

- Selected issues and challenges faced by the Islamic financial system as a global market
- An analysis of international cases involving Islamic financial contracts
- Judiciary and dispute settlement mechanisms
- Salient features of IFSA 2013
- Shariah Compliance as required by IFSA 2013
- An analysis of recent Malaysian cases involving Islamic banking and financial disputes

The programme received an excellent response from participants, indicating a need for IAIS Malaysia to offer similar training programmes in future. The training programme ended with a photo session and the distribution of certificates of attendance.

**International Conference on
Islam, Science and Sustainable Development:
Maqasid al-Shari'ah and Humanity's Well Being
(IAIS Malaysia, 6-7 October 2015)**

Wan Naim Wan Mansor

Approaching Sustainable Development from the perspective of Islamic philosophy and *Maqasid al-Shari'ah* remains relatively unexplored. Realising the high potential of Islamic philosophy to further contribute to this field, the International Institute of Advanced Islamic Studies (IAIS) Malaysia, and along with its co-organisers, the Global Movement of Moderates (GMM), University of Malaya, and Monash University, jointly organised a two-day international conference entitled *Islam, Science and Sustainable Development: Maqasid al-Shari'ah and Humanity's Well Being*. The opening speech was delivered by YB Senator Dato' Dr. Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki, with other eminent speakers including Prof. Mohammad Hashim Kamali, Prof. Datin Azizan Baharuddin, Prof. Tan Sri Dzulkifli Abdul Razak and Prof. Mohamed Aslam Haneef.

Throughout the conference, several key Islamic concepts were repeatedly highlighted: namely the 'Oneness of Being', from the core Islamic principle of *Tawhid*; humanity's divinely-ordained responsibility to act as trustees and vicegerents, as encapsulated in the principle of *Khilafa*; and lastly, the aiming towards an 'optimal balance' guided by *Mizan* and *Wasatiyyah*. The oneness of Creator and Being (*Tawhid*) endows all of humanity with the same dignity and equal basic rights. The concept of *Khilafa* invokes humanity's spiritual responsibility as God's trustee to responsibly administer the Earth's resources

and establish a just social order. *Mizan* and *Wasatiyyah* are guiding principles in balancing between the ‘developmentalist’ versus ‘protectionalist’ approach.

The conference covered a wide-range of fields and topics, as illustrated by a selection of its policy recommendations:

- To improve water-security in the Middle East via legislation, the introduction of solar power, establishing a court to mediate on trans-boundary water disputes and a compensation system.
- To re-evaluate the feasibility of palm oil as a source of renewable energy and a fossil-fuel alternative;
- To increase the role of the media in promoting awareness and knowledge of Sustainable Development;
- The need to develop ‘Islamicity’ indices to measure development projects;
- To further explore methods of Sustainable Development in Agriculture;
- Tougher laws to regulate and discourage privatisation of basic needs;
- To utilise *Zakah* and *Waqaf* for sustainable development projects;
- Renewed approaches for Genetically Modified technology;
- Tougher and more unified laws on littering.

The Islamic contribution to the concept of Sustainable Development exhibits a lot of potential and promise for further conceptual enhancement. While early-stage Sustainable Development focused primarily on the ecological aspects of development, Islamic philosophy re-emphasises the value of human dignity and responsibility. Islamic principles and *Maqasid al-Shari’ah* can be important contributors to the much needed ‘spiritual element’ of the highly mechanical and technical process of development.