

## Sikh belief about the environment

Since animals are living beings just as we are, therefore they should be treated with same care as we treat ourselves. All treatments of any life form would be a wrong doing. In general there is nothing like special rights of animals in Sikhism, it's just that everybody should be treated without any harm. Although human beings are seen as the most intelligent life form on earth, they are responsible for almost all the **damage** done to the planet.

Sikhism is very concerned with the relationship between humanity and the environment. They believe that Waheguru (God) created the world as a place where every type of plant and animal could live so that all life could have the chance to prove that it was good enough to reach mukti (liberation from the cycle of birth and death, reincarnation).

Guru Nanak taught:

Nature we see  
Nature we hear  
Nature we observe with awe, wonder and joy  
Nature in the nether regions  
Nature in the skies  
Nature in the whole creation...  
Nature in species, kinds, colours  
Nature in life forms  
Nature in good deeds  
Nature in pride and in ego  
Nature in air, water and fire  
Nature in the soil of the earth  
All nature is yours, O powerful Creator  
You command it, observe it and pervade within it.  
(Guru Granth Sahib)

The lives of the Gurus are full of stories of their love for nature. Sikhs are forbidden to kill for the sake of killing or to eat to excess.

In Sikh hymns Waheguru is said to be the provider of all life. There is no difference between the world of humans and the world of nature. Both of these are equally important and must be treated with respect.

The Gurus have strongly made us aware of our responsibility towards this earth.

*Guru Granth Sahib*

Sikhs believe that the environment can only be preserved if the balance created by Waheguru is maintained.

- Since the beginning of the Sikh religion in the late fifteenth century, the faith has been built upon the message of the 'oneness of Creation'. Sikhism believes an almighty God created the universe. He himself is the creator and master of all forms of the universe, responsible for all modes of nature and all elements of the world. Sikhism firmly believes God to be the source of the birth, life and death of all things.

- Sikhism teaches that the natural environment and the survival of all life forms are closely linked in the rhythm of nature. The history of the Gurus is full of stories of their love and special relationship with the natural environment-, with animals, birds, vegetation, earth, rivers, mountains and the sky. There is also a very strong vegetarian tradition.
- It is for this reason that in Sikhism those who kill for lust of hunting, eating or to make sacrifices are condemned. In Sikh hymns God is often referred to as the provider for all life which God loves and is loved by. God as both father and mother guarantees equality to man and woman in faith and compassion towards all beings and nature.