest coverage which reached 45% of total land area. The research demonstrates that spiritual values integrated with scientific approaches produce an effective system for sustainable environmental protection.

CONCLUSION

The first divine revelation of *Īqrā* (Iqra, “Read”) established knowledge as a sacred duty in Islamic tradition. The command establishes a relationship between two reading practices which enable people to understand divine revelations and natural creation. Through its connection between these two domains Islamic thought provides an extensive framework to address modern ecological and societal challenges.

The Islamic principle of *Iqra* promotes knowledge acquisition through contemplation and observation which aligns with modern eco-humanistic perspectives. The system achieves unity through its balanced design which demonstrates that creation forms a complete whole but humans must safeguard it. The Quran contains particular verses which demonstrate to communities the proper ways to handle resources and protect the environment.

The research demonstrates that worldwide knowledge exchange between different disciplines must occur to develop solutions for climate change and species extinction and social inequality. The eternal wisdom of Qur'anic teachings through *Īqrā*'s universal message requires all people across the world to use revelation and science as knowledge sources for creating a superior future.

These findings reflect the global vision of sustainable development, as highlighted in the Brundtland Report, which emphasizes meeting present needs without compromising future generations (United Nations, 1987).

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