**Green politics: The future landscape of politics**

[Syed Asim Ali Bukhari](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/syed-asim-ali-bukhari/)

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The age for the political slogan of ‘Food, Clothing, and Shelter’ has become incomplete in the face of the catastrophic natural environmental challenges being faced by mankind. Now is the time for *Green Politics*, a political ideology based on the creation of an ecologically sustainable society pillared on the values of environmentalism and social responsibility. The new political landscape requires an updated green slogan promising environmental sustainability for the current and future generations which will resultantly ensure an equal and steady supply of food, clothing, and shelter.

Many of the world leaders are practicing green politics by promising the voters concrete steps for attaining environmental sustainability and supporting various green initiatives. Ex-US President Barack Obama was one of the most vocal world leaders on the issue of Climate Change. His government’s climate action plan included steps to cut carbon pollution in America, to prepare the US for the impacts of the climate crisis, and for the US to lead international efforts to combat global climate change. Similarly, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel has been called the “climate chancellor” due to her green advocacy and steps to lead Germany into the age of green energy. It is under her green leadership that Germany has been able to generate 55.8% of net energy in the first half of 2020through renewable energy sources. The global political scenario shows that a green economy needs a green commitment from green world leaders. However, the commitment should be in true spirits and not just greenwashing to secure the votes of the ecologically conscious public.

Projects like the Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme and the Ravi Riverfront Urban Development can be transformed into green construction projects ensuring a huge opportunity for green growth in the country

The role of leadership in a country’s green vision is evident from the case of the US, where it was observed that the country backtracked on its environmentally sustainable path after President Barack Obama under the leadership of Donald Trump. According to the US’s news agencies, the Trump government has weakened or wiped out more than 125 rules and policies aimed at protecting the country’s air, water, and land including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change Mitigation. His political opponent Joe Biden practices green politics by inculcating working on environmentally sustainable policies as part of his election manifesto. He has repeatedly termed the climate change as a ‘global crisis’ and is planning a number of environmental sustainability initiatives. His win in the recent US election shows the positive voter response towards green politics. Prince Charles along with both his sons Prince William and Prince Harry are strong advocates of pro-environmental public and private initiatives.

In Pakistan, the Prime Minister Imran Khan has envisioned a Clean and Green future for our country but the ecologically conscious voters are still waiting for the implementation of green goals in the true spirits. Under the current government,the country has witnessed the Billion Tree Tsunami initiative, digitalization of various government departments, and Pakistan being elected the vice-president in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 25th and 26thConference of Parties (COP-25& COP-26). However, a large incongruity exists between various government initiatives and environmental sustainability. Surprisingly, the budget for combating climate change causes and effects, of a self-proclaimed green government, was reduced from Rs. 7.579 billion in 2019-20 to Rs.5 billion in 2020-21. The government banned the use of single-use polyethylene (PE) plastic bags in some cities but has been unable to get this ban effectively implemented. The majority of government initiatives in various industries lack green management aspects. Under the current leadership, Pakistan has hardly made any substantial progress on the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030.

Given Pakistan’s current environmental degradation and climate change scenario, all stakeholders need to play their role in ensuring environmental sustainability. Banks are the engine of a country’s economy and play an imperative role in economic growth. The banking industry can also play the role of a savior in case of our country’s environmental dilemma by adopting Green Banking. It is the banking ideology that minimizes adverse environmental impacts of not just the banks but also the industries that are being financed by banks. Green finance is an integral part of Green Banking which can play a major role in fulfilling the green promises of our leaders. Unfortunately, the current government projects aimed at revitalizing the country’s economy have no dimension of environmental sustainability.

Projects like the Naya Pakistan Housing Scheme and the Ravi Riverfront Urban Development can be transformed into green construction projects ensuring a huge opportunity for green growth in the country. Green construction projects will in turn boost the development of the green supply chain, green buildings, green warehousing, renewable energy sources, green services,and green manufacturing sectors which in turn will be financed through the bank’s Green Financing schemes. Green Banking implementation is based on the dimensions of Environment, Social, and Governance (ESG). Pakistan is currently lacking effective green governance with weak policy-making and a lack of inter-connectivity between the country’s economic, social, and environmental sustainability goals. Green politics will only win votes when the public witnesses tangible proof of the implementation of the green manifesto. Green Banking can be the key to the successful realization of the green promises of green politics. Banks can boost the country’s green economy but the banking industry needs the support of regulatory authorities and policymakers for the creation of green product and service demand in Pakistan. By making Green Banking a manifesto, a green political leader can ensure environmental sustainability.

*The writer is working as a Green Banking Officer in Bank AL Habib Limited, Pakistan. He is also pursuing a Ph.D. in Green Banking from the UniversitiSains Malaysia (USM), Penang, Malaysia.*