Muslim Green Guide to Reducing Climate Change

As for the earth, We have spread it out, set firm mountains in it, and made everything grow there in due balance (Qur’an 15:19)

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Muslim Green Guide to reducing Climate Change
Co-Published by:

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Qur'an Translation
Surely brothers and sisters, in our moments of reflection, as we gaze around at our Lord’s signs and admire his majesty in the beauty of the trees that provide us with delicious fruits, the clouds from which falls the nourishing rain and the vast oceans which man harvests and upon which he is carried great distances; we must surely recognise that the earth and everything in it is a trust placed upon us. We are temporary custodians and this is another of Allah’s tests for us to see how we care for our environment and all things within it.

Climate change is the consequence of Man disturbing the balance of Allah’s creation. The harmony of our weather, our land, air and sea has all been affected by too much pollution and too little care in consuming the earth’s resources.

It is required within our Islamic faith, that we behave as responsible and considerate citizens in our families and communities, practising concern and moderation in our lives. We can do this best by following the guidance of Qur’an and Sunnah, which clearly invites us to live in harmony, not only with our neighbours, but also with our environment.

Mindful of Allah’s tests for all of us, we invite you to reflect, in the light of the practical suggestions contained within this guide, and see how being mindful of our impact on climate change will help us all to be more observant Muslims, and make our actions pleasing to Allah. Try these practical suggestions with your family and friends. Invite others to join with you and see how you can save energy, resources, time, money and most of all, save the precious balance in this world for your children and the generations to come, inshAllah.

The Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences (IFEES) has worked almost single handed for over twenty years to put the environmental message of Islam across to Muslims and it gives us particular pleasure to co-publish this valuable resource with UK LifeMakers, who independently produced the original draft. This resource systematically sets down a simple set of actions supported by Islamic teachings. If assiduously followed by every Muslim household in Britain, these could make a significant contribution to meeting Government targets in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Qur’an (5:48) tells us to “compete” with each other in doing good actions. Thus every good action counts and my prayer is that we compete vigorously enough to leave the earth in a liveable state for our children.
What is Climate Change?

The Earth’s climate (weather) changes all the time, but most scientists say that it is now starting to change suddenly, drastically and unpredictably, in ways that may well result in catastrophic floods, droughts, storms, forest fires, heat-waves etc. We are already seeing an increase in the rate of such natural disasters around the world.

Many scientists agree that the most likely reason for these changes is a build-up of carbon dioxide in Earth’s atmosphere, due to human beings’ excessive burning of fossil fuels, such as oil, gas, and coal. This has increased the temperature of the earth by trapping heat from the sun (the ‘Greenhouse Effect’), causing ‘Global warming’. This is being seen in many places but in particular in the polar ice caps and glaciers, which are melting at an unprecedented rate. As the ice melts, another ‘greenhouse’ gas, methane, is released from trapped bubbles and from the peat bogs that have been frozen for many centuries. Methane is highly flammable and contributes even more to global warming than carbon dioxide. Methane is also released in large quantities from animals and human beings as they digest their food.

As the ice melts, the rate of global warming increases even faster, as the ice no longer reflects the heat of the sun out into space. Since human beings appear to have played an important part in upsetting the balance of the climate, people all over the world are being asked to find ways to cut their carbon emissions by abandoning fossil fuels and turning to renewable energy sources, such as the sun, wind, water, volcanic heat, and waves.

Why is it important for Muslims to take action?

• Islam teaches Muslims to respect Allah’s creation and maintain the balance He created. Allah commands people, ‘Do not cause corruption on the earth’ (2:11).
• Everyone in the world needs to help. Muslims make up at least one fifth of the world’s population.
• While most Muslim countries are poor and use far less fossil fuels than rich ones, many Muslims also live in the rich countries or lead wasteful lifestyles and need to play their part in reducing their consumption of fossil fuels.
• Many Muslim countries produce oil and so have a vested interest in maintaining the fossil fuel industry. Nevertheless, it’s in their interest to keep the price of oil high, to maximise their income from production, and to make the oil last longer before it is all used up.
• Higher oil prices would create incentives for people to switch to cleaner and more sustainable energy.
• Oil producing countries should therefore include sustainable energy industries in their long-term investment and diversification plans.

Climate change is a far greater threat to the world than international terrorism.”

(UK Government chief scientific adviser Sir David King)
Food & Cooking

What is the issue?
FACT: The UK spends £500m per year on organic food, but the effect is reduced as it’s flown around the world. When organic products are imported by plane from New Zealand, the transport energy used is 235 times greater than the energy savings of organic production.

How can my family help?
• Think before you buy. Demand local and organic and seasonal food.
• Getting produce out of season means either growing it using glasshouses or importing it, sometimes by air.
• Cook from fresh, as fresh is better for your health.
• Use a toaster rather than the grill to make toast - it will use less energy.
• Buy organic milk - it takes over three times as much energy to produce a litre of non-organic milk as organic.
• Buy in bulk for everyday items. As well as saving money, this avoids emissions produced in packaging individual items.

Water Heating

What is the issue?
Heating or cooling water in all its forms, whether for heating, cooking or air conditioning, uses large amounts of energy, and this contributes to climate change.

How can my family help?
• If your boiler is over 10 years old, then you can save energy by changing the boiler for an efficient condensing boiler.
• Baths use more energy than an efficient shower, you will save water and energy by using showers to bathe.
• Older houses may let the cold air through windows, try installing double glazing to reduce your heating needs.
• If it’s warm weather or you’re going away for a few days switch off the central heating. Try turning down the thermostat.
• Air conditioning uses a lot of energy, more than almost all of your home appliances. Be aware before you install or use.

Benefits
Healthy living
Saves money
Saves time
Reduces harmful gases

TOP TIPS!
Buy local/organic food
Cook efficiently
Buy in bulk

Contacts
www.organic-food-for-everyone.co.uk/
www.farmersmarkets.net

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
0800 512012
www.environment-agency.gov.uk
08708 506 506
Electricity

What is the issue?
Everyone now takes electricity for granted, but producing energy using fossil fuels like coal and gas contributes to climate change.

How can my family help?
• Switch to a renewable energy supplier / tariff.
• Don’t leave electrical appliances on standby, switch them off.
• Tumble dryers use a lot of energy, instead, air dry when possible.
• Buy appliances that are energy ‘A’ rated, and above, to save electricity.
• Switch off the TV and play in the park or garden with your family, you will enjoy it more and feel healthier for it.

TOP TIPS!

Benefits
Saves money
Get fitter and healthier
Reduces harmful gases

Contacts
www.ecotricity.co.uk
01453 756 111
www.greenenergy.uk.com
0845 456 9550
www.energysavingstrust.org.uk
0800 512012

Saves money
Saves time
Reduces harmful gases

(orientation:horizontal)

Lighting

What is the issue?
• The more electricity we use, the more harmful emissions are released into the atmosphere.
• Lighting is essential in our homes, the more lights we have, the more electricity we use.
• Up to 15% of your electricity bills are just from using lights around the house.

How can my family help?
• Where possible, change your normal light bulbs for energy-efficient light bulbs.
• When you leave a room, switch the lights off, get into this good habit and it will make a difference.
• Check the watts number on your lights, if they are more than 60 watts, ask if they can be changed for a lower power usage e.g. 40 watts, or better still change for energy-efficient bulbs.

TOP TIPS!

Benefits
Saves money
Get fitter and healthier
Reduces harmful gases

Contacts
www.energysavingstrust.org.uk
0800 512012
www.environment-agency.gov.uk
08708 506 506

Saves money
Saves time
Reduces harmful gases

(orientation:vertical)
Laundry

Clean your garments; keep away from all filth
(Qur’an 74:4-5 H) literal translation, see note

Waste: Reduce

What is the issue?
FACT: A recent study by Cambridge University’s Institute of Manufacturing found that 60% of the energy associated with a piece of clothing is spent in washing and drying it.

How can my family help?
• Wash your clothes in warm water instead of hot.
• Save up to launder a few big loads instead of many smaller ones.
• Use the most efficient machine you can find—newer ones can use as little as one-quarter of the energy of older machines.
• Separate clothes by material, some may last you longer by hand washing rather than washing by machine.
• When they’re clean, dry your clothes the natural way, by hanging them on a line, airing rack, or radiator rather than loading them in a dryer.

Do not be tight-fisted, nor so open-handed that you end up blamed and overwhelmed with regret
(Qur’an 17:29 H)

How can my family help?
• Buy only what you need and avoid wasting money on goods you won’t use.
• Buy products that can be reused, plastic containers, glass jars and cloth shopping bags can be reused.
• Buy products with little packaging: the less packaging the less waste.
• Sell or give away unwanted items, someone else may well need them.
• Reduce paper waste by cancelling unwanted mail.
• Buy non-toxic products whenever possible, they are less harmful to the environment.

Saves energy and resources
Saves you money
Reduces harmful gases
Protects the environment

Benefits
Contacts
www.recyclenow.com
0845 3 313131

TOP TIPS!
Do large loads of laundry instead of smaller ones.
Dry using a clothes line outside or a clothes rack inside.

Benefits
Contacts
The Global Warning Survival Guide
www.time.com

TOP TIPS!
Do large loads of laundry instead of smaller ones.

www.recyclenow.com
0845 3 313131

Saves energy and resources
Saves you money
Reduces harmful gases
Protects the environment

Benefits
Contacts
www.time.com

Saves time
Saves money
Reduces harmful gases
Protects the environment

TOP TIPS!
Clean your garments; keep away from all filth
(Qur’an 74:4-5 H) literal translation, see note

Waste reduction starts at the supermarket.
Use food in order of age, so that it doesn’t rot.
Don’t open another thing before you finish the first one.

Don’t be tight-fisted, nor so open-handed that you end up blamed and overwhelmed with regret
(Qur’an 17:29 H)
Waste: Reuse

How can my family help?

- **Carrier bags and twist ties:** Carrier bags can be reused in the shops or as bin bags around the house.
- **Envelopes:** By sticking labels over the address you can reuse envelopes. Alternatively, old envelopes can be used as scrap paper to make notes.
- **Jars and pots:** By cleaning glass jars and small pots, you can use them as small containers to store odds and ends. You can make your own preserves (e.g. fruit, jam, pickles and sauces) and store them in used jars after sterilizing them with heat.
- **Newspaper, cardboard and bubble wrap:** Make useful packing material when sending parcels, moving house or storing items.
- **Old clothes, toys, household goods and books:** can be made into other textile items such as cushion covers or stuffing or teapot cosies, or even paper. You can recycle them by taking them to charity shops. Other people can reuse your unwanted clothes and books when you donate them to charity shops.

Waste: Recycle

How can my family help?

- **Recycling different materials:** Many materials can be recycled, such as paper, garden waste, wood, plastic, metal, and glass.
- **Buy products that can be recycled:** When shopping, buy products that can be recycled easily such as glass jars and bottles and tin cans.
- **Buy products that have been made from recycled material:** check by looking on the label.
- **Avoiding buying hazardous material:** It is difficult to recycle products like fluorescent lighting tubes that contain hazardous waste. They can only be disposed of safely via your local recycling centre.
- **Recycling bins:** Make sure you have a recycling bin in your home. Keep it in an obvious place so you won’t forget to use it. Your local council should be able to provide you with a recycling bin that can be used for materials such as glass, paper, aluminium and plastic.
- **Use your local council recycling centre:** If you can get transport, take your waste to the local centre, or hire a skip.

### Benefits

- **Saves water and energy**
- **Saves trees**
- **Reduces harmful gases**
- **Lower priced goods**

### Contacts

- **Www.recyclenow.com**
- **0845 3 313131**
- **Www.islamic-relief.com**
- **0121 605 5555**

### TOP TIPS!

- **Donate old electrical equipment to schools or community centres so that others can reuse them.**
- **Try fixing instead of disposing.**
- **Refill spent printer cartridges.**

### Benefits

- **Reduces pollution**
- **Saves water and energy**
- **Saves trees**
- **Reduces harmful gases**

### Contacts

- **Www.recyclenow.com**
- **0845 331 3131**

### TOP TIPS!

- **Make sure you know what facilities your local council provides.**
- **Join with neighbours to collect and then drop off at recycling points.**
- **Assist the elderly in your street.**
Waste: The 3 ‘R’s

When you ... remove stones, thorns and bones from the road, ... it counts for you as sadaqah (Hadith: Tirmidhi)

What’s the issue?

• An estimated 6.7 million tonnes of household food waste is produced each year in the UK, most of which could have been eaten. This wastes good food, costs us all money and adversely impacts on the environment.
• Rechargeable batteries can be reused many times before they need throwing away, Normal batteries create unnecessary waste.
• 70% less energy is required to recycle paper compared with making it from raw wood pulp. Saving paper saves trees, which can then continue to absorb carbon dioxide.

How can my family help?

• Reduce: what you buy and use it all up
• Reuse: reuse whatever you can.
• Recycle: when things are ready to be disposed of, see if they can be recycled.

Benefits
Saves money
Good for your garden
Reduces harmful gases
Up to 50% of waste in your bin can be used as compost

Contacts
www.recyclenow.com
www.communitycompost.org
0114 258 0483
www.recycleforlondon.org.uk
0845 331 3131

TOP TIPS!
Get into the habit of the 3 ‘R’s; Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.
When you recycle, get the whole family involved.

Cars

What’s the issue?

• Cars produce a lot of polluting gases which make it hard to breathe and they hurt the environment.
• More people own cars, are driving further and engines are thirstier than ever before. A quarter of all car journeys in the UK are under 2 miles, that’s a lot of short, polluting trips.

How can my family help?

• For your next car try a smaller engine (1.0L or 1.3L), try a hybrid car or one that uses alternative fuels such as electricity, LPG, hydrogen fuel cell. All these pollute less than petrol.
• Try to walk or use a bike for journeys under 2 miles, over half of our journeys are short and don’t need a car, try it and you will feel healthier, it will help you to lose weight as well as being great for the environment.

Benefits
Saves you money
Improves health and fitness
Reduces harmful gases

Contacts
www.greencarsite.co.uk
+ 44 (0)20 7193 4569

TOP TIPS!
Walk more, use the car less
Try smaller-engined cars, they’re cleaner & cheaper
Share your journeys
Ride a bike when you can
Air Travel

What’s the issue?

• Air travel emits greenhouse gases which make the world hotter and hurt the environment.
• More people now travel by air more times every year; cheap airlines have made foreign travel easier.
• Alternative aviation fuels are being tested at the moment and may soon be in use.

How can my family help?

• Take fewer holidays or trips requiring air travel, try taking holidays or trips inside the UK by train.
• When you travel by air, ask if the pollution of the journey can be balanced with a ‘carbon offset’.
• The newer the airline’s fleet of aircraft, the better the efficiency and clean technology of the engines.
• Ask yourself if you really need to make more than one Hajj or Umrah journey.

Benefits

Reduces harmful gases
Trains can cut your carbon emissions by up to 80% 

Contacts

www.carbonbalanced.org
0845 054 4422

TOP TIPS!

Try the train when you can
Try UK holidays
Try combining trips
Can you use web video to talk instead of travelling?

Cycling

What’s the issue?

• Most fossil fuel transportation is very polluting and harms the environment.
• The majority of journeys in cars, in the UK, average only 2 miles.
• People exercise less, so diabetes, obesity & high blood pressure are increasing.

How can my family help?

• Look for opportunities to walk more or use a bicycle for shorter journeys.
• Cycling improves health and provides exercise.
• Cycling does not pollute the environment, as it has no exhaust fumes.
• Cycling is something people can enjoy as a family.

Benefits

Helps you stay fit
Saves you money
Reduces harmful gases
Improves health

Contacts

www.sustrans.org.uk
0845 113 00 65
www.whycycle.co.uk

TOP TIPS!

Use a bike for shorter trips
Enjoy cycling as a family
Get into healthy habits
Cycle to keep fit

Air Travel ” We made the sky a well-secured canopy—yet from its wonders they turn away. (Qur’an 21:32 H) “

Cycling ” (He created ... ) horses, mules, and donkeys for you to ride and use for show, and other things you know nothing about. (Qur’an 16:8 H) “
Grants

“He has made the sun and the moon useful to you”
(Qur’an 14:33 H)

What is the issue?
Helping the environment doesn’t have to be expensive and you can find help from the government to improve your home and help your family live a green life.

How can my family help?
• A simple and effective way of reducing the energy wasted in your home is by adding wall and loft insulation – there are insulation grants to help you do this.
• If you have children or vulnerable relatives in your house, you may be eligible for a grant to install an efficient boiler.
• If you’re more ambitious and want to generate your own electricity, you can get grants for solar power systems.

Benefits
Saves you money
Saves you time
Reduce harmful gases

Contacts
www.carbontrust.co.uk
0800 085 2005

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
0800 512 012

TOP TIPS!
Install loft insulation
Replace your old boiler
Install clean energy

How green is my family?

• We grow our own food
• We buy locally grown organic food
• We donate unwanted items to schools/others who can use them
• We take more showers than baths
• We turn down the thermostat to control the temperature
• We switch appliances off instead of using standby
• We use low energy bulbs for lighting
• We Reduce, Reuse and Recycle items around the house
• We walk or cycle whenever we can instead of using the car
• We know where to access help, information and grants to assist us in becoming a more environment-friendly family

Saves you money
Save you time
Reduce harmful gases

www.carbontrust.co.uk
0800 085 2005

www.energysavingtrust.org.uk
0800 512 012
General Information

WWF www.wwf.org.uk/01483 426333
OXFAM www.oxfam.org.uk 0870 333 2700
Friends of the Earth www.foe.co.uk 020 7490 1555
Greenpeace www.greenpeace.org.uk 020 7865 8100
UK Environment Agency www.environment-agency.gov.uk 08708 506 506
UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change www.ipcc.ch 0041 22 730 8066
UN Environmental Programme http://www.unep.org 00 254 20 7621234 (Nairobi, Kenya)

Qur’an Translation

Quotations from the Qur’an used in this booklet are taken from:
The Qur’an: a New Translation, by M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, Oxford University Press, 2005 (H)
It is God who sends the winds, bearing good news of His coming grace, and when they have gathered up the heavy clouds, We drive them to a dead land where We cause rain to fall, bringing out all kinds of fruit,

(Qur’an 7:57 H)

We sent water down from the sky in due measure and lodged it in the earth—We have the power to take it all away if We so wish,

(Qur’an 23:18 H)