INTEGRATING SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS IN MALAYSIA WITH *MAQASID AL-SHARI'AH* (THE OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC LAW)

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Abstract

Sustainability planning is not in isolation of Islam. Islam laid down some basic principles like the earth was created for human sustenance in due balance and proportion. Therefore it is human obligation to fulfil current and future human needs through proper planning and to prohibit mischief that will backlash on humanity itself. Above all, Islam advocates planning practices as manifestation of human roles as *khalifah* on earth tied with values and ethics. Underlying the human roles as *khalifah*, al-Quran and al-Sunnah set a value system in which their ultimate aim is to preserve the five human essentials namely faith, life, intellect, lineage and property. These five essentials are exegesis of all Quranic verses and Sunnah of the Prophet called *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. Thus, the paper reports an attempt to integrate the five essentials of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* with the MURNInet (The Malaysian Urban Indicators Network) sustainability indicators. A survey was carried out on 86 desk-officers at the selected Local Planning Authorities namely Majlis Bandaraya Shah Alam, Majlis Perbandaran Bentong and Perbadanan Putrajaya together with their respective State Town and Country Planning Department, by virtue of their achievement as the most sustainable cities within the period 2008-2010. Within the eleven sectors of MURNInet, the result showed that five sectors scored the highest percentage in terms of their relation with the preservation of faith, three sectors on preservation of self, and one sector each on preservation of intellect, lineage and property. Through a Focus Group Discussion, the study validates the concept of sustainability in Islam derived from various Islamic injunctions in comparison with the contemporary concept of sustainability. At the end, the study managed to establish a sustainability concept perceived in Islam and its relation with the contemporary sustainability indicators in Malaysia.

Keywords: *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*, Islam, religion, sustainability, governance

1 INTRODUCTION

A conceptual review of the term sustainability suggests its essence as the ability and capability of the environment to meet current and future generation's needs. Stemming from the Islamic principles that the

environment is created for human's sustenance in due balance and proportion, it gives confidence and credential that the natural resources like water, air, soil, flora and fauna are sufficient for human and non-human use so long as the world exists. In so doing, man is reminded not to cause mischief to the environment that would backlash humanity itself. Reconciling this paradox gives the idea that the consumption of the natural resources for human sustenance must be done in an appropriate manner i.e. not to transgress its limits created by the Almighty and which are seen as mischievous acts on earth. Binding one with this idea in mind would help him to respect the environment and treat it reservedly. This idea of reticence indeed constitutes the fundamental etiquette in Islamic sustainability planning as it regards environment in a bigger context where social and economic activities take place rather than as one of the separate pillars propagated in contemporary sustainability concept. Since the environment is a place for human activities, it is apt to view it from the perspective of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* (the objectives of Islamic law) specifically on its five essentials notably the preservation of faith, self, intellect, lineage and property. The harmonization between the contemporary concepts of sustainability and the Islamic point of views of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* will definitely promote human wellbeing in a more all-inclusive manner.

This paper is intended to integrate the existing sustainability indicators in Malaysia embodied in the MURNInet document 2005 with the five essentials of the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. The key objectives of the paper are to deduce the sustainability concept in Islam in comparison with the present concept of sustainability and to contrast the eleven MURNInet sectors with the five essentials of the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. Subsequently, the paper is structured under four main sections i.e. sustainability programme in Malaysia, overview on *Maqasid al-Shariah*, methodology, and findings and discussion.

2. SUSTAINABILITY PROGRAMME IN MALAYSIA

Administration of the sustainability programme in Malaysia is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government. The Ministry is headed by the Minister, the Deputy Minister and the Secretary General. There are three Deputy Secretary Generals in-charge of (i) policy and development, (ii) urban wellbeing, and (iii) administration. Under the Ministry, there are nine Federal statutory bodies namely (i) Federal Town and Country Planning Department, (ii) Fire and Rescue Department of Malaysia, (iii) National Housing Department, (iv) Local Government Department, (v) National Solid Waste Management Department, (vi) National Landscape Department, (vii) Tribunal of Housing and Strata Management, (viii) Housing and Local Government Training Institute and (ix) Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Corporation. At the local government level, there are presently one hundred and fifty-four (154) Local Planning Authorities throughout Malaysia at different status as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Local Planning Authorities in Malaysia

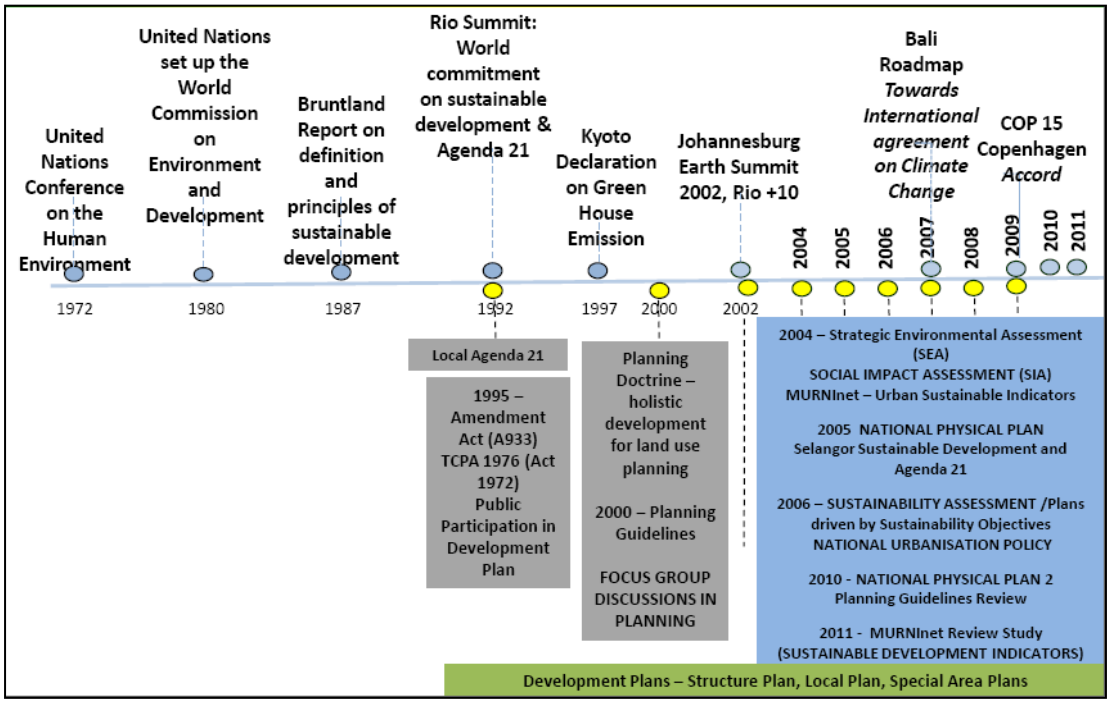
City Hall/Council	Municipal Council	District Council	Corporation/Authority
13	39	97	5

The Ministry sets a vision to establish continual and sustainable living environment for all levels of Malaysian society. This vision is complemented by its mission of planning, coordinating and implementing excellent human settlements through comprehensive housing programmes, uniformed development control with integral infrastructure facilities, social and recreational services towards building a dynamic society. With the aim to catalyze development, planning, service excellence and to create quality human settlements through socio-economic balance, the Ministry outlines the following six key objectives:

1. Provide affordable housing for those who qualify and regulate aspects of housing development.
2. Assist and guide the Local Authority (LA) in providing quality municipal services, social and recreational facilities to meet the needs of the population and improve their economic opportunities.
3. Provide prevention and firefighting services and rescue for the safety of life and property.
4. Advise the federal and state governments on matters relating to planning, management, development and soil conservation in line with the National Physical Plan.
5. Provide policy and advisory services for planning, implementation and management of landscapes, parks and recreation for local authorities and government agencies.
6. Provide policy, regulatory systems and the management of solid wastes and public cleansing management that are integrated, efficient, reliable and cost effective.

All the government agencies under the Ministry are entrusted with the tasks to prosper the country sustainably. Numerous policy documents have been promulgated to facilitate systematic developments of the nation such as the National Urbanisation Policy, the National Housing Policy, the National Landscape Policy, the National Physical Plan and the National Solid Waste Management Policy. Simultaneously various related laws like the Housing Development (Control and Licensing) 1966 (Act 118), Strata Management Act 2013 (Act 757), Local Government Act 1976 (Act 171), Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 (Act 133), Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Corporation Act 2007 (Act 673), Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172) and Fire Services Act 1988 (Act 341) have been instituted. Delving into the contents of those documents, an important message evoked and that they are all towards the goals of achieving sustainable development of the country. The diagram below illustrates how the sustainable development concept first evolved in 1972 at the United Nations Conference which eight years later brought about the setting up of the world commission on environment and development. Malaysia's own involvement began in 1992 arising from the Rio Summit and the world's commitment on sustainable development. Malaysia soon implemented the Local Agenda 21 as well as amended the Town and Country Planning Act in support of the sustainable development objectives. In fact, Malaysia was very committed towards achieving the sustainable development agenda that from 2000 to 2011, various efforts were carried out pertaining sustainable development, amongst which is the formulation of the MURNInet (Malaysian Urban Indicators network) to inculcate sustainable development amongst its local authorities.

Figure 1: Malaysia's Commitment towards Sustainable Development Agenda



Source: Federal Department of Town and Country Planning Peninsular Malaysia, 2008.

2.1 Malaysian Urban Indicators Network (MURNInet)

The MURNInet is a measurement tool to identify a sustainable area as an area that is capable of sustaining its social, economic and physical development achievements whilst maintaining its excellence in culture and environment. Indicators used are to monitor developments in the local authorities towards sustainable development. MURNInet is based on a computer network designed to evaluate urban conditions, effects of development and suggest opportunities for improvement to upgrade the level of sustainability in urban areas of the local authorities. The research on MURNInet started in 1998, two years after The Habitat Agenda, Istanbul in 1996. The MURNInet guideline was developed by the Federal Department of Town and Country Planning Peninsular Malaysia. MURNInet measured the sustainability of a city based on 11 planning sectors. Those 11 planning sectors were divided into fifty five (55) urban indicators as listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Malaysian Urban Indicators Network (MURNInet)

No.	Planning Sectors	Indicators
1.	Demography	1. Urbanization rates 2. Population density 3. Average annual growth rate of population 4. Median age 5. Average household size
2.	Housing	6. The ratio of house price to income 7. The ratio of house rent to income 8. The ratio of floor space per person 9. The percentage of housing stock
3.	Urban Economics	10. Unemployment rate 11. Employment growth rate 12. The rate of employment growth 13. The poverty rate of population 14. Income distribution (Gini coefficient)
4.	Utilities and Infrastructure	15. Water consumption rate for each population 16. The rate of water loss 17. Percentage of the flood area 18. Average daily garbage collection for each resident 19. Percentage sewerage service received by residences
5.	Public Facilities and Recreation	20. The ratio of doctor to the population 21.The ratio of total land area of public open space to 1,000 people 22. The ratio of teachers to primary school student 23. The ratio of pre-school to the population 24. The ratio of halls to the population
6.	Environment	25.Percentage of financial allocation for environmental management 26. The ratio of cases of asthma to 10,000 population 27.Percentage allocation of finance for landscaping program 28. Water quality index (WQI) 29.Percentage of area receiving garbage collection services 30. Percentage of solid waste recycling 31.The number of noise complaints received in a year 32.The ratio of cases of waterborne diseases and food to 10,000 population
7.	Sociology and Social Impact	33.Percentage of population participation in community programs 34. The quality of health services 35. The ratio of index crimes to 10,000 people 36. The ratio of juvenile cases to 10,000 people 37. The ratio of arrest cases (social problems) to 1,000 population 38. The rate of divorce to 1,000 households
8.	Land Use	39.Percentage approval of Certificate ofFitness for Occupancy (CFO) 40. Percentage of approved land for community facilities 41. Percentage of residential floor area in the city
9.	Heritage and Tourism	42. The percentage of expenditure for maintenance and the beautification of the tourist attractions area 43.The percentage of attractions area
10.	Transport and Accessibility	44. Percentage of public transport users 45. The quality of public bus services 46. Percentage of expenditure to improve the accessibility

		system 47. The percentage of private cars without passenger in central city during peak hour in the morning 48. The ratio of the number of road accidents to 10,000 people 49. The percentage of cases involving fatal accidents.
11.	Management and Finance	50. Local revenue per capita 51. The rate of tax collection 52. The ratio of flow to emoluments 53. Expenditure per capita 54.The ratio of officers to population groups and associations 55. Percentage of operating expenditure over revenue

Source: Federal Department of Town and Country Planning Peninsular Malaysia, 2004.

The objectives of the MURNInet were:

i. To determine the level of sustainability for each town in the country,
ii. To identify the strength and the weaknesses of a town,
iii. To suggest the opportunity for improvement in order to upgrade the level of sustainability.

In 2002, six Malaysian towns were selected as pioneer projects on the application of this MURNInet assessment. Between 2004 till 2009 there was a gradual increase in interests by other municipalities and Local Authorities in MURNInet. In 2004 and 2005, 8 cities took part in the application, in 2006-14 towns, in 2007- 42 towns, in 2008-48 towns, in 2009-87 towns and finally in 2010, 101 towns out of the 149 local authorities took part in this exercise (Shamsaini and Azmizam, 2013).

Table 3: Most Sustainable Cities in Malaysia 2007-2010

	2010	2009	2008	2007
No. 1	Putrajaya (94.12%)	Bentong (90.30%)	Shah Alam (86.84%)	Jelebu (85.09%)
No. 2	Shah Alam (90.09%)	Shah Alam (87.04%)	Malacca (85.09%)	Malacca (84.21%)
No. 3	Petaling Jaya (87.96%)	Petaling Jaya (86.11)	Jelebu (84.21%)	Tapah (83.33%)

Source: MURNInet Gateway, 2011

The scale of the MURNInet's sustainability index is categorized into three i.e. More than 80% is considered sustainable, 50-79% - Moderately sustainable and less than 50% - less sustainable. The above record shows the top three sustainable cities in Malaysia by year. In 2008 it was Shah Alam, in 2009 – Bentong and in 2010, Putrajaya was the most sustainable with the highest score at 94.12% sustainability level. The MURNInet Gateway was launched and applied within 2007 – 2009 where local authorities undertook on-line data entry into the system. However, the overall content and framework of the MURNInet was reviewed in 2011 to encourage all the then 154 Local Authorities in Malaysia to participate. This revision was to improve on the choice of characteristics of the indicators to include the Vision 2020, the 10th Malaysia Plan, the New Economic Model and the Transformation Programme. Indicators are now categorized into 6 Dimensions, 21 Themes and 36 Indicators which reflect the sustainable development concept which is multi-sectoral and cross-sectoral in nature. Thereafter MURNInet has now been rebranded into MURNInets (Malaysian Urban-Rural National Indicators Network on Sustainable Development) since November 2012. MURNInets is to compliment other planning instruments like National Physical Plan strategies, Social Impact Assessment (SIA), Planning Guidelines and had to be updated to reflect changes of life style, new government policies and to address issues like climate change. The Happiness Index survey was introduced as one indicator under the quality of life theme to emphasize on the importance of community wellbeing in the sustainability agenda of Malaysia.

3. *MAQASID AL-SHARI'AH* (THE OBJECTIVES OF ISLAMIC LAW)

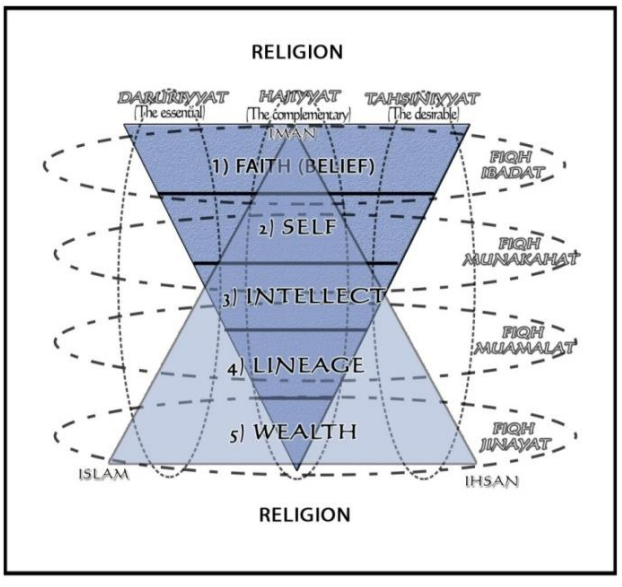
The theory of *Maqasid* can be traced back to the administration of the second caliph, Umar bin al-Khattab (d. 644) and the Maliki School of Islamic jurisprudence, which emphasized public interests or *Maslahah*. The concept of *Maqasid* was first developed by the twelfth century theologian Abu Hamid al-Ghazali (d. 1111) in reference to the five fundamental aspects of human life i.e. protection of life, religion, intellect, progeny and property. He also pioneered the categorization of *Maqasid-al-Shari'ah* into three descending categories of significance: the *Dharuriyyah* (the essentials), the *Hajiyyah* (the complementaries) and the *Tahsiniyyah* (the desirables or the embellishments). *Dharuriyyah* are seen as absolute requirements for the survival and the spiritual well-being of individuals and communities. These objectives are musts and basic for the establishment of the general human welfare of this world and the world hereafter. If they are ignored then the world's coherence and order cannot be established and chaos, disorder and loss will prevail. *Dharuriyyah* relates to five things for human wellbeing and development:-

1) Protection of Faith/Belief
2) Protection of Life/Body
3) Protection of Reason/Intellect
4) Protection of Posterity/Lineage
5) Protection of Property/Wealth

The preservation of faith is the most crucial that lead people to embrace the presence of Allah in every human undertaking, acts or omissions. The preservation of self, enable a person to embrace the greatness of Allah thus directing him to perform his role as *khalifah* religiously; towards his fellow men as well as the environment. Meanwhile, preservation of intellect paves the way for people to acquire intellectual skills and knowledge and to be able to appraise right and wrong. Islam pays great attention on societal life through the preservation of lineage. This involves the marriage institution, principles of inheritance and family relationships. Lastly, preservation of property outlines certain behaviours and ethics regarding economic transactions and business dealings in fair, non-corrupt equitable distribution of wealth and wise use of natural resources and environment.

While these five essentials are being preserved within the three main categories of the *Dharuriyyat* (necessities), the *Hajiyyat* (complementary) and the *Tahsiniyyat* (embellishment), they are being governed by the Islamic Law comprising of *Fiqh al-Ibadat* (personal law), *Fiqh al-Munakahat* (family law), *Fiqh al-Muamalat* (societal law) and *Fiqh al-Jinayat* (criminal law). These are to be practiced under the realm of *Iman* (faith), Islam (submission) and *Ihsan* (inner-conscious). **Figure 2** shows the conceptual ideas of the five essentials of the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* juxtaposed with the concepts of the personal, family, societal and criminal laws set against the Islamic values and morality of *Iman*, *Islam* and *Ihsan.* It must be noted that the three groups of principles are closely interwoven and interconnected.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*



Source: Azila ET. al., 2015

4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used for this study comprised of extensive reviews of literature, focus group discussion and a questionnaire survey. Understanding of the sustainability concept from the Islamic perspectives and *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* was established through the former approach. It includes analysing the Qur'an and its exegeses, Prophetic Reports, books on Islamic jurisprudence, lexicons and statutes. The deduced Islamic principles were then contrasted with the contemporary concepts of sustainability that yield the Islamic sustainability concept within the framework of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*. The concept was then presented to the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) session comprising of the following seven experts:-

Table 4: List of Experts in the Focus Group Discussion

No.	Expert	Organization
1.	Expert 1	Department of Islamic Affairs, *Negeri Pahang*
2.	Expert 2	Division of Planning & Research- Mu'amalat Section, Department of Islamic Development, Malaysia *(JAKIM)*
3.	Expert 3	Division of National Landuse Information, Town & Country Planning Department, *Semenanjung Malaysia.*
4.	Expert 4	Division of Planning & Research, Town & Country Planning Department, *Semenanjung Malaysia.*
5.	Expert 5	Local Council of *Bentong*
6.	Expert 6	Islamic Revealed Knowledge & Human Sciences, IIUM
7.	Expert 7	Kulliyyah of Architecture & Environmental Design, IIUM

Basically, there were three preliminary findings that were clarified and validated during the FGD; the first one was on the concept of sustainability in Islam and contemporary practice, the second was concerning the usage of relevant Quranic verses and *Hadiths* in support of the MURNInet sector and the last subject was the research issues and findings notably:

i. Lack of Islamic basis/foundation on the current sustainability indicators

ii. Non-integrative sustainability indicators with *maqasid al-shari'ah*

iii. Lack of understanding on the concept of *maqasid al-shari'ah*

The above research issues and findings were inferred from the result of the field-survey conducted. For the field-survey, a purposive sampling was adopted; this was based on the knowledge of the population and the purpose of the study. The subjects were selected because of its status of sustainable cities i.e. Shah Alam, Bentong and Putrajaya at three years cohort from the year 2008 until 2010 together with its respective State Town and Country Planning Departments (refer **Table 5**). Desk officers who involved in the implementation of the MURNInet were selected for the purpose of this study. They comprised (i) administrators, such as Administration Officers and Technicians; and (ii) semi-professionals and professionals, such as Assistant Town planners and Town planners. Another criteria of selection was that the respondents should be directly involved in the MURNInet monitoring program regardless of their religion and educational background. **Table 5** shows the distribution of the 86 respondents by their respective offices with full responses received except for the two respondents from the *Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa, Pahang.*

Table 5: Distribution and Responses of respondents by Local Authorities and Town Planning Departments

Study area	PUTRAJAYA (2010)	BENTONG (2009)		SHAH ALAM (2008)		TOTAL
	Perbadanan Putrajaya	Majlis Perbandaran Bentong	Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa, Pahang	Majlis Bandaraya Shah Alam	Jabatan Perancangan Bandar dan Desa, Selangor	
Respondent	**28/28**	**10/10**	**8/10**	**30/30**	**10/10**	**86**

(Source: Survey Form, 2013)

When formulating the questionnaire survey, deciding on who to survey and how to categorize the overall survey response data into meaningful groups of respondents are among the criteria that need to be considered. Based on the field survey on 86 respondents, 54 respondents (63 %) were female, while the remaining 32 respondents (37 %) were male respondents (**Table 6).**

Table 6: **Demographic profile of the respondents**

Variables	Subject	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male Female	32 54	37 63
Age	21-30 31-40 41-50	64 21 1	75 24 1
Ethnicity	Malay Chinese Indian	85 1 -	99 1 -
Education level	Diploma Degree SPM	65 16 5	76 19 5
Designation	Admin officer Technician Assistant planner Planner	23 51 11 1	27 59 13 1
Year of involvement in MURNInet	1-3 years 4-6 years 7-9 years	61 22 3	71 25 4

(Source: Survey form, 2013)

Regarding the age group of the respondents, the highest number of respondents (74%) was aged between 21 to 30 years old. The lowest number of respondent (only 1%) was from the age between 41 to 50 years old. Based on this field survey, 85 respondents or 99% were Malays and Muslims and only one respondent was a Chinese and Non-Muslim. The highest number of respondents at 76% was diploma holders, followed with 19% with degree qualifications and 5% with *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) certificates. Majority of the respondents were technicians (59%) followed by administration officers (27%), assistant town planners (13%) and town planners (1%). The survey found that approximately 71% of the respondents had 1-3 years of experience followed by 25% with 4-6 years' experience while another 4% had 7-9 years of experiences in dealing with MURNInet since its introduction in 2004. The years of involvement of the personnel with MURNInet are very important as it helps in answering the questionnaire survey more precisely. Their job scopes include evaluating the city performance, improving services to the public, identifying problems using indicators and addressing issues on urban quality. For the technical department, they were in-charge to key-in the sustainability data into the MURNInet gateway (MURNInet gateway, 2011).

5. FINDINGS

This section concerns the findings and discussion that have been gained from the data collection stage. The analysis is based on the primary data collected during the field survey that consists of questionnaire survey of the town planning desk-officers and also the focus group discussion.

Table 7: Summary of Findings for Each Planning Sector against the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah*

Planning sector	Preservation of faith (%)	Preservation of life (%)	Preservation of intellect (%)	Preservation of lineage (%)	Preservation of property (%)
Demography	**54**	33	3.5	9	0.5
Housing	5.8	**36**	27.3	1.7	29
Urban economics	**41**	24	16.5	1.6	16.7

Utilities and infrastructure	11.4	23	3	**49**	13.5
Public facilities and recreation	-	**60**	40	-	-
Environment	8.4	**55.5**	19.3	13	3.8
Sociology and social impact	**45**	26.4	10.6	17.8	0.2
Land use	-	34	2.3	1.6	**62**
Heritage and tourism	**48.8**	32	4.1	-	15
Transport and accessibility	-	46.1	**50**	1.6	-
Management and finance	**46.5**	18.8	15	2.1	17.6

(Source: Survey Form, 2013)

From Table 7, the researchers found that there is an issue regarding the foundation of the formulation of the MURNInet. While the researchers accepted the eleven sectors regarded by professionals as core elements for sustainability measurement, apparently the religiosity and spirituality indicator has not been included in the MURNInet. This is perhaps due to the absence of consultation with the religious department during its formation admitted by the respondents. Consequently, this gives rise to the problems of the indicators itself. Formulation of the sustainability indicators based on the Islamic principles is very important since religion and morality take precedence against rationality, custom and judicial in Islamic jurisprudence. In contrary, these two elements are less prominent in western law. In this regard, Kamali (1991) claimed that Islamic jurisprudence exhibits greater stability and continuity of values, thought and institutions when compared to western jurisprudence. In the light of sustainability agenda, many authors believed that religious approach is gaining more influential compared to technological advancement. Abedi et.al. (2008, p.609) stressed that technical solutions have not been resulting in satisfactory outcomes in addressing environmental crisis […]religion has been getting more recognized to define proper environmental ethics. Odeh (2009, p.41) asserted that talking about development without considering the spiritual side of people is meaningless; development must preserve the essence of our humanity. Shaharir (2011, p.91) commented that the definitions of sustainability are not comprehensive enough to cover the many important factors which include the spiritual and cultural dimensions of man and knowledge.

Besides that, it can be summarized that there is haziness among the respondents in answering the questionnaire survey since the respondents failed to relate each of the sector with all the five preservations. Taking public facilities and recreation sector as an example, the respondents were not able to closely relate the sector in MURNInet with the preservation of faith, lineage and property. The respondents could only relate that sector with preservation of life at 60% and intellect 40%. Similarly for the other sectors such as land use, heritage and tourism as well as transport and accessibility, the respondents failed to relate these sectors with all the five preservations in their hierarchical order. This inability could be understood as due to their limited knowledge on *Maqasid al-Shariah*.

With regard to the findings of FGD, all experts agreed on the concept of Islamic sustainability (Figure 4) derived from the extensive literature review in comparison with its contemporary concept (Figure 3). The concept of sustainability is Islam is quite different from the conventional sustainability concept. In the latter, sustainability is the interplay between the three pillars i.e. economy, environment and society. Under economy, the two overriding elements are jobs security and wealth creation, hence the attainment of sustainable economic situation. Preservation of the natural environment is important to create sustainable local environment. Under society, social inclusion and communities will result in social equity. Sustainable economy, healthy local environment and social equity are essential to bring about sustainable development. Islam, on the other hand, regard environment in its wider sphere within which sustainable economic and social activities take place. The prime movers of these activities are the human being themselves. They have been entrusted as "*Khalifah*" or vicegerents to safeguard and prosper the environment in a sustainable manner and under the guidance of the Islamic laws like *Fiqh al-Ibadat* (personal law), *Fiqh al-Munakahat* (family law)*, Fiqh al-Mu'amalat* (societal law) and *Fiqh al-Jinayat* (criminal law)*.* Hence sustainability will be attained via the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* for the benefit of humankind and its civilization. Figure 3 and Figure 4 illustrates the concepts of sustainability from the contemporary point of views and Islam respectively.

Figure 3: Sustainability-Three Fundamental Correlation (Source: Ho Chin Siong, Muhammad Zaly, 2008).

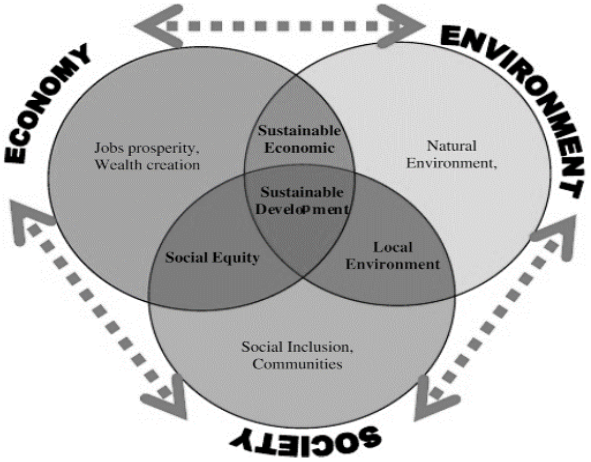
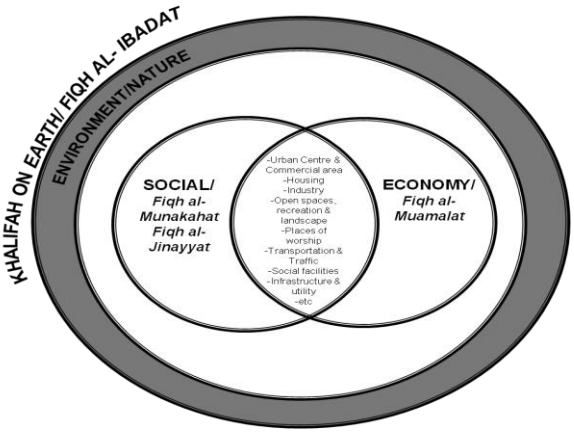


Figure 4: The Conceptual Framework of Islamic Built Environment in relation to Sustainability (Azila et. al., 2012)



The experts were also in consensus with the issues and findings derived from the questionnaire survey (refer Table 7). Below are several statements quoted during the FGD to reflect the above agreement:

"I agree with the concept. We must remember that failing to properly manage the earth means we are failed to fulfil the trust (*amanah*)" **(Expert 3)**

"...in fact, man is part of the entire environment...so I think the concept is acceptable" **(Expert 1)**

"...it would be very good if the formulation of the sustainable indicators in Malaysia to include both basis i.e. Islamic and contemporary references...so i agree with the researcher's opinion" **(Expert 1)**

"...the issue is acceptable as we are amending the MURNInet 2005 version to incorporate some loopholes" **(Expert 3)**

"...*Maqasid al-Shari'ah* is a good approach to be inserted in the built environment field" **(Expert 7)**

"It is true...*maqasid al-shari'ah* is a universal concept aiming at human welfare regardless of religion" **(Expert 5)**

6. CONCLUSION

The concept of sustainability in Islam goes beyond the three pillars of the Western sustainability concept. Instead of the three pillars of economy, social and environment influencing sustainability within their own realms, Islam puts environment as the all-encompassing factor that influence economic sustainability and social sustainability. Muslims are religiously bound to manage the earth under the notion of *Khalifah* who has been entrusted by the Creator to protect, conserve and utilize the environment that is endowed with resources, in a wise and sustainable manner. Hence the famous definition of the Brundtland Report (Brundtland Commission (1987) WCED), that stressed sustainability as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" concurs with the Islamic obligations of human beings as *khalifah* on the earth and who will be held answerable in the Day of Resurrection. Attempts at measuring and monitoring sustainability in Malaysia via MURNInet had shown some flaws where planning indicators did not base on the *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* principles. The survey also showed the inadequacies of the officers' knowledge and understanding of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah.* Hence there will be risks of failing to secure sustainability in the long run should new sustainability indicators that are Islamic-based are not incorporated into the existing indicators. A more comprehensive sustainable indicator network is therefore necessary to integrate the Islamic perspectives of *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* into the conventional indicators to ensure the desired sustainability for human wellbeing in the future.

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