



Bridging the Gap: An Islamic Sustainable Development Model for the WANA Region

Dr Laylla Rkiouak



WANA
INSTITUTE

“Knowledge from the region, action for the region”

Dr Laylla Rkiouak



Laylla joins the WANA Institute following the completion of her PhD at the University of Cambridge. Her PhD research was part of the stratospheric particle injection for climate engineering in the UK - it investigated the surface properties of seven different particle's candidates and the ozone depletion impacts on these surfaces. Laylla also holds a Bachelor of Science in Engineering and a Master of Science in Chemical Engineering. At the WANA Institute Laylla is working with the Green Economy team to investigate the transition from a fossil fuel-driven economy to a sustainable system for the West Asia-North Africa region. She strongly believes that an ethics-based sustainable development agenda must be in the forefront of the current societal system.

© WANA Institute 2016. All rights reserved.

Bridging the Gap: An Islamic Sustainable Development Model for the WANA Region is also available in English and Arabic online at www.wanainstitute.org

To obtain a copy of this publication please contact:

West Asia – North Africa (WANA) Institute

Majlis El Hassan – Royal Palaces

Amman

Jordan

Telephone: +96264644407

Business hours: 9.00am – 5.00pm (UTC +2)

Email: info@wanainstitute.org

Permission to Reproduce

The information in this publication may not be reproduced, in part or in whole and by any means, without charge or further permission from the WANA Institute. For permission to reproduce the information in this publication, please contact the WANA Institute Communications Department through the contact information above.

Published by the WANA Institute, Majlis El Hassan, Amman, Jordan

Content: Dr Laylla Rkiouak

Cover: WANA Institute

Interior Design: WANA Institute and The Economic Press Co

Editing: Dr Erica Harper and Roisin Taylor, WANA Institute

Printed in Amman, Jordan

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The West Asia - North Africa (WANA) Institute is a non-profit policy think tank based in Amman, Jordan.

Operating under the chairmanship of His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal, the Institute works to promote a transition to evidence-based policy and programming to combat the development and humanitarian challenges facing West Asia and North Africa.

The WANA Institute aspires to be a trusted source of knowledge, evidence and opinion, and to provide a forum for open debate for leading researchers and policy makers in the region.

We undertake research, host conferences and conduct training workshops in the areas of social justice, green economy and human security. We believe these three areas represent both the most pressing issues facing our region and the greatest opportunity for our work to create vital impact.

GIZ. Solutions that work.

GIZ provides services worldwide in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development. The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) is the main commissioning party, but GIZ also work closely with the private sector, fostering successful interaction between development policy and foreign trade.

GIZ has been working in Jordan for over 40 years, and has had an office in the capital of Amman since 1979. The civil war in Syria and the political instability of the region are having a direct impact on Jordan, where several hundred thousand people have sought refuge since the start of armed conflict in the neighbouring country. GIZ is supporting Jordan in creating long-term prospects for both Jordanians and Syrian refugees by assisting the host municipalities where many of the refugees are living, and thus contributing to the stability of the country.

The development problems Jordan faces are rooted primarily in the lack of natural resources. Climate change and environmental pollution are other key issues. Currently, Jordanian-German cooperation is focusing on water as well as employment and education. Since 2001, water has been the priority in Jordanian-German cooperation. Jordan is one of the world's most water-deprived countries, and GIZ is helping provide an adequate and stable water and wastewater management system through various measures. To create economic and vocational prospects for Jordanians and the Palestinians and Syrians living in Jordan, a new priority area since 2015 has been to promote measures in education, vocational training and job creation. GIZ is also promoting environmental protection and resource conservation and waste management in Jordan. In addition, there are several regional programmes which are being implemented from Jordan.

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been present in Jordan since 2001. SDC plays an active role in providing assistance and improving the living conditions of vulnerable groups in the Jordanian community as well as other vulnerable groups such as refugees and migrant workers, with special focus on women and children. In order to achieve its overall goal, SDC focuses on three domains of interventions: Basic Needs and Services; Protection; and Water.

In the water domain, SDC is focusing in applying the principals of "Integrated Water Resources Management" (IWRM) in the divers projects forecasted at different level of the water cycle. The foreseen projects are divided in software supports and hardware actions. The engagement of SDC will mainly be:

- Aquifer protection and monitoring actions;
- Fresh water production including traditional water treatment and desalinization;
- Fresh water distribution;
- Improved irrigation with focus on Water Energy and Food Security Nexus;
- Wastewater management
- Rapid aerial survey through Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) or commonly called drone and
- Vocational training on water project management and water projects implementation;
- Awareness addressed to different water users and at different levels

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung Organization

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is a non-profit organization committed to the values of social democracy and the oldest of Germany's political foundations. Founded in 1925, it is the political legacy of Friedrich Ebert, Germany's first democratically elected President. Ebert, a Social Democrat of humble origins, had risen to hold the highest office in his country despite considerable opposition from the undemocratic political elite. He assumed the burden of the presidency in a country, which was crisis-ridden following its defeat in World War I. His personal – often painful experience – in managing to rise through the ranks and in facing political confrontation led him to propose the establishment of a foundation with a threefold aim:

- contributing to international understanding and cooperation wherever possible in order to avert a fresh outbreak of war and conflict
- furthering a democratic, pluralistic political culture by means of political education for all classes of society
- facilitating access to higher education and research for gifted young people by providing scholarships

In his testament, Friedrich Ebert asked for donations from mourners instead of funeral flowers, thus providing for the financial basis of the foundation. Hence, after Ebert's untimely death in 1925, the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung came into life. The Foundation was immediately banned when the Nazi regime entered into power in 1933. FES was not re-established until after the end of World War II. Today FES works in more than 100 countries around the world. The foundation continues to pursue the above aims and values, which have lost nothing of their relevance since Friedrich Ebert wisely framed them in 1925.

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
1: Sustainable Development as a Global Concept	4
2: The United Nations and Sustainable Development	6
3: Effectiveness of and Potential for the Sustainable Development Model	8
4: Re-Conceptualising Sustainable Development	11
5: Bridging the Gap: A Distinctively Islamic Model of Sustainable Development	12
6: An Islamic basis for a Sustainable Development Model: <i>Maqasid al-Shari'a</i>	14
7: Islamic Sustainable Development Models in the Making	16
8: Creating a New Islamic Model of Sustainable Development	17
Conclusion: From Theory to Model Implementation	22
References	24

Introduction

While humans have inhabited the earth for more than 200,000 years, it is only in the last six decades, during which time societies have transitioned from being driven by biomass (renewable organic materials) to fossil fuels, that significant changes to the biosphere have taken place.¹ This transition, which is often referred to as the 'globalisation resurgence',² has seen countries around the world experience economic growth, poverty reduction and improved welfare.³ Steady rises in per capita income and falling commodities prices has increased the availability of goods and services, including communication technology in the form of cellular phones, the Internet and media, and basic household items such as heating, cooking equipment and clothing. The increased availability of food and medicine, as well as technological transfers in health, food production and sanitation, has been linked to decreased food insecurity, increased global life expectancy, and falling maternal and child mortality.

The massive rise in trade, consumption and production brought about by the use of fossil fuels has, however, come at a severe ecological cost. The pressures of global economic development and associated growth in production (particularly in emerging economies) has led to a decline in the availability of previously plentiful resources such as freshwater, fuels (oil, gas and coal), minerals (copper, aluminium, and iron ore) and grains (wheat, maize and rice).⁴ Both overproduction and overconsumption, combined with weak regulation, has interfered with the planet's delicately balanced ecosystem and its ability to sustain life,⁵ manifesting in global temperature changes,⁶ deforestation, loss of biodiversity and increased pollution.

The growing global population is diminishing resource stocks and accumulating waste faster than it can be absorbed or recycled. Over the past 15 years, 130,000 km² of forest has been destroyed annually and 15 percent of ocean stocks have been destroyed.⁷ Additionally, the global extraction of natural resources has increased by nearly 45 percent in the last 25 years.⁸ Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are accumulating in the atmosphere⁹ causing climatic change and impacting the health of the ecosystem.¹⁰ Simultaneously, the growth in global resource consumption and waste emissions has meant that the population is consuming resources at a faster pace than the earth can regenerate.¹¹

¹ H Haberl, "The Global Socioeconomic Energetic Metabolism as a Sustainability Problem" *Energy* 31, no. 1 SPEC. ISS. (2006): 87–99; A Galli, T Wiedmann, E Ercin, D Knoblauch, B Ewing, and S Giljum "Integrating Ecological, Carbon and Water Footprint into a 'Footprint Family' of Indicators: Definition and Role in Tracking Human Pressure on the Planet" *Ecological Indicators*, The State of the Art in Ecological Footprint: Theory and Applications (2012): 100–112.

² Globalisation is understood as a process of interconnectedness between the world's people driven by international networks and flows of finance, trade and goods, technology and ideas, media and information and human capital.

³ United Nations Development Programme "Human Development Report" (2006) Palgrave Macmillan; United Nations Environmental Programme "GEO4 Global Environment Outlook: Environment for Development" (2007).

⁴ J Sachs *The Price of Civilization* (2011) 100–102.

⁵ Haberl (n 1); R Rockström, W Steffen, K Noone, A Persson, FS Chapin, EF Lambin, TM Lenton "A Safe Operating Space for Humanity." *Science* 46 (2009): 472–75.

⁶ There is global scientific consensus on global warming: the average atmospheric temperature is rising, particularly in the northern hemisphere and there is solid evidence on the role of humans in this process. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has concluded that emissions of carbon dioxide from human activity are the primary cause of climate change.

⁷ UNEP (n 3).

⁸ A Behrens, S Giljum, J Kovanda and S Niza "The Material Basis of the Global Economy. Worldwide Patterns of Natural Resource Extraction and Their Implications for Sustainable Resource Use Policies." *Ecological Economics* 64, no. 2 (2007): 444–53; Friends of the Earth "Overconsumption - Our Use of the World's Natural Resources" *Friends of the Earth Europe* (2009); F Krausmann, S Gingrich, N Eisenmenger, KH Erb, H Haberl, and M Fischer-Kowalski "Growth in Global Materials Use, GDP and Population during the 20th Century." *Ecological Economics* 68, no. 10 (2009): 2696–2705.

⁹ S Solomon, Climate Change 2007 - *The Physical Science Basis: Working Group I Contribution to the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

¹⁰ SHM Butchart, M Walpole, B Collen, A Van Strien, JPW Scharlemann, REA Almond, JEM Baillie "Global Biodiversity: Indicators of Recent Declines." *Science* 328, no. 5982 (2010): 1164–68; UNEP (n 3); Haberl (n 1).

¹¹ Rockström (n 5).

This state of affairs has demonstrated that while free markets are efficient for increasing productivity and standards of living, they are ineffective at preventing environmental spillovers, overconsumption and ecological damage.¹² Such markets need to be regulated by a governing authority; otherwise humanity will continue to press against the ecological limitations of its own habitat.¹³

This phenomenon is playing out clearly and dramatically in the West Asia-North Africa (WANA) region, where the major environmental challenges are water scarcity, land degradation, air pollution and climate change. Water availability and arable land resources are being impacted by the rise in average global temperature, its increasing variability and extreme climate events. Desertification is threatening around one-fifth of the region, contributing to food insecurity, and higher risk of conflict.¹⁴ If this trend, or the 'business as usual' scenario, continues (and the majority of evidence suggests that it will, or will even accelerate¹⁵) the planet's ability to sustain life will be severely compromised.¹⁶

The global environmental and scientific communities have long-advocated for major changes in policy and human behaviour to stop and reverse the population's impact on the planet and biodiversity.¹⁷ They have called for a better understanding of the origins of anthropogenic (human-induced) impacts and a transition to a more sustainable system of consumption while maintaining or increasing societal wellbeing.

The solution that has been presented to combat these environmental challenges is 'sustainable development'. Sustainable development is an interdisciplinary concept that considers the environmental, social and economic dimensions of a system, facilitating a holistic approach to contemporary challenges. There are, however, important limitations inherent in the model. Chief among these is that economics has come to dominate approaches to sustainable development, arguably brought on by the broad influence of Western-centric modern capitalism.

This paper critiques the sustainable development concept and tries to tackle these limitations by defining a new model specific to the challenges and norms of the WANA region. It is argued that the forces likely to mobilise the citizens of the region and leverage the required political commitment might be found in the Islamic tradition. It concludes that *maqasid al Shari'a* (the objectives of Islamic law) provides a platform for a new regional definition of sustainable development.

¹² Sachs (n 4) 33.

¹³ *ibid* 28-29.

¹⁴ "Arab Human Development Report" United Nations Development Programme (2009). Despite the deteriorating environmental situation, popular concern, related action and policy pressure remains insufficient. There is also strong evidence of apathy within communities. The UN-led "World We Want" survey ranked the chief concerns of 50,426 Jordanians among basic economic, social and political rights. Protecting forests and rivers, and action on climate change ranked last of 16 priority areas, while access to clean water and sanitation ranked eighth.

¹⁵ United Nations "Copenhagen, 2009, Key Messages from the Congress, The International Scientific Congress on Climate Change, Global Risks, Challenges and Decisions, Copenhagen, Denmark (10-12 March 2009)."

¹⁶ D Moore, G Cranston, A Reed, and A Galli "Projecting Future Human Demand on the Earth's Regenerative Capacity." *Ecological Indicators*, The State of the Art in Ecological Footprint: Theory and Applications (2012): 3-10.

¹⁷ O Sala, EF Stuart Chapin, IJJ Armesto, E Berlow, J Bloomfield, R Dirzo, et al. "Global Biodiversity Scenarios for the Year 2100." *Science* 287, no. 5459 (March 10, 2000): 1770-74.

1: Sustainable Development as a Global Concept

Sustainable development was first defined in the Brundtland Report (1987) as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹⁸ This definition recognises the integrated nature of the relationship between humans and their environment. It highlights the spatial and temporal dimensions of sustainable development as fundamental in societies where an increasing number of people are able to lead decent lives both now and in the future. Equity and fairness are additional key principles of sustainable development in that priority is given to improving the conditions of the poor and to distribution across generations.¹⁹

By recognising future generations as key stakeholders in development (but ones that are not present to defend themselves), sustainable development exposes a key deficit in the status quo. Free markets do not protect future users; public goods such as fresh water and clean air are vulnerable to abuse and over-exploitation unless economic activities are regulated.²⁰ Governments likewise have no incentives to protect future consumers; the design of democratic political systems means that they are preoccupied with short-term gains that reflect the needs and wants of their constituencies.²¹ Sustainable development thus demands a commitment that current users and policy-makers act as planetary stewards by taking action and making decisions that will protect future stakeholders.²²

Sustainable Development Structure	
Primary dimensions ²³	Secondary dimensions ²⁴
Safeguarding long-term ecological sustainability	Preserving nature intrinsic value
Satisfying basic human needs	Promoting protection of the environment
Promoting intergenerational equity	Promoting public participation
Promoting intergenerational equity	Satisfying aspirations for an improved standard of living

As the concept of sustainable development evolved and generated more interest, definitions of the term have become varied and contested. The work of Dobson, who has identified more than 300 definitions, states that: “[sustainable development is] a conception of sustainability in that it contains views on what is to be sustained, on why and on what the objects of concern are and on the degree of substitutability of human made for natural capital...”²⁵

Three points can be drawn from this definition. First, what is being sustained is a variable. For example, according to the cornucopian technocentrism view of sustainable development (the belief that everything can be solved by technology), it is economic growth that is being sustained. This contrasts with the

¹⁸ United Nations, “WCED World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future” (1987).

¹⁹ Sachs (n 4) 36.

²⁰ *ibid* 40-41.

²¹ *ibid* 36.

²² *ibid* 41.

²³ United Nations (n 18)

²⁴ KG Høyer *Sustainable Mobility - the Concept and Its Implications: Ph.d. Thesis*. Institute of Environment, Technology and Society, Roskilde University Centre, 1999.

²⁵ A Dobson “Environment Sustainabilities: An Analysis and a Typology.” *Environmental Politics* 5, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 401-428.

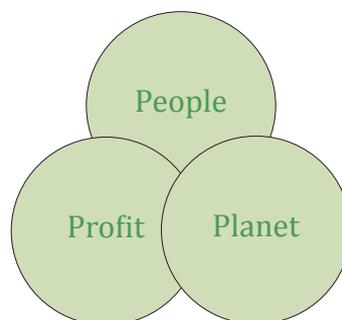
ecocentric view where dominance is given to ecology. Second, the object of concern can be selected; for example, human wellbeing or ecological health. Third, the definition highlights the existence of human-made substitutes to natural capital.

Sustainable development's amorphous nature began to be realised in 1981 when Spreckley and Elkington introduced the idea that sustainable development could also be understood as a responsible approach to business. They identified three pillars: people, planet and profit. Today, this model — also labelled 'triple bottom line' or 'triple P' — has come to dominate the political debate on sustainable development.²⁶ This reflects an appetite for businesses in profit-oriented societies to fit themselves within the sustainable development framework by making economic growth a central goal. Using sustainable development as a tool for growth was somewhat envisaged in the Brundtland report:

Sustainable development clearly requires economic growth in places where such human needs aren't being met. Elsewhere, it can be consistent with economic growth, provided the content of growth reflects the broad principles of sustainability and non-exploitation of others. But growth by itself is not enough.²⁷

Economic growth could even be seen as a vehicle for facilitating the four primary dimensions of sustainable development outlined above.²⁸ However, it was not intended to have the dominant role it has come to occupy in the 3Ps model.²⁹ The global adoption of the 3Ps model has arguably alienated cultures that are not focused on economic growth or capitalism. It may also explain their weak progress in certain areas and reluctance to engage in sustainable development debates and goal setting at the international level.

Figure 1: The three pillars of sustainable development



²⁶ PP Rogers, KF Jalal and JA Boyd *An Introduction to Sustainable Development* Earthscan, 2008.

²⁷ United Nations (n 18).

²⁸ J Elkington *Cannibals with Forks: Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business*. Capstone Publishing Ltd, 1999.

²⁹ H Erling, K Linnerud and D Banister "Sustainable Development: Our Common Future Revisited" *Global Environmental Change* 26 (May 2014): 130–39.

2: The United Nations and Sustainable Development

The transboundary and multi-sector nature of the environmental spillovers caused by rapid industrialisation highlighted the need for international cooperation, creating a natural entry point for the United Nations (UN).³⁰ UN concern around, and interest in, sustainable development, can be traced to the UN Conference on the Human Environment in 1972. This conference was followed by the World Conservation Strategy (1980) and the establishment of the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1983. The Commission went on to prepare the aforementioned Brundtland Report (1987), which defined sustainable development, tabled key social, economic, cultural and environmental issues, and reviewed potential global solutions.

In 1992, the first UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, was held in Rio de Janeiro. State leaders broadly acknowledged an urgent need for change in consumption and production patterns. The Summit produced Agenda 21, a blueprint for sustainable development in the 21st century, aimed at enabling a high quality environment and a healthy economy for the world's population. The Agenda reaffirmed that sustainable development was delimited into economic, social and environmental pillars. A particularly important achievement was a reiteration of developed countries' commitment to 0.7 percent of Gross National Product (GDP) being allocated in official development assistance, and to transfer access to environmentally sound technologies, especially to developing countries.³¹

Despite such gains, progress was sluggish. In 1997, the UN General Assembly highlighted that "overall trends with respect to sustainable development are worse today than they were in 1992" and that "much remains to be done to activate the means of implementation set out in Agenda 21".³² Herein marked what would become a gradual shift away from the environment as the lodestar of sustainable development. In September 2000, world leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets with a deadline of 2015: the 8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With the exception of goal seven, 'ensure environmental sustainability', the notion of sustainable development and environmental protection more broadly were absent from the agenda.

The World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 saw a further shift away from the environment and towards social and economic development as the cornerstones of sustainable development. This has been linked to governments' prioritisation of the MDG project as well as the development of low-income counties occupying a higher place on the international agenda.³³ There was, however, increased recognition of the interlinked nature of social, economic and environmental challenges and the need for integrated approaches.

This changed dynamic was cemented in June 2012 at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), where it was agreed that a set of Sustainable Development Goals would be developed. The goals would build on the MDGs, but also fill the gaps, especially in the areas of social, economic and

³⁰ Sachs (n 4) 240.

³¹ J Drexhage and D Murphy "Sustainable Development: From Brundtland to Rio 2012" International Institute for Sustainable Development (2010) 8.

³² Resolution adopted by the General Assembly: S/19-2 "Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21" A/RES/S-19/2 (19 September 1997).

³³ Drexhage (n 31) 8.

environmental issues. The UN Secretary-General established a 27-member High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons to advise on this process. At the same time, UN-facilitated thematic consultations on 11 key issues and 50 national and regional dialogues took place around the globe. In the Arab region, consultations occurred in Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco and the Sudan. In 2014, an Open Working Group proposed 17 goals and 169 associated targets, which was followed by a process of inter-governmental negotiations. These goals were endorsed by heads of state at a high level political summit in September 2015. The goals and indicators, which range from poverty alleviation to sustainable growth, are outlined in the table below. Critically, the text is grounded in an elaboration of the 3Ps model: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership.

	Suggested Goal	Potential Indicator
1	End poverty in all its forms everywhere	Proportion of population below \$1.25 (PPP) per day
2	End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture	Proportion of population below minimum level of dietary energy consumption
3	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages	Maternal mortality ratio (MDG Indicator) and rate
4	Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all	Percentage of children (36-59 months) receiving at least one year of a quality pre-primary education program
5	Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls	Prevalence of girls and women 15-49 who have experienced physical or sexual violence [by an intimate partner] in the last 12 months
6	Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all	Percentage of population using safely managed water services, by urban/rural
7	Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all	Share of the population using modern cooking solutions, by urban/rural
8	Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all	GNI per capita (PPP, current US\$ Atlas method)
9	Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation	Access to all-weather road (percent access within [x] km distance to road Mobile broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants, by urban/rural
10	Reduce inequality within and among countries	Indicator on inequality at top end of income distribution: GNI share of richest 10 percent or Palma ratio
11	Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable	Percentage of urban population living in slums or informal settlements (MDG Indicator)
12	Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns	Disclosure of Natural Resource Rights Holdings
13	Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts	CO2 intensity of new power generation capacity installed (gCO2 per kWh), and of new cars (gCO2/pkm) and trucks (gCO2/tkm)
14	Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development	Share of coastal and marine areas that are protected
15	Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss	Annual change in forest area and land under cultivation
16	Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels	Violent injuries and deaths per 100,000 population Number of refugees
17	Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development	Domestic revenues allocated to sustainable development as percent of GNI, by sector

3: Effectiveness of and Potential for the Sustainable Development Model

Today, the concept of sustainable development enjoys widespread legitimacy among the international community including in academia, government, civil society and the private sector. It has become the mainstay of agencies such as the UN Development and Environment Programmes, has been incorporated into the mandates of international financial institutions including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, and increasingly occupies a role in private sector strategy under the rubric of corporate social responsibility. It is also gaining resonance at the national level; by 2009, 106 governments had developed sustainable development strategies.³⁴

Against such widespread uptake, progress has been limited and unsustainable trends in production and consumption continue. Growth in population-driven consumption has meant that humanity's demands on the planet have more than doubled in the last 40 years.³⁵ There is also vast and rising inequality: "roughly 80 percent of the natural resources used each year are consumed by about 20 percent of the world's population."³⁶

One explanation is tied to the vagueness and flexibility around sustainable development as a concept. While this is arguably what has allowed such a high degree of consensus to take hold, it also explains the difficulty in moving from sustainable development as a theoretical paradigm to its implementation. In the absence of a shared, constructive understanding of the concept, entry points and pathways for implementation remain lacking.³⁷ This has manifested in a tendency to focus on narrow issues, or 'implement what is implementable'. Drexhage and Murphy provide the example of climate change being the locus of inter-governmental cooperation on sustainable development, largely to the exclusion of other issues. The scale and complexity of the problem, they argue, cannot be addressed in the confines of negotiation on climate change. Moreover, compartmentalising environmental issues is deleterious insofar as the changes required need to take place principally in the societal and economic realms.³⁸

Sustainable development's malleability has also left it vulnerable to competing agendas.³⁹ As discussed above, this first became apparent in the early 2000's when focus moved away from the environment and towards development. Development is broadly understood by governments as economic growth, with success defined in terms of benchmarks such as GDP per capita.⁴⁰

According to Drexhage and Murphy, the major challenge is to develop new pathways to connect genuine widespread concern into action that is tangible and feasible.

Particularly since the advent of the MDG project, the development priority has been lifting poor countries out of poverty, with the discourse weighted heavily towards poverty alleviation through free trade and debt relief.⁴¹ The project has arguably worked; developing countries (mainly in Asia) have achieved

³⁴ Drexhage (n 31) 9.

³⁵ World Wildlife Fund, Living Planet Report (2008) 2.

³⁶ Drexhage (n 31) 15.

³⁷ *ibid* 16.

³⁸ *ibid* 16.

³⁹ *id*.

⁴⁰ *ibid* 17.

⁴¹ *ibid* 16-17.

exceptional rates of economic growth and decreasing rates of poverty. Such growth, however, has been facilitated by recreating the resource-intensive production models seen in developed countries, fuelling a new wave of consumption-driven environmental exploitation.

This exposes an overall contradiction running throughout the modern sustainable development debate. Sustainable development evolved to address the environmental spillovers caused by unregulated overproduction, understanding that solutions lay in a combined effort that linked societal, economic and environmental behaviours and objectives. Allowing the profit/development dimension in sustainable development to take precedence has facilitated, rather than allowed a reining in, of overproduction. How then, was the sustainable development agenda allowed to evolve in a way that perpetuates the state of affairs it was born to overcome?

Sustainable development is largely understood by governments as economic growth and increased living standards without or with minimum environmental damage.

A key issue that the sustainable development discourse never overcame was the political economy of transitioning to sound ecological practices. Acting as environmental stewards for future generations requires a voluntary foregoing of immediate wants and needs. This, in turn, requires fundamental changes in the consumption habits of and lifestyles enjoyed in developed societies and the middle classes of developing societies. It will also involve short-term costs while low-carbon pathways, such as renewable energy, grow an effective market share and become more affordable.⁴² That such a transition is unlikely to bode well with consumers largely explains the lack of political leadership on challenging consumerism and making good on environmental commitments. A compounding problem is relative institutional strength. Drexhage and Murphy highlight that those lobbying for trade and growth — the World Bank and International Monetary Fund — are more influential than their environmental counterparts such as the UN Environmental Programme. Likewise at the national level, ministers of trade and finance usually enjoy greater political strength than ministers of environment.⁴³

In this context, sustainable development advocates have not been able to find the required political entry points; bound to their constituencies, there are insufficient political incentives in the current consumer climate to make the necessary changes to realise sustainable development gains. Until ‘growth versus protection’ is made a political issue, consumerism, overproduction and environmental impact will continue to operate in a vicious cycle. This perhaps represents a failure in effective user engagement. The sensitisation of the public to new sustainable approaches is imperative because through their political and consumer choices, governments and producers can be incentivised to deliver more environmentally sensitive solutions. Initiatives to promote interactive public engagement however, such as the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network,⁴⁴ have been sporadic and lacked comprehensiveness.

In summary, sustainable development represents a new and innovative approach that charts a course out of impending environmental disaster. A key strength is its holistic and integrated approach — an ability to view the bigger picture.⁴⁵ This responds to the fact that, for decades, scientists have been

⁴² Sachs (n 4) 202, 232.

⁴³ Drexhage (n 31) 18.

⁴⁴ SDSN “Sustainable Development Solutions Network,” 2012 <<http://unsdsn.org/>>

⁴⁵ F Charnley, M Lemon and S Evans “Exploring the Process of Whole System Design.” *Design Studies* 32, no. 2 (March 2011): 156–79.

trained to develop disciplinary expertise, leading to a lack of nexus considerations between disciplines. Sustainable development's 'whole system' design alleviates this problem by considering problems from multiple perspectives with interdisciplinary, collaborative and interactive processes.⁴⁶ However, this perceived strength has turned out to be the model's Achilles' heel. Sustainable development was somewhat hijacked by an agenda of capitalism and growth. The elevation of the profit or economic dimension of sustainable development has facilitated more exploitation of human and natural resources, but in a more informed way.⁴⁷ Optimists see this disequilibrium as preventing the model from achieving its *raison d'être*. However, for pessimists, sustainable development has become an instrument of a global agenda to lead humanity in a pre-determined direction towards capitalist goals.⁴⁸ Either way, the evidence speaks to the earth having a carrying capacity dependent on the value of depleted resources per person per year. Taking into account population growth and the decreased amount of accessible finite resources, a decrease in this rate is non-negotiable if humanity is to continue.⁴⁹ In its current form, the sustainable development model is unable to achieve its aims. The failure of global action platforms such as the UN Sustainable Development Agenda to recognise this, calls into question the capability of the UN to rectify development pathways in a timely manner. New approaches are therefore called for.

⁴⁶ J Blizzard and LE Klotz "A Framework for Sustainable Whole Systems Design." *Design Studies* 33, no. 5 (September 2012): 456–79; Such cooperation is required, not only between scientists and policy-makers, but also with consumers and inhabitants; see N Roorda "Fundamentals of Sustainable Development." Text, 2012 available at <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9781849714198/>.

⁴⁷ *id.*

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, Blizzard and LE Klotz, 470

⁴⁹ N Georgescu-Roegen "Energy and Economic Myths." *Southern Economic Journal* 41, no. 3 (January 1, 1975): 347–81.

4: Re-Conceptualising Sustainable Development

Some scholars, such as Sachs, speculate that the recent financial crisis and associated decline in trust in globalisation provides a window of opportunity to inspire new receptivity towards sustainable development.⁵⁰ This may be particularly the case in the WANA region, whose members already harbour deep scepticism towards the strength of the Western capitalist model and are averse to the consumerism and individualism that they associate with America and other Western states.⁵¹

Citizens of the region may well have identified something that the West has long ignored. Developed countries' quest for wealth has resulted in a diminution of social trust, citizenship values and participation in governance.⁵² Libertarianism has crowded out the role of the public sector, weakening its social redistributive function.⁵³ This state of affairs — focused on individual self-gain and stripped of shared attention for the future — has marginalised the interests of the poor, the vulnerable and future generations.⁵⁴ There is increasing evidence to support such a view. Americans may enjoy the highest rates of per capita GDP, but they score poorly on happiness, quality of life and wellbeing.⁵⁵ With escalating inequality,⁵⁶ a narrow group enjoys the lion's share of resources, and the public is increasingly associating corporatism with unethical behaviour and resource exploitation.⁵⁷

Against this backdrop, there is a strong case for radically redefining how development is understood. Whereas indicators have traditionally focused on Gross National Product (which measures wealth, growth, employment etc.), the discourse is beginning to recognise that this measure overlooks other important factors such as quality of life, worker satisfaction, integrity, environmental stewardship, wealth equity and poverty alleviation.⁵⁸ Progress has been seen in the development of, for example, Bhutan's Gross National Happiness theory, UNDP's Human Development Index⁵⁹ and the Legatum Institute's Prosperity Index. Arguably, however, such models still risk lacking the value resonance required to transition to practices that are ecologically sustainable in the WANA region.

⁵⁰ Drexhage (n 31) 19.

⁵¹ Sachs (n 4) 136.

⁵² *ibid* 140-141, 9-10.

⁵³ *ibid* 5, 11-12, 68.

⁵⁴ *ibid* (n 4) 13, 146-50.

⁵⁵ *ibid* 13, 138-141, 166-167, 226.

⁵⁶ *ibid* 6, 22-23, 146-150.

⁵⁷ *ibid* 23-24, 230.

⁵⁸ Drexhage (n 31) 19.

⁵⁹ Sachs (n 4) 205-207; Drexhage (n 31) 10.

5: Bridging the Gap: A Distinctly Islamic Model of Sustainable Development

This gap might be filled by a development model that is distinctly Arab in nature; one that reflects the values, goals, priorities and challenges shared by the people of the region. Such a model must isolate the specific drivers that can galvanise population groups, inspire collective action and demand widespread respect. It is argued that many of these drivers can be found in the Islamic tradition.⁶⁰

The idea of a sustainable development model that is connected to religious values stands somewhat in opposition to the current model, which reflects a separation of religious ideology and public policy making.⁶¹ The sustainable development discourse has, however, acknowledged that the three pillars of sustainable development need to be completed by an ethical dimension at the level of popular values. The World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg (2002) added a short paragraph 6 to its Programme of Action: “We acknowledge the importance of ethics for sustainable development and, therefore, emphasize the need to consider ethics in the implementation of Agenda 21.”⁶²

In the West Asia-North African context, ethics, shared values, morality, and religion are interconnected and largely indistinguishable. Islam is a comprehensive way of life, “concerned with individual rights, practices and rules, but also with issues often associated with the state and governance”.⁶³ It comprises a wide range of rules, covering both the private and public spheres, ranging from hygiene and dietary norms, prayer and fasting, to financial administration practices, and civil and criminal law.⁶⁴ Not surprisingly, in contrast to the West, in Islam there is no separation between religion and the state.

Moreover, there is strong uptake potential for Islamic environmentalism in the WANA region. Some scholars suggest that violations of environmental ethics by Muslims results from a gap between theories and practice⁶⁵ — a gap that could be fulfilled by policymakers and Islamic scholars giving practical shape to the Islamic environmental discourse through appropriate legislation. Muhammed Iqbal opines that the modern world stands in need of biological renewal; moreover, that religion can ethically prepare modern man to overcome the burden of its

The world’s population comprises more than 1.6 billion Muslims or 23 percent of its population. The WANA region accounts for 6 percent of the world population with 93 percent of its population being Muslims making it the most Muslim dense region in the world.

⁶⁰ The religion of Islam was brought to the Arabian peninsula between the years 610 and 632 by the Prophet Muhammad. Muslims believe that God revealed the Islamic message to the Prophet Muhammad, through the Angel Gabriel. According to tradition, both the Prophet and his companions memorized all of the revealed messages, which were finally recorded in a single version of the Qur’an under the third Caliph, ‘Uthman ibn ‘Adffan (r. 644-656). See P M Holt, Ann K S Lambton, Bernard Lewis (eds) *The Cambridge History of Islam*, 185 Vol 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1977).

⁶¹ Ironically, in Max Weber’s view, the Protestant ethic provided the methodological and rational platform for capitalism to take hold. Modernity and capitalism then limited the scope of moral obligation through rigorous set of rules to be followed.

⁶² Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg available at < http://www.cepal.org/rio20/noticias/paginas/8/43798/Platform_for_Action.ENG.2002.pdf>

⁶³ A Black *The West and Islam: Religion and Political Thought in World History*; Oxford University Press (2008); M Mohamad *The Challenge Pelanduk Publications* (1986).

⁶⁴ See A Bezzi, “Women and the Law in Jordan : Islam as a Path to Reform”, West Asia-North Africa Institute (2015).

⁶⁵ Z Sardar (ed) *Touch of Midas: Scientific Values and the Environment in Islam and the West* Manchester, U.K. ; Dover, N.H., U.S.A: Manchester Univ Pr (1984).

responsibility.⁶⁶ Moreover, some suggest that the Qur'an and Sunna comprise all of the necessary elements to develop and construct a platform for environmental ethics.⁶⁷ An Islamic sustainable development model could be incorporated into the work of the many Islamic environmental movements including Islamic eco-philosophies, Islamic environmental law, green jihadi activism, halal eco-certified foods, Islamic eco-villages, Islamic local currencies, and 'green' sheikhs and scholars.⁶⁸

In summary, sustainability and its holistic approach necessitate a capacity to rethink, based on knowledge and continuous reflection on the consequences of every action, their unintended outcomes and their underlying frames, premises and values.⁶⁹ It requires regional policy analysis, and units of analysis that transcend nation-state boundaries,⁷⁰ but remain ethically relevant. An Islamic sustainable development model — one that is regionally and ethically focused — offers a much-desired alternate narrative to the profit-dominated 3Ps model and hence from Western capitalism. As such, it represents a platform with the potential to galvanise the commitment and political will necessary to see the fundamental changes needed for sustainable development to take hold.

⁶⁶ Sir M Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*. New Delhi: Kitab Bhavan, 1930.

⁶⁷ L Wersal "Islam and Environmental Ethics: Tradition Responds to Contemporary Challenges." *Zygon* 30, no. 3 (1995): 451–59; N Seyyed Hossein "Islam and the Environmental Crisis" *Wiener Slavistisches Jahrbuch* 34, no. 4 (1990): 217–34; R Kamla, S Gallhofer and J Haslam "Islam, Nature and Accounting: Islamic Principles and the Notion of Accounting for the Environment" *Accounting Forum* 30, no. 3 (September 2006): 245–65; RS Gottlieb *This Sacred Earth: Religion, Nature, Environment* Routledge, 2003; H Have *Environmental Ethics and International Policy* UNESCO (2006); I Ozdemir, *Toward an Understanding of Environmental Ethics from a Qur'anic Perspective* Harvard University Press (2003); W Jenkins "Islamic Law and Environmental Ethics: How Jurisprudence (Usul Al-Fiqh) Mobilizes Practical Reform" *Worldviews: Global Religions, Culture, and Ecology* 9, no. 3 (2005): 338–64; A Al-Damkhi "Environmental Ethics in Islam: Principles, Violations, and Future Perspectives" *International Journal of Environmental Studies* 65, no. 1 (2008): 11–31; AA Bagader *Environmental Protection in Islam* 2nd Revised edition., Union Internationale pour la Conservation de la Nature et de ses Ressources (1996); AU Usman and M F Khamidi "Green and Sustainable Development in an Islamic Perspective" (2012); C Schwarte "Environmental Protection in Islamic Law: An Overview on Potential Influences for Legal Developments in Iraq." *Local Environment* 8, no. 5 (October 1, 2003): 567–76; RC Foltz, FM Denny and A Baharuddin "Islam and Ecology" Harvard University Press; O Al-Jayyousi *Islam and Sustainable Development: New Worldviews*. Gower Publishing, Ltd. (2012); I Abdul-Matin and K Ellison *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches about Protecting the Planet*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers (2010); Abdel-Haleem, Muhammad. "Islam, Religion of the Environment: The Need for Re-Education and Retraining" in *The Environment and Judiciaries of the Arab World: Proceedings of the Arab Chief Justices' Conference and Symposium on the Training of Judges and Other Legal Stakeholders in Environmental Law and Sustainable Development, Cairo, Egypt, May 29-31, 2004*, edited by Mamdouth Marie and Adel Omar Sherif, 68–83. Cairo: Supreme Constitutional Court of Egypt (2004).

⁶⁸ "Report-Globalized-Eco-Islam-a-Survey-Schwencke-vs-24-February-2012-Pdf.pdf (Objet Application/pdf)".

⁶⁹ AEJ Wals and R Rodela "Social Learning towards Sustainability: Problematic, Perspectives and Promise" *NJAS - Wageningen Journal of Life Sciences*, Social learning towards sustainability: problematic, perspectives and promise, 69 (June 6, 2014): 1–3.

⁷⁰ Al-Jayyousi (n 67).

6: An Islamic basis for Sustainable Development: *Maqasid al-Shari'a*

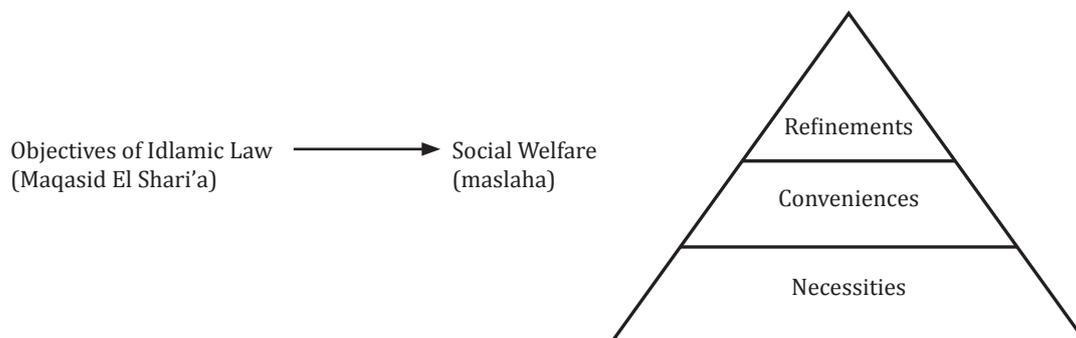
Such a model may have a basis in Islamic jurisprudence. The two fundamental sources of Islamic law are the Qur'an and the Sunna. The process for deriving law from fundamental texts is called *ijtihad*; *ijtihad* is the process by which the texts can be applied in changing circumstances, including to contemporary issues. In order for *ijtihad* to be valid, it must comply with the underlying goals or objectives of *Shari'a* (*maqasid al-Shari'a*).

Maqasid al-Shari'a is an important science that defines the divine wisdom, purposes and intents behind the rulings upon which *Shari'a* is based, such as justice, human dignity, free will, generosity, facilitation and social cooperation.⁷¹ Scholars have identified different objectives of *Shari'a*,⁷² but the principle objective is generally considered to be *maslaha* (social welfare). In practice this means that when jurists interpret the fundamental sources they cannot interpret them in a way that is inconsistent with broader social welfare or what is in the best interests of society.

The objective of the *Shari'a* is to promote the welfare of human beings, which lies in safeguarding their faith, their life, their intellect, their posterity, and their wealth. Whatever ensures the safeguard of these five fundamentals serves public interest and is desirable.⁷³

As shown in the diagrams below, *maslaha* has been divided into three sub-categories: necessities, needs and luxuries; and necessities into the sub-categories of preservations of faith, life, wealth, intellect and lineage (posterity).⁷⁴

Figure 2: Diagram Representation of the objectives of Islamic law



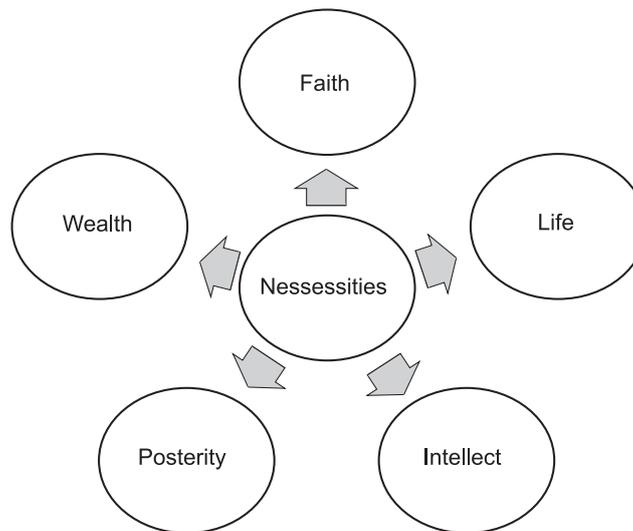
⁷¹ J Auda *Maqasid Al-Shariah: A Beginner's Guide*, edited by Shiraz Khan and Anas Al Shaikh-Ali. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought (2008).

⁷² Numerous renown Scholars have extensively worked on *Maqasid al-Shari'a*, among them are *Abd al-Malik al-Juwayni*, *Abu Hamid al-Ghazali*, *Fakhr al-Din al-Razi*, *Najm al-Din al-Tufi*, *al-Tahir ibn Ashur* and *Yusuf al-Qaradawi*.

⁷³ Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki and Nurdianawati Irwani Abdullah, quoting Al-Ghazali, "Maqasid al-Shari'ah, Maslahah, and Corporate Social Responsibility" (2007) 24/1 *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences*.

⁷⁴ Auda (n 71) J Auda, *Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought (2008); MH Kamali "Maqasid Al Shari'ah – Made Simple" accessed July 9, 2015 at <http://www.academia.edu/7121442/Maqasid_Al_Shari_ah_Made_Simple_-_Mohammad_Hashim_Kamali>; GE Attia *Towards Realization of the Higher Intents of Islamic Law: Maqasid Al-Shariah: A Functional Approach*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought (2008); "Maqasid Al-Shari'ah in Islamic Finance: An Overview" accessed July 5, 2015 at <http://www.academia.edu/1146010/Maqasid_Al-Shari_ah_in_Islamic_Finance_An_Overview>

Figure 3: The Islamic view on the necessities for social welfare



These categories have evolved over time in response to changing conditions and challenges. Ibn Ashur, for example, presented a new understanding of *maqasid al-Shari'a* by reconceptualising each necessity in contemporary terminology: 'preservation of lineage' evolved into 'the preservation of the family system' and 'protection of true belief' evolved into 'freedom of beliefs'. He also introduced the concepts of freedom, rights and equality as *maqasid al-Shari'a* in their own right. Yusuf al-Qaradawi has included the concepts of human dignity and rights as fundamental objectives of *Shari'a*.⁷⁵

These extensions of *maqasid al-Shari'a* demonstrate that there is space for Islamic reform to respond to contemporary global issues. According to Jasser Auda, the development of *maqasid al-Shari'a* is an opportunity for Islamic law to address the challenges facing Muslim societies by presenting an intellectual Islamic methodology for reform from within the religious sphere.⁷⁶ Arguably, environmental degradation presents the most pressing challenge of the 21st century, and as such, should be included as part of the *maqasid el Shari'a* (as this is *maslaha* — in the best interests of society). In short, an Islamic sustainable development model based on *maqasid el shari'a* represents a valid and efficient response to poor environmental governance from within the domain of Islam.

⁷⁵ Auda (n 71).

⁷⁶ *ibid.*

7: Islamic Sustainable Development Models in the Making

The idea of approaching sustainable development from an Islamic perspective is not entirely new. In 2002, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) developed the Islamic Declaration of Sustainable Development.⁷⁷ The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) presented this model to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. The Declaration reviewed the major challenges faced by the Islamic world in the field of sustainable development: poverty, illiteracy, foreign debt, degraded economic and social conditions, disequilibrium between population growth and available natural resources, weak technical capabilities, and a paucity of expertise and skills in environmental management.

The Declaration also charted a general framework for an Islamic agenda to overcome these obstacles and proposed cooperation among Islamic countries to achieve sustainable development. This framework identified five parameters of an Islamic sustainable development model: (i) to achieve justice, (ii) promote active participation, (iii) establish genuine inter-country partnership through a just system for world trade (to replace the debt system that was leading to resource depletion), (iv) enhancing the international community's implementation of practices and policies and (v) educating youth on environmental responsibility and the preservation of religious and moral values. Like the 3Ps model, therefore, the Declaration's principal weakness is how it is influenced by the capitalist development framework. By elevating economic growth as the means by which to close the gap between Islamic and developed countries, the model ignores the unsustainable and environmentally destructive actions through which such growth is facilitated.

A more effective attempt was made by Dr Odeh al Jayyousi in his 2002 book, *Islam and Sustainable Development*.⁷⁸ This work highlights the cultural and spiritual gap in the conventional/Western sustainable development model. He uses the Islamic notions of balance, harmony, public interest, wisdom and living lightly on earth to formulate a new model structured around: (i) good governance, (ii) excellence, (iii) social capital (iv) integrity without corruption to fulfil a good life (*hayat tayeba*) and (v) respect for the earth. He proposes the local community (neighbourhood level) as constituting the core of economic solidarity and social cohesion. However, while the book presents a comprehensive Islamic worldview on sustainable development, it lacks the metrics required for successful application and monitoring within the policy sphere.

⁷⁷ ISESCO is an international organization specializing in the fields of education, science, culture and communication, established to develop an educational system inspired by the Holy *Qur'an* and the *Sunna*. Arab countries clearly dominate this platform, although membership includes a total of fifty Muslim (majority) states, including Iran and Indonesia. It is closely allied to the International Islamic Fiqh Academy.

⁷⁸ Al-Jayyousi (n 71).

8: Creating a New Islamic Model of Sustainable Development

Based on the above understanding of *maqasid al Sharia'a*, and in response to the deficits outlined above, a new model of sustainable development is proposed. This model is centred around the notion of human dignity and based on the five pillars that uphold dignity: justice (*'adl*), intellectual knowledge and education (*'ilm*), social welfare (*maslaha*), human stewardship of natural resources, and wealth and economic activities (*iqtisad*). The essential elements of this model and the issues that it will address are outlined in tables 1 and 2 and figure 4 below:

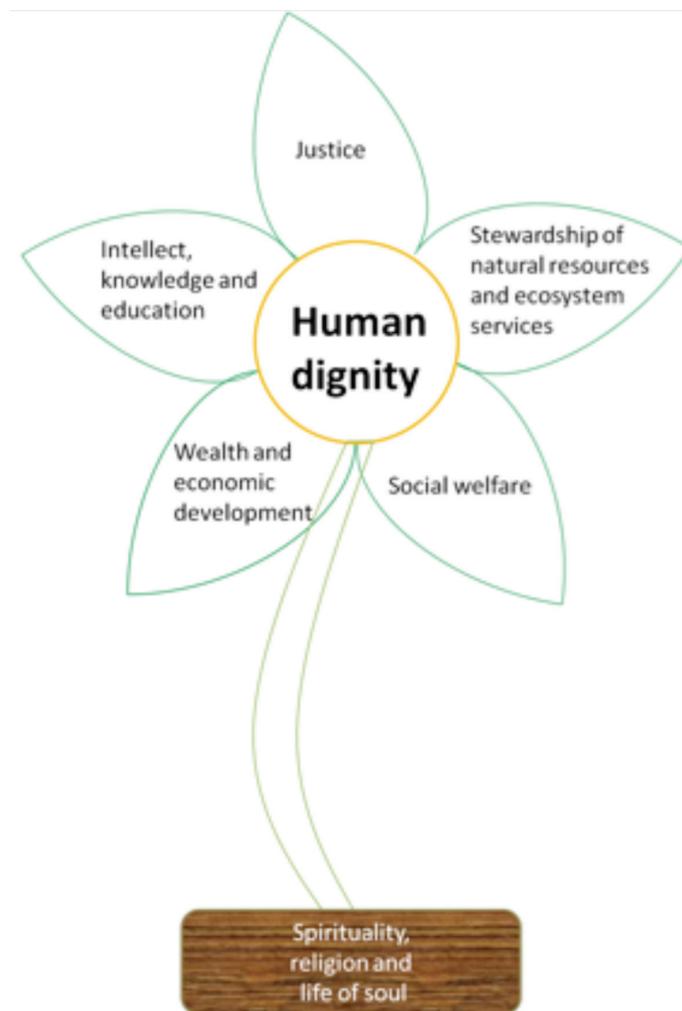
Table 1: Redefining sustainable development through *maqasid al-Shari'a*

	Islamic sustainable development conception
What to sustain?	Human dignity and natural dignity
Why?	Human welfare (material and spiritual) and stewardship role to Nature
Objects of concern	Present and future generation human and non-human needs
Methodology	Reviving Islamic principles

Table 2: Pillars of the Islamic sustainable development model

Pillars to sustain human dignity
Social, individual, economic and environmental Justice
Natural resources and ecosystem services
Social Welfare
Wealth and economic development
Knowledge and education

Figure 4



This figure presents the Islamic sustainable development model as a living plant, centered around human dignity. The sun required for growth is presented as God’s mercy and the soil reflects spirituality: as a plant grows with light and soil, Muslim’s absorb God’s divine light. The Islamic concept of mercy to humanity is shown in how Allah’s light is converted to social welfare (likened to photosynthesis). The image also reflects the Islamic concept of balance. Just as growth requires calibration, the need for each of the pillars to be proportionate is reflected in the balancing of the petals. Finally, like the growing plant ensures that energy received exceeds energy consumed, the role of the knowledge pillar is to ensure that the rate at which natural resources are consumed is equal to (or less than) the rate of regeneration.

8.1 Human Dignity

The dignity of the human person is not only a right in and of itself, but a central tenet of Islam and fundamental to Arab identity.⁷⁹ Islam's acknowledgement of human dignity finds its origins in the liberty that Allah accords to all men.

We have bestowed dignity on the children of Adam⁸⁰

The *Qur'an* states that human beings were created "in the best of moulds";⁸¹ they are born free and granted intellect. This enables them to make reasoned choices and maintain a higher position with respect to all other creatures.⁸² This explains why even the unborn enjoy the right to life, and the dead have the right not to be mutilated and to be buried decently and quickly.⁸³ Since human beings are free, they should not be coerced nor should life be unnecessarily regimented so as to deprive liberty.⁸⁴ It is on this basis that both the *Qur'an* and the *Sunna* prohibit persecution, aggression, and the violation of human dignity. Instead, personal growth is encouraged, through piety and righteousness.

8.2 Justice

In Islam, justice is a right, a responsibility (a duty towards God), and a supreme virtue.⁸⁵ Islam also recognises the importance of equality before the law, without discrimination on the grounds of race, gender, religion or status.

And among those We created, is a community which guides by truth and thereby establishes justice.⁸⁶

O you who believe! Be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for God's sake, even though it be against your own selves, your parents, or your near relatives, and whether it be against rich or poor.⁸⁷

God commands (the doing of) justice and fairness [...] and forbids indecencies and injustice.⁸⁸

8.3 Intellectual Knowledge and Education

The importance of education in Islam is highlighted in the first verse of the *Qur'an*:

Proclaim! In the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, Who created- Created man, out of a clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful,- He Who taught the pen, - Taught man that which he knew not.⁸⁹

⁷⁹ Dignity also constitutes the basis of fundamental rights in international law. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states in its preamble: 'recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'.

⁸⁰ Q17:70.

⁸¹ Q95:4.

⁸² M Baderin International Human Rights and Islamic Law 141, Oxford: Oxford University Press (2005) 52.

⁸³ *ibid.*

⁸⁴ *ibid.*

⁸⁵ The prime objective of Islam is to establish justice on earth: "Indeed, Allah orders justice", Q16:90.

⁸⁶ Q7:181.

⁸⁷ Q4:135.

⁸⁸ Q19:90.

⁸⁹ Q96:1-5

Scholars such as Ghazali have proposed education models that highlight development as an integral part of learning, leading ultimately to knowledge of God.

8.4 *Maslaha*

As discussed above, *maslaha* relates to the principle of social welfare; that decisions should be, and decision-makers should act, in the best interests of society. With respect to sustainable development, *maslaha* can be closely related to the protection of the vulnerable, another key principle in Islam. Islam demands proper civic behaviour, compassion for others,⁹⁰ and the protection of specific groups such as children, women and the elderly:

O Men! Here I have been assigned the job of being a ruler over you while I am not the best among you. If I do well in my job, help me. If I do wrong, redress me. [...] The weak shall be strong in my eyes until I restore them to their lost rights, and the strong shall be weak in my eye until I have restored the rights of the weak from them.⁹¹

8.5 Human Stewardship of Natural Resources

The message of Islam is directly drawn from the principle of oneness: the notion that everything originates from one source. Islam sees the universe as an interlocking matrix of abiotic and biotic systems in which every entity has a specific role forming a coherent and united whole.⁹²

To Him belongs whatsoever is in the heavens and the earth, all obey His will. And it is He who originates creation.⁹³

Nature not only supports the physical dimension of human needs, but also the spiritual dimensions.⁹⁴

Assuredly the creation of the heavens and the earth is a greater (matter) than the creation of men: Yet most men understand not.⁹⁵

Given this mutually constituting relationship between man and nature, the *Qur'an* and *hadith* outline various principles on environmental ethics and natural resource protection.⁹⁶ Islam recognizes the collective role of humankind as stewards of the earth:⁹⁷

If a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, or a person or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as a charitable gift for him.⁹⁸

Some scholars view this guardianship role as a barometer of success with respect to the preservation of natural capital and the fulfilment of Muslims' responsibilities towards God:

And it is He who has made you successors (*khala'ifa*) upon the Earth and has raised some of you above others in degrees (of rank) that He may try you through what He has given you.

⁹⁰ Sachs (n 4) 9-10.

⁹¹ Baderin (n 82) 141.

⁹² "Wisdom In Nature" accessed 15 July 2015 at <<http://wisdominnature.org/>>

⁹³ Q30:26.

⁹⁴ Foltz (n 67).

⁹⁵ Q 40:57.

⁹⁶ Islam and the Environment: A Bibliography" accessed 10 March 2015 at <http://www.academia.edu/3670659/Islam_and_the_Environment_a_bibliography>

⁹⁷ Abdul-Matin (n 67); C Chapin, F Stuart, SR Carpenter, GP Kofinas, C Folke, N Abel, WC Clark, P Olsson, et al. "Ecosystem Stewardship: Sustainability Strategies for a Rapidly Changing Planet." *Trends in Ecology & Evolution* 25, no. 4 (April 2010): 241-49.

⁹⁸ Sahih Bukhari, Book of Agriculture, hadith 513.

Indeed your Lord is swift in Penalty; but indeed, He is Forgiving and Merciful.⁹⁹

Nasr highlights the sacredness of nature into which God's presence is permeable. The *Qur'an* notes that with the extinction of species, groups of worshippers are silenced:

Have you not seen that unto Allah glorifies whosoever is in the heavens and the earth, and the birds with wings outspread (in their flight)? Each one knows its own (mode of) prayer and praise. And Allah is Aware of what they do.¹⁰⁰

The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him and there is not a thing but glorifies His praise. But you understand not their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.¹⁰¹

Finally, Islam emphasises the need for maintaining balance. The *Qur'an* states that everything is created in proportion and measure. For human society to be complete, balance between material and spiritual value is essential. Islam teaches moderation in all matters, with the loss of balance leading to corruption. However, to maintain this balance, knowledge on production and consumption pattern limitations is needed.

Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the Earth, spreading corruption.¹⁰²

Corruption has appeared in the land and sea, because of what the hands of men have earned, that God may give them a taste of some of their deeds, in order that they may find their way back.¹⁰³

8.6 Wealth and Economic Activities

Al Ghazali identifies three goals of economic activity: the achievement of self-sufficiency for one's survival, provision for the wellbeing of one's family and provision to assist those in economic need.¹⁰⁴ The *Qur'an*, *hadith*, *Sunna* and the *Shari'a* set out an elaborate framework for business relations. Within this framework, business is understood as socially useful, morally justified and religiously encouraged economic activity, provided that Islamic guidelines are adhered to. Al Ghazali has also enumerated five guidelines on marketplace benevolence: (i) no excessive profit, (ii) be lenient to the poor and strict to the rich, (iii) be gentle and flexible, (iv) promptly repay debt and give the possibility of debt cancelation, and (v) extend credit to the poor without expectation of repayment. Particularly relevant to the sustainable development model is the vehicle through which Islam's sensitivity to the poor and the need for the wealthy to contribute to their welfare finds tangibility: *zakat*. Another relevant principle is unjustified enrichment; Islamic banking rules prevent personal gain that is not derived from personal effort.

Zakat expenditures are only for the poor and for the needy and for those employed to collect [zakat] and for bringing hearts together [for Islam] and for freeing captives [or slaves] and for those in debt and for the cause of Allah and for the [stranded] traveller – an obligation [imposed] by God.¹⁰⁵

⁹⁹ Q6:165.

¹⁰⁰ Q17:41.

¹⁰¹ Q17:44.

¹⁰² Q2:60.

¹⁰³ Q30:41.

¹⁰⁴ AA Islahi and Shaikh M Ghazanfar "Economic Thought of Al-Ghazali." MPRA Paper (1998) <<http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/53465/>>

¹⁰⁵ Q9:60

Conclusion: From Theory to Model Implementation

Defining an efficient and responsible path of sustainability is a *sine qua non* for resolving the challenges confronting the WANA region.¹⁰⁶ Lifting the region out of dysfunctional and entrenched patterns of environmental governance will be neither fast nor easy. A long-term strategy for incremental, phased development is required.

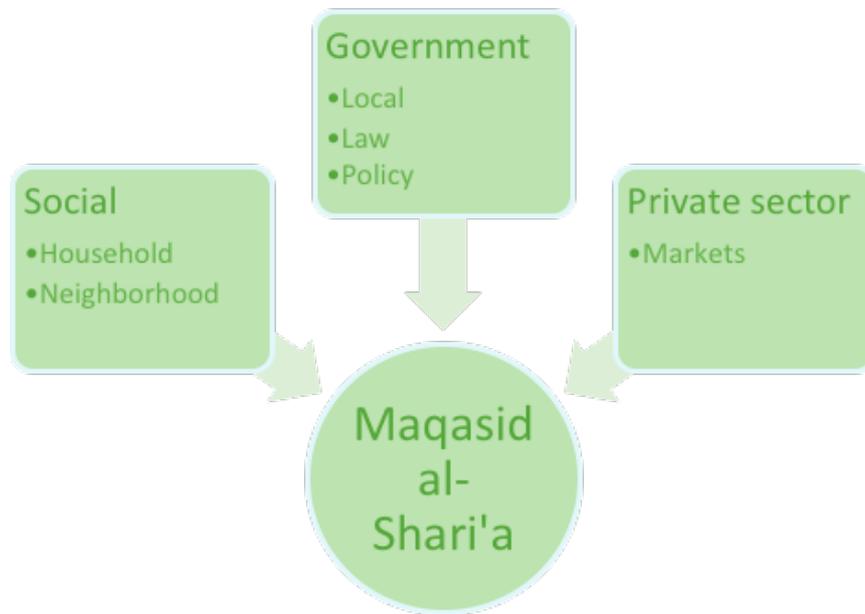
The implementation of an Islamic sustainable development model based on the objectives of Islamic law would require applicable metrics. For the framework to be effective, monitoring and control is crucial. In this regard, specific quantitative and qualitative indicators for the parameters considered would need to be defined and evaluated. A monitoring system would also need to be developed, possibly through the creation of a monitoring centre, or a system that links research and development centres in the region.

The states of the region need to make a formal commitment to and craft a strategy for Islamic sustainable development. A decision-making framework that understands environmental transition as part of the *maqasid al-Shari'a* needs to be established. This strategy should ensure that policies, institutions and processes in the government, social and private sectors fulfil the objectives of Islamic law (figure 5). Through this strategy, governments must take responsibility for resolving key sustainable development deficits in line with *maqasid al-Shari'a*. Such change must take place against a vision for building a critical number of regionally integrated states that place human dignity at the core of the development process.

The role of citizens in implementing such a sustainable development model cannot be understated. To date, resources and programming have focused on national policies rather than the role that communities and local leaders can play in natural resources management. End-users need to be engaged in more effective ways, through education (on religious rights and responsibilities) and empowerment (a space and the tools to craft innovative solutions to their own problems). This must be coupled with identifying and engaging local thought leaders (such as Imams) and change makers (such as youth leaders) to promote changes in attitudes and use patterns, and advocate for the integration of quality and equality of access in broader environmental goals. With more than 1.6 billion Muslims or 23 percent of the world population, this Islamic sustainable development model could play a crucial part in the future of sustainable development.

¹⁰⁶LH Endress "Chapter 3 - Scarcity, Security, and Sustainable Development" in *Sustainable Economic Development*, edited by AM Balisacan, U Chakravorty and M V Ravago, 49–66. San Diego: Academic Press (2015).

Figure 5: Sustainable livelihood framework for policies, institutions and processes to fulfil the objectives of Islamic Law (*Maqasid al-Shari'a*)



References

- Abdul-Matin, Ibrahim, and Keith Ellison. *Green Deen: What Islam Teaches about Protecting the Planet*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2010.
- Al-Jayyousi, Professor Odeh Rashed. *Islam and Sustainable Development: New Worldviews*. Gower Publishing, Ltd., 2012.
- Ashur, Muhammad Al-Tahir Ibn. *Ibn Ashur: Treatise on Maqasid Al-Shariah*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2006.
- Attia, Gamal Eldin. *Towards Realization of the Higher Intents of Islamic Law: Maqasid Al-Shariah: A Functional Approach*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008.
- Auda, Jasser. *Maqasid Al-Shariah: A Beginner's Guide*. Edited by Shiraz Khan and Anas Al Shaikh-Ali. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008.
- Maqasid Al-Shariah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008.
- Charnley, Fiona, Mark Lemon, and Steve Evans. "Exploring the Process of Whole System Design." *Design Studies* 32, no. 2 (March 2011): 156–79. doi:10.1016/j.destud.2010.08.002.
- Dobson, Andrew. "Environment Sustainabilities: An Analysis and a Typology." *Environmental Politics* 5, no. 3 (September 1, 1996): 401–28. doi:10.1080/09644019608414280.
- Elkington, John. *Cannibals with Forks: Triple Bottom Line of 21st Century Business*. Capstone Publishing Ltd, 1999.
- Goudie, Andrew S. *The Human Impact on the Natural Environment: Past, Present, and Future*. John Wiley & Sons, 2009.
- Haberl, H. "The Global Socioeconomic Energetic Metabolism as a Sustainability Problem." *Energy* 31, no. 1 SPEC. ISS. (2006): 87–99. doi:10.1016/j.energy.2004.04.045.
- Islahi, Abdul Azim, and Shaikh Mohammad Ghazanfar. "Economic Thought of Al-Ghazali." MPRA Paper, 1998. <http://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/53465/>.
- "Islam and the Environment: A Bibliography." Accessed March 10, 2015. http://www.academia.edu/3670659/Islam_and_the_Environment_a_bibliography.
- "Maqasid Al-Shari'ah in Islamic Finance: An Overview." Accessed July 5, 2015. http://www.academia.edu/1146010/Maqasid_Al-Shari_ah_in_Islamic_Finance_An_Overview.
- Mohammad Hashim Kamali. "Maqasid Al Shari'ah – Made Simple." Accessed July 9, 2015. http://www.academia.edu/7121442/Maqasid_Al_Shari_ah_Made_Simple_-_Mohammad_Hashim_Kamali.
- Moore, David, Gemma Cranston, Anders Reed, and Alessandro Galli. "Projecting Future Human Demand on the Earth's Regenerative Capacity." *Ecological Indicators, The State of the Art in Ecological Footprint: Theory and Applications*, 16 (mai 2012): 3–10. doi:10.1016/j.ecolind.2011.03.013.
- Nelson, Gerald, Elena Bennett, Asmeret Berhe, Kenneth Cassman, Ruth DeFries, Thomas Dietz, Achim R. Dobermann, et al. "Anthropogenic Drivers of Ecosystem Change: An Overview." *Agronomy*

& Horticulture -- Faculty Publications, January 1, 2006. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/agronomyfacpub/364>.

"Report-Globalized-Eco-Islam-a-Survey-Schwencke-vs-24-February-2012-Pdf.pdf (Objet Application/pdf)." Accessed July 4, 2015. <http://media.leidenuniv.nl/legacy/report-globalized-eco-islam-a-survey-schwencke-vs-24-february-2012-pdf.pdf>.

Rockström, R., W. Steffen, K. Noone, A. Persson, F.S. Chapin, E.F. Lambin, T.M. Lenton, et al. "A Safe Operating Space for Humanity." *Science* 46 (2009): 472–75.

Sardar, Ziauddin, ed. *Touch of Midas: Scientific Values and the Environment in Islam and the West* Manchester, U.K. ; Dover, N.H., U.S.A: Manchester Univ Pr, 1984.

Solomon, Susan. *Climate Change 2007 - The Physical Science Basis: Working Group I Contribution to the Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC*. Cambridge University Press, 2007.

UN. "Copenhagen, 2009, Key Messages from the Congress, The International Scientific Congress on Climate Change, Global Risks, Challenges and Decisions, Copenhagen, Denmark. 10–12 March 2009.," 2009. <http://climatecongress.ku.dk/pdf/synthesisreport>.

"WCED World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future," 1990. <http://www.un-documents.net/wced-ocf.htm>.

United Nations. "Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development .. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform," August 2015.

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>.

"Wisdom In Nature." Accessed July 15, 2015. <http://wisdominnature.org/>.

The West Asia - North Africa Institute is proud to be supported by its Executive Circle Members



This publication was elaborated upon through the generous support of the following donors



Majlis El Hassan, Royal Palaces, Amman, Jordan | +962 464 4007 | info@wanainstitute.org
www.wanainstitute.org