



## Analytical Examination of the Rights of Future Generations in Iranian Criminal Law and the Qur'an

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Received: 2024/06/25 ; Revised: 2024/08/05 ; Accepted: 2024/10/09 ; Published online: 2025/01/10

### Abstract

The rights of future generations constitute a foundational concept in the realization of intergenerational justice and sustainable development. These rights rest on the principle of the fair and enduring transmission of natural resources from earlier generations to those yet to come. Today, safeguarding these rights has evolved from an ethical concern into a legal and global imperative. The overexploitation of natural resources, environmental pollution, and the degradation of ecosystems threaten not only the well-being of the present generation, but also the fundamental right of future generations to live and flourish. Consequently, both legal and religious frameworks increasingly recognize the necessity of protecting these rights. This study, employing a descriptive-analytical approach, examines the status and foundations of the rights of future generations in the Qur'an and within the legal system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It seeks to determine how these two foundational sources provide theoretical and legislative support for the protection of intergenerational rights. An analysis of Constitutional Principles 45 and 50, as well as relevant statutory provisions, indicates that the Iranian legislature recognizes the right to a healthy environment and the equitable use of natural resources as inherent rights of future generations. Moreover, certain criminal statutes explicitly criminalize and penalize conduct that endangers these rights. Likewise, the Qur'an—through numerous verses characterized by universal address and the structure of real propositions (*qaḍāyā ḥaqīqīyah*)—presents the earth and divine bounties as belonging to all humans across the entire span of history. From this perspective, human use of God-given resources is framed as a collective trust rather than an exclusive form of ownership; thus, any corruption, wastefulness, or destruction of these resources constitutes an infringement upon the rights of future generations. An examination of the Qur'anic concepts of human vicegerency (*khalīfah*), divine justice, the prohibition of corruption and waste, and the universality of divine provision reveals that the Qur'an articulated the conceptual foundations of intergenerational justice long before the emergence of modern environmental law theories. These teachings can serve as a basis for deriving jurisprudential maxims and binding legal principles related to intergenerational responsibility, and they provide a substantive foundation for addressing existing shortcomings in current legislation.

**Keywords:** Iranian Criminal Law; Constitution; Present Generation; Future Generations; Qur'an.

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<https://www.jspt.ir/>

**Publisher:** Urwat al - Wuthqa International Academic Research Institute

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.22034/jspt.2025.508985.1083>



## Introduction

A survey of religious teachings and Qur'anic verses makes it clear that future generations possess rights that Islam explicitly emphasizes and seeks to protect. Islam, while paying attention to the lived experience and conduct of human beings, likewise accords special significance to their natural environment and to the well-being of future generations. Numerous verses in the Qur'an address the observance of the rights of future generations, and by assigning intrinsic value to nature, living beings, and the created order, they obligate human beings to safeguard these rights alongside their devotional and social duties. Certain rights, however, cannot be properly interpreted or justified apart from a theocentric worldview. For instance, the very notion that future generations possess entitlements, and that the present generation bears responsibilities toward those who are not yet born, becomes intelligible only within a theological framework. Questions such as: *How can individuals who do not yet exist have rights over current generations? and Why should we consider ourselves accountable to them?* can only be answered meaningfully through belief in God, cosmic purpose, and moral teleology. From this standpoint, the created order is structured around purposiveness, interlinking individuals across time, and it is God who assigns rights to human beings and, in correspondence with each right, imposes an obligation. In other words, "Our responsibility toward future generations is grounded in the fact that the world is governed by divine wisdom, that creation moves toward purposeful ends, and that rights arise from the very structure of creation—placing upon us the duty to respect them" (Motahhari, 1387/2008, Vol. 21, p. 440).

On the basis of these theological premises, several core questions emerge:

- 1) How does the Qur'an ensure the rights of future generations?
- 2) How does the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran protect these rights?
- 3) To what extent do statutory laws and existing enforcement mechanisms safeguard the rights of future generations?

To address these questions, a careful examination of relevant constitutional provisions—particularly Principles 45 and 50—is required. Likewise, statutory laws concerning future generations, natural resources, and sustainable development must be analyzed to determine how explicitly or implicitly they recognize and protect intergenerational rights. Moreover, the challenges surrounding the implementation of these rights within Iran's legal system demand close scrutiny. Such challenges include the absence of precise legal definitions, insufficient enforcement mechanisms, and limited public awareness. Ultimately, solutions must be offered to strengthen legal protections for the rights of future generations within national legislation and policymaking. A

review of prior scholarship shows that most studies have focused on future-generation rights within international environmental framework. Among these works is Azizollah Fahimi's article "*The Relationship Between Religion and the Environment*," which highlights the importance of environmental preservation from the viewpoint of Islam. Another relevant study is Mahdi Firoozi's "*A Jurisprudential and Legal Study of Justice as the Foundation of the Rights of Future Generations*," which examines the issue through the lens of both ontological and legislative justice. Similarly, Seyed Abbas Pour-Hashemi's article "*The Formation and Development of the Concept of the Rights of Future Generations in International Environmental Law*" discusses environmental rights in binding and nonbinding international instruments. In addition, a thesis titled "*The Rights of Future Generations to Vital Resources in Islamic Jurisprudence and Law*," written by Seyed Mahmoud Hallatayi at the University of Tehran, addresses issues such as legal address (*khiṭābāt-i qānūnī*), waqf, wills, and inheritance. Another contribution in the field is the article "*Analytical Examination of the Rights of Future Generations from the Perspective of the Qur'an*" by Mostafa Karamipour and Adel Sarikhani. Although the authors attempt to articulate the Qur'anic foundations of intergenerational rights and emphasize the necessity of intergenerational justice in the use of divine bounties, the study is limited to a small selection of verses and remains primarily exegetical–ethical rather than jurisprudential or legal. Furthermore, despite acknowledging humanity's responsibility toward future generations, the authors do not establish a structural link between Qur'anic concepts and Iran's legal or criminal frameworks. In this sense, the Qur'an is treated as a source of moral inspiration rather than a foundation for deriving enforceable legal and criminal norms. Another relevant study is Fatemeh-al-Sadat Qureshi Mohammadi's article "*Securing the Environmental Rights of Future Generations in Iran's Legal System*." While the work analyzes domestic laws and certain international environmental documents, and draws attention to Constitutional Principles 45 and 50, it does not attempt to derive binding Qur'anic foundations that could support criminal legislation in this area.

A further contribution in this field is Mostafa Karamipour's doctoral dissertation "*Evaluating the Feasibility of Criminal Protection of the Rights of Future Generations from the Perspective of Islamic Criminal Jurisprudence and Criminal Law*." Although the study utilizes jurisprudential maxims such as *lā ḍarar, itlāf, and tasbīb* to justify criminal protection of environmental resources, its Qur'anic analysis remains limited. Qur'anic citations are brief and introductory, and no systematic link is established between Qur'anic directives and constitutional principles or Iran's criminal system. In other words, the relevant verses are not treated as potential foundations for legal norms.

Likewise, Seyed Mohammad Hosseinian's master's thesis "*A Jurisprudential and Legal Study of Protecting the Rights of Future Generations*" emphasizes jurisprudential principles concerning natural-resource preservation and intergenerational justice through concepts such as vicegerency, trust, and human responsibility toward the earth. Nevertheless, the research remains focused on general notions of justice and divine trusteeship without engaging in criminal or legislative analysis. Here too, the Qur'an is regarded as an ethical reference rather than a source of binding legal norms. A critical review of these works shows that, although each contributes to the literature on the rights of future generations, they collectively suffer from several notable limitations. Firstly, most studies are descriptive and conceptual, employing only minimal inferential analysis grounded in the Qur'anic text. Secondly, a number of relevant verses—particularly those addressing universal ownership, corruption on earth, and humanity's collective trusteeship—remain unexamined. Thirdly, the relationship between Qur'anic teachings and constitutional principles or criminal law provisions in Iran is insufficiently articulated. That is, previous studies do not adequately formulate the "legislative implications of Qur'anic foundations for the protection of future generations." With full awareness of these gaps, the present study adopts an integrative approach, bridging Qur'anic hermeneutics and Iranian criminal law. Here, a wide range of Qur'anic verses—those addressing humanity's shared access to natural resources, the prohibition of corruption, the imperative of justice, and the doctrine of human vicegerency—serve as the primary basis of analysis. Because these verses take the form of *real propositions* (*qaḍāyā ḥaqīqīyah*) and address all humans across time, they inherently ground the rights of future generations within a divine framework. By interpreting these verses in relation to Constitutional Principles 45 and 50 and relevant criminal provisions, this study demonstrates that the Qur'an articulated, centuries ago, principles that can inform contemporary environmental legislation and advance intergenerational justice.

## 1. Conceptual Analysis

The terms "*future generations*" and "*rights of future generations*" are the central concepts of this study. Clarifying and analyzing these concepts contributes significantly to a correct understanding of the various dimensions of the topic. Therefore, we first examine the definitions of key terms.

### 1-1. The Concept of Future Generations

#### 1-1-1. Lexical Meaning of "Generation"

According to *Muqāyis al-Lughah*, the root ل-س-ن (n-s-l) indicates separation, and *al-nasl* (generation/offspring) refers to *al-walad* (child) because it has been

separated from its parent. The term is similarly applied to the separation of feathers from a bird or wool from a camel (Ibn Faris, 1983, vol. 5, p. 420). In *Lisān al-‘Arab*, *al-nasl* is defined as *al-walad* and *al-dhurriyah* (offspring/progeny), with detailed explanations of its various usages in verbs such as *tanāsal* and expressions like *nasalat al-naqah* (Ibn Manzūr, 1984, vol. 11, p. 669). *Al-‘Ayn* also defines *nasl* as what is produced from humans or animals. Overall, classical lexical sources interpret *nasl* as “progeny, offspring, descendants” and also as “the separation or emergence of something from another.”

### 1-1-2. Terminological Meaning of “Generation”

When used in the context of kinship or genealogy, the term *generation* has a clear and specific meaning. However, when extended into social, historical, or philosophical domains, its boundaries become less precise. At this level, a generation refers to a group of humans living within a defined temporal period, and from a demographic perspective, it constitutes a unit of human continuity. In contrast, future generations include those who have not yet been born, whose existence will begin after the end of the current generation. This concept essentially encompasses all humans who will live in the future, either within a specific geographic region or globally, thus sustaining the continuity of humankind (Saed Vakil, 2011, p. 48).

## 1-2. The Concept of the Rights of Future Generations

### 1-2-1. The Concept of “Right”

Lexically, the term *haqq* (right) derives from the root ح-ق-ق (ḥ-q-q), meaning affirmation, correspondence with reality, and firmness against falsehood (Ibn Manzūr, 1997, vol. 10, p. 49; Ibn Faris, 1984, vol. 2, p. 15). Terminologically, in legal studies, a *right* refers to a type of privilege, authority, or capability that is recognized by the law of a country for an individual vis-à-vis others or the society at large (Katouzian, 2000, vol. 1, p. 21; Emami, 1990, vol. 1, p. 5). A right establishes a relationship between the *right-holder* (*dhī al-haqq*) and the *duty-bearer* (*man ‘alayhi al-haqq*) and aims to ensure justice in human interactions. Some jurists consider it a rational or religiously sanctioned ability to exercise and benefit from the object of the right (Khomeini, 2009, vol. 2, p. 29; Gorji, 2009, p. 281). Broadly, rights constitute a set of binding rules designed to regulate human behavior in society and to guarantee justice and social security.

## 2. Protection of the Rights of Future Generations in the Iranian Legal System

The rights of future generations are recognized and protected at the highest

legislative level in the Islamic Republic of Iran, namely the Constitution. Several constitutional provisions, including **Article 50**, which addresses the protection of the environment and natural resources, as well as articles concerning intergenerational justice, sustainable development, and safeguarding *anfāl* (public wealth), directly or indirectly emphasize the necessity of preserving the rights of future generations. Additionally, ordinary laws and executive regulations, such as the Environmental Protection and Improvement Act, the Air Pollution Prevention Act, the Equitable Water Distribution Act, and the Mining Act, reflect legislative support for the rights of future generations across economic, environmental, and social dimensions.

- **Positive Dimension:** Through legislative provisions and macro-level policies, such as development plans and general policies in the environmental domain, lawmakers seek to ensure long-term societal and intergenerational benefits.

- **Negative Dimension:** By prescribing criminal, administrative, and civil sanctions, violators of public and intergenerational rights are prosecuted and penalized.

A crucial issue in this context is the **efficiency of protective laws** and the proportionality between crime and punishment. In criminal law, one of the fundamental principles is that sanctions must correspond to the social harm caused by the offense. Lack of proportionality weakens the deterrent effect of laws and increases violations against the interests of future generations.

## 2-1. Constitutional Protection of the Rights of Future Generations

The **Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran** is the primary legal framework that explicitly addresses intergenerational equality and protection. Articles 45 and 50 directly relate to the rights of future generations.

**Article 45** stipulates: *"Public wealth and resources, including deserted lands, mines, seas, lakes, rivers, other public waters, mountains, valleys, forests, reeds, natural pastures, ownerless inheritances, unknown properties, and public properties restored from usurpers, are under the control of the Islamic government to be managed in accordance with public interest. The law shall determine the details and usage of each."*

**Article 50** explicitly recognizes the right to a healthy environment for current and future generations: *"In the Islamic Republic, protecting the environment in which present and future generations shall have a progressively growing social life is considered a public duty. Economic and other activities that entail environmental pollution or irreparable destruction are prohibited."*

The Constitution is based on the principle that current generations should utilize natural resources in a manner that ensures future generations can also

meet their needs. Article 50 emphasizes sustainable development and recognizes the rights of both present and future generations. Environmental protection is considered essential for human flourishing, and current development must align with ecological imperatives, not vice versa (Ramazan Ghavam Abadi, 2020, p. 263).

The article identifies two key threats to the rights of future generations: **pollution** and **destruction**. Pollution is multifaceted, and comprehensive definitions are challenging. MARPOL 1973 defines discharge as one form of pollution. Similarly, Article 688, Note 2 of the Iranian Penal Code defines environmental pollution as:

*"The introduction or mixing of foreign substances into water, air, soil, or land to the extent that its physical, chemical, or biological quality is altered, causing harm to humans, other living beings, plants, or properties."*

Destruction refers to any alteration of natural resources that seriously threatens ecological balance and biodiversity. Article 50 establishes environmental protection as a **public duty**, creating a collective obligation for the state and citizens. Environmental resources are fundamental human rights, without which life is unsustainable. Consequently, the use of natural resources must be just, ensuring future generations can live healthily and sustainably, and current generations must not exploit or destroy these resources in violation of intergenerational justice.

## 2-2. Ordinary Laws

Although there is no specific Iranian law entitled "*Protection of the Rights of Future Generations*", several ordinary laws address aspects of these rights. This study highlights two prominent examples.

### 2-2-1. Islamic Penal Code

In addition to the principles mentioned in the Constitution that pay attention to intergenerational rights, ordinary laws and regulations of significance have also been enacted in this regard. These laws and regulations, in their positive aspect, have enacted proactive programs aimed at supporting and preserving the environment. In their negative dimension, they provide reactive policies by anticipating punitive measures, and in multiple instances, they have extended to the enforcement of criminal sanctions against violators of the environment (Omidy & Yousefi Pour, 2014, p. 10). Among ordinary laws, the Islamic Penal Code ratified in 1996, Article 680 addresses hunting or capturing protected wild animals, and Article 688 deals with threats to public health such as contaminating drinking water or distributing polluted water, improper disposal of human and animal waste and other residues, dumping poisonous substances into rivers, littering streets, illegal slaughtering of animals, etc. These provisions,

in their proactive dimension, implement policies to safeguard future generations regarding access to clean water, prevention of unsanitary waste disposal, and prevention of pollution of water bodies, while in the reactive dimension, they resort to punishments such as imprisonment or fines for violators. Article 680 specifically addresses hunting or capturing protected wildlife, and Article 688 highlights key aspects of future generations' rights, including the protection of drinking water, sanitary disposal of human waste, and prevention of environmental poisoning.

### **2-2-2. Protection Against Radiation Law, 1989**

Article 1 of this law states the objectives as follows: "Given the increasing use of radiation in various fields and the necessity to protect employees, the public, future generations, and the environment from harmful effects of radiation, the following regulations have been enacted." As observed, this law explicitly addresses the protection of future generations, and Article 3, Clause 5 reiterates this concern. The law was enacted to prevent harmful effects from increasing use of radiation in industrial, medical, research, and military domains, safeguarding human health and the environment both presently and in the future. By emphasizing the protection of employees, the public, future generations, and the environment, the legislator extends the scope of protection beyond the current generation, stressing the sustainability of health and a safe environment for posterity. This approach exemplifies the principle of prevention and precaution in environmental law, ensuring potential hazards are managed before harm occurs. From a public law perspective, such legislation promotes continuous public interest and protection of fundamental human rights over time, recognizing that future generations are entitled to benefit from actions taken by the current generation. The law applies to all matters related to radiation protection nationwide, including safeguarding employees, the public, future generations, and the environment from harmful radiation effects.

### **3. Quran and the Rights of Future Generations**

The Quran contains verses pertaining to the rights of future generations. Since these verses are expressed as "real judgments" (*qadā' al-ḥaqīqī*), they apply not only to existing people but also to those yet to exist, i.e., future generations. A real judgment is one whose ruling applies to all obligated individuals, embedded in nature itself, and capable of being applicable to any individual or external case (Khomeini, 1420 AH, Vol. 1, p. 316). In these cases, the ruling applies to those possessing a specific attribute at the time of issuance as well as to those who will acquire that attribute in the future (Na'ini, 1376, Vol. 1, p. 170). In other words, real judgments apply to all natural persons, whether currently existing or yet to exist, such as "mustati" (capable persons),

encompassing both actual and potential existents (Fazel Lankarani, 1381, Vol. 1, p. 470; Sadr, 1406 AH, Vol. 1, pp. 11–12). Jurists and legal scholars assert that most Sharia rulings are real judgments, except for special rulings specific to the Prophet (Khui, 1417 AH, Vol. 4, p. 147; Bejnordi, 1419 AH, Vol. 2, p. 62).

Quranic and Sharia addresses are of two types:

**1) Personal address:** directed to a specific group or individual, such as to Moses (a): “Go to Pharaoh; indeed, he has transgressed” (Taha: 24) or to the Prophet Muhammad (s): “O Messenger, convey what has been revealed to you from your Lord” (Ma’idah: 67).

**2) General address:** the ruling is expressed generally and not limited to a particular individual or group, such as “Every capable person must perform Hajj” or “O you who believe” or “O people.” The ruling applies to the general category rather than a specific individual or group, with the validity based on the potential of a subset of the addressed audience to comply rather than all, e.g., commands of God that include non-compliers like disbelievers or sinners (Jame’i et al., 1389, p. 453).

Thus, the Quran contains numerous verses emphasizing the rights of future human generations. Some refer explicitly to divine blessings, others through general addresses:

1) Creation of blessings for all people Many Quranic verses depict the creation of the heavens, earth, and all blessings therein as aimed at securing the common welfare of humanity and ensuring material and spiritual sustenance for future generations. The repeated use of “for you” (lakum), as in “He who made the earth a resting place for you and the sky a canopy” (Baqarah: 22) and “He created for you all that is on the earth” (Baqarah: 29), clearly indicates that while ultimate ownership belongs to God, the benefit is granted universally. The earth was created as a permanent abode for human life (Tabarsi, Vol. 1, p. 155). The object of creation is not limited to a particular group but includes all humans across all eras. Classical exegesis notes these addresses are formulated as real judgments, not restricted to specific individuals at a specific time (Maghnieh, Vol. 1, p. 58). Legally, these verses form the basis of principles emphasizing universal access to natural resources, reflected in contemporary concepts such as “public participation in natural resources” (Stockholm Declaration, 1972) and “universal right to the environment” (Rio Declaration, 1992).

The verse “And He placed the earth for all beings” (Ar-Rahman: 10) syntactically negates private ownership and affirms collective usufruct. The term “all beings” (al-anam) includes all creatures and thus all humans (Modarresi, Vol. 14, p. 291), confirming that no generation or group may monopolize the earth in a way that deprives others, particularly future

generations, of benefit. These verses emphasize the prohibition of exclusive appropriation of natural resources and the necessity of equitable distribution of land benefits. Any utilization depriving future generations contradicts the purposes of these verses. In Surah An-Nahl, God details the natural order: rainfall, plant growth, animals, and the provision of shelter and clothing: “And Allah made for you from your homes a dwelling, and from their wool and fur... enjoyment for a time” (An-Nahl: 80–81). The phrase “for a time” indicates temporality and the custodial nature of human use, emphasizing stewardship and consideration of future generations. Surah Luqman (31:20) states: “He has subjected to you what is in the heavens and the earth and bestowed His blessings upon you, apparent and hidden.” The term “subjected to you” implies responsibility; humans may use resources, but they are entrusted to manage and preserve them. In jurisprudential and legal terms, control is custodial, not absolute ownership; utilization must respect divine limits and the welfare of humanity, especially future generations. Verses such as “as provision for you and your cattle” (Abasa: 32; Naza’at: 33) and descriptions in Surah Naba (6–16) and Surah Mu’minun (18–22) indicate that the natural order exists to provide living opportunities for humans and other creatures. The term “mata” denotes “right to benefit” (Zamakhshari, Vol. 4, p. 697; Tusi, Vol. 10, p. 260), not “ownership.” Nature is recognized as collective property for humanity, subject to public interest, not individual will. Hence, utilization is a collective, non-waivable right that must be exercised justly and ecologically responsibly. In sum, the Quran establishes a monotheistic basis for ownership and usage, asserting the universality of blessings as a fundamental legal and ethical principle. Intergenerational rights require that no generation exploit natural resources in ways that endanger the survival or benefit of future generations, as divine blessings are a trust, not the exclusive property of the present generation.

2) Human Stewardship on Earth Verses such as “He is the one who made you successors on the earth” (Fatir: 39) define humans as God’s vicegerents, tasked with developing the earth (Tha’labi, Vol. 4, p. 213). Stewardship implies succession across generations, where future generations inherit responsibilities and rights to utilize and manage resources (Tabatabai, Vol. 17, p. 52). Being a “khalifah” entails legal and ethical responsibility: humans must manage the earth not merely for individual benefit but for the prosperity, continuity of life, and rights of others, including future generations. These verses, alongside others like “He placed the earth for all beings” (Ar-Rahman: 10) and “He has subjected to you what is in the heavens and the earth” (Luqman: 20), connect human stewardship with collective and future-oriented responsibilities. Stewardship is not absolute ownership; it implies equitable management, protection of resources, and upholding intergenerational rights, forming a jurisprudential or

legal principle prohibiting actions that deprive others or future generations of their due. Legally, human stewardship provides a foundation for sustainable resource utilization policies, prevention of waste, and intergenerational justice.

3) Divine Justice and the Rights of Future Generations The verse “And He placed the earth for all beings” (Ar-Rahman: 10) explicitly asserts that the earth and its resources are for all humanity, not a particular individual or generation. Contextual analysis with surrounding verses shows this universality as an expression of divine justice. Previous verses, e.g., “The sun and moon [move] according to precise calculations” (55), “The sky He raised and established the balance” (7), and “Establish weight with justice and do not diminish the balance” (9), indicate a precise and balanced system of creation, where any disruption contradicts divine justice and order. Therefore, human entitlement is conditioned by justice and environmental balance; exploitation must not deprive others or future generations. Subsequent verses referencing fruits and palms confirm the universal and balanced availability of resources. Thus, the generality of Ar-Rahman 10 reflects divine justice, mandating equitable use and conservation.

The verse “Did you not see that Allah subjected to you what is in the heavens and the earth, and bestowed His blessings upon you, apparent and hidden?” (Luqman: 20) emphasizes that blessings are for all humans, forbidding exclusive appropriation. Justice in resource use entails both intra-generational fairness (avoiding monopolization or destruction) and intergenerational fairness (preserving access for future generations). These two aspects of justice are rooted in divine unity, as all humans are equal in benefiting from God’s provision, and no generation may usurp another’s share. The verse “Allah is He who created you and provided for you” (Ar-Rum: 40) directly links provision to divine creation, negating any legitimacy of exclusive or exploitative control. Humans are beneficiaries, not independent owners. Justice thus encompasses fairness among contemporaries and intergenerational responsibility, safeguarding future generations’ rights. Additional verses, e.g., “There is not a thing but with Us are its treasures, and We do not send it down except in a known measure” (Al-Hijr: 21), “We sent down water from the sky in measured quantity” (Al-Mu’minun: 18), and “Indeed, We created everything in proportion” (Qamar: 49), emphasize that sustenance and natural systems are controlled by God, measured and balanced. Humans must respect these measures across all generations, and improper use constitutes violation of divine order and justice.

4) Prohibition of Corruption and Waste Quranic prohibitions against corruption and waste directly relate to protecting future generations. Wastefulness and corruption disrupt the balanced system of creation and deplete vital resources that must be equitably distributed. The verse “Eat and drink but

do not waste; indeed, He does not like the wasteful” (Al-A’raf: 31) establishes moderation in consumption. Consumption is legitimate, but excess constitutes a transgression against public rights and future generations.

The verse “And when he turns away, he strives upon the earth to corrupt it and destroy crops and progeny, and Allah does not love corruption” (Al-Baqarah: 205) illustrates the link between environmental damage and threats to present and future life. The combination of “crops” and “progeny” shows that environmental corruption directly infringes upon life rights. Corruption and destruction are considered major sins, with severe legal consequences in Islamic jurisprudence. The verse “Do not cause corruption on the earth after it has been set right” (Al-A’raf: 56) highlights that human actions must preserve the balance and wise system God placed in creation. Exploitation outside moderation violates this balance. Quranic prohibitions against waste and corruption function as divine and legal safeguards, limiting human use of natural and economic resources to prevent violations of public and intergenerational rights. These injunctions form the basis for intergenerational responsibility in Islamic jurisprudence, ensuring the right to life, environmental health, and equitable resource distribution across generations. In summary, these Quranic verses establish a divine legal-ethical system in which justice in resource use and environmental balance is a prerequisite for legitimate human action. The prohibition of waste and corruption aims to protect future generations’ benefits, forming the basis for Islamic legal principles such as the “principle of environmental protection” and “intergenerational justice,” all intended to safeguard the life and well-being of future generations.

## **Conclusion**

In the contemporary era, the unrestrained exploitation of natural resources has posed serious challenges to the world. Continuing this trend could violate the rights of future generations and fundamentally threaten the survival of living beings on Earth. Therefore, it is imperative for the present generation to take measures that ensure future generations can also benefit from natural resources. In this regard, the constitutions and ordinary laws of many countries address this important right. In Iranian criminal law, although there is no separate legislation explicitly devoted to protecting the rights of future generations, Articles 45 and 50 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran explicitly refer to these rights. Despite the constitutional recognition of such rights, the “right of future generations” has not yet been formally established as a legal right. It is therefore recommended that ordinary laws define and describe criteria and standards for respecting the rights of future generations so that these principles can be effectively implemented under the Constitution. Moreover, the Qur’an contains

numerous verses emphasizing the observance of the rights of future generations. These verses regard the Earth and divine blessings as belonging to all people, holding the present generation accountable in relation to them. Just as divine commands are binding upon future generations and obligate them to fulfill them, the God-given blessings also belong to future generations and are not exclusive to the current one. The Qur'an considers human generations as successors to one another, repeatedly emphasizing divine justice and the human obligation to maintain it, and categorizes wastefulness and the destruction of natural resources as sins and corruption. The explicit recognition of these rights in the Qur'an and in existing laws reinforces the notion that natural resources do not belong to any single generation, and that nature and its resources are common to all humans across generations, created to meet their needs. Many of these Qur'anic teachings and statements can serve as a foundational source for establishing jurisprudential and legal rules, highlighting a gap in these domains that requires attention.

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