

Uwakili Eco-Interfaith Handbook

"Ulimwengu Mmoja, Sauti Mbalimbali Kwajili ya Uumbaji"



**Practical Manual for Engaging Faith Leaders and Societal Actors in
Action for Nature and Climate**

Acknowledgement

We wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Regional Director of East Africa, Tais Ziethen, and Thematic/Technical Advisors, Pastor Paul Mdumi, Rev. Rebecca Muhoza, and Sheikh Abdula Hamid Suleiman for their invaluable contributions to the creation of the Uwakili Eco-Interfaith Handbook. Special thanks to Mr. Dickson Shekivuli for initiating the process and Mr. Furahini Mchome for his exceptional coordination. We also appreciate the support and collaboration of all partners and stakeholders from various institutions. Your collective efforts have made this handbook a reality, empowering faith leaders and communities to engage in sustainable stewardship of natural resources.

Foreword

Welcome to the Uwakili Eco-Interfaith Handbook, a comprehensive guide for different societal actors working in the environment, such as faith leaders, interfaith committees, youth and women. This handbook underscores the profound influence of faith on our understanding and stewardship of the Earth, highlighting how the Earth is both a divine gift and a sacred responsibility. Its intent is to catalyze action, dialogue, and to act as an inspiration for those who believe in the healing power of faith for our planet.

Our world faces a severe environmental crisis, with drying rivers, deforested hills, polluted towns, and unpredictable weather patterns impacting our communities. As faith leaders, we respond with prayers and tangible actions. We use our faith teachings as a moral compass to respect creation and leverage our religious networks to mobilize communities for positive change. The Uwakili Eco-Interfaith Handbook aims to equip interfaith committees and faith leaders with practical tools to engage communities in environmental care, unite diverse faith traditions to share teachings, wisdom, and actions, support local faith-based environmental initiatives rooted in spirituality, Indigenous wisdom, and science, and strengthen interfaith cooperation in caring for our shared home, Earth.

This handbook is especially crafted for interfaith committees operating at community and national levels, faith leaders from all traditions, including Imams, Pastors, Priests, Sheikhs, Traditional Elders, and others. Also for youth and women groups within faith communities who are eager to lead eco-initiatives, and environmental champions who believe in the role of faith in environmental justice. It is a versatile tool that can be read for inspiration, used to plan activities, or brought to community meetings. With this handbook, we aspire to foster stronger cooperation between faiths for environmental justice, enhance environmental awareness within our congregations and communities, and encourage more faith-led environmental actions, from planting trees to influencing policies and cultivating a renewed spiritual responsibility for creating care across generations.

Danmission, an international faith-based organization, promotes sustainable stewardship of natural resources through interfaith collaboration. Their approach integrates theological and spiritual responses to environmental challenges, emphasizing the shared responsibility of all faiths to protect the environment. One of their notable initiatives is the Uwakili project, which exemplifies their efforts in fostering interfaith cooperation for environmental conservation.



Julie Koch

Secretary General

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Section One

Introduction, Background, and Principles for Interfaith Initiatives

Introduction

Environmental stewardship is a shared responsibility across faith traditions. The Uwakili Eco-Interfaith Handbook is a practical guide aimed at empowering grassroots interfaith committees, religious leaders, and faith constituencies to engage in environmental conservation actively. This handbook blends theological insights, Indigenous knowledge, and practical eco-initiatives to inspire faith communities to act to address environmental challenges.

Faith communities play a significant role in shaping societal values and behaviour. Across East Africa, religious leaders and institutions influence millions of people through their teachings and moral authority. By integrating creation care into faith-based teachings, religious leaders can inspire collective action for environmental sustainability. The handbook provides essential knowledge, strategies, real-life case studies, and proposed actions to help faith communities implement meaningful ecological initiatives.

This handbook is designed for different societal actors, including interfaith committees, religious leaders, youth groups, and women's and men's organizations. These groups are key agents of change and can serve as catalysts for environmental stewardship within their communities. Additionally, the handbook includes interactive sections, such as space for committees to articulate their vision for creation care and an inspirational statement that can be used to encourage community engagement during meetings and faith gatherings.



PHOTO: 1 BISHOP. DR. MALASUSA AND DEPUTY MINISTER, VICE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENT, KHAMIS H KHAMIS, MWANZA REGIONAL COMMISSIONER SAID MTANDA, SHEIKH BAKARANI OMARY-, REV. DR. ELIESHI AYO MUNGURE. INAUGURATED THE UWAKILI INTERFAITH FORUM AND LAUNCHED THE UWAKILI ECO-THEOLOGY HANDBOOK.

Key Environmental Challenges in East Africa

East Africa faces severe environmental challenges, including deforestation, soil erosion, reduced rainfall, and biodiversity loss driven by anthropogenic and natural factors, clearance for agriculture, mining, and the demand for charcoal and firewood. Climate change exacerbates these issues with erratic weather patterns, prolonged droughts, extreme heat, and unpredictable rain, impacting agriculture, water availability, and food security. Pollution, particularly plastic waste and water contamination, affects major water bodies such as Lake Victoria, reducing access to clean water.



PHOTO: 2 PREPARING A KILN FOR CHARCOAL PRODUCTION

Land degradation from unsustainable agricultural practices and rapid urbanization further weakens ecosystems, leading to declining soil fertility, loss of arable land, and increased food insecurity, disproportionately affecting vulnerable communities.

Faith-based environmental action is crucial in addressing these challenges. Religious groups in Tanzania, Uganda, and Kenya are promoting, among other things, energy-efficient stoves, waste management education, community clean-up efforts, tree-planting initiatives, rainwater harvesting projects, and sustainable agriculture training. This handbook includes case studies from the Uwakili project and other initiatives, offering practical insights and reflection questions to encourage faith communities to develop strategies for environmental conservation, emphasizing interfaith collaboration, theological wisdom, and practical initiatives to safeguard the natural world for future generations.



PHOTO: 3 MOTORBIKES (BODABODA) ARE A SIGNIFICANT MEANS OF TRANSPORTING CHARCOAL TO TOWNS, AS THEY ARE USED OFF-ROAD TO AVOID THE POLICE AND FOREST AUTHORITIES.

Why Eco-Interfaith?

Environmental and climate challenges are of global and local concern due to their social, economic, and ecological impacts. Religious teachings emphasize the sacredness of nature and the responsibility of humans to protect it. Islam teaches stewardship (Khalifah) of the Earth, encouraging sustainable practices and resource protection. Christianity's "Creation Care" concept leads to church-led environmental initiatives promoting renewable energy. African Traditional Religion views natural elements as sacred, fostering environmental protection by preserving holy groves and using totems and taboos for sustainable resource management.



PHOTO: 4 IMAM ADNAN AND EVANGELIST YOHANA FROM WEST USAMBARA WORK TOGETHER ON A DEMO FARM INITIATED BY THE FORLIVES PROJECT, IMPLEMENTED BY THE TANZANIA FOREST CONSERVATION GROUP, AND SUPPORTED BY DANMISSION.

Collaborative eco-interfaith initiatives are essential for addressing environmental challenges. Interfaith dialogues and community-based projects, such as community gardens and recycling programmes, promote ecological sustainability and interreligious cooperation. Faith leaders are responsible for advocating for environmental stewardship and integrating environmental education into faith teachings to mobilize congregations for sustainable practices. In East African communities, faith leaders' trusted positions enable them to influence policies, inspire behavioural shifts, and foster community-driven conservation efforts, contributing to climate resilience and sustainable development.



PHOTO: 5 MEMBERS AND STAKEHOLDERS OF THE UWAKILI INTERFAITH FORUM POSE AS THEY VISIT THE NATURE FOREST RESERVE IN BUKOBA, KAGERA, TANZANIA, TO LEARN AND EXPERIENCE.

Dialogue and Ethical Principles for Interfaith Action

Why Dialogue is Essential for Interfaith Environmental Action

Caring for the environment is a shared responsibility but, for different faith communities to work together effectively, they must first listen to and understand each other.

Interfaith dialogue helps build trust, respect, and collaboration, ensuring that religious differences are not barriers but bridges to cooperation.

Without dialogue, there is a risk that:

1. Some groups may feel excluded or misunderstood.
2. Environmental projects may fail due to a lack of unity.
3. Differences in faith perspectives may lead to division instead of cooperation.

However, with open and honest dialogue, communities can:

1. Discover shared values about protecting creation.
2. Learn from each other's wisdom and traditions.
3. Find stronger solutions together than they could alone.

What is Dialogue?

Dialogue is	Dialogue is NOT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A space to listen and learn from each other.• An opportunity to find common ground.• A process that leads to joint action for the common good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A debate to prove which religion is better.• A place to convince others to change their beliefs.• Just talking without acting.

Ethical Principles for Interfaith Dialogue and Action.

For interfaith cooperation to work, it must be guided by ethical principles that create a respectful and inclusive environment. Below are 10 key principles (adapted from Leonard Swidler's Dialogue Decalogue) that can help faith communities work together effectively:

Principle	Explanation
Enter to learn, not to change others.	Dialogue is about understanding, not converting others to your truth.
Speak honestly and with respect.	Share your faith's perspectives but do so with kindness and respect.
Let each person define their own faith.	No one should speak for another religion - let people express their own beliefs.
Be open to self-criticism.	Be willing to recognize where your faith community has failed in environmental stewardship.
Expect both agreement and disagreement.	Some values will unite us; others will be different and that's okay.
Protect confidentiality.	Private conversations should stay within the group, building trust.
See the world through the eyes of others.	Try to understand how nature is viewed in different faith traditions.
Be humble.	No faith has all the answers - we all have something to learn.
Move from dialogue to action.	Talking alone is not enough - real dialogue leads to real solutions.
Respect sacred symbols and practices.	Show respect for places of worship, religious beliefs, and customs.

These principles create a safe and respectful space for faith communities to work as equals towards a common environmental goal.

Creating a Safe and Inclusive Space for Dialogue

To ensure that everyone feels respected and valued, interfaith committees should:

Before the Dialogue	During the Dialogue	After the Dialogue
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Invite representatives from all local faiths, ensuring inclusivity.• Explain the purpose clearly—why this dialogue matters for environmental action.• Create a neutral and welcoming space, such as a community hall, mosque courtyard, or under a sacred tree.• Agree on ground rules, such as respectful listening and avoiding interruptions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage active listening—participants should listen to understand, not just to respond.• Ensure no single faith dominates the conversation.• Use storytelling instead of debate—personal experiences are more powerful than arguments.• Keep the focus on shared values and practical actions rather than theological disagreements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Summarize key agreements and next steps.• Record insights and commitments made by the group.• Keep the conversation ongoing—interfaith dialogue is a journey, not a one-time event.

Reflection Question:

What are some barriers to interfaith dialogue in your community? How can they be overcome?

"As Tanzanians, we must take care of our environment, for it is the Eden we have inherited from the Heavenly God. Environmental conservation is a spiritual matter, and this world belongs to all of us. Therefore, we must take care of it."

Quote from Bishop Dr. Malasusa, Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania (ELCT).

TABLE 2: FACILITATOR'S QUICK CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL DIALOGUE

1	Have I ensured that all faith groups feel equally valued? Have I set a clear purpose for the dialogue?
2	Have I created an environment where participants feel safe to share? Have I encouraged storytelling and personal experiences rather than debate?
3	Have I ensured that the dialogue leads to action, not just discussion?

Dialogue Activity: Listening to the Earth and Each Other

<p>Objective:</p> <p><i>Help participants connect their faith with creation care through storytelling and shared reflection.</i></p>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Divide participants into small interfaith groups. 2. Ask each participant to share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A sacred teaching, story, or verse from their faith about nature. • A personal experience of seeing environmental harm in their community. • A hope or prayer they have for the future of creation. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. As participants share, write keywords or themes on a flip chart (e.g., water, trees, justice, ancestors). 4. Close the session with a joint moment of silence, prayer, or blessing, seeking divine guidance for the shared commitment to care for creation.
<p>Golden Rule of Eco-Interfaith Dialogue</p> <p><i>"Treat every faith with the same respect you wish for your own. Treat creation as a sacred trust belonging to all."</i></p>	

Section two

Foundation of Eco-Interfaith Action

Why Faith Matters for Creation Care

Faith and spirituality shape how people view and interact with the world, and they see nature as a sacred trust from the gods. Faith leaders guide communities to live responsibly with nature, and their voices are crucial in addressing climate change, deforestation, and pollution. This section explores creation care across different faith traditions and the role of interfaith cooperation in protecting our shared home.

Sacred Teachings from Faith Traditions on Creation Care

Faith traditions have always taught respect for nature, seeing it as a reflection of divine wisdom. Below are some key spiritual teachings from different traditions emphasizing the duty to care for creation.

Christianity – Stewardship and Creation Care

Christianity teaches that the Earth belongs to God, and humans are called to be stewards, not owners. The Bible emphasizes that nature is part of God's creation, and destroying it is an offence to the Creator.

Psalm 24:1 – ***"The Earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."***

This verse reminds believers that humans do not own the Earth. It is a gift from God, and we must treat it with reverence.

Genesis 2:15 – ***"The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it."***

This verse clearly shows that humanity was placed in creation with a responsibility to nurture and protect it.

Romans 8:22 – ***"We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."***

This verse teaches that when humans harm nature, all of creation suffers. Environmental destruction is not just a physical issue but a spiritual crisis.

Christian Reflection:

How are we treating the "Garden" that God entrusted to us? If creation is groaning, what role do we play in its suffering, and how can we heal it?

Islam – Khalifah (Stewardship) and Balance in Creation

Islam teaches that humans are Khalifah (custodians) of the Earth and must protect it as an act of worship. The Quran frequently reminds believers that nature is created with perfect balance, and harming it is an act of injustice.

Quran 55:7-9 – ***“And He has raised the heaven and set up the balance, so that you may not transgress in the balance. And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance.”***

This verse highlights that God created the world in perfect harmony, and it is human responsibility to maintain this balance, not to disrupt it.

Quran 2:30 – ***“And when your Lord said to the angels: I am going to place a successor (Khalifah) on Earth...”***

This verse emphasizes that humans were created as caretakers, meaning we are entrusted to protect, not exploit, the Earth.

Quran 7:31 – ***“O children of Adam! Take your adornment at every place of worship, and eat and drink, but waste not by excess, for Allah loves not the wasteful.”***

This verse condemns wastefulness, reminding believers to use resources responsibly.

Islamic Reflection:

As Khalifah (stewards), how can we ensure that our current resources will remain available for future generations?

African Indigenous Wisdom and Environmental Care

In African Traditional Religion, nature is not separate from the spiritual world. Respect for rivers, mountains, trees, and animals is a must, as they are believed to carry spiritual energy or to be the dwelling places of ancestors and deities. Sacred Groves and Trees: many African communities have forests or specific trees that are considered holy. Cutting them without permission from the elders or performing a ritual is forbidden, as it is believed to disturb the spirits.

Historically, African societies have maintained a profound connection with nature, viewing it as integral to their existence. Cultural practices and beliefs emphasize the interdependence between humans and the natural world, with many communities revering sacred natural elements such as rivers, mountains, and forests.

This respect for nature is reflected in sustainable resource management practices and religious teachings, often occurring in unique natural environments, using elements like

trees and stones as symbols of God's greatness. Efforts to conserve the environment included philosophies such as 'Omuziro' (Taboo) and 'Omushambwa' (Nature Divinity), which prohibited cutting down trees near water sources to prevent environmental destruction. These practices fostered respect for consecrated areas, preserving the environment and encouraging the planting of Indigenous trees.

The Wisdom Cycle involves continuous learning, reflection, application, and growth, transforming raw data into wisdom. Wisdom Circles preserve Indigenous environmental wisdom by documenting proverbs and stories from the elders. Communities can strengthen conservation efforts by reintroducing traditional practices such as tree-planting ceremonies, river conservation rituals, and forest protection measures, ensuring sustainability for future generations.

Steps to develop a Wisdom Circle include:



Proverbs on Creation

- *"If you cut the forest, the rain stops visiting your village."*
- *"The land is borrowed from our children, not inherited from our ancestors."*

These proverbs teach that our actions today affect the future and that we must think beyond our lifetimes when making environmental decisions.

Reflections:	Reflection Exercise:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are some traditional environmental laws in your community? How have they been forgotten, and can they be revived? 2. What unites us: shared values across faiths 3. Why work together? (The Power of Interfaith auction) 4. Environmental crises do not respect religion. Drought, floods, and pollution affect everyone, regardless of faith. 5. Faith leaders together have unmatched influence – people trust religious voices, which can lead to faster community change. 6. Interfaith action builds peace. When faiths work together for the Earth, they build trust, strengthening interfaith harmony. 7. Diversity is strength, different faiths bring different wisdom, creating richer solutions for environmental challenges. 	<p>What does my faith teach about nature?</p> <p>Take a moment to reflect and discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What stories, proverbs, scriptures, or traditions from your faith guide how you view and treat nature? 2. What traditional practices in your community show respect for the Earth? 3. How does environmental action express your faith? 4. Write down key reflections and use them to guide future eco-actions.

Closing Thought for Faith Leaders:

“When faith leaders from different traditions plant a tree together, they plant more than roots in the soil. They plant the seeds of peace, unity, and hope for future generations.”



PHOTO: 6 REV. GREYSON KINYAHA FROM MAKEDONIA PARISH IN SHINYANGA (SELVD) PLANTING TREES WITH SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Section Three

Practical Eco-Interfaith Actions

Tree planting with interfaith blessings

Different faith groups come together to plant trees while offering collective prayers and blessings for the protection and sustainability of the environment. This activity promotes environmental stewardship and strengthens peace and unity among diverse communities. For example, in a village, Christians, Muslims, and traditional leaders unite to plant fruit and Indigenous trees, and each group offers blessings for the trees' growth, and the community agrees to protect them for future generations.



PHOTO: 7 REV. GREYSON KINYAHA FROM MAKEDONIA PARISH IN SHINYANGA (SELVD) PLANTING TREES WITH SUNDAY SCHOOL CHILDREN.

Clean-up campaigns:

Community spaces involve organizing efforts to clean and restore sacred sites, such as riverbanks and forests, or religious sites, such as mosques and church compounds. These campaigns preserve the sanctity of these areas while raising awareness about the importance of keeping nature clean. A local example might include a group of community members and faith leaders coming together to clean a sacred river, ensuring its water remains pure for both spiritual and practical use.

The creation of community eco-gardens or green spaces:

Urban and rural communities create sustainable and environmentally friendly spaces for growing food and supporting local biodiversity. These spaces can also serve as educational hubs, teaching people about sustainable agriculture and ecological balance.



PHOTO: 8 KITUNTU ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEMBERS, KARAGWE DISTRICT.

Hosting green interfaith days

Green Fridays or Sundays encourage people from different faith backgrounds to come together on designated days to engage in eco-friendly activities, such as tree planting, recycling, or environmental education. One example could be an event where different faith communities pray for the planet on a Friday or Sunday, followed by activities like cleaning up a local park or planting native trees. This day may incorporate the interfaith blessing for water protection, including words from different religious texts expressing gratitude for the water, and asking for divine protection for future generations.



PHOTO: 9 SHEIKH KABEKE FROM MWANZA AND CONGREGANTS FROM MAGU MOSQUE COMPOUND PLANTING TREES DONATED BY TFS TO RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

Advocacy for sustainable policies and responsible livelihoods:

Religious and community leaders advocate for government policies promoting environmental sustainability by using their influence to shift public opinion. Faith groups emphasize conservation and sustainable development, helping bring about beneficial policy changes. For instance, religious leaders might lobby for laws mandating renewable energy use in public buildings. They can promote sustainable livelihoods such as recycling, and reducing and reusing both renewable and non-renewable resources, such as clean cooking energy through the introduction of clean cookstoves or solar-powered cookers. These stoves minimize the use of firewood and charcoal, thus reducing deforestation and improving indoor air quality. Facilitating the distribution of energy-efficient stoves to households reduces the time spent gathering firewood and the environmental impact of traditional cooking methods.



PHOTO: 10 MS ZAINAB KHALIFAN FROM BAKWATA ADVOCATING FOR JUST ENERGY POLICIES DURING THE UIF MEETING IN BUKOBA

Interfaith Songs, Poems, and Plays

Creative expressions such as songs, poems, and plays are potent tools for raising environmental awareness and fostering a sense of unity among faith communities. Interfaith songbooks such as "One World, Many Voices" encourage people from different backgrounds to sing together about hope, peace, and love. Similarly, poetry and theatrical performances can convey profound messages about the importance of environmental conservation and the shared responsibility of all faiths to protect the planet. These artistic actions help to inspire and engage communities in the collective effort to address climate change.

Youth Eco-Interfaith Action Clubs

The creation of Youth Interfaith Nature Action Clubs allows young people from different religious backgrounds to join in environmental actions that promote sustainable practices and respect for the Earth. These clubs can be platforms for young people to learn from each other, organize eco-friendly events, and promote environmental awareness across their communities.



PHOTO: 11 YOUTH FROM KARAGWE. PHOTO BY TOBIAS BRO KLINDT

Below is a step-by-step process to guide the formation and sustainability of these clubs:

1. Identify Stakeholders and Partners
2. Awareness and Sensitization
3. Formation of Eco-Interfaith Clubs
4. Capacity Building and Training
5. Initiating Environmental Actions
6. Interfaith Dialogue and Collaboration
7. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Sustainability

After successfully forming a youth club, the young people will sign a declaration and make a public pledge to participate in activities that protect and restore the environment.



PHOTO: 12 YOUTH GLOBAL STORYTELLERS FROM DENMARK LEARNING FROM LOCAL WOMEN HOW TO PREPARE TREE NURSERIES FROM THE USAMBARA MOUNTAINS, TANZANIA.

Women-led Eco-Initiatives

Women-led eco-initiatives are a powerful force for change. Women, often the primary caretakers of families, have a vested interest in protecting the environment. In many communities, women lead the way in sustainable practices, from eco-friendly farming to renewable energy use. Women can form community-based eco-interfaith groups focused on planting trees, managing nurseries, running beekeeping projects, and promoting sustainable agricultural practices. One such initiative involved creating small-scale tree nurseries in villages, with the women teaching others how to plant and care for Indigenous trees.

“Conservation is not merely a scientific duty. It is a spiritual responsibility. When we care for creation, we honour the creator. When we protect the environment, we fulfil our mission as stewards of God’s creation.”

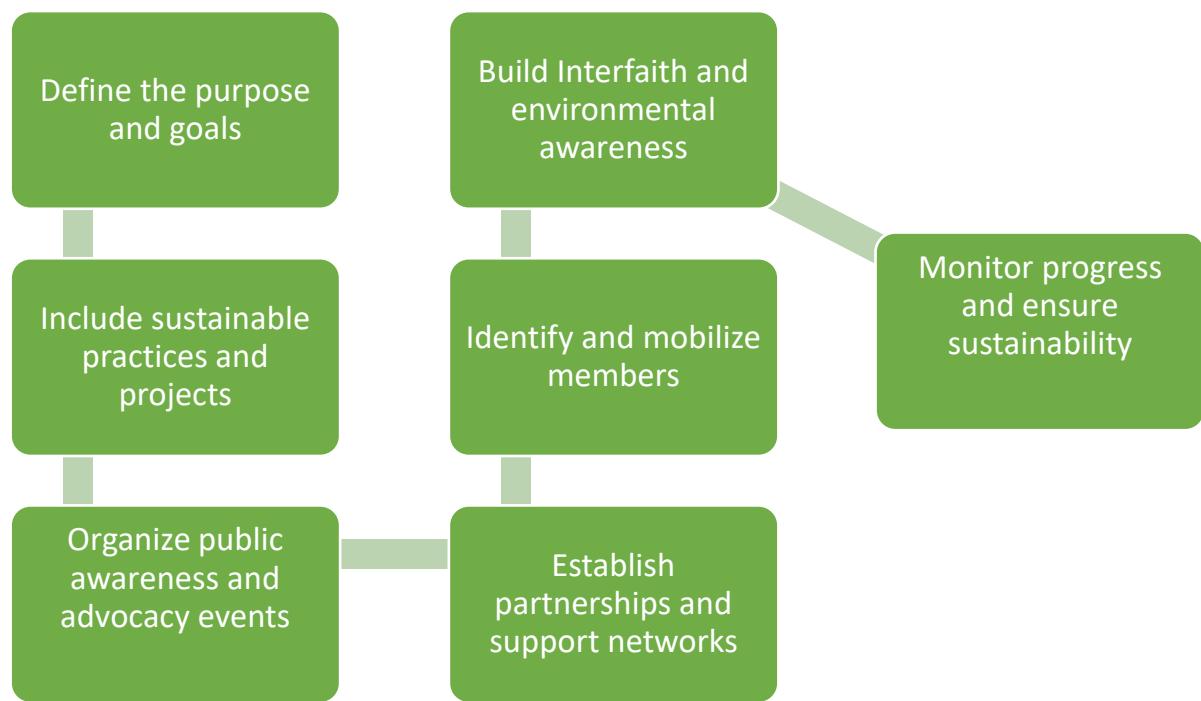
Bish. Dr. Alphonse Mwaro Baya (Lord Bishop of the Diocese of Mombasa ACK)



PHOTO: 13 YOUTH GLOBAL STORYTELLERS FROM DENMARK WERE LEARNING FROM LOCAL WOMEN HOW TO PLANT AND GROW SEEDLINGS ON THE GROUND FROM THE USAMBARA MOUNTAINS, TANZANIA.

A women's interfaith group in a village can form a Wisdom Circle to share knowledge on sustainable agriculture, herbal medicine, and water conservation techniques. Developing an Eco-Interfaith Women's Cycle Group involves incorporating environmental advocacy, interfaith collaboration, and community engagement while empowering women.

Steps to Establish and Sustain the Group:



Monitoring and Storytelling

Monitoring and storytelling are essential tools for tracking progress, learning from experiences, and sharing impact with a broader audience. Successful initiatives may go unnoticed without proper documentation, and valuable lessons may be lost. Documentation ensures accountability by tracking environmental commitments, enabling learning and improvement by identifying what works and what needs adjustment. It is a source of inspiration and advocacy, showcasing real-life impact to encourage community involvement. To effectively measure progress, each interfaith group or forum can focus on three primary areas: trees planted, dialogues held, and overall community impact.



Tracking tree planting involves recording the number of seedlings distributed and planted, monitoring survival rates at intervals of 3, 6, and 12 months, and identifying the types of trees, such as fruit trees, Indigenous species, and medicinal plants.



Tracking dialogues on environmental action involves recording the number and type of community discussions or interfaith meetings conducted, along with the key topics covered, such as energy-efficient stoves, climate change, and natural resource management.



Community impact stories highlight the real-life benefits of environmental actions, capturing testimonies from individuals or groups who have experienced positive change.

Example: Rose Athanael, a member of Katembe village, shared that after switching to an energy-efficient stove, her family had reduced their firewood usage by 50%, freeing up time for her to expand her beekeeping business.

Eco-Logbook Template for Each Committee

Each Eco-Interfaith group should maintain an Eco-Logbook to record real-time environmental activities.

Example Eco-Logbook Template:

Date	Activity	Location	Participants	Outputs	Follow-up Needed
dd/mm/yy	Tree planting	Nyakato School	30 students	200 trees planted	Check survival rate in 3 months
dd/mm/yy	Dialogue on clean energy	Kituntu village	50 villagers	15 households adopted energy-efficient stoves	Conduct follow-up visits
dd/mm/yy	Beekeeping training	Nyaishozi village	10 women	5 beehives constructed	Provide honey harvesting tools



PHOTO: 14 BEEHIVE IN KARAGWE. PHOTO BY TOBIAS BRO KLINDT

SECTION FOUR

Faith Messages and Sermons for Environmental Care

TABLE 1: CHRISTIAN SERMONS

BY REV. REBECCA MUHOZA

SERMON 1: The Earth Belongs to the Lord — And We are Accountable	SERMON 2: Created in God's Image — Called to Reflect His Care	SERMON 3: Blessings and Responsibility – Will We Honour God's Gift?
<p>Text: Psalm 24:1-2</p> <p><i>"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for He founded it on the seas and established it on the waters."</i></p>	<p>Text: Genesis 1:26-31</p> <p><i>"Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals..."</i></p>	<p>Text: Jeremiah 2:7</p> <p><i>"I brought you into a fertile land to eat its fruits and rich produce. But you came and defiled my land and made my inheritance detestable."</i></p>
<p>Introduction</p> <p>I want to ask you a simple question: whose world is this? When you look at the mountains, forests, rivers, and animals, do you believe they belong to us? To the government? To some corporations? No! From the beginning, the Bible declares that the Earth belongs to the Lord!</p> <p>The world we live in is not some cosmic accident. It is the handiwork of a loving Creator, a God who formed every river and every tree, every sunrise and every creature. He formed them not for destruction but for His glory and our stewardship.</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>What does it mean to be made in God's image? It means we are created to reflect His character in all we do. And part of God's character is that He cares for His creation.</p> <p>From the first chapter of the Bible, God gives humanity a mission: care for what I have made. The first job ever given was not in church building, it was in a garden. God called Adam and Eve to care for creation and rule over it with love and wisdom, just as God rules over us.</p>	<p>Introduction</p> <p>What will future generations say about us? Will they thank us for preserving the world God gave us? Or will they curse us for leaving them a wasteland? This question is not environmental — it is spiritual.</p>

<p>Creation is a Gift — But Not Ours to Own</p> <p>The book of Genesis paints a powerful picture of God speaking the world into existence and placing Adam and Eve into a garden not as owners but as caretakers. The Earth was God's gift, and they were called to tend and keep it.</p> <p>Today, God asks us the same question He asked Adam: "Where are you?" Where are we when the forests are destroyed? When rivers run dry from pollution? When our children inherit poisoned air and barren soil? Where are we, Church?</p>	<p>Sin corrupts our role as caretakers.</p> <p>But when sin entered the world, everything changed. Humanity's relationship with creation was broken. Greed replaced gratitude. Exploitation replaced care. And, today, we see the evidence all around us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forests disappearing faster than we can replant them. • Rivers polluted until life can no longer survive in them. • Land stripped bare by greed and carelessness. 	<p>God's Blessings come with responsibility.</p> <p>God brought Israel into a fertile land, giving them rivers, vineyards, olive groves, and grain fields. But Israel forgot something, the land was not theirs to waste; it was God's gift entrusted to them. And when they polluted it with idolatry and greed, God called it detestable.</p>
<p>Environmental Destruction is a Spiritual Crisis</p> <p>When we waste, pollute, and destroy God's creation, we are not just committing environmental sins; we are also committing spiritual rebellion. We say to God, "We don't care about Your gift." And one day, when we stand before Him, He will ask how we treated the world He entrusted us with.</p>	<p>Caring for creation is part of our witness.</p> <p>As Christians, we are called not just to preach the Gospel of salvation but to live it out through our actions. Part of that witness is how we treat the Earth, the stage where God's story unfolds.</p> <p>Jesus said in Matthew 5:16, "<i>Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.</i>"</p> <p>When people see the Church planting trees instead of cutting them down, preserving water instead of wasting it, they will see something different, they will know the character of God reflected in His people.</p>	<p>We have defiled God's Gift.</p> <p>Today, God has given us forests, oceans, and fertile lands — and we have defiled them through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greed-driven deforestation. • Polluted water and poisoned air. • Wasteful living that consumes more than we need. • This is not just a physical crisis; it is a spiritual crisis. It shows that we have forgotten that the Earth is a sacred ground entrusted to us by a holy God.

<p>A Call to Repentance and Action</p> <p>God calls the Church to repent for its carelessness toward creation and to heal the Earth as His hands and feet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Plant trees where there is deforestation.</i> • <i>Clean up rivers polluted by waste.</i> • <i>Teach our children that every piece of creation carries God's fingerprint.</i> <p>Above all, let us live with the humility of stewards, knowing this world is not ours but the Lord's.</p>	<p>A Call to Act</p> <p>I believe God is calling the Church to rise and say:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will protect what God has made. • We will teach our children that the Earth is sacred. • We will no longer sit silently while greed and neglect destroy what God called "very good". 	<p>The Church must lead the way.</p> <p>If we believe that the Earth is the Lord's, the Church must stand at the frontline of environmental action. Not because it is fashionable. Not because governments tell us to. But because we are God's people, and we honour Him by honouring His creation.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p> <p>My friend, I want to ask you — how do you treat what God has given you? Because how you care for creation reflects how you honour the Creator. Let us rise as a generation of faithful stewards, so that when we stand before Him, we can say, "Lord, we took care of what You gave us."</p>	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>My friend, if you want to reflect the image of God, then start by caring for what He cares for — His creation. Let your love for creation be a sermon without words, declaring to the world that the Creator is good, and His people are faithful.</p>	<p>Conclusion</p> <p>My friend, when you walk through a forest, drink from a clean river, and breathe fresh air, remember that you are receiving God's gift. Will you honour the Giver by protecting the gift? The choice is yours—and the time to act is now.</p>

TABLE 2: ISLAMIC DAAWA

By: SHEIKH ABDULA HAMID SULEIMAN

DA'AWA 1: Children and the Environment – A Sacred Trust from Allah	Da'wah 2: Our Responsibility to Care for the Climate — A Trust from Allah <i>"Bismillah Rahmani Raheem"</i>
<p>In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Beloved brothers and sisters, I begin by reminding myself and all of you that Allah has given us two sacred trusts: our children and the environment. Both are Amanah (trust) and will testify for or against us on the Day of Judgement.</p>	<p>My beloved brothers and sisters, we begin in the Name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. We send blessings and salutations upon our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him), who was sent as a mercy to all creation.</p> <p>I want to talk to you about something that affects every single one of us, something that does not care about your wealth, your tribe, your nationality, or your age. It is the climate, the environment we live in.</p> <p>The air we breathe, the water we drink, and the land we walk upon are all part of the trust (Amanah) that Allah has placed in our hands.</p>
<p>The Earth – A Gift and a Trust</p> <p>Allah says in the Qur'an:</p> <p>"The earth belongs to Allah and all that is in it." (Qur'an 24:64)</p> <p>This Earth is not ours to waste, pollute, or destroy for temporary gain. It is a sign of Allah's creative power. Every tree, every river, every living creature glorifies Allah in ways we may never fully understand. And yet, who is the greatest destroyer of this creation? It is us — human beings.</p>	<p>Allah says in the Qur'an:</p> <p><i>"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what people's hands have done, so that He may make them taste the consequences of their actions, so perhaps they will return to righteousness." (Surah Ar-Rum, 30:41)</i></p> <p>Subhan Allah, what a powerful verse! Allah is telling us that the environmental harm we see today, the floods, the droughts, and the pollution, is not random. They are the result of human actions. Our greed, carelessness, excessive consumption, and attitude of "this is not my problem". But even within this warning, there is hope that we can change and return to better ways.</p>
<p>The Environment Shapes Our Children's Souls</p> <p>My brothers and sisters, think that children are like blank pages that they absorb from the environment that surrounds them. If they grow up in a home that teaches respect for nature, they will see the environment as a reflection of Allah's mercy. But if they grow up in a society that pollutes, wastes,</p>	<p>The Climate is a sign of Allah.</p> <p>My brothers and sisters, the changing of the seasons, the beauty of the sunrise, the rain that brings life, the cool winds that soothe us—all of these are Ayat, signs from our Creator. They are not just there to admire; they are reminders of Allah's power, wisdom, and mercy. When we destroy these blessings, we are not just harming the planet; we are ignoring the signs of Allah. That</p>

<p>and destroys, they will see creation as something to exploit.</p> <p>The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:</p> <p>"Each child is born upon the fitrah (pure nature), but it is the parents who make them Christian, Jewish, or Magian."</p> <p>This hadith is not just about faith. It teaches us that the home environment moulds the soul. How we treat creation becomes part of our children's spiritual DNA.</p>	<p>is a spiritual crisis before it is an environmental one.</p>
<p>Our Prophet's Environmental Wisdom</p> <p>Subhan Allah, our beloved Prophet (peace be upon him), was the greatest environmentalist.</p> <p>He taught us:</p> <p>"Do not waste water even if you are at the bank of a flowing river."</p> <p>"Planting a tree is a charity (sadaqah)."</p> <p>"Whoever revives a dead piece of land will be rewarded for every living creature that benefits from it."</p> <p>What does this show? Caring for the environment is not a luxury. It is part of faith. Inheritance and Environment: The Two Teachers. The scholars of Islam teach us that two forces shape every child:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inheritance (Urithi): They receive the strengths and weaknesses passed through generations from their bloodline. 2. Environment (Mazingira) This is the world they are raised in: the home, the family, the school, the society, and the media they consume. <p>A good inheritance in a corrupt environment will struggle to shine. But even a weak inheritance can flourish in a</p>	<p>The Prophet's Example — A Mercy to All Creation</p> <p>And who better to guide us in this than the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)? Even in the deserts of Arabia, where water was more precious than gold, he taught us <i>not to waste even a single drop</i>, even when performing wudhu.</p> <p>He taught us that planting a tree is a Sadaqah Jariyah — an ongoing charity that will benefit us long after we have returned to Allah. He warned us not to pollute water sources, not to cut down trees unnecessarily, and to show mercy to animals. This is part of our faith! Caring for the environment is not some modern trend but part of the Sunnah.</p>

<p>righteous environment. This is why we must work on the home and society.</p>	
<p>Natural vs. Human Environment</p> <p>There are two types of environments: the Natural Environment (Mazingira Asilia) — Allah created the world: the oceans, mountains, forests, animals, air, and water. Allah says:</p> <p>"Indeed, we created everything in perfect balance." (Qur'an 54:49)</p> <p>The Human Environment (Mazingira Hariri) — This is what we have built: our cities, technology, and industries. The natural environment reflects Allah's perfection, while the human environment reflects our responsibility. When we destroy nature, we disrupt the balance Allah created.</p>	<p>Practical Actions — Small Steps, Big Rewards</p> <p>Some people think climate action is only for governments or scientists. No, my brothers and sisters, every small action counts with Allah.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve water. Close the tap when you don't need it. • Reduce waste. Avoid unnecessary plastic and excess. • Plant a tree — even if you know Qiyamah is tomorrow, the Prophet (peace be upon him) told us to plant it still. • Teach your children that respecting nature is part of loving Allah.
<p>The Crisis we Created</p> <p>Brothers and sisters, the environmental crisis we see today — polluted rivers, deforestation, climate change — this is not Allah's test. This is the result of our actions. Allah says in the Qur'an:</p> <p><i>"Corruption has appeared on land and sea because of what the hands of people have earned."</i> (Qur'an 30:41)</p> <p>We have disconnected ourselves from the natural world and, in doing so, from the signs of Allah. Our greed, wastefulness, and arrogance have made the Earth cry in pain.</p>	<p>The Earth is Temporary — Our Accountability is Eternal</p> <p>This world is temporary but our actions here will follow us into the next life. On the Day of Judgement, Allah will ask us how we treated this Amanah, this trust. Were we wasteful? Were we greedy? Or did we honour His creation with gratitude and care?</p>
<p>Teaching our Children to Care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If we want to raise children who love Allah, we must teach them to love and respect His creation. • Take them to the forest and tell them every leaf sings Allah's praise. • Show them how water is life, and wasting it disrespects the gift of life itself. • Teach them that planting trees is not just environmental work but an act of worship. 	<p>A Final Reminder</p> <p>If you believe in love for this Earth, what would you love for your children and grandchildren after you? This is not just about saving the planet. It is about living our faith the faith of care, mercy, balance, and respect.</p> <p>May Allah make us people who walk gently upon this Earth, who leave a legacy of care, and who meet Him with a record full of kindness — not only to each other but also to the environment He gifted us.</p>

- Our schools, madrassas, and homes must all become environmental education centres rooted in our Islamic values.

A Call to Action for Parents and Leaders

- Mothers and fathers, teachers and elders, what environment are you creating for the next generation?
- Are we raising children of wastefulness or children of gratitude?
- Are we showing them a world that reflects Allah's order or human greed?
- Are we teaching them that success is wealth and power or that success is leaving the Earth better than we found it?

We are failing as caretakers; unless we repent and change course, our children will inherit a broken world and faith. Our choices today shape our children's future; every tree planted, every drop of water saved, and every lesson on respecting creation will benefit future generations.

The Prophet (peace be upon him) said:

"If the final hour arrives and you have a sapling in your hand, plant it."

Why? Because even in the face of destruction, caring for creation is part of our faith.

Conclusion – A Dua for Our Children and Our Earth

Allah,

Make our children people of faith, wisdom, and mercy.

Let them walk gently upon the Earth, knowing that this land belongs to You.

Make them caretakers of Your creation, following the example of Your Messenger (peace be upon him).

Grant them hearts that see Your beauty in every tree, every river, every creature.

Protect them from greed, wastefulness, and arrogance.

And make us, their parents, faithful examples so we may meet You with clean hands and pure hearts.

Ameen

"Brothers and sisters, let us leave this world better than we found it — for the sake of our children and for the pleasure of Allah. This is not environmental activism. This is Islam."

Wassalamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullahi wa Barakatuh.

SECTION FIVE

Final Commitment and Blessing

Why End with a Commitment?

Faith communities understand the power of commitment. Promises made before God, ancestors, and the community hold deep spiritual meaning in every religious tradition. Caring for creation is not just a project activity. As people of faith, we make a spiritual covenant with each other, with future generations, and with the Earth itself. This section offers a way for your interfaith committee to seal your commitment, making it part of your shared spiritual journey.

Sample Interfaith Covenant Text

We, members of the Interfaith Committee of [Community Name], representing the diverse faiths and spiritual traditions of our community, standing on the common ground of our shared humanity, recognizing the Earth as a sacred trust from the Creator, mindful of the suffering caused by environmental destruction, and moved by the teachings of our faiths to act for justice, peace, and the healing of creation,

Hereby Commit To:

1. Work together as people of faith to protect forests, water sources, and all creation.
2. Teach our communities that caring for the Earth is a spiritual duty in all our traditions.
3. Mobilize our religious institutions to adopt eco-friendly practices.
4. Support youth, women, and elders to lead environmental action within our faith communities.
5. Speak out boldly when environmental harm threatens human dignity and future generations.
6. Pray together for the healing of the Earth, knowing that spiritual renewal and ecological renewal go hand in hand.

We make this covenant today with God, the Creator, as our witness and our ancestors' spirits as our guides.

Signed on this day [Insert Date]

By:

Representative of [Faith 1]

Representative of [Faith 2]

Representative of [Faith 3]

Community Elders and Youth

(Space for signatures, stamps, or symbols from each faith group)

Create Your Local Covenant

You don't have to use the exact text above. Your committee can draft your own covenant using local language, religious symbols, and meaningful cultural expressions for your community.

Reflection Exercise: Writing Your Covenant

As a committee, gather and reflect:

1. What does creation mean in each of our faith traditions?
2. What shared values unite us in caring for the Earth?
3. What specific commitments are we ready to make together?
4. What blessings or prayers from our faiths can we include?
5. Write your own covenant and publicly commit to it at a joint interfaith event.

Sample Interfaith Blessing for Creation Care

From Christianity:

"Creator God, bless the hands that plant trees and clean the Earth. May we walk gently upon Your creation, knowing we are stewards of Your sacred gift."

From African Traditional Spirituality:

"Spirits of the land, rivers, and forests receive our humble offerings. May our ancestors walk with us as we restore the balance between people and nature."

From Islam:

"Ya Allah, make us khalifahs who protect the Earth, just as you have commanded. Guide our hearts to respect all living beings, for they too glorify You."

From All Faiths Together

"We ask for wisdom, courage, and unity so that our work to care for creation may bring healing to the land, peace to our hearts, and hope to future generations. Amen / Ameen / Ashe / Twaweza."

How to Create Your Eco-Commitment Tree?

1. Draw a large tree on a wall or poster.
2. Each faith group adds one leaf with a written action (e.g., "We commit to holding an eco-sermon once a month").
3. Place the tree in a public space, such as a worship area, school, or community centre.
4. Update it regularly with new leaves showing progress and new commitments.
5. Space for Drawing Their Eco-Commitment Tree: each faith adds a leaf with an action they will lead.



PICHA 1: "SHEIKH OMARI KAMERA, MWENYEKITI WA BARAZA LA WAISLAMU TANZANIA, TAWI LA MWANZA, AKIPANDA MTI WAKATI WA UZINDUZI WA JUKWAA LA UWAKILI LA DINI MBALIMBALI JIJINI MWANZA."

Resource Bank

TABLE 3: BIBLICAL CALL TO CARE FOR CREATION

Biblical Call to Care for Creation
<p>Genesis 1:1-2</p> <p><i>"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the deep surface, and the Spirit of God hovered over the waters."</i></p> <p>This is the foundation of our faith in creation; God is the source of everything. Nothing came into being by accident or by chance. All creation is an intentional work of God's divine will and wisdom.</p> <p>When God is removed from our understanding of the world, life becomes empty, formless, and without clear direction. This teaches us that life, nature, and all creation can only find meaning when connected to the Creator.</p>
<p>Genesis 1:9-13</p> <p><i>"And God said, 'Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear.' And it was so. God called the dry ground 'land,' and the gathered waters He called 'seas.' And God saw that it was good. Then God said, 'Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their kinds.' And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good."</i></p> <p>This reveals to us the orderliness and intentionality of God's creation. He separated water from land, showing us that God is a God of order, not chaos. Life, as we know it, begins with God's command for vegetation to flourish.</p> <p>Without God, there can be no life. Just as the land was commanded to bear fruit, we too are called to bear fruits of righteousness and good works (Galatians 5:22-23). Everything God created was good; we are entrusted to honour, care for, and preserve this goodness. To neglect or destroy it is to disrespect the Creator Himself.</p>
<p>Genesis 1:26-31</p> <p><i>"Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'"</i></p> <p>This verse establishes human beings' unique role in creation, bearing God's image and endowed with reason, responsibility, and moral awareness. Humans are entrusted with authority and stewardship over the rest of creation, not for selfish exploitation but for responsible care. If God declared all creation to be "very good" then we must ensure that this goodness is preserved, and our leadership over creation must reflect God's wisdom, compassion, and justice.</p>
<p>Genesis 2:15</p> <p><i>"The Lord God took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and care for it."</i></p>

Humanity's first vocation was caring for creation, highlighting that environmental care is part of our divine purpose. We must use resources wisely and protect the Earth for future generations, as reckless exploitation has led to deforestation, pollution, and species extinction, violating the original creation mandate.

Psalm 19:1

"The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands."

Creation itself testifies to God's greatness and glory. Every sunrise, river, forest, and creature is a sermon without words, calling us to honour the Creator. By caring for creation, we join this silent praise.

Psalm 104:24-30

"How many are Your works, Lord! In wisdom, You made them all; the earth is full of Your creatures... All creatures look to You to give them their food at the proper time. When You give it to them, they gather it up; when You open Your hand, they are satisfied with good things. When You hide Your face, they are terrified; when You take away their breath, they die and return to the dust. When You send Your Spirit, they are created, and You renew the face of the ground."

This passage highlights the interdependence of all creation, emphasizing that every living thing relies on God's continuous provision. Harming the environment disrupts this divine balance, causing suffering to both nature and human communities that depend on healthy ecosystems for survival.

Isaiah 55:12-13

"You will go out in joy and be led forth in peace; the mountains and hills will burst into song before you, and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thornbush, the juniper will grow, and instead of briers, the myrtle will grow. This will be for the Lord's renown, for an everlasting sign that will endure forever."

This prophetic vision connects human redemption with the restoration of creation. When humanity is reconciled with God, creation itself rejoices. This shows us that the healing of the human heart and the healing of creation go hand in hand. Environmental care is part of spiritual renewal.

Psalm 24:1

"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it."

This verse reminds us that ownership belongs to God alone. We are not the true owners of the Earth — we are only temporary stewards. This should lead to humility and care, not arrogance and greed.

Psalm 115:16

"The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth He has given to mankind."

This reveals the divine trust given to humanity. Although God owns all, He has entrusted the Earth to our care. This is a sacred responsibility, not a licence for destruction. The Earth is a gift to nurture, not a resource to exhaust.

John 1:3

"Through Him, all things were made; without Him, nothing was made that has been made."

This reminds us of that Christ Himself participated in creation. Caring for creation is therefore not simply an Old Testament concept, it is part of the Gospel message itself.

Nehemiah 9:6

"You alone are the Lord. You made the heavens, even the highest heavens, and all their starry host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to everything, and the multitudes of heaven worship You."

This verse highlights that creation and worship are connected. When we care for creation, we honour the Creator. When we abuse creation, we dishonour the One who made it.

Colossians 1:16-17

"For in Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible... all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

This New Testament passage highlights Christ's central role in creation and its ongoing sustenance. To harm creation is to dishonour Christ Himself. To care for creation is to live out the Gospel.

Job 37:14-18

"Listen to this, Job; stop and consider God's wonders. Do you know how God controls the clouds and makes His lightning flash? Do you know how the clouds hang poised; those wonders of Him who has perfect knowledge?"

This powerful passage invites us to pause and reflect on the majesty of creation. It calls us to humility, reminding us that we are small compared to the grandeur of God's work.

Final Reflection

Beloved brothers and sisters, these verses paint a clear Biblical picture:

- Creation is God's handiwork.
- Human beings are entrusted as stewards.
- To care for creation is to honour God.
- To abuse creation is to dishonour the Creator.
- Creation care is part of faithful living and worship.

As Christians, we cannot claim to love God while ignoring or harming His creation. Let us, therefore, become faithful stewards, preserving the Earth as an act of worship, teaching our children to see the world as sacred, and living in such a way that our creation care reflects our love for the Creator.

May God give us wisdom, courage, and compassion to fulfil this calling for His glory and future generations.

Amen

TABLE 4: TRANSLATIONS OF THE QURANIC VERSES ON THE ENVIRONMENT

Translations of the Quranic Verses on the Environment
Surah Al-Baqarah (2:205) <p><i>"And when he turns away, he strives throughout the land to cause corruption and destroy crops and animals. And Allah does not like corruption."</i></p>
Surah Al-Baqarah (2:29) <p><i>"It is He who created for you all of that which is on the earth. Then He directed Himself to the heaven, [His being above all creation], and made them seven heavens, and He is Knowing of all things."</i></p>
Surah Ar-Rum (30:41) <p><i>"Corruption has appeared throughout the land and sea by [reason of] what the hands of people have earned so He may let them taste part of [the consequence of] what they have done that perhaps they will return [to righteousness]."</i></p>
Surah Ar-Rum (30:42) <p><i>"Say, 'Travel through the land and observe how was the end of those before. Most of them were polytheists.'"</i></p>
Surah Al-A'raf (7:56) <p><i>"And do not cause corruption upon the earth after its reformation. And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good."</i></p>
Surah Al-A'raf (7:85) <p><i>"And to [the people of] Madyan [We sent] their brother Shu'ayb. He said, 'O my people, worship Allah; you have no deity other than Him. There has come to you clear evidence from your Lord. So fulfil the measure and weight and do not deprive people of their due and do not cause corruption upon the earth after its reformation. That is better for you, if you should believe.'"</i></p>
Surah Al-Qasas (28:77) <p><i>"And seek, through that which Allah has given you, the home of the Hereafter; and [yet], do not forget your share of the world. And do good as Allah has done good to you. And desire not corruption in the land. Indeed, Allah does not like corrupters."</i></p>
Surah Al-A'raf (7:74) <p><i>"And remember when He made you successors after the 'Aad and settled you in the land, and you take for yourselves palaces from its plains and carve from the mountains, homes. So remember the favours of Allah and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption."</i></p>
Surah Al-Kahf (18:58) <p><i>"And your Lord is the Forgiving, Full of Mercy. If he were to blame them for what they earned, He would have hastened the punishment for them. But for them, it is an appointment from which they will never find an escape."</i></p>

Surah Hud (11:85)

"And O my people, give full measure and weight in justice and do not deprive the people of their due and do not commit abuse upon the earth, spreading corruption."

Surah Ash-Shu'ara (26:51-52)

"They said, 'No harm. Indeed, to our Lord we will return. Indeed, we aspire that our Lord will forgive us our sins because we were the first of the believers.'"

Surah Al-A'raf (7:31)

"O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess."

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:27)

"Who breaks the covenant of Allah after contracting it and severs that which Allah has ordered to be joined and causes corruption on earth? It is those who are the losers."

Surah Hud (11:7)

"And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days - and His Throne had been upon water - that He might test you as to which of you is best indeed. But if you say, 'Indeed, you are resurrected after death,' those who disbelieve will surely say, 'This is not but obvious magic.'"

Surah Hud (11:17)

"So is one who [stands] upon clear evidence from his Lord and a witness from Him follows it, and before it was the Scripture of Moses to lead and as mercy? Those who believe in it. But whoever disbelieves in it from the [various] factions - the Fire is his promised destination. So, be not in doubt about it. Indeed, it is your Lord's truth, but most people do not believe."

Surah Al-Baqarah (2:60)

"And [recall] when Moses prayed for water for his people, we said, 'Strike with your staff the stone.' And twelve springs gushed forth from it, and everyone knew its watering place. Eat and drink from the provision of Allah, and do not commit abuse on the earth, spreading corruption."

Surah Al-A'raf (7:31) (Repeated verse from earlier)

"O children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess."

Summary of Hadith on Environment:**1. Planting a Tree as Charity:**

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said that if a Muslim plants a tree or sows seeds, and then birds, animals, or humans eat from it, it counts as ongoing charity (Sadaqah) for the one who planted it. (Hadith reported by Anas bin Malik)

2. Keeping the Environment Clean:

The Prophet (SAW) advised Muslims to avoid defiling public areas, especially places where people walk or gather, such as pathways or shaded areas. Cleanliness of the environment is a part of faith. (Hadith reported by Abdullah bin Amr)

3. Conserving Water:

Even when performing ablution (wudhu) near a flowing river, the Prophet (SAW) emphasized not to waste water. This highlights the importance of conserving resources even when they seem abundant. (Hadith reported by Amr bin Shuaib)

4. Protecting Water Sources:

Polluting or contaminating water sources is forbidden. This includes urinating in still water. Protecting water is protecting life itself. (Reported in several collections)

5. Caring for Public Spaces:

The Prophet (SAW) warned against those who misuse public spaces, emphasizing that cleanliness and respect for shared areas is a part of faith. (Hadith reported by Abu Hurayrah)

6. Faith and Environmental Responsibility:

The Prophet (SAW) taught that true faith includes caring for the environment and leaving spaces clean for others. (Reported in various Hadith collections)

7. Personal Hygiene and Environmental Care:

The Prophet (SAW) reminded his companions that personal cleanliness extends to the environment. Throwing waste in improper places, especially water sources, is forbidden. (Reported by Abu Ayyub Ansari)

8. Environmental Ethics in Warfare:

Abu Bakr (RA) instructed Muslim armies to avoid destroying trees, burning crops, or killing animals unnecessarily during warfare. Respecting creation, even in conflict, is a part of Islamic ethics.

9. Proper Waste Disposal:

The Prophet (SAW) prohibited relieving oneself in water sources, under fruit-bearing trees, or where people gather, highlighting environmental cleanliness. (Reported by Abu Hurayrah)

10. Avoiding Water Pollution:

Throwing impurities into clean water is strongly condemned. The Prophet (SAW) warned against such actions as they harm both people and the environment. (Reported in Bukhari and Muslim)

11. Islamic Environmental Philosophy:

Islam teaches that caring for the environment is a form of worship, a reflection of gratitude to Allah. Every act of protection benefits all creation.

12. Fire and Environmental Destruction:

The Prophet (SAW) warned against starting unnecessary fires or causing destruction that harms people, animals, or the environment. (Reported in Ahmad)

Conclusion:

These Hadiths remind us that environmental care is not a new concept. It is a part of our faith. From conserving water to planting trees, protecting public spaces, and avoiding pollution, Islam calls on every believer to steward the Earth. Environmental responsibility is a spiritual obligation directly connected to our love for Allah and His creation.



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