

THE GREEN CULTURE OF ISLAM

MAZLINA MANSOR
ISMAWI HJ. ZEN
JAMILAH OTHMAN
NOR ZALINA HARUN
NURHAYATI ABDUL MALEK



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TREES IN THE MAKING OF ISLAMIC ENVIRONMENT

Nurul Aida Salim, Azila Ahmad Sarkawi and Jamilah Othman

Department of Urban and Regional Planning and Department of Landscape Architecture,
Kulliyyah of Architecture & Environmental Design, International Islamic University
Malaysia

ABSTRACT

This paper describes the importance of tree planting in the built environment from Islamic viewpoints. The discussion presents reviews on both secular and Islamic ways of connecting tree to environment and at the same time, encouraged people to appreciate the environment accordingly. Both nature and the environment are huge responsibility of the khalifah on earth. The task is clearly explained through several verses in the holy Quran as well as from the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad S.A.W. Overall, the reviews indicate that environment as the whole, has right to receive good treatment from mankind.

Keywords: Islam, tree planting, environment, sustainability, built environment

INTRODUCTION

Trees and landscaping are integral to the design quality of most developments. They help to define the character of an area, improve quality of life and increase the attraction of places for people to live and work in. In addition, tree is also one of the elements that need to be preserved towards achieving sustainable development as tree is a part of the environment as well (Bicknell et. al., 2009). Since the beginning of urbanism, cities have been the centres for human interaction, living and related activities. In so being, cities drawn on natural resources from their hinterlands and brought many changes that go beyond city boundaries. Whilst most of the changes have been beneficial to mankind, it cannot be deny that some of the changes, increasingly nowadays, have had adverse impact onto the environment. Recently, the protection of trees is increasingly critical for human health (Elliot, 1994). The end of the 20th Century witnesses the shift of urban development from the physical aspect, that is, cities as concrete jungles, to a more complicated, comprehensive and integrated city development. The protection of the environment depends on the way how we manage and control the development that is mostly related with each other (Bicknell et. al., 2009).

In Islam, the Almighty Allah has created vast numbers of trees and plants: each playing a role in the natural systems of which they are part, to confirm man's faith in the majesty of He who created this universe and for his admiration and pleasure (Omar, 1988). Chapra (1993) traces the ethical foundations for the protection of environment under the principle of 'No Injury'. According to this principle, Muslims are prohibited from harming