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### Qur'anic Concept of Natural Resources and Modern Times: Research Review

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Allah Almighty has created countless natural resources for benefit of man. Natural resources management and planned usage plays a key role in economic and social development of any country. The whole economic system of the world is dependent upon reasonable and usage of natural resources. Natural resources are used by human beings and other living beings. The various ecosystems depend upon the natural resources. Unfortunately, Natural resources are not being used carefully in modern times. It needs to understand useful role of natural resources for smooth running of human life on Earth. Significance of various natural substances have been mentioned in Holy Qur'ān. Exploitation, Destruction, excess usage and wastage of natural resources has been strictly prohibited in Holy Quran. In this research article, usefulness of natural resources for human life has been presented in the light of Quranic teachings .

**Key Words:** Qur'ān, Natural Resources, usefulness, Exploitation, Care, Modern times

#### Introduction

Earth is the most important natural resource in the universe that contains humans, animals, plants, living beings and non-living beings. Natural resources such as air, water, animals, plants, sunlight, heat, are essential for the survival of living things on Earth. Air, water, food, air and heat are the basic necessities of life which are available to human beings in abundance. Natural resources provide the basic necessities for sustaining life on the planet Earth. But natural resources are being exploited and destroyed by man in modern times. Holy Quran is complete code of life. A lot number of Quranic verses indicate significance

of natural resource and their right use. Therefore, it is need of time to understand natural resources in the light of Qurānic teachings.

### **Literature Review**

A lot of number of scholars and intellectuals have done excellent research work on the subject of "natural resources".Dr. Qiblā Ayāz has discussed ecological significance of some natural resources in his book "Conservation and Islām" in the light of Islāmic teachings. The famous book "Islam and the Environment" by Indian environmentalist A.R. Agwān explores usefulness of natural resources in environmental perspective. This book was published by the Institute of Objective Studies, Delhī in 1997.Researcher Bashīr Ahmed Dars's research article titled "Environmental Protection in the Light of Islamic Teachings" published in the research journal "The Scholar" in 2016. This article sheds light on the protection of natural resources and environment in the context of Islamic teachings.Researcher ‘Abdul Manān`’s research article titled “Water Conservation in Islamic Perspective” was published in research journal “Al-Qalam” (Vol-24,No.2,December 2019).This article throws light on protection of an important natural resource “water” in context of Islāmic instructions. The value of the natural resources in modern times can be gauged from the fact that the United Nations Organization has also focused on natural resources and organized many international conferences to discuss management and right use of natural resources.

In addition to the above mentioned books and articles, many other authors have also discussed value of natural resources for human life. Keeping in mind the benefits of the natural resources, the title "Qurānic Concept of natural resources and Modern times: Research Review" has been chosen.

### **Research Methodology**

Standard and qualitative research methodology has been adopted. The primary sources related to natural resources have been used. However, at some places, secondary sources

have also been utilized. Internet was used to obtain the latest relevant research material in the current times. Sīrat Study Center Sialkot Cantt was also visited to gain authentic research material. English translation of Qurānic verses has been taken from Maulānā Taqī 'Usmānī's English translation of Holy Qurān.

### **Usefulness of Natural Resources**

Natural resources were created by Allah for Man. Natural resources are consisted of human being ,Earth, animals, plants and minerals etc. Natural resources in Al-Bahth ul-Laghw 'ind al-'Arab were described as under:

"Every corner of the earth and in the heavens and all that is in the world(man or animal or bird or plant).<sup>1</sup>

Well known Muslim philosopher Imām Ghazālī states as below:

Man's economic needs are met by the natural resources found on the planet, minerals, plants and animals.<sup>2</sup>

The whole economic system of the world is dependent on three basic and major natural resources; plants, animals and minerals. All the natural resources are interlinked. Indian environmentalist A. R. Agwan writes:

“Nature is a web of relations”<sup>3</sup>

All natural resources are interconnected and interdependent. The survival of every living being is directly or indirectly linked to natural resources. The Oxford Dictionary defines natural resources as under:

“Materials or conditions occurring in nature and capable of economic exploitation.”<sup>4</sup>

Natural resources are substances found naturally on the earth that are related to the economic situation and exploitation. The Dictionary of Environment defines it as below:

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<sup>1</sup> Ahmed Mukhtār 'Abdul Hamīd 'Omar, Al-Bahth ul-Laghvī 'ind al-'Arab, ('Alim al-Kuttab, 2003), 1:315

<sup>2</sup> Abū Hamid Muhammad Bin Muhammad Al-Ghazālī, Ahyā 'Ulum al-Dīn, (Beirut: Dār Al-Ma'rifah, N.D.), 2:105

<sup>3</sup> A. R. Agwān, Islam and the Environment, (N. Delhī: Institute of Objective Studies, 1997), p.2

<sup>4</sup> The Concise Oxford Dictionary, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p.907

“The reserves are that part of the current economic and social conditions.”<sup>5</sup>

Natural Resources are part of socio-economic environment of Earth. They play an important role in social and economic development and prosperity of any country. Role of natural resources in Encyclopedia Britannica was stated as below:

“The primary necessities for maintaining life, food, water, air and a source of heat have been available to humans for thousands of years.”<sup>6</sup>

American geologist J.S Lewis states:

“The Earth, with its atmosphere and oceans, its biosphere, its crust of relatively oxidized, silica rich, sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic rocks overlaying (a magnesium)silicate mantle and core) of metallic iron, with its ice caps, deserts, forests, tundra, jungles, grasslands, fresh water lakes, coal beds, oil deposits, plants, animals, magnetic field, ionosphere, mid ocean ridges, convincing is a system of stunning complexity”<sup>7</sup>

Food, water, air and heat are the basic necessities of life that have been available to humans in abundance for thousands of years. Minerals, plants and animals are the basic Natural resources that provide the necessities of life. Food, water Air and heat are the basic necessities for sustaining life on the planet that are available for the benefit of mankind. Animals, plants, minerals are natural resources of vital importance and utility for the survival of human life. M.S. Rao expresses as follows:

“It may be natural (animal, vegetable, mineral) or a product of some other activity (e.g. coal tar, wood pulp).”<sup>8</sup>

The raw material is the natural substance required for the manufacture of goods. It can be the product of natural substances (animals, vegetables, minerals) or any other activity (such as coal, wood pulp). Dr. Qiblā Ayāz expresses in his famous book "Conservation and Islam" as under:

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<sup>5</sup> Gurdīp Rāj, Dictionary of Environment, (N. Dehī: Anmol Publications, 1992), p.181

<sup>6</sup> The New Encyclopedia Britannica, (Chicago: Britannica Inc., 1998), 3:553

<sup>7</sup> F. Press, R. Siever, Earth, (New York: W.H. Freeman, 1986), p.2

<sup>8</sup> M.S. Rāj, Dictionary of Geography, (N. Dehī: Anmol publications, 1998), p.293

“The term natural resources includes not only timber, gas, oil, coal, minerals, lakes and submerged lands, but also features which supply a human need and contribute to the health, welfare and benefit of a community are essential to wellbeing thereof ,and proper enjoyment of property devoted to parks and recreational purposes.”<sup>9</sup>

The term natural resources includes not only human being, plants, animals, forests, gas, oil, coal, minerals, lakes and fertile lands but also all the items that meet human needs and contribute to the welfare of the community and which are reserved for recreational purposes and parks and are essential for the well-being of humanity. Land, water resources, air, sea, rivers, forests and plants, salts and minerals, soil, oil, gas, coal, metallic resources, iron, gold, silver, etc. are important natural resources. Natural resources include all of them. Natural resources are also used by human beings and other living beings for their own benefit. The various ecosystems on the planet Earth and the life that inhabits them are also included in the natural resources. In the form of land continents (continents) or in the form of agricultural products on land or in the form of minerals found underground or in the form of animals and plants found on land, in the form of rivers or in the form of oceans. All these things are included in the natural resources. There are two main branches of natural resources; Renewable Resources and Non-Renewable Resources.

### **1. Renewable Resources**

Natural resources that can be renewed are called renewable resources. There are far more renewable resources in the world than non-renewable resources. These are more stable, long lasting, cheap and environmentally friendly than the non-renewable resources. They are found on the planet in large quantities comparatively fossil fuels. The annual amount of fuel produced is ten times greater than the amount obtained from the mineral and nuclear fuel reserves in Pakistan. Fortunately these resources are readily available there. According to the Encyclopedia of Britannica, the description of renewable resources is as follows:

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<sup>9</sup>Dr.Kibla Ayaz, Conservation and Islam, (Islamabad: World Wide Fund for Nature Pakistan,2003),p.16

“Natural Resources are classified as either renewable or Nonrenewable. Living resources animals and plants can reproduce or renew themselves; minerals cannot. Yet Renewable resources must be mined judiciously so that their numbers remain stable and the ecosystem in which that operate remains healthy.”<sup>10</sup>

The above statement shows that renewable resources include living things, animals and plants while mineral resources are considered as non-renewable resources. Wind, water and solar energy are renewable natural resources. Renewable resources should be used wisely as the survival of ecosystems depends on these resources. Energy and natural resources are inextricably linked. The source of natural heat and light is the sun. The natural resources of our universe are flowing in their respective spheres. Solar energy, hydropower and wind power are renewable resources. According to geologists, Pakistan cannot get out of the energy crisis without focusing on renewable energy sources. A.R. Agwān, a leading scholar in the Muslim world, writes his in book about renewable natural resources as under:

“Allah has seen fit to support mankind and all other creatures by His provision of renewable resources, those which by proper and judicious use are perfectly capable of nurturing all of life until the end of time.”<sup>11</sup>

Allah Almighty has created suitable resources to help mankind and all other creatures through the provision of renewable resources. Items and elements are incorporated into renewable natural resources. Living elements are called "biotech". "Dictionary of Geography" defines it as follows:

“The factors reflect the influence of living organisms in the development of soil and vegetation (e.g., bacteria, earthworms, ants, termites, moles, field-mice; in U.S.A. also prairie-dogs ground-squirrels and gophers.)”<sup>12</sup>

Both animals and plants are living things and these are all examples of renewable natural resources. Power plants with renewable sources can be built in smaller sizes to replace non-renewable power plants. Thus, Energy transmission can be made environmentally

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<sup>10</sup>The New encyclopedia Britannica ,3:553-554

<sup>11</sup>A.R. Agwān, Islām and the Environment, p. 50

<sup>12</sup>M.S. Rāḡ, Dictionary of Geography, p. 42

friendly and energy wastage can be minimized by focusing on getting energy from renewable sources (solar, hydropower, wind energy, etc.).

## 2. Non-Renewable Resources

These are natural resources that, once used, are gone forever, their spent value is unchanged. Fossil fuels, minerals, etc. are examples of non-renewable resources. Fuels, minerals, petroleum, Salt, natural gas and coal. The New Encyclopedia of Britannica writes about non-renewable resources:

“Fossil fuels are classed as Non-renewable .They are slow to form and are destroyed by use. Minerals are also Nonrenewable, but, some, such as iron, are plentiful, and others, such as, aluminum can be recycled on economical basis.”<sup>13</sup>

Fossil fuels are said to be a non-renewable resource. Fossil fuels are slow to form and depleted. Minerals are also a non-renewable resource but some minerals such as iron are found in large quantities and other minerals such as aluminum are economically recycled. Can be cycled. Initially, the planet consisted of tall plants, vast meadows, forests and so on.

<sup>14</sup>Fossil fuels take millions of years to form. Fossil fuels are usually composed of hydrocarbon compounds. Therefore, when they are used, they chemically react with the oxygen in the atmosphere to form carbon dioxide which destroys the natural environment.

The "fossil fuels" in the Dictionary of the Environment have been stated as follows:

“The fuels derived from ancient organic remains; peat, coal, crude oil, and natural gas. Tar-sands and oil-shales, though currently no widely exploited, are included in resources of fossil fuels.”<sup>15</sup>

Coal, crude oil and natural gas, Tar and oil shell, although not currently exploited on a large scale are called the resources of fossil fuels. Mineral fuels are non-renewable and the energy obtained from them is considered non-renewable. Heat energy is obtained from

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<sup>13</sup>The New encyclopedia Britannica, 3 :553-554

<sup>14</sup> Dr.Hulūk Nūr Bāqī, Qurānic verses and Scientific Facts,(Karāchī: Indus Publishing Corporation, 1998),p.28-29

<sup>15</sup> Gurdīp Rāj, Dicrtionary of Environment, 84

fossil fuels. One trillion dollars invested in China and Eastern countries to produce thermal energy. It is the largest source of energy. Mumtāz Hussain expresses as below:

“Crude oil is also called black gold. Oil is an important non-renewable natural resource. Daily oil production in Pakistan is 70,000 barrels while consumption is 822,000 barrels per day.”<sup>16</sup>

Environmentalists include petroleum, natural gas, coal and other mineral resources in the list of non-renewable natural resources. It is the moral and national duty of the human race to reduce the use of non-renewable resources.

### **Qurānic Concept of Natural Resources**

Natural resources have been created to meet the basic ecological and biological needs of life on the planet. Sunlight, air, water and food are common examples of the basic necessities of life. Creation of natural resources is a great gift of Allah almighty. Organic and inorganic compounds are the sources of enhancement the beauty of the Earth. Allah created the earth for man and placed in it piles of plants, inanimate objects, animals rivers, seas, mountains and winds so that the noble creatures of man may take full advantage of it. He arranged the natural resources in such a way that no one can do it except Allah.

Almighty Allah says:

"هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا"<sup>17</sup>

“It is He who created for you all that the earth contains”

The above text of holy Quran indicates that all the creatures of the earth, the universe and the natural resources have been created for the benefit of mankind. Allah has created animals and different kinds of plants, inanimate objects and minerals, which have many benefits and properties. These things are consisted of both living and non-living. From a single germ, astronomical bodies like the sun have all been created for the welfare of mankind. Trees, rocks, minerals, air, water, forests, animals, birds and humans themselves

<sup>16</sup>Mumtāz Hussain, Mutāla Mahūl,(Lāhūrē: Āzād Book Depot,N.D.) p.86

<sup>17</sup>Al-Baqra,2:29



are part of the natural resources. It doesn't take long to do and make a name for oneself in the world. Dr. Qiblā Ayāz explains it as below:

“The Earth `s resources are useful for living beings but also that dead bodies dissolve within the Earth, in short ,all things on the Earth have been created to serve mankind.”<sup>18</sup>

Earth is an important natural resource. In the vast universe, Earth is the only planet that is suitable environment for the survival of living things. Well known author, Hārūn Yahyā states it as under:

“Earth is a planet which Allah created as a hospitable environment for life.”<sup>19</sup>

Almighty Allah says:

20" الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمْ الْأَرْضَ مَهْدًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمْ فِيهَا سُبُلًا لَعَلَّكُمْ تَهْتَدُونَ "

“The One who has made the earth a cradle for you, and has made for you pathways therein, so that you may be guided.”

Allah Almighty has made surface of Earth comfortable for man. Imām Fakhr-ud-Dīn Al-Rāzī explains it as follows:

“Earth and its surface has been made smooth for the creatures so that they can dwell on it.”<sup>21</sup>

Water, soil, air and fire are the four basic natural elements of the universe from which the whole universe came into being. This reveals the usefulness of the earth's soil. Well known researcher A.R. Agwān describes the importance and usefulness of land resources as follows:

“The land and soil are essential for the perpetuation of our lives and the lives of other creatures.”<sup>22</sup>

Similarly, Imām Ibn-e- Qayyim has expressed in his book “Tibb-e-Nabwī” significance of natural resources as below:

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Kiblā Ayāz, Conservation and Islām, p. 19

<sup>19</sup> Hārūn Yahyā, The Creation of the Universe, p. 91

<sup>20</sup> Al-Zukhrūf, 43:10

<sup>21</sup> Fakhr-ud-Dīn Al-Rāzī, Mufāttih Al-Ghayb, (Beirūt: Dār Al-Ahya ul-Tarāth ul-‘Arabī, 1420 AH), 8:31

<sup>22</sup> A. R. Agwān, Islām and the Environment, p. 79

“Man is a mixture of the three basic components of soil, air and water.”<sup>23</sup>

Allah Almighty says:

“وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ”<sup>24</sup>

“And We created from water every living thing. Would they still not believe?”

Each word of the Qurānic verses has a very important secret. The word that is used in the Qurānic verse is to be alive, which is equivalent to life force. This one statement of the Qurānic verse expands the concept of life force so much that it completely covers viruses, protoplasm, DNA, molecules, etc. In this way, a scientific fact was told to humanity fourteen centuries ago. Life force comes from water and gets strength from water.<sup>25</sup> The earth is a natural source of heat energy. There is a lot of heat and energy inside the earth. Hot springs and volcanoes are a living proof of this fact. Muhammad S‘aeed states it as below:

The interior of the earth contains so much heat and energy that every cubic mile of rocks in the earth's crust will provide immense energy.<sup>26</sup>

Allah Almighty spread wonderful circle of the earth and placed the great anchors of the mountains so that all the creatures could live their life in peace and tranquility in it and this planet did not move or shake. The earth surface is also very enchanting and there are various great benefits and advantages for human beings inside it. The part of the Earth in which we live is called Biosphere. The "Dictionary of the Environment" defines it as under:  
“Biosphere: The part of the earth and its atmosphere in which organisms live.”<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Muhammad ibn-e- ‘Abī Bakr Ibn-e- Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Tibb-e-Nabwī, (Beirūt: Dār al-Hilāl, N.D.), p.16

<sup>24</sup> Al-Anbiā, 21:30

<sup>25</sup> Abdul Manān, Water Conservation in Islamic Perspective, (Lāhūr: Punjab University, Al-Qalam, Vol-24, No.2, December 2019), p.584

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad S‘aeed, Science and Universe, (Lāhūr: National Library, Railway Road, 1955), p.45

<sup>27</sup> Gurdīp Rāj, Dictionary of Environment, p.29

Almighty Allah has made the atmosphere of the earth suitable for survival of living beings. Allah Almighty has created balanced environment of the earth especially for human beings. In modern scientific term, it is called "Biosphere". The plants grow in the soil and it is a combination of different elements. It includes minerals, clay, salt, clay mud, sand, etc., decomposed organic matter and microscopic organisms that provide strength, water soluble nutrients to plants. MS Rao expresses his views as below:

“ It is penetrated by the roots of plants, that derive from it nutrients and moisture; in fact, from the standpoint of agriculture, soil is made up of the top few cm of mantle rock in which cultivated plants are grown.”<sup>28</sup>

The above text clarifies that the outer layer of soil provides a useful and conducive environment for plants on the planet. The outer layer of the earth contains nutrients, moisture and air for the growth of plants and their roots. Geologists have divided the interior of the earth into three parts, the crust, the mantle and the core. This mountain range is located on the lower layer of the mantle.<sup>29</sup>

Natural resources include all the substances produced by nature and are used by human beings for their benefit. Land, air, water, trees, minerals and animals are the basic natural resources. Sometimes Man himself tries to destroy these natural gifts. Man depends on the world's natural resources such as air, water, soil, minerals, trees, animals, food and gas in order to spend a balanced life on Earth. It is essential to adopt preventive measures to protect all the natural resources and living things on Earth. If even the survival of a single living or natural resource is threatened, the whole earth will be endangered because all living and natural resources on the planet are interconnected. The survival of all living things on planet Earth depends on natural resources. The Earth is very different from other planets. A man needs to carry a 20-kilogram oxygen cylinder on your back to breathe on any other planet. Divine nature has adorned the planet Earth with plants to produce a large amount of oxygen in the atmosphere for the breathing of living beings. Natural resources

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<sup>28</sup>M.S. Rāḡ, Dictionary of Geography ,p.327

<sup>29</sup>M'āḡrif (Monthly),(Indiā :Dāḡr-ul -Musnafīn Shiblī Academy, April 2019), p.297

are also mentioned and valued in all the religions of the world. For example, Zoroastrians value the earth and its natural resources. Every flower is an angel according to their belief.

In this regard, A. R. Agwān writes:

“The Parsees, contemporary followers of Zoroaster, are told that “every flower is appropriate to an angel.” In their Jashan ceremony, they revere and remember fire, water, the animal and the vegetable kingdoms, the earth, the minerals and metals in the earth and the air, and even the other that occupies space.”<sup>30</sup>

Parsīs hold conferences in honor of natural resources and in their ceremonies they build bridges of fire, air, water, animals, botany, earth, minerals and metals. Well known scholar

A.R. Agwān writes about the importance of basic natural resources as follows:

“Clearly, as a living social creatures, man has biological and ecological needs such as light, air, water, food, shelter and community, and he may utilize the resources of the earth to secure those basic necessities, as may every other living creature on earth.”<sup>31</sup>

The natural resources are colorful; they have different shapes and types. In fact, all of them have benefits for the humans. Allah Almighty has not created a single thing in vain. Everything from an atom to a vast universe has been created for the benefit of mankind.

The divine command is:

وَمَا خَلَقْنَا السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَمَا بَيْنَهُمَا إِلَّا بِالْحَقِّ "32"

“We did not create the heavens and the earth and all that is in between them without a truthful purpose.”

Imām Ibn-e- Jarīr Tabrī interprets the above verse as follows:

“All the creatures and wonders found in the heavens and the earth are carrying out their responsibilities with justice and fairness.”<sup>33</sup>

Man has a central position in this vast universe. Everything in the world has been given under his control. All the things have been created to serve mankind. In this regard, Saeed bin ‘Alī Qahtanī in Al-‘Urwa Tul-Wuthqa states as follows:

<sup>30</sup> A. R. Agwān, Islām and the Environment, P.9

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, P.46

<sup>32</sup> Al-Hijjar, 85:15

<sup>33</sup> Muhammad ibn-e- Jarīr al-Tabarī, Jāmi 'al-Bayān fī Tawīl al-Qur'ān, ( Moussat al-Risālah, 2000), 17:128

Allah Almighty has subdued all the natural resources in the earth, including the planets, the moon, the sun, the stars, the planets, the earth, the air, the water, the minerals, the soil, the mountains, the forests, the animals, the rivers, the oceans and other natural resources are the guarantors of the survival of human life.<sup>34</sup>

Similarly, Hārūn Yahyā expresses:

“All the existed elements serve play role to serve human life. Not of them is either superfluous or purposeless. This situation is further evidence that the universe was created by Allah for mankind.”<sup>35</sup>

Non-Muslim scientists and thinkers also acknowledge the fact that the universe and its natural resources have been created specifically to make human habitation possible upon Earth. According to scientist Denton, the purpose of the creation of natural resources is as follows:

“The Universe was specially created to make humane life possible.”<sup>36</sup>

Imām Abu al-Barkāt al-Nasfī states purpose of the creation of natural resources as follows:

“Countless resources have been created for the benefit of human beings and for the beautification of the earth and all the natural resources have been brought under the control of human beings.”<sup>37</sup>

Verse No. 13 of Surah Al-‘Imrān states that minerals (gold, silver), animal resources (horses, cattle) and plant resources (agricultural fields) have been made a great welcome and adornment for the people. One of the purposes of the products created by is to provide decoration for the satisfaction of human aesthetic sense.

Holy Qurān has a holistic view of the earth and the natural elements found in it and the issues related to it. There is wisdom and expediency in every command of God. Numerous verses encourage and emphasize contemplation of the mysteries and secrets of the universe and their teaching and research.

Allah Almighty says:

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<sup>34</sup> S‘a‘eed bin ‘Alī Al-Qahtānī, Al-‘Urwa tul-Wuthqa Fī Dhā‘Ul Kitāb Wa Sunnah, (Riyādh: Matb‘a Safīr, N.D), 1:126

<sup>35</sup> Hārūn Yahyā, The Creation of the Universe, P. 168

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, P. 30

<sup>37</sup> Abū Al-Barkāt ‘Abdullah Bin Ahmad Al-Nasfī, Tafsīr ul-Nasfī, (Beirūt: Dār Al-Qalam, 1998), 3:411

"أَوَلَمْ يَنْظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ مِنْ شَيْءٍ ۗ وَاَنْ عَسٰى اَنْ يَّكُوْنَ قَدْرًا  
اَقْتَرَبَ اَجَلُهُمْ ۗ فَبَائَ حَدِيْثٍۭۤۢ بَعْدَهٗ يُؤْمِنُوْنَ " 38

"Have they not looked into the kingdom of the heavens and the earth, and into the things Allah has created, and into the fact that their time might have possibly drawn near? In which other discourse, then, shall they believe after this?"

Imām Baydhawī interprets the above Qur'anic text as under:

"Allah Almighty has created so many natural things in the earth and it is impossible to count them."<sup>39</sup>

Numerous natural resources are mentioned in the Qur'ān and various Qur'ānic verses urge mankind to think deeply about these natural resources. Scientists also acknowledge the Qur'ānic truths. There is complete harmony between Qur'ānic truths and modern science.

Almighty Allah says:

"إِنَّ فِيْ اٰخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللّٰهُ فِي السَّمٰوٰتِ وَالْاَرْضِ لَآيٰتٍۭ لِّقَوْمٍ يَّتَّقُوْنَ" 40

"Surely, in the alternation of night and day and in what Allah has created in the heavens and the earth, there are signs for a people who are God fearing."

Astronomy, biology, marine, minerals, botany and zoology have been mentioned in the various verses of Holy Qur'ān. Natural substances are symbols of Allah Almighty who is the real creator of everything. In this regard, Imām Rāzī elaborates as under:

Sources of Water (rain, snow, oceans, tides etc.), minerals, flora and fauna are the four most important natural elements exist in the universe.

<sup>41</sup>

The above mentioned arguments indicate that Allah Almighty has not made the Earth, the heavens and the natural resources found in them useless. Sciences of natural resources is in accordance with Qur'ānic guidelines. Allah Almighty has created understanding skill in natural resources (animals, plants, minerals), by which they glorify their Lord. Fear of God is also existed in inanimate objects. According to Qur'anic teachings, stones fall out due to

<sup>38</sup> Al-'Arāf,7:185

<sup>39</sup> Nāsser al-Dīn 'Abdullah bin 'Omar Al-Baydhāwī, Anwār al-Tanzīl wa Isrār al-Tāwīl, (Beirut: Dār Ihyā al-Tarāth al-'Arabī, 1418AH), 3:44

<sup>40</sup> Yūnas, 10:6

<sup>41</sup> Fakhr ul-Dīn al-Rāzī, Mufatīh al-Ghayb, (Beirut: Dār al-Ahyā al-Tarāth al-'Arabī, N.D.),

fear of Allah Almighty and their fragmentation is a sign of fearing God. It is clearly stated in the Holy Qur'ān that all things (natural resources) in the universe glorify and praise Allah. In Surah Al-Noor of the Holy Qur'ān, the glorification and praise of the beings of the universe is described as follows:

"أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ يُسَبِّحُ لَهُ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالطَّيْرُ صَافَاتٍ كُلٌّ قَدْ عَلِمَ صَلَاتَهُ وَتَسْبِيحَهُ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ بِمَا يَفْعَلُونَ" 42

“Did you not realize that purity of Allah is proclaimed by all those in the heavens and the earth, and by the birds with their wings spread out? Everyone knows one’s own (way of) praying (to Allah) and one’s own (way of) proclaiming Allah’s purity. And Allah knows well what they do.”

Ibn-e-‘Atiyah Undalsī explains as under:

“The commentators said: everything in the heavens and the earth has perceiving capacity.”<sup>43</sup>

Everything in the universe is alive and glorifies Allah Almighty. Hydrogen atoms are also used in living things and hydrogen gas itself contains hydrogen, but it is our delusion that hydrogen gas is dead. Abu Al-Faraj ‘Abdul Rahmān Ibn Al-Jawzī expresses:

“Everything (natural resource) of world is busy in praising Allah.”<sup>44</sup>

The aforesaid explanations prove that all the natural resources in the universe have sense of understanding which human being cannot comprehend. Thus, it shows sacredness and importance of natural resources. Allah Almighty commands about right and careful use of natural resources in Holy Qur'ān as follows:

"وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ۗ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ" 45

“Eat and drink and do not be extravagant. Surely, He does not like the extravagant.”

<sup>42</sup>, Al-Nūr, 24:41

<sup>43</sup>, Abdul-Rahmān Ibn Tamām Ibn ‘Atiyah Al-Undlasī, Al-Muharrar ul-Wajīz Fi Tafsir ul-Kitāb ul-‘Azīz, (Beirūt: Dār ul-Kuttab Al-‘Alamiya 1422 AH), 4:188

<sup>44</sup> Abū al-Faraj ‘Abdul Rahmān Ibn Al-Jūzī, Zād al-Masīr fi ‘Ilam ul-Tafsīr, (Beirut: Dār al-Kitāb ul-‘Arabī, 1422 AH), 4:232

<sup>45</sup> Al-‘Arāf, 7:31

The above Qurānic verse indicates that extravagant, destruction and excess use of Allah`s blessings (natural resources) has been strictly prohibited. It is clear that Man has been commanded by Allah to use natural resources carefully and not to waste them blindly at any cost.

### **Conclusion**

Allah Almighty has created all the natural resources for the welfare and benefit of human being. Various verses of Holy Qurān depict that natural resources are not purposeless while these blessings are created to serve mankind. According to teachings of Holy Quran, All things (natural resources) in the universe glorify and praise their creator Allah. Land, air, water, plants, minerals and animals are the basic natural resources for survival of human life on planet Earth. Modern Man himself is destroying these natural gifts of God. If even a single basic natural resource (Land, air, water, plants, animals, minerals) is destroyed, all creatures on the earth would be endangered because all the natural resources are interconnected. It is need of time to understand the value and significance of natural things for survival of living beings. Wastage and destruction of natural resources has been strictly prevented in Holy Qurān. Therefore, natural resources should be used carefully.