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10 RETHINKING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN LIGHT OF MAQASID AL-SHARIA

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INTRODUCTION

Imagine living in a world of chronic food shortages, widespread disease, mass species extinction, no ice at the Antarctic, wars over freshwater sources, drowning coastal cities and a deforested Amazon—we are not far from it. The symptoms of this bleak picture of the future are already apparent. In the pre-industrial world, at no point were CO₂ concentrations above 300 ppm.² From 1959 to 2016, it has increased from 316 ppm to 400 ppm.³ At this rate, an extrapolation demonstrates that, by mid-century, it will almost be 800 ppm. Today, we are witnessing a loss in biodiversity, air and water pollution, floods, droughts, depletions of natural resources and global warming. In the social sphere, income inequality, disease, poverty, lack of sanitation and education are widespread and visible. The incessant development is insatiable in its consumption of earth's vital resources. Natural resources are treated as a consistent income, rather than finite capital, in a way that threatens the provision of future generations.⁴

The concept of sustainable development has been derived from *Our Common Future*, also known as the Brundtland Report, published by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987. The Brundtland Report defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.⁵ This definition recognises both intergenerational and intra-generational equality. The Brundtland Report highlights three fundamental pillars of sustainable development: protection of environmental resources, economic development and

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 - 2 Parenti C. 2013. “A Radical Approach to the Climate Crisis”, *Dissent Magazine*, Summer [https://doi.org/10.1353/dss.2013.0047].
 - 3 Lindsey R. 2020. “Climate Change: Atmospheric Carbon Dioxide”. Online at: <https://bit.ly/2YONAkD>
 - 4 Schumacher EF. 1973. *Small Is Beautiful: A Study of Economics as If People Mattered*. New York: Vintage Books.
 - 5 Brundtland GH. 1987. *Our Common Future – A Call for Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 8 [https://doi.org/10.1017/S0376892900016805] [hereinafter Brundtland Report].

social justice.⁶ The most common and accepted model of sustainable development is the “three overlapping circles” model, also known as the “three-sector” model or “triple-bottom” line (see Figure 10.1).⁷ It has gained significant support from the international community and has been promoted at conferences and educational institutes. The twentieth century has witnessed unprecedented economic growth and technological innovation, but it has also left an unparalleled cleavage between the rich and poor and resulted in high levels of environmental infraction. The questions we must ask are: why has sustainable development failed and what is the way forward?

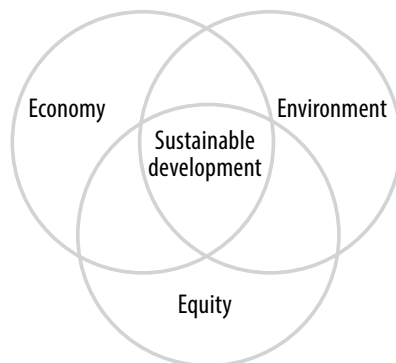


Figure 10.1: Three overlapping circles model of sustainable development

Concern for environmental integrity, propounded by the sustainable development discourse, has brought a watershed in our thinking and industrial practices, with implementation of initiatives such as carbon taxing, low carbon technology, the use of alternative technology, energy efficient practices and waste management techniques. However, not enough has been done. The traditional understanding of the sustainable development community and the Brundland Report is that development that uses appropriate technology will lead to economic growth, reduce poverty and environmental degradation.⁸ This is based on the premise that environmental degradation is caused by poverty and short-term decisions and that it is just the quality of growth that needs to be changed.⁹ Thus, to remove poverty and ensure sustainability, economic growth has been a key operative in the sustainable development discourse. However, according to researcher Lele Sharachchandram a more realistic conception of the problem of unsustainability is the influence of affluence, and its consequent overconsumption and economic

6 Jarvie ME. “Brundtland Report: Publication by World Commission on Environment and Development”, *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Online at: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Brundtland-Report> [Accessed 12 February 2020].

7 UN General Assembly. 2005. “60/1. 2005 World Summit Outcome”, U.N. Doc A/Res/60/1, 24 October.

8 Brundtland Report.

9 Sharachchandram L. 1991. “Sustainable Development – A Critical Review”, *World Development* 19(6):614 [[https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X\(91\)90197-P](https://doi.org/10.1016/0305-750X(91)90197-P)].

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exploitation. This has a greater impact on the environment than poverty. Thus, through capitalist economic pursuits and environmental degradation, poverty and social injustice are further exacerbated.¹⁰

Following from the Stockholm Conference (1972), the Brundlandt Report (1987), the Rio Earth Summit (1992), the UN Millennium Summit (2000) and the Rio + 10 Earth Summit (2002), the UN released seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, involving 193 member states and global civil society. This has been enumerated in the UN resolution, “Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, enacted to inform international policy and to motivate civil society to ensure a realisation of the “triple-bottom line”.

The approach of the UN has been rather short-sighted, focusing on goals and mitigation, but not challenging or reconceptualising the framework. According to scientist Tim Unwin, several shortcomings are evident in the SDGs: they lack focus and attempt to enumerate too many goals, the target setting lacks flexibility and is highly ambitious, it makes no attempt to effect systemic change and it serves the interest of the organisation.¹¹ Thus, a radical approach to reconceptualise sustainable development should be employed, rather than failure to meet social and ecological justice due to a superficial arrangement of goals.

In this chapter, I attempt to deconstruct sustainable development and expose both its philosophical underpinnings and its erroneous model. This requires questioning the economic structures of development, the problems of consumption and consumerism, and the impasse between anthropocentrism and ecofascism. It challenges the attempts of modern science at desacralising nature and the reduction of the sustainable development discourse to logical positivism. It further requires contestation of the contemporary ethical worldviews of utilitarianism and deontology. Only after attempts to de-secularise and neutralise the epistemological paradigms that exist within sustainable development may we transplant it into it a religious, and in particular, an Islamic worldview.

My aim is to redefine and model sustainable development through an Islamic vision by rethinking sustainable development in light of *maqasid al-sharia* (objectives of Islamic law). Infusing faith-based elements in the model will give it a more true and holistic notion of sustainability. In this reconstruction, we attempt to classify sustainable development through the higher objectives or purposes of Islam. This will elaborate upon the concepts of faith (*al-din*), society (*al-nafs* and *al-nasl*), environment (*al-bi'ah*) and economy (*al-mal*). Using the *maqasid* model of sustainable development will enact significant change in improving poverty and concern for the environment. Through the conceptual ingredients of stewardship (*khalifa*), justice (*'adl*), balance (*mizan*), moderation (*wasatiyyah*), brotherhood (*ukhuwah*) and

10 Sharachchandram, “Sustainable Development”, 614.

11 Unwin T. 2015. “ICTs and the Failure of the Sustainable Development Goals”, *Tim Unwin's Blog*, 5 August. Tim Unwin is the UNESCO Chair in Information and Communication Technologies for Development (ICT4D) and Emeritus Professor of Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London.

public interest (*maslaha*), coupled with the most sophisticated framework of *maqasid al-sharia*, we may articulate an Islamic sustainable development strategy. In this chapter, I define sustainable development in light of an Islamic perspective as: development that meets the spiritual and economic needs of all generations without compromising the responsibilities of men to himself, his society, to the environment and to God. Thus, as advocates of a sound sustainable development model premised on the timeless and universal wisdom of the Islamic tradition we may be witnesses for humanity.

DECONSTRUCTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The economic quagmire

The concept of sustainable development is not value-free but inherently possesses a secular ethic. This may further impede sustainability goals. The sustainable development discourse has given equivalence to economy, environment and equity (see Figure 10.1 above). Thus, the overlapping circles model is flawed in giving equal importance to economic growth relative to the sanctity of nature and subsistence of mankind. Even worse, in reality, it actually undermines these two sectors in the name of progress, development and maximum profit.

The opposed logics of development and sustainability are apparent in the economic system employed by the West.¹² The neo-liberal development model is linear and increasing, advancing maximum profit and economic progress at the expense of nature. Sustainability, in contradistinction, opposes this logic, for the science of ecology and society operates in a circular fashion.¹³ Linear development models are founded on Western intellectual paradigms, advocating economic rationality, advancing individualism, and a competitive economic streak to the demise of social equity and nature.¹⁴ It is evident that sustainable development has been simply a cloak to rehash the economic model of old in more palatable expressions. Thus, sustainable development is laden with a neo-liberal bias, sustaining the classical development theory to the exclusion of other ideological paradigms so crucial to its reformation.

The SDG programme anticipates at least seven percent annual GDP growth. This further employs the linear development model, increasing extraction, production and consumption, feeding the system that makes the rich richer, the poor poorer and destroys the planet.¹⁵ The SDGs fail to recognise the role capitalism has

12 Boff L. 2012. "Sustainable Development: a Critique of the Standard Model", *Global Policy Forum*, 2 February.

13 Boff, "Sustainable Development".

14 Hove H. 2004. "Critiquing Sustainable Development: A Meaningful Way of Mediating the Development Impasse?", *Undercurrent* 1(1):50.

15 Hickel J. 2015. "The Problem with Saving the World", *Jacobin*, 8 August.

played in sustainable development discourse, as they assume that the world is dependent on production and consumption to ensure its survival.¹⁶ It is the very economic system itself that needs change. It should be less profit-centric and more focused on socio-environmental justice than growth. Economic growth and the trickle-down theory of development have failed to create more jobs and decrease poverty.¹⁷ Secondly, the assumption that poverty causes environmental destruction rationalises neo-liberal development policies, further stratifying society and harming the environment.¹⁸ Nowhere has the UN mentioned in their discourse of sustainable development that the problem of poverty is the sickness of “affluenza”¹⁹ of the wealthy and their monopoly on natural resources.²⁰ Until corporate powers and the system that perpetuate their institutions are challenged or reformed, socio-environmental problems will only accelerate.

Sustainability should be divorced from the ideology of capitalism and begin to serve people and the planet in a sober economic framework. A more moderate economic system has an ethical base, institutionalises social welfare, is interest-free, mediates the free market and distributes resources fairly. Wealth is a trust from God, to be used honestly as a means to meet everyone’s needs and reduce poverty.²¹ The present economic system merely feeds hedonistic desires and is void of a faith-based motivation to ensure higher values and principles are met. It is faith that assists in realising meaning in economic development and earning, thereby enabling it to serve its higher purpose.²²

Consumption and consumerism

Overconsumption directly feeds capitalism and by extension exacerbates unsustainable practices. Private spending has increased fourfold from 1960 to 2000 according to Worldwatch Institute.²³ Global Footprint Network has estimated that to sustain current consumer levels we would require three planets to sustain a

16 Hickel, “The Problem with Saving the World”.

17 Sharachchandram, “Sustainable Development”, 614.

18 Sharachchandram, “Sustainable Development”, 614.

19 The term “affluenza” was popularised by documentary filmmaker John de Graaf and co-authors in the 2001 film and accompanying book, *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic* (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002), defining affluenza as “a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety, and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more”.

20 Dearden N. 2015. “The UN Development Goals Miss the Point – It’s All about Power”, *Global Justice Now*, 25 September.

21 Chapra MU. 2008. “The Islamic Vision of Development in the Light of *Maqasid Al-Shari’ah*”, Occasional Papers Series 15. London and Washington: International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 36.

22 Chapra, “The Islamic Vision of Development”, 36.

23 Mulligan M. 2015. *An Introduction to Sustainability – Environmental, Social and Personal Perspectives*. First Edition. New York: Routledge, 27 [<https://doi.org/10.4324/978131588852>].

population of 9 billion.²⁴ The French philosopher, Gilles Lopovetsky argues that we are living in a world of “hyperconsumption”, due to globalisation and removal of consumer restraints. He regards this as the third stage of “consumer capitalism”. Hyperconsumption is identified by rapid expansion of the quantity of “required” consumer goods.²⁵ These “required” goods, typically regarded as luxury items, have become “necessities”; every household now has multiple mobile devices, televisions, computers, and motor vehicles. Lopovetsky suggests that hyperconsumption has been spurred on by “individualism” and “hedonistic consumerism”.²⁶ The cost of hyperconsumption is a loss of social cohesion, diminishing of natural resources and environmental degradation. To curb consumption is not just a question of economic structures and policy change, but a problem of the self and control of carnal desires. The sustainable development discourse has ignored the solution of reduced consumption by the wealthy, but rather promotes high production outputs.²⁷

Hillary Hove, a climate change and energy policy expert, critiques the lack of attention given to the West’s extreme consumption as one of the key failures of sustainable development.²⁸ She argues that equitable consumption and environmental sustainability are at an impasse with maximising profit. She thus encourages an understanding between underconsumption, overconsumption and sustainable development. Mulligan advocates ethical consumption and voluntary simplicity to deal with the pathology of accumulation.²⁹ In addition to being thoughtful of our source of consumption, the imperative to consume less, live simpler and more frugal lives are in keeping with spiritual ideals. Low consumption lifestyles may challenge the underpinning development model of Western economies.

Consumerism is not just an economic instinct but a spiritual problem, displacing the one God with the Gods of modernity, development and materialism. The Greek philosopher Epicurus encouraged the moderation of consumption, saying, “If you want to make a man rich, be not adding to his money but subtracting from his desires.”³⁰ For man to subtract from his desires goes beyond “consuming less” to becoming a spiritual exercise in controlling one’s carnal desires. The consumerist and waste-creating lifestyles promoted in the modern world are not in keeping with sustainable living. Thus, to promote frugality, minimalism and ultimately less consumption, the ethical and religious frameworks become necessary.

24 Global Footprint Network. Online at: <http://www.footprintnetwork.org>

25 Cited in Mulligan, *An Introduction to Sustainability*, 29.

26 Mulligan, *An Introduction to Sustainability*, 30.

27 Hickel, “The Problem with Saving the World”.

28 Hove, “Critiquing Sustainable Development”, 51.

29 Hove, “Critiquing Sustainable Development”, 51.

30 Mulligan, *An Introduction to Sustainability*, 40.

Beyond anthropocentrism

A common argument lodged against sustainable development is its anthropocentric nature. It recognises only human beings as having intrinsic value. By contrast, ecocentrism is the antithesis to anthropocentrism and promotes nature as the centre of the universe. It recognises that all living entities and ecosystems have intrinsic value, placing humans within a wider ecosphere rather than making them the axis of the universe. The ecocentric approach has been a reaction to the anthropocentric approach championed in sustainable development circles. The anthropocentric approach perpetuates the insatiable thirst of man to consume and maximise utility, ultimately injuring nature. The ecocentric approach undermines the critical role of humans as stewards of earth. The goodness of nature is available for human survival, comfort and development; however, it should be used responsibly and distributed equally. A theocentric axis goes beyond the anthropocentric and ecocentric bifurcation to integrate the two approaches along a path of God consciousness.³¹ It advocates a sound relationship between man and nature, marginalising neither of the two. A synthesis of these two approaches, infused with transcendental wisdom, embraces the sacredness of nature and the responsibility of man on earth.

The prism of logical positivism

The Western dominated paradigm of sustainable development has been seen through the prism of positivism, which excludes spirituality, aesthetics and ethics as operative paradigms of knowledge. To add insult to injury, Western science makes

31 The tension between anthropocentric and non-anthropocentric positions brought about a plurality of moral persuasions. These did not follow a linear historical trajectory; much overlap exists between them at various periods. The anthropocentric instrumentalist value theorist gives human beings intrinsic value. On the other hand, non-anthropocentric positions give nature intrinsic theory, as well. Such a nature-centred environmental ethic was advocated through the work of Peter Singer (1975) in giving moral consideration to sentient entities (animal liberation), Tom Regan (1983) in his support for animal rights, Paul Taylor (1981) giving moral consideration to not just sentient creatures but all living things and Aldo Leopold (1949) in giving moral respect to the whole of the community of life and the development of a holistic ethic. In the late 1980s and 1990s, the dialectical debate between intrinsic and instrumental value theories gave room to discussions around practice, the community, spatial and temporal issues, systemic concerns and context. The third position, radical environmental ethics, goes beyond the impasse between the anthropocentric and ecocentric schism and focuses on transformation. Four main approaches or movements in radical environmental ethics exist: deep ecology, ecofeminism, social ecology and bioregionalism. The theocentric approach I advocate in this chapter overlaps and shares much of the concern of deep ecology; however, it rejects the hazy mystical approach that undermines social issues, austere measures, and simplistic rejection of technology, science and reason. See Singer P. 1975. *Animal Liberation: A New Ethics for our Treatment of Animals*. New York: New York Review; Regan T. 1983. *The Case of Animal Rights*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press; Taylor PW. 1986. *Respect for Nature: A Theory of Environmental Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press; Leopold A. 1991. *A Sand County Almanac. With Essays on Conservation from Round River*. New York: Ballantine Books.

further claims to objectivity and absolutism. On the basis of such claims, Western scientists speak for the Earth to the exclusion of a more holistic and metaphysical view of nature.³² A fundamentalist science, might “forbid that the Peruvian peasant, an African nomad, or a rubber tapper of the Amazon would have something to say in this regard”.³³ A reductionism of this kind worships the product of science and technology as ends, giving further significance to incessant development. Human society and the ecosystems are thus solely viewed through a quantitative lens, employing the strict confines of measurement and causal relationships. This ignores a qualitative approach that employs a teleological worldview to nature.

An alternative approach to the positivist, quantitative understanding of sustainable development would be to maximise values. Our socio-environmental discourse will thus be less descriptive and empirical, but more transformational. To envision change requires man to have a deeper, spiritual motivation and more holistic outlook to our universe. Our society and environment should thus be nurtured by spiritual custodians rather than the custodians of fundamentalist science.

Going beyond the ideological straightjackets of positivism, we begin to see nature in a more metaphysical light. The Western conception of sustainable development has been limited to a positivist lens void of any spiritual or ethical dimension. By expanding our methodological and epistemological tools we may recognise the aesthetic and intrinsic value of all living organisms. Thus, advocates of the sustainable development movement that embrace a plurality of approaches invite more cohesive and effective interpretations of sustainable development.³⁴

Desacralising nature

Due to the rise of modernity and decline of religion, the environment has lost its sacral nature. The secularisation of nature has led to its disenchantment, removing nature of any spiritual or religious overtones.³⁵ The Western bias in sustainable development attempts to protect the environment for modern humanity’s survival but not as a responsibility bestowed upon us or in recognition of its sacredness. This shift in thinking is deeply rooted in the post-enlightenment era thinking, in which our social and environmental spheres have become divorced from divine guidance and replaced by the sovereignty of humanity and carnal desires. The social and environmental crisis thus involves the microcosm within us and requires a command of the “landscape of our souls” to overcome this crisis.³⁶ Islamic philosopher, Seyyed Hossein Nasr, cogently argues that an inner transformation

32 Hove, “Critiquing Sustainable Development”.

33 Setia A. 2007. “Inner Dimensions of Going Green”, *Islam & Science* 5(2).

34 Sneddon C, Howarth R and Norgaard RB. 2006. “Sustainable Development in a Post-Brundtland World”, *Ecological Economics* 57(2):253-268 [<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2005.04.013>].

35 Al-Attas SMN. 1985. *Islam and Secularism*. New York: Mansell Publishing Limited.

36 Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*.

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and change in our view of nature is needed to solve the impending destruction of the environment.³⁷ The harmony and balance of our environmental spheres have become upset, because nature has become secularised and cut off from God.³⁸ The current environmental and social crisis is a result of a spiritual crisis of man. Upon achieving equilibrium of our souls, which is for reason to predominate over our desire for luxury and power, our view of nature will change, directly impacting our interaction with the environment and society.

Critical appraisal of contemporary ethics

Sustainable development discourse has been underpinned by the dominant approaches of deontological and utilitarian ethics at the expense of virtue ethics. The deontological ethics of Immanuel Kant emphasises rules, duties and maxims. The consequentialist approaches of Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill stress outcomes or consequences of an action. Neither of these two approaches underscores the agent's character, nor aims towards moral excellence, as a virtue ethics would. The legal and political institutions that propound sustainable development approach the problem of social equity and environmental preservation from a solely rational lens. The internal make-up of an agent is ignored, instead only emphasising the external actions and duty. The rise of secular modernity has marginalised the input or role of religion in the social, economic and environmental space. When virtue ethics were a dominant part of man's life the pursuit of outcomes was not just outcomes, and rules were not just rules, rather the internal condition or moral excellence of man motivated their pursuit.

The discourse of sustainable development needs to go beyond the secular ethics of the post-enlightenment era and embrace the virtue ethics inherent in religious traditions. Moral character and wisdom are the compasses of how we should be and live.³⁹ A rethinking of sustainable development will thus consider moral education. We do not dismiss the deontological and consequentialist approaches to morality all together, but we must acknowledge their limitations. These other approaches would be employed alongside virtue ethics, thus the principles or universals employed are coupled with the binding material of moral excellence.⁴⁰ It is at the nexus of internal and external approaches to ethics that a comprehensive ethical framework can be incorporated into sustainable development.

37 Nasr SH. 1976. *Man and Nature: The Spiritual Crisis of Modern Man*. London: Unwin Paperbacks.

38 Nasr, *Man and Nature*.

39 Hursthouse R. 2012. "Virtue Ethics", *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Fall [http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2013/entries/ethics-virtue/].

40 Hursthouse, "Virtue Ethics".

TOWARDS A *MAQASID* MODEL OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction to maqasid al-sharia

Maqasid al-sharia (objectives of Islamic law) is the principle of the higher intents, goals, purposes or ends of the divine law (*sharia*).⁴¹ Maliki jurist and legal theoretician, Al-Qarafi (d. 1868), understood the *maqasid* to manifest benefit (*maslaha*) and steer away from harm or mischief.⁴² The facilitation of ease, improvement and benefit of individuals and the community are the predicates on which the *sharia* is based.⁴³

According to legal theoretician, Abdullah Bin Bayyah, from the eleventh century onwards, a “philosophy of Islamic law” began to develop in the Muslim world.⁴⁴ Imam al-Juwayni (d. 1058) classified *maqasid al-sharia* as the protection of “faith, soul, mind, progeny and money”. Traditional scholars have divided the *maqasid* into three levels of prioritisation: the necessities (*darurat*), needs (*hajiyyat*) and enhancements (*tahsiniyyat*). The necessities are regarded as essential to human living, order in society and prevention of chaos.⁴⁵ The needs ensure the prevention of harm or difficulty; however, they are not essential for life. The enhancements aim towards beautification and perfection, but they are not regarded as a priority.

The application of Al-Shatibi’s (d.1388) inductive method is useful to expand upon the five general *maqasid* in light of new contexts. Islamic legal scholar, Hashim Kamali discusses how Al-Juwayni established the *maqasid al-sharia* on the rulings punishing transgressors (*al-hudud*) for murder, consumption of alcohol, adultery and other offences; thus, the list of *maqasid* needs to be extended and a spiritual or ethical dimension needs to be incorporated.⁴⁶ Modern scholars as Rashid Rida (d. 1935), Al-Tahir ibn Ashur (d.1907), Mohammad al-Ghazzali (d. 1996) and Yusuf al-Qardawi (1926-) have attempted to expand the universal *maqasid* to include economic and political reform, women’s rights, freedom of belief, justice, human dignity, restoring moral values and cooperation, respectively.⁴⁷

Even so, the scope of the classical *maqasid* theory must be critically assessed in light of contemporary needs and challenges, in order to both challenge and embrace modern advances in the field, while also providing a spiritual and ethical dimension to sustainable development. In the remainder of this section, I thus challenge the conventional schematic of sustainable development (see Figure 10.1

41 Auda J. 2008. *Maqāsid al-Shari’ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law: A Systems Approach*. London: International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2 [<https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctvkc67tg>].

42 Auda, *Maqāsid al-Shari’ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*.

43 Kamali H. 2008. “Maqasid Al-Shari’ah Made Simple”, IIIT, 1.

44 Auda, *Maqāsid al-Shari’ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*, 16.

45 Kamali, “Maqasid Al-Shari’ah Made Simple”, 4.

46 Ramadan T. 2009. *Radical Reform*. New York: Oxford University Press, 35 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195331714.001.0001>].

47 Auda, *Maqāsid al-Shari’ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*, 6.

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above) and propose a *maqasidi* framework of sustainable development represented by concentric circles of priority (see Figure 10.2).

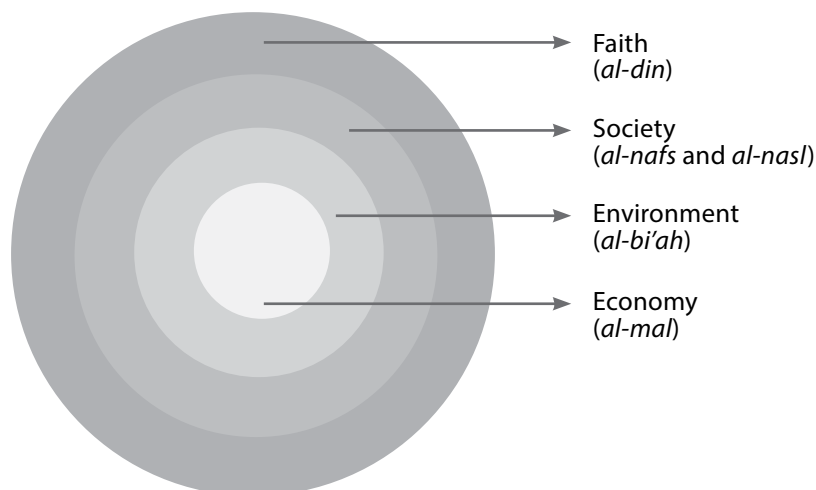


Figure 10.2: *Maqasid* model of sustainable development

The conventional schematic has equated the importance of the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, protection of environmental resources, economic development and social justice (see Figure 10.1 above). A more appropriate schematic would be to prioritise the pillars according to a *maqasid* lens (see Figure 10.2 above). I will elaborate on sustainable development in light of the *maqasid* classifications; namely the four levels, faith (*al-din*), society (*al-nafs* and *al-nasl*), environment (*al-bi'ah*) and economy (*al-mal*). I have made an attempt to contemporise *maqasid* terminology to account for modern concepts of sustainable development to assist in juridical reasoning.⁴⁸

The first level: faith (al-din)

Faith (*al-din*) takes the highest priority in the classification of *maqasid* (or pillars of sustainable development). The spiritual component of man has a direct impact on shaping the physical, thus, al-Ghazzali placed *din* as the highest priority of the *maqasid*.⁴⁹ According to historians Arnold J. Toynbee and Will and Ariel Durant's studies of history, the moral fibre and social cohesion of a community is only truly possible with the aid of religion.⁵⁰ The SDGs proposed by the UN cannot be

48 Auda, *Maqāsid al-Shari'ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*.

49 Dariah A, Salleh MS and Shafiai H. 2016. "A New Approach to Sustainable Development Goals in Islamic Perspective", *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences* 219:163 [https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2016.05.001].

50 Chapra, "The Islamic Vision of Development", 20 (citing Toynbee AJ. 1958. *A Study of History* [abridgement of Somervell DC] vol 2. New York: Oxford University Press, 495-496; Durant W and Durant A. 1968. *The Lessons of History*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 51).

accomplished through the compass of neoliberalism but only through the moral compass provided by religion. Social justice, the environment and the economy should be seen through the prism of faith. Justice (*'adl*) within these paradigms cannot truly be met without the life-giving force of faith. Through *al-din* we manifest the enrichment of spirituality and ethics so vital to a sound conception of sustainable development.

Maqasid theory places the protection and implementation of the *sharia* on the scale of necessity (*darurat*). God's placing man as vicegerent on earth (*khalifa*) ensures that man cares and flourishes in order for the earth to operate within its carrying capacity.⁵¹ The Quran states, "Then We appointed you viceroys in the earth after them, that We might see how ye behave."⁵² The trust (*amanah*) of responsibility as vicegerents on this earth is to observe the divine law.⁵³ Through the *amanah* bestowed upon man, the earth's resources are utilised according to divine rule and not man's prodigal desires.

In the Western model of sustainable development, self-interest is short-term and care for humanity and nature is limited to the finite world with no motivation for long-term self-interest. A faith-based conception of sustainable development motivates individuals to act in their long-term self-interest, and to consider eternal well-being.⁵⁴ Accountability in the hereafter (*'akhirah*) and love for God are motivations for a believer to follow the divine decree. Thus, the impulse to alleviate hardship of others and protect nature is not merely to ensure survival but to live in accordance with the tenets of faith and please God. The abandoning of our *amanah* not only affects our security in this world but the hereafter, too.⁵⁵

The highest level (*tahsiniyyat*) of virtue is "moral", because it is voluntary and optional, and the lowest (*darurat*) is "legal", because it is compulsory; thus on the vertical scale of priorities, the establishment of virtue ethics is an enhancement (*tahsiniyyat*). The tradition of spiritual cultivation (*tasawwuf*) has emphasised the internal virtues of moral refinement and purification of the heart. Moral virtue is an inward reality that cannot be measured; it is an aesthetic quality and is to be striven for as the ideal. Through ethical cultivation, a sincere concern for humanity and nature is fostered. It goes beyond duty or legal prescription, as the concern is a deep-seated reality of the heart. Walking on earth lightly,⁵⁶ concern for your fellow man, living a simple lifestyle and curbing desires is an inward condition and

51 Dariah, Salleh and Shafiai, "A New Approach to Sustainable Development Goals".

52 Pickthall M. 1930. *The Quran Translated*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 10:14. See also 35:39 [hereinafter Quran].

53 Quran, 33:72. "Lo! We offered the trust unto the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from bearing it and were afraid of it. And man assumed it. Lo! he hath proved a tyrant and a fool."

54 Chapra, "The Islamic Vision of Development", 22.

55 Setia, "Inner Dimensions of Going Green".

56 Quran, 25:63. "The (faithful) slaves of the Beneficent are they who walk upon the earth modestly."

not an outcomes-based programme. The moderation adopted by humanity thus leaves more resources for needs-fulfilment. Philosopher and humanitarian Alfred Schweitzer argued that a civilisation will fall if it is void of an ethical foundation, even if it employs the most creative methods or technologies.⁵⁷ Moral control of the self is more important than the control of nature, and the freedom of the higher self is more effective than the freedom of the desires. The inner consciousness is activated through a moral system, thus providing the will to moderately extract and equitably allocate resources.⁵⁸ Thus, in addition to the divine decree of the *sharia*, moral character building may prove useful to realise sustainable development goals.

The “wasteland about us” is not necessarily a reflection of a quantitative failure, but a reflection of the “wasteland within us”.⁵⁹ The environmental and social crisis is thus a spiritual crisis. According to Al-Attas, *khalifa* is not just the socio-political stewardship but the stewardship of the soul.⁶⁰ Thus, Western secular man has embraced an erroneous form of progress and given up the stewardship of his soul, leading to the betrayal of his trust (*amanah*). Through the control of the self and embracing the virtues of the soul, man adopts qualities such as temperance and contentment instead of greed and material growth,⁶¹ or sincere generosity instead of close-fistedness. Only when man holds the qualities of temperance and generosity are the consumption of natural resources moderated and care for humanity realised.

*The second level: society (al-nafs and al-nasl)*⁶²

As outlined in the introduction, inequality, disease, poverty, lack of sanitation and education are widespread and apparent. These are concerns of the social dimension of sustainable development. The classification of life (*al-nafs*) and progeny (*al-nasl*) from the *maqasid al-sharia* can be situated in the space of social justice. Through the “protection of life” and “protection of progeny”, intra-generational equality and intergenerational equality are achieved respectively. An inductive survey of the Quran, *sunnah* and Islamic legal traditions convey the central role of the family, *ummah* and wider humanity. The *sharia* gives equal consideration to the whole community and all of humanity on the level of necessity (*darurat*) and need (*hajiyyat*) to ensure human living and the prevention of harm. A restraint upon the excessive opulence and consumption that surpass enhancements (*tahsiniyyat*) may ensure dignity and respect for all.

57 Chapra, “The Islamic Vision of Development”, 25.

58 Makwemba T. 2004. *An Islamic Perspective on Sustainable Development in the Context of Globalization*, Master’s thesis, University of Kwazulu-Natal.

59 Setia, “Inner Dimensions of Going Green”, 137.

60 Al-Attas, *Islam and Secularism*, 134.

61 Setia, “Inner Dimensions of Going Green”.

62 In sustainable development discourse, the term “social justice”, “social equity” or “society” is used. To embrace the paradigms of *al-nafs* (life) and *al-nasl* (progeny) in *maqasid* theory, we will use the term “society”. This will encompass the ideas of justice and equity in the social sphere.

The notions of equity and social justice (*'adalah ijtimaiyyah*) ensure equal provision for all of humanity. It is by the token of justice in the Islamic tradition that man may draw closer to God.⁶³ Justice is of the supreme virtues that govern the personal and social spheres. The Quran states, "We verily sent Our Messengers with clear proofs, and revealed with them the Scripture and the balance, that people may keep up justice", and in another verse, God says, "And, if you judge between people, that you judge with justice."⁶⁴ It is through *'adl* as an operative value in the *maqasidi* matrix of sustainable development that distributive justice can be achieved. Through the eradication of poverty, equal opportunity and access to education, health, clean water, sanitation and other necessities can be realised. Islam considers human life to be governed by justice, not by economic determinism.⁶⁵ Thus, in Islam, justice is the determinant of the equitable distribution of resources. On the other hand, injustice (*zulm*) refers to a state of usurping the rights of others, inequality, oppression, exploitation and wrongdoing.⁶⁶ The socio-economic system is dominated by *zulm*. Even though creative efforts of planning or the most efficient and ecofriendly technologies are employed inequity will still persist if *zulm* underpins sustainable development efforts.

God has provided the earth to be utilised for our subsistence.⁶⁷ However, these can become abused if a state of injustice (*zulm*) exists in the socio-political sphere, and moderation and justice are not exercised. The institution of *zakah*, *sadaqah* and *waqf* are instruments to ensure the equitable allocation and distribution of a nation's wealth as discussed in the section on economy below. The Quran states, "Lo! Allah enjoineth justice and kindness, and giving to kinsfolk, and forbiddeth lewdness and abomination and wickedness. He exhorteth you in order that ye may take heed."⁶⁸ Thus the enjoining of kindness and justice ensures the social stratum is in balance and every human is ensured basic provision (*darurat* and *hajiyyat*).

A sustainable development discourse that is founded on a communitarian ethic will ensure social solidarity. The problem of poverty cannot perpetuate if each person sees himself or herself as an individual tree part of the forest, but only if each individual looks after their neighbour, and each nation supports the other. The fourteenth-century historian and sociologist, Ibn Khaldun argued in his *Muqadimah* that the consumption of luxury goods and the rise of a "consumer class" leads to a breakdown of social cohesion (*'asabiyyah*) and moral decadence.⁶⁹ The moral decadence that follows opulence begins to dislocate social solidarity and mutual

63 Quran, 5:8. "Be just, that is closer to piety".

64 Quran, 57:25 and 4:58.

65 Chapra, "The Islamic Vision of Development", 9.

66 Chapra, "The Islamic Vision of Development", 11.

67 Quran, 31:20. "See ye not how Allah hath made serviceable unto you whatsoever is in the skies and whatsoever is in the earth and hath loaded you with His favours both without and within?"

68 Quran, 16:90.

69 Mahdi M. 2006. *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History*. New York: The Other Press.

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care. Ibn Khaldun stated that to further bind social cohesion it is imperative to employ the components of religious and spiritual institutions. The Islamic social framework is thus communal, cooperative and humane. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, "There is no merit of an Arab over a non-Arab except through piety",⁷⁰ and the Quran says, "We made you into tribes and nations to get acquainted".⁷¹ The Islamic social system thus recognises the equality of all, yet embraces its diversity. It is the unity of religion, the similar rights and obligations that bind society. Thus, the placement of sustainable development in *maqasid* theory will infuse Islamic elements of social solidarity, mutual care, brotherhood, communal responsibility and distributive justice into its body in a way that manifests true social justice.

The third level: environment (al-bi'ah)

The environmental crisis experienced in the world is symptomatic of a moral and spiritual crisis of modern man. The ethical paradigm operative in the world is void of the binding material of transcendental wisdom. In our deconstruction of sustainable development, we have understood it as anthropocentric and the response has dominantly been the polar opposite. A theocentric worldview goes beyond the anthropocentric/ecocentric dichotomy and integrates the two approaches, but it also recognises the role of religious morality and spirituality. It advocates a sound relationship between man and nature, marginalising neither of the two. A synthesis of these two approaches, infused with transcendental wisdom, embraces the sacredness of nature and the responsibility of man on earth

Researcher and international consultant in energy, water and environment, Odeh R. Al-Jayyousi articulates a metanarrative to humans' placement in the universe. The earth has been created for the benefit of humanity; however, humans have been given the trust (*amanah*) to look after it in a sustainable manner. The absence of stewardship (*khalifa*) has fostered mischief and consequently destroyed our environment. Jayousi emphasises that a reading of the Quran informs our soul and mind of the interconnectedness of man and nature.⁷² Thus, the action of stewards on earth is not domination and exploitation of nature, but guardianship. Professor of History and Philosophy of Science, Adi Setia, argues that the current environmental crisis is less a resource problem and more an attitude problem.⁷³ This attitude stems from the condition of the soul and has a direct effect on the ecological health of the planet. Setia says that the failure of the human ego is its submission to carnal desires and the forgoing of long-term prosperity for short-term gain. Spiritual humility towards nature has been suppressed by the development narrative of modernity and should thus be rearticulated in the sustainable development model.

⁷⁰ See Al-Bukhari, Hadith 1623, 1626, 6361.

⁷¹ Quran, 49:13.

⁷² Al-Jayyousi O. 2016. *Islam and Sustainable Development: New Worldviews*. New York: Routledge [<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315589947>].

⁷³ Setia, "Inner Dimensions of Going Green".

The *maqasid al-sharia* should include the “preservation of environment” in the *maqasid* framework. Scholar of contemporary Islamic thought, Tariq Ramadan calls for the extension of the *maqasid* and includes ecology as a *maqsad*.⁷⁴ He further discusses the numerous verses and prophetic traditions that set out an Islamic ethics respecting the environment.⁷⁵ Another prominent contemporary Islamic scholar, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, calls for the conservation of the environment (*hifz al-bi'ah*) as a higher goal of the *maqasid*. He expounds to say that the disruption of the ecological balance directly affects human life and safety.⁷⁶

The environment (*al-bi'ah*) and society (*al-nafs* and *al-nasl*) are interdependent and interconnected, with the preservation of society dependent on a healthy environment. It is incumbent upon the Muslim community to draw on the rich tradition of ecological *fiqh*. A contemporary understanding of public interest (*maslaha*) may place the priorities of climate change at the front of the discourse of well-being. To include the preservation of the environment as a universal objective of the *sharia* in the twenty-first century is of utmost importance to mankind's well-being and existence.

At the core of the Islamic faith is the principle of *tawhid*, it affirms and acknowledges that God is One and the only Reality. The order and unicity of nature is symbolic of *tawhid*, for if another reality existed nature would reflect chaos.⁷⁷ Through man's mischief on earth, nature would reflect distortion and chaos, a sign of the worship of the false gods of modernity and development. *Tawhid* thus affirms the wholeness, holiness and interconnectedness of nature. It is the imperative of man to acknowledge this unicity in nature and obey the natural law. In the metaphysical worldview of Islam, the divine book of creation is a revelation to man. Nature is understood as a sign (*ayat*) that endows us with understanding and reflects the majesty of God. The Quran states, “Allah has sent down rain from the sky and given life thereby to the earth after its lifelessness. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who listen”⁷⁸ and in another verse God says, “We made the sky a protected ceiling (canopy), but they, from its signs, are turning away.”⁷⁹ Through the signs (*ayat*) of nature we appreciate the aesthetic and sacred value attributed to it.

In the Islamic worldview maintaining an ecological balance (*mizan*) respects the sacral nature of the environment. Human intervention in the environment needs to be curbed or in-equilibrium may occur. Upsetting the equilibrium may threaten

⁷⁴ Ramadan, *Radical Reform*, 129.

⁷⁵ Ramadan, 237.

⁷⁶ Kamali MH. 2015. *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam: The Quranic Principle of Wasatiyyah*. New York: Oxford University Press, 143 [<https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190226831.001.0001>].

⁷⁷ Quran 21:22. “If there were more than one god ... Heaven and earth would have collapsed into disorder and chaos. Praise be Allah, Lord of the Throne, Transcendent beyond all their description of Him.”

⁷⁸ Quran, 16:65.

⁷⁹ Quran, 21:32. See also 6:99 and 39:21.

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humanity, causing food shortages, flooding of cities, extinction of fauna and flora and other negative results.⁸⁰ Kamali discusses the quantitative and qualitative balance God has set in the environment as expressed in the following two verses, “Lo! We have created everything by measure”⁸¹ and “And the sky He has uplifted; and He has set the measure, that you exceed not the measure, but observe the measure with equity, nor fall short thereof”.⁸² Many such verses are enumerated in the Quran. It is thus incumbent upon the Muslim community to adopt the role of custodian and, not lean towards extravagance and ensure the cosmic balance. The principle of moderation (*wasatiyyah*) should be observed in society and in economic and environmental policy. The concepts of *wasatiyyah* and *maqasid al-sharia* need to be at the front of the discourse of preserving the environment.

The fourth level: economy (al-mal)

The sustainable development discourse has been dominated by neoliberal economic policies. This has perpetuated incessant development at the expense of social and environmental sustainability. In the *maqasid* classification, *hifz al-mal* is the “preservation of wealth”. To contemporise this objective, it can be understood as “economic development”, “diminishing the difference between economic levels” or “redistribution of wealth”.⁸³ The necessities (*darurat*) and needs (*hajiyyat*) cannot be realised when the flow of money is focused on enhancements (*tahsiniyyat*). It is thus important that economic policy and management of wealth should restrict extravagance to ensure provision of basic necessities.

Unfortunately, the dominant capitalist economy places profit above social equity and preservation of the environment. The sustainable development model sustains neoliberal interest, equating the economy to the realms of the society and environment (see Figure 10.1 above), the *maqasid* matrix of sustainable development (see Figure 10.2 above) places the economy after the interest of faith (*al-din*), social justice (*al-nafts* and *al-nasl*) and the environment (*al-bi'ah*). The moral or spiritual component in the *maqasid* model appeals to the inner consciousness of man to observe the equitable and just distribution of wealth, with the Quran harshly condemning excessive accumulation of wealth.⁸⁴ Accountability before God and the long-term interest of the hereafter motivates man to forgo his short-term worldly interest in accumulation and development. Such God consciousness inherent in Islam motivates man to ensure the well-being of others.

The classical Islamic instruments of *zakah* (charity), *sadaqah* (voluntary charity) and *waqf* (public endowment) help to achieve economic justice. The mechanism of *zakah*

80 Kamali, *The Middle Path of Moderation in Islam*, 140.

81 Quran, 54:49. See also 25:2.

82 Quran, 55:7-9. See also 55:1-5.

83 Auda, *Maqāsid al-Shari'ah as Philosophy of Islamic Law*.

84 Quran, 9:34. “... They who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the way of Allah, unto them give tidings (O Muhammad) of a painful doom ...”

is the chief instrument in the distribution of wealth and alleviation of poverty.⁸⁵ It is not just a “tax”, but a means by which to attain purity and spiritual growth and, thus, not a burden but a blessing by which you can draw closer to your Creator. It is a superior tool to Western systems of distribution, for it is levied upon accumulated wealth, thus discouraging hoarding and tight-fistedness. In addition to *zakah*, it is encouraged to go beyond the call of duty and give voluntary charity (*sadaqah*). The establishment of public endowments (*awqaf*) has played an instrumental role of development in Muslim civilisations. Hospitals, educational institutes, mosques, and *sufi* centres have been dependent on *waqf* endowments.⁸⁶ In the *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Willi Heffening states, “The *waqf* system in the east was very beneficial in ameliorating poverty and misery and in furthering learning.”⁸⁷

Economist, Umer Chapra says that although the instruments of *zakah*, *sadaqah* and *waqf* are helpful as redistributive methods, we should not undermine the importance of economic development in enlarging the national pie.⁸⁸ He argues that it is incumbent on Muslim countries to focus on *sharia*-compliant methods of economic development to alleviate poverty and inequality. Serious hardship has occurred due to interest-based finance. Thus, to provide access to interest-free capital for the poor, the integration of microfinance with the institutions of *zakah* and *awqaf* are necessary.⁸⁹ In addition, the profit-and-loss sharing and lease-based modes of Islamic finance should be encouraged.⁹⁰

The capitalist economic model employs the trinity of profit, interest and development as ends, causing hardship and poverty. Its interest-based banking system encourages loans and overconsumption.⁹¹ A new economic model is necessary to ensure environmental and social sustainability. A fundamental attribute of the Islamic economic system is the prohibition of usury (*riba*). The Quran emphatically discourages the use of interest, stating, “O you who believe, devour not interest doubling and redoubling, and keep your duty to Allah; that you may be successful.”⁹² The spiritual aspect of human development is undermined in the Western-centric approach to “progress”. Well-being or progress is dominantly measured in material terms; it thus becomes the end itself. In the Islamic model

85 Quran, 9:103. “Take alms of their wealth, wherewith thou may purify them and make them grow, and pray for them. Lo! thy prayer is an assuagement for them. Allah is Hearer, Knower.”

86 Makwemba, *An Islamic Perspective on Sustainable Development*.

87 Makwemba, *An Islamic Perspective on Sustainable Development*, 84 (quoting Heffening W, *Encyclopedia of Islam*, quoted in Rahman F. 1989. *Health and Medicine in the Islamic Tradition*. New York: Crossroads, 62).

88 Chapra, “The Islamic Vision of Development”, 36.

89 Chapra, “The Islamic Vision of Development”, 37.

90 Chapra, “The Islamic Vision of Development”, 37.

91 Al-Jayousi, “Re-Thinking Sustainability and Progress”.

92 Quran, 3:130.

of human development, a holistic fulfilment of needs is necessary. Understanding human development in the holistic sense will bring the sustainable development discourse in alignment with true human needs rather than neoliberal sentiment.

Excessive or deficient spending can be curbed by the observance of *wasatiyyah*. This middle-ground approach prevents lavishness and niggardliness, ensuring the just distribution of wealth. Destruction of crops, property and livestock is due to neglect or wastefulness and an infraction of “the protection of money” (*hifz al-mal*).⁹³ Islamic economics thus takes a middle posture (*wasatiyyah*) between capitalism and restrictive socialism.

Gratitude (*shukr*) and frugality can pose a remedy to the consumerism and wastefulness that feeds capitalist economics. Gratefulness breeds a sense of contentment. Thus, man is inclined to usage by need rather than greed. The mentality of scarcity motivated by neo-classical economics motivates a sense of greed. A heart of contentment and temperance instead of covetousness can be nurtured through God consciousness. The purification of the heart (*tazkiyyah*) is an antidote for the illness of “affluenza” and prodigal lifestyles promoted by consumer capitalism.⁹⁴ Techno-economic efficiency and green alternatives are not solutions, since they merely alleviate the symptom of the problem. In most cases of application, it is old-styled capitalism in the guise of green capitalism.

CONCLUSION

The conventional approach to sustainable development is laden with a secular bias. This chapters has shown the erroneous philosophical underpinnings inherent in this model. The social and environmental problems that exist at the conception of the sustainable development discourse are still apparent, if not worse. In our deconstruction of sustainable development, we have discussed, firstly, that sustainable development is inherent of neoliberal development policies, further stratifying society and destroying the environment. Sustainability should be free from the ideology of capitalism and begin to serve people and the planet. Secondly, the lack of attention given to the West’s extreme consumption is one of the key failures of sustainable development. The problem of overconsumption directly feeds the vehicle of capitalism and exacerbates unsustainable practices. Thirdly, to move beyond the anthropocentric and ecocentric dichotomy in environmentalism requires a synthesis which infuses transcendental wisdom, embraces the sacredness of nature and the responsibility of man on earth. Fourth, the harmony and balance of our environmental spheres have become upset due to nature becoming secularised and removed of spiritual or religious overtones. Fifth, the Western conception of sustainable development has been limited to a positivist lens and thus void of a

93 Kamali MH. 2010. *Moderation and Balance in Islam: The Quranic Principle of Wasatiyyah*. Kuala Lumpur: IIAIS.

94 De Graaf, *Affluenza*.

spiritual and ethical dimension. Finally, the deontological and consequentialist approach has limitations, and thus should be accompanied by virtue ethics, so that the outcomes and universals employed are coupled with the binding material of moral excellence.

The conventional schematic has equated the importance of the three pillars of sustainable development, namely, protection of environmental resources, economic development and social justice. A more appropriate schematic would be to prioritise the pillars according to a *maqasid* lens. We have elaborated on sustainable development in light of *maqasid* classifications and four levels of priority. Faith (*al-din*) takes the highest priority in the classification of the *maqasid* model of sustainable development. The world is a seedbed to the hereafter and a truly holistic sustainable development model includes faith-based components. Society (*al-nafs* and *al-nasl*) takes the second highest priority. The classification of life (*al-nafs*) and progeny (*al-nasl*) can be situated in the space of society or social justice.

By positing “protection of life” and the “protection of progeny” as universal objectives, the *maqasid al-sharia* thus achieves intra- and intergenerational equality. Environment (*al-bi'ah*) takes the third highest priority. The earth has been created for the benefit of man; however, man has been given the trust (*amanah*) to look after it in a sustainable manner. The absence of stewardship (*khalifa*) has fostered mischief and consequently destroyed our environment. The environmental crisis experienced in the world is thus symptomatic of a moral and spiritual crisis of modern man. A shift in our worldview of nature, manifest the signs of our lord and the sacramental role of nature in the cosmic order.

The final priority in the *maqasid* model of sustainable development is economy (*al-mal*). The moral or spiritual component in the *maqasid* model of sustainable development appeals to the inner consciousness of man to observe the equitable and just distribution of wealth. The classical Islamic instruments of *zakah* (charity), *sadaqah* (voluntary charity) and *waqf* (public endowment) are applied to achieve economic justice. In addition to these distributive methods, it is incumbent on Muslim countries to focus on *sharia*-compliant (exclusion of *riba*) methods of economic development to alleviate poverty and inequality. Gratitude (*shukr*) and frugality can be a remedy to the consumerism and wastefulness that feeds capitalist economics. An Islamic economics thus takes a middle posture (*wasatiyyah*) between capitalism and restrictive socialism.

The *maqasid al-sharia* provides a coherent framework for implementing sustainable development. The body of this chapter has focused on building a theoretical framework. Upon a robust conceptualisation a concrete work-plan may be initiated and ultimately improve humanity. It is through the integration of good governance and moral regeneration that the goals of sustainability can be realised. A redrafting of SDGs in Muslim countries within a *maqasid* matrix would incorporate faith-based elements in the realms of economics, social justice and environmental preservation.

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Finally, I define sustainable development in light of an Islamic vision as: development that meets the spiritual and economic needs of all generations without compromising the responsibilities of men to himself, his society, to the environment and to God. A comprehensive understanding of sustainable development in the vision of Islam will account for social justice; preserve and recognise the intrinsic value of nature, and sustain a sober trajectory of economic development. Thus through the application of *maqasid* theory, the *sharia* will become the vanguard by which sustainable development will come to culmination.