

**ASSIGNMENT No.1**

**Q.1 Highlight the significance of women in terms of their role in natural resource processing and consumption.**

It's been 14 years since the UN Security Council adopted [Resolution 1325](#) acknowledging women as important agents of change in recovery from conflict and peacebuilding generally. But between 1992 and 2011, only four percent of signatories in 31 major peace processes around the world were women, and only 12 out of 585 peace agreements referred to or made provisions for women's needs in the reconstruction process.

Excluding women from reconstruction and peacebuilding can prolong conflict and perpetuate systematic inequalities, no more so than when it comes to natural resource management. Since 1990, at least 18 conflicts have been fuelled or financed by natural resources, according to the [UN Environment Program](#) (UNEP).

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Among rural households in the developing world, women are [typically the primary providers](#) of water, food, and energy (e.g., firewood and biomass). As a result, women in conflict-affected countries are often especially dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods and especially vulnerable to changes in availability and access.

Despite this, women are still persistently discriminated against and compensated less in agricultural pursuits, land rights, and other natural resource management activities, as well as excluded from peace processes. This is particularly problematic because the frequent result – food insecurity – threatens not only women, but dependent family members and young children. Additionally, food insecurity often contributes to the recurrence of violence in areas with weak institutions and vulnerable markets.

Failure to recognize the trials and realities women face in areas affected by conflict violates their rights and dismisses their positive potential. [Women and Natural Resources: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential](#), a report published jointly by UNEP, [UN Women](#), the [UN Development Program](#), and the [UN Peacebuilding Support Office](#), analyzes and offers solutions to strengthen peacebuilding outcomes by enhancing women's engagement and empowerment through natural resource management.

**Gender Dynamics in Conflict-Affected Areas**

Women represent [43 percent](#) of the agricultural labor force in developing countries and over half of agricultural laborers in sub-Saharan Africa. Despite this, [research](#) indicates that women are rarely consulted in peacebuilding programs related to agricultural planning, technology, and access to credit.

Concessions and interventions often sideline women's interests, particularly in cases where male village chiefs or heads of households are responsible for representing community interests. In fact, some peace agreements have [exacerbated land-related vulnerabilities](#) for women, according to the report.

**“Women form the majority of resource users and managers...but this responsibility seldom translates to the political or economic levels”**

Following the cessation of conflict in 2005 Aceh, Indonesia, for example, funding for economic recovery focused primarily on cash crops, such as rice, rubber, palm oil, and coffee. Women, who primarily grew subsistence crops, were largely excluded from benefits.

Similarly, women in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea, were sidelined in peacekeeping efforts and land agreements in the late 1990s and early 2000s, despite the matrilineal nature of their communities. While women were able to informally participate in the peace process by utilizing their unique family positions to facilitate discussion between conflicting groups, they were not adequately represented in the formal negotiation process.

Women in conflict-affected areas often also face elevated security risks because of their natural resource management responsibilities. Population pressures around refugee and displaced persons camps can lead to water shortages and deforestation, forcing women to go further and further away to collect drinking water and firewood, where they may be [more vulnerable to assault](#).

“At a practical level, women form the majority of resource users and managers in peacebuilding settings, but this responsibility seldom translates to the political or economic levels. This has to change,” [said Achim Steiner](#), UN under-secretary-general and UNEP executive director, in a press release. “Peace and development can only be achieved when both men and women access and benefit from natural resources in an equitable and sustainable way.”

#### Including Women Leads to Stronger Peace

On the flip side, peacebuilding can afford an opportunity to change these dynamics, according to the report. Peace processes typically take place in a dynamic political environment – governments have been shaken or overthrown, new powers may be rising, while others fall. This can be an opportunity to empower women and shift predominant genders roles.

#### **Women are more likely than men to use natural resources to increase overall family welfare**

Conflicts related to natural resources are more likely to reignite within the first five years after the peacekeeping process. But when included in peace negotiations, women tend to prioritize issues like land rights, natural resources, and environmental degradation. Research by [UN Women](#) shows that women are more likely than men to use natural resources to increase overall family welfare, reduce child malnutrition, and improve family food consumption. As a result, including women in the peace process can [reduce post-conflict natural resource inequalities](#) that trigger re-ignition of conflict.

[After the genocide in Rwanda](#), for example, women’s membership in land commissions, local and national governing bodies, and the courts was mandated, leading to the highest percentage of female parliamentarians anywhere in the world and new laws protecting women’s rights to own and inherit land.

In the Darfur Peace Agreement of 2006, women [placed a spotlight](#) on the impact of war on agriculture, and thus the livelihoods of women and children. As a result, the agreement created mechanisms to address those problems, such as the creation of investment opportunities, enhancement of productive capabilities, and provision of credit, production inputs, and capacity-building for women farmers.

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Opportunities for Peacebuilding

In essence, the report argues, women are an untapped wealth of natural resource knowledge and peacebuilding potential. In order to capitalize on opportunities for peacebuilding, the authors suggest three entry points.

- **Among peacebuilding organizations and governments, promote female participation in negotiation processes, especially those related to natural resource management.** This includes having women participants, consulting with women's groups and networks, referring to gender experts when developing policy, and ensuring the representation of women in important decision-making institutions.
- **“Sustainable natural resource use is the cornerstone of development”**
- **Adopt proactive measures protecting women from resource-related violence during conflict and post-conflict periods.** Women are particularly vulnerable to physical insecurity during times of conflict, including sexual violence. Ensuring that women have safe access to essential resources and increasing women's participation in security institutions can help alleviate this vulnerability, while improving food security generally. Innovative technology can also play a role. Clean cookstoves, used in Afghanistan and elsewhere, require less fuel and protect women from the health impacts of indoor smoke inhalation.
- **Create conditions that support long-term women's economic productivity and sustainable use of natural resources.** In post-conflict societies, access to credit, technical support, and benefits from natural resource exploitation are essential to empowering women. Legal support for enforcement of land rights and negotiation processes that include women should be prioritized, as well as providing women with the resources to enforce their rights. Additionally, access to skills and finance training for women in conflict settings, when their roles may have expanded to tasks traditionally carried out by men, can be important.

Within the UN, the report suggests better inter-agency cooperation could result in more effective peacebuilding. The four authoring agencies suggest at least 15 percent of all funding towards UN-supported natural resource management and peacebuilding initiatives should be allocated to women's empowerment and gender equity.

“Sustainable natural resource use is the cornerstone of development,” said Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka in a [press release](#). “Women's full participation and access to natural resources are urgent priorities for rebuilding peaceful societies.”

**Q.2 How does biodiversity affect the gender roles? Especially in terms of its effects on women lives?**

A recent meeting in Bangkok hosted by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity developed training materials to advance gender inclusion in biodiversity planning in the Asia-Pacific region.

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“If we do not consider gender we increase the loss of biodiversity, due to mismanagement and unsustainable use, and the loss of important traditional knowledge, skills and experiences,” says one of the workshop participants, Soseala Saosaoa Tinilau, Tuvalu’s Director of Environment.

“For example, women in one of the Pacific Island countries [unspecified] were not consulted in coastal fisheries management for the reason that men are responsible for fishing, but it was found that women are involved in agriculture activity which had a downstream impact on a reef through increasing sedimentation,” he adds.

Disregarding gender can aggravate poverty and inequality, so it is wise to try to do something about it.

UN Environment has been stepping up its work on gender and biodiversity in the region. At the end of November it supported the Convention on Biological Diversity in bringing together 25 biodiversity and gender experts to develop training materials for the region at a three-day workshop in Bangkok.

Gender professionals, national biodiversity stakeholders, civil society, research institutes, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Centre for Biodiversity, and UN agencies attended the workshop. The training materials developed will help integrate gender and biodiversity into government planning.

This will be a major contribution to implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

“The material will serve as a bridge between gender and biodiversity to train government staff and national and regional practitioners responsible for supporting the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans,” says UN Environment gender and environment expert Annette Wallgren.

Among men and women in the region, biodiversity is closely connected to development, access to resources, income-generating activities, food, and essential household products. From this perspective, the disciplines of biodiversity and gender overlap, and indeed are intrinsically linked.

“While collecting, utilizing and selling plant and animal products is a daily routine for many women and men in the world, the concepts of gender and biodiversity remain abstract and unconnected to many policymakers and practitioners in the environment field,” says Wallgren.

“Adding to the challenge is the need to tailor knowledge materials to specific region and country contexts,” she notes.

#### **Gender perspective**

Asia's remarkable economic growth has brought many benefits through higher incomes and employment but this growth has also fuelled threats to ecosystems and biodiversity through habitat degradation and biodiversity loss.

These threats affect men and women differently so to plan for the best sustainable solutions, a gender perspective is required. This perspective allows practitioners and policymakers to consider everyone’s capacity, skills and knowledge in the design and implementation of sustainable solutions.

Currently gender professionals have insufficient knowledge and experience on biodiversity conservation strategies, while biodiversity specialists do not have the awareness of national policies and priorities for gender equality.

**Country support for Lao PDR, Myanmar**

In partnership with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), UN Environment is rolling out country support in Lao PDR and Myanmar to build capacity and set up institutional arrangements for gender inclusive National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. Key partners in the initiative are the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and the UN Environment-World Conservation and Monitoring Centre, which will provide support on developing gender indicators.

**Q.3 How effective is the role of eco-feminists in preserving the environment?**

Since the last four decades, theology and environment have been focused comparatively where the environmentalists have leveraged different religious and spiritual values and traditions to provoke environmental activism and its awareness. Various studies and researches have discussed the theological foundations of Islamic environmental traditions and values (Marsi 1992; Ammar 2000; Haq 2001; Nasr 2001; Ammar 2017). This paper is an attempt to contribute to the environmental activism in Pakistan from an ecofeminist perspective, under the Islamic teachings and human behaviors towards them. Many scholars have discussed awareness and behaviors as Muslim behaviour towards environmental activism such as Ozdemir (1998), Khalid (1992), Aftab (2001), Al-Jayyousi (2012), Aftab 1994 and Foltz (2013) through various aspects of Islam and environmental activism. However, the present paper discusses Muslim behaviour towards environmental activism in Pakistan in particular and in Islamic theology generally.

In Pakistan, according to the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAOUN), only 281 per Km<sup>2</sup> area are available for the 180 million people. The rapid changes in geographical features, climate change, deforestation, and pollution are affecting the country (2019) in the form of the social and economic crash, and ultimately human conditions. It forced over ten million people to migrate towards safe places (Climate Emergency Institute 2017; Climate Change, Mobility, and Women's Economic Empowerment in Pakistan 2018).

The environmental groups along with the middle-class, until the mid-twentieth century during the industrial and urban development were concerned about preservation, pollution, and wildlife protection of nature (Elliott 2020). This aptitude from the grass-root level proposed as a feasible solution. Joint ventures from the state, NGOs, educational complexes, social sector, and ecofeminist activists are the compatible approaches to address the emerging humanitarian catastrophe. Eco-feminism is the base to discuss the women's environmentalists as environmental caretakers. In comparison, the paper will go through the environmental frames of Egypt and Turkey due to the similar demographics, religious background, and developmental challenges. Secondary literature as research papers, articles, media reports, and web blogs are the sources of

information. The findings will help the Pakistani environmentalists, social activists, government, and common people to address the environmental issues for their solution.

The French feminist, Francois d' Eaubonne coined the term 'Eco-feminism' in 1974 (Hosseinnezhad 2017). Women who were against the exploitation of nature initiated this movement to protect their mother nature. Ecofeminism continued to develop, in the 1980s radical eco-feminists linked to nature and women with adjustable power; and encourages their exploitation for economical labor and resources, respectively (Imran and Chen 2020; Miles 2018). The cultural ecofeminist, the second school of thought, encourages the affable relationship between women and nature as nurturer and provider of food that society must value. It was extracted from nature-based religions and social hierarchies (Elliott 2020).

The religion Islam emphasized to maintain the balance and justice in every respect of life, especially human dealings with nature, as in the Holy Quran, He (Allah) advised:

Besides, establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance. (Qur'an 55: 9)

Justice and balance are fundamental conditions for a smooth system and future survival of the universe. Humans must implement them in all aspects of their life; including the environment (Alpay et al. 2013).

Women, being the house managers, maintain this balance, as for the environment is the place to live, work, and re-establish the social and religious beliefs of life (Vasi 2008). Failing to maintain the ecological balance, human actions caused serious environmental catastrophes like global warming, floods, earthquakes, landslides, water drought, pollution, disturbance in eco-system, fewer shelter facilities, and pandemics in this century (Miles 2018).

As Quran enlightened, "And that there is not for man except that [good] for which he strives" (Qur'an 53:39). Therefore, humans, as the guardian and trustees of nature, need to maintain the ecosystems with great efforts and personal changes. Waste can be easily reduced by recycling. Water conservation and plantation can secure other natural resources and soil drought

Women are engaged in the environmental activism movement throughout the world, out of which ecofeminism is the one social derivation. As a social movement, it is rooted in environmental and feminist ethics (Hosseinnezhad 2017). In the rush of multiple disciplinary kinds of research as geography, political ecosystem, and post-structuralism, it established an alternative eco-gender solution, opposite to the perspective of male domination against the environment and women (Imran et al. 2020; Hosseinnezhad 2017).

One group of feminists worried about the gender classification of cultural ecofeminism that may promote exploitation while the other group emphasized the nature-based religion. Some of them were against the idealization of nature from the perspective of organic farming. This bifurcation of the movement provided numerous explanations of ecofeminism (Miles 2018; Eckstein et al. 2018). They addressed the issue of different cultures and religions for a rational arrangement. Women, on the other hand, concentrated on local cultures and religious studies according to their natural and social roles, as mothers and custodians (Miles 2018). She naturally protects her environment and participates in economic growth like cattle farming, fishing, producing,

and marketing of natural food and herbs. She executes her domestic responsibilities like cooking, gathering fuel, transporting pure water, nurturing children, and elders.

She is the advocate of outdoor activity to promote pro-environmental behaviors. Age, education, class, race, gender, and religion must not barricade when it comes to environmental issues. Vasi favored the view that “kids must join in elders regardless of gender” (2008, p. 90).

An independent policy think tank ‘Leadership for Environment and Development’ (LEAD) Pakistan, on the other hand, finds that the recovery strategies of climate change are “gender-blind” as they only consult local male leaders focused on the socioeconomic factors that affect women’s environmental performance. They must focus on the environmental conditions that are causing the poverty and women’s disempowerment due to air pollution, overcrowded slums, and poor waste dumping services in Pakistan (Lotia et al. 2018). Islam seconds the cultural ecofeminist view by honoring women about their comfort. According to her biological functions (to be a mother), she needs proper nutrition even before her birth. Allah honored men, as they “shall take full care of women...” (Qur’an 4: 34). Accordingly, work is a privilege for women that they can take on it according to circumstances.

Along with deforestation, plastic garbage is another reason of pollution, especially of seawater in Pakistan. It is like death pills for marine animals and causing the hindrance in the sanitation system. In the case of burning, it harmed the air quality index along with the smoke from factories and automobile engines.

Air pollution is another cause of climate change. Smoke is causing 1.3 million deaths due to lung cancer and heart disease. The conditions get worse in Asian countries during the winter season due to smog (the mixture of fog and smoke). Also in this twenty-first century, about 70% of Asia people are facing sanitation problems. Rehman highlighted the existing environmental issues due to the meager dealings, those are causing pandemics; Dengue fever, Congo fever, Dyria, Hepatitis (2015), and now Coronavirus, etc.

As the twenty-first-century environmental movements are negotiating with the diverse economic applications as tourism, trade, and financial investment (Elliott 2020). In Khat Lashkar village, Dadu district, women were participating in the agriculture economy but changing in weather patterns, due to deforestation and pollution, affected their economic freedom, as well

Pakistan is experiencing water cataloging, land erosion, and desertification due to deforestation and pollution. Green Squad, a group of volunteers tried to promote environmental conservation through the plantation, recycling plastic, and the botanical gardening, especially in Islamabad and Rawalpindi regions. The biggest challenge is the saplings’ ownership in case of people’s response after the plantation season. Even then, they planted about 20,000 saplings in the country by providing awareness to the common people to preserve the remaining forests (Ahmed 2019). The mangrove in Baba and Bhit islands shriveled due to a lack of fresh water.

#### **Q.4 Discuss the impact of water pollution on women’s health.**

The following are some negatives ways that water pollution can directly affect human health.

##### **Ingesting microplastics**

A person may ingest microplastics via drinking water or through eating contaminated seafood. At Tokyo Bay in 2016, scientists examined 64 anchovies for microplastic consumption — 77% [Trusted Source](#) had microplastics in their digestive systems.

People have also discovered them within salt, beer, and other food items.

Studies show microplastics may cause oxidative stress, inflammatory reactions, and metabolic disorders in humans. However, further research is needed to confirm these effects.

### **Consuming water contaminated by sewage**

The WHO note that, globally, around 2 billion [Trusted Source](#) people use a drinking water source with fecal contaminants. Contaminated water can harbor bacteria, such as those responsible for diarrhea, cholera, dysentery, typhoid, hepatitis A, and polio.

According to the UN, every year, approximately 297,000 children under five die from diseases linked to poor sanitation, poor hygiene, or unsafe drinking water.

### **Drinking water containing chemical waste**

Chemical pollutants, such as pesticides, fertilizers, and heavy metals can cause serious health problems if ingested.

In 2014, residents in Flint, Michigan, experienced water contamination due to inadequate testing and treatment of their water supply. The contaminated water caused rashes, hair loss, and itchy skin. Lead levels in the bloodstream of children who drank the water doubled.

A person who ingests chemical toxins in their water can be at risk of:

- cancer
- hormone disruption
- altered brain function
- damage [Trusted Source](#) to immune and reproductive systems
- cardiovascular and kidney problems

Swimming in contaminated water can also trigger:

- rashes
- pink eye
- respiratory infections
- hepatitis

### **Combatting water pollution**

A person who wishes to reduce water pollution can help by:

- reducing plastic usage and recycling plastics when possible
- disposing of household chemicals properly
- keeping up with the maintenance of their vehicle to ensure it is not leaking harmful substances
- avoiding using pesticides



- making sure to clean up dog waste
- making sustainable choices regarding food and drinks
- considering going vegan or vegetarian

**Q.5 What is the difference between deep and shallow ecology. Illustrate with examples.**

Deep Ecology practices biospherical egalitarianism “in theory.” Ideally, we should give respect and equal rights to all forms of life, but this is just not realistic. Some plants and animals must take the brunt of our human needs, since we do need to eat and use various parts of land in our human life. Deep Ecology takes into consideration human needs but calls them to spare as much life as possible by living a life that is mindful to the value of all non-human life. Shallow Ecology is a movement which simply promotes conservation strategies against pollution and the depletion of resources. Deep Ecology is a movement that promotes “ecological wisdom,” which is the understanding of the reason for the Shallow Ecology movement by acknowledging the inherent value of all forms of life.

Deep Ecology supports a principle of diversity. Co-existing and cooperating with our non-human counterparts leads to prosperity and growth among forms of life. The diversity among the species and within the species offer many life-enhancing behaviors, characteristics, and ways of life to be brought together.

This principle reaches beyond relationships between different species; it extends over human to human relationships, as well. Deep Ecology recognizes that with diversity comes different classes, which can be divided in “the exploiters” and “the exploited.” These divisions are not diversity in a positive sense; they are diversity driving species apart and eliminating a relationship that shows value to other forms of life.

Sometimes, when humans commit to making a difference, they only take into consideration the issues of pollution and resource depletion, rather than looking at the bigger picture. Looking at the bigger picture means to see that the problem causing these issues needs to be resolved before a movement towards minimizing pollution and conserving resources will be successful.

This problem is that humans do not always understand the responsibility we have to our Earth and are not always aware of important principles, such as biospherical egalitarianism or the principle of diversity.

Due to a state of human ignorance, the complexity of our biosphere makes it difficult to understand if not broken down into proper divisions. Humans must be completely interactive with their thoughts when thinking of all forms of life and their inherent values, and must think deeply about what these things mean, rather than how they make us feel.

We must live lives full of deep and intentional thought processes in order to avoid the overwhelming complexity of the world we live in to muddle our minds into a complicated mess. In order to be sure that the message of the Deep Ecology movement is not conveyed improperly, it is most effective to promote it on a small-scale level and build up from there.

Many conservation efforts are made by centralized organization, such as the United States’ federal government. To break this down, concepts must first be introduced on a smaller scale, such as local organizations or even in

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the family unit. To infiltrate society with the uncommon ideas of the Deep Ecology movement, small scale systems must be made aware first so that the systems come together and ecological wisdom can become common knowledge across the larger system, society.

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