

# All religions agree 'environs must be safeguarded'

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** When it comes to the environment, the common theme in all religions is, humans have to care for it.

This was one of the conclusions reached by panellists at yesterday's Interfaith Dialogue on the Religious Views of the Environmental Crisis.

Institute of Islamic Understanding

Malaysia director Prof Datin Dr Azizan Baharuddin said in Islam, the earth is regarded as a source of knowledge, which is full of bounties.

"For Muslims, the earth is a gift from Allah so we should be grateful for it," she said, adding that it was seen as *dosa* (sin) to destroy the environment.

Malaysia Hindu Sangam deputy president V. Kandasamy said Hindus shared the same view that

the earth is a valuable gift.

"All of God's creations must be respected," he said, adding that the earth should not be polluted.

Dignity for Children chairman Rev. Elisha Satvinder Singh said the haze was an example of humans' failure to appreciate the planet.

"The haze is caused by greed and negligence. The actions of people has led to the destruction of the environment," he added.

International Network of Engaged Buddhist (INEB) executive committee member Vidyananda K.V. Soon said people needed to practise moderation and sustainable living to tackle the environmental crisis.

"What we do will affect someone else," he said.

"There are the 3 Rs – reuse, reduce and recycle – but from a religious standpoint, we should also

add refuse and reject," said Soon, adding that people needed to eliminate "over-consumption".

He said the haze was a result of over-consumption, and greed among corporations.

The interfaith dialogue was moderated by University Putra Malaysia's Faculty of Human Ecology dean Prof Dr Zaid Ahmad and was held at the Islamic Centre here.