

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGION ON ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN MACEDONIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to examine the influence, that is the positive potential of religion (religious teachings, religious communities and leaders) on raising environmental awareness in Macedonian society. The rationale for this stems from the recommendations in various initiatives related to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in which the need for a broad framework for cooperation between stakeholders in all social spheres is highlighted. Within these initiatives, religious communities and leaders are recognized as important partners in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which derive from the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, considering the wide spectrum of these goals, the support of religious communities and leaders in environmental protection, that is, in raising awareness for environmental protection, is particularly emphasized.

Starting from such observations regarding the influence of religious communities and leaders on raising the environmental awareness of believers, within this paper, an account of the correlation between religious teachings and the environment is initially presented. Then follows a thematic analysis of a secondary database from a previous empirical research on religious collectivities in Macedonian society in relation to man's relationship to nature, as well as a comparative analysis with data from research on the citizens' perception of religion and its role in Macedonian society. In the findings of such analyses, criticism of the insufficient involvement of religious leaders in raising environmental awareness, as well as the willingness of a large percentage of citizens to participate in environmental protection initiatives initiated by their religious communities, is evident. Such findings point to the presence of clear support for increasing the influence of religion on the environmental awareness of Macedonian citizens.

Keywords: religious communities, religious leaders, environment, environmental awareness

1. INTRODUCTION

In September 2015, world leaders adopted the declaration on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It's a global action plan that summarizes 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets that would enable the prosperity for people and the planet. The 2030 Agenda is built on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), surpassing previous partial initiatives and development plans that have mainly focused on progress in developing countries. Objective of this action plan is to transform our world over the next 15 years. Thereby, the preamble of the Agenda states that in the implementation of this action plan, it will be necessary to include all stakeholders who would act through a collaborative partnership. (UN, 2015)

The concept of achieving the sustainable development goals, as the largest participatory process that requires relentless commitment from society as a whole, inevitably points to religion. This recognition stems from the fact that one of the most noticeable phenomena of society is religion, as well as the finding that about 85 percent of the people worldwide identify with a religion (World Population Review, 2022). Hence, the need and role of religion in the realization of the 2030 Agenda is clearly reflected. This universal agenda, and the emerging understanding of the points of religious agreement in environmental ethics, can be the corner stones for a common vision that enhances the role of religion in achieving sustainability. The involvement, that is the support of the religious leaders is emphasized in all global initiatives for successful realization of the goals. Thereby, it is clearly stated that religious leaders and organizations should actively engage in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs in their communities, on their own footprints, and in cooperation with each other. This view stems from the grasp that: "religious values and practices are deeply entwined in the fabric of daily lives, and the leaders of churches, mosques, temples, and other religious communities play an important role in shaping attitudes, opinions, and behaviors for

management and use of the environment and natural resources and for sustainable development overall” (UNEP, 2016). As expected, this appeal, without any hesitation, was supported by religious leaders worldwide, whereby in September 2015 in Bristol, faith leaders, representing 24 belief traditions from around the world, including Buddhism, Confucianism, Christianity, Daoism, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Sikhism and Shintoism, declared their support in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Ibid). Also, On November 28, 2015, at 21st Conference of Parties (COP) in Paris (a few days before the adoption of the Paris Agreement), religious leaders and representatives of religious organizations participated in an interfaith climate justice event, where climate justice declarations were signed by more than 1.7 million people from all over the world (CIDSE, 2015). Such efforts continued in the following period, when in November 2016, 33 religious leaders in support of the 22nd Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), presented the “COP22 Interfaith Statement”, in which faith communities call on their followers to “act on the reality of the climate crisis” (COP22, 2016).

According to Tomalin and Hausteine, such initiatives are not an entirely new approach. They point out that:” the relevance of religious identities and actors for global, national and local development discourses has risen in significance over the past decades” (Tomalin and Hausteine, 2020). One of the most significant previous initiatives was the establishment of the UN Interagency Task Force on Religion and Sustainable Development (UN IATF-R) in 2010. It is conceived as a platform for knowledge exchange and management, capacity building, system-wide guidance and oversight regarding engagement with faith-based/-inspired civil society actors (UNEP, 2020). Inspired by these efforts, a number of initiatives have been launched in recent years, such as the formation of the International Partnership on Religion and Sustainable Development (PaRD) in 2016. Its purpose is to provide a platform for governmental entities, intergovernmental entities, and religious and value-driven civil societies organisations to achieve the sustainable development goals (PaRD, 2016).

2. RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS ON ENVIRONMENT

According the most religious doctrines, harmony (or order of the Universe) is a given and, at the same time, a task that must be built with wisdom and intelligence. And it is a common task. “Theology, philosophy and science all speak of a harmonious universe, of a "cosmos" endowed with its own integrity, its own internal, dynamic balance. This order must be respected. The human race is called to explore this order, to examine it with due care and to make use of it while safeguarding its integrity” (Paolo II, 1990) – is written in one papal message almost 30 years ago. This is a text that confirms the role of religion and its responsibility for creation, which must be also exercised in the public sphere, to defend the earth, water and air, and above all to protect man against destruction of himself. In one another Vatican document, the Encyclical Letter *Caritas in veritate* (48), is written: “Nature is at our disposal not as “a heap of scattered refuse” (Diels and Kranz, 1952), but as a gift of the Creator who has given it an inbuilt order, enabling man to draw from it the principles needed in order “to till it and keep it” (Gen 2:15) (Benedict XVI, 2009).

It means that the religion is called to promote an open and fruitful dialogue between human cultures to feed the world and the vision of a way of life conscious, respectful and sympathetic, fed by an ecological spirituality. It is also task of the religion to develop a new mentality, a new way of knowing and considering the relationship of men with the environment. That is because, educating the people for a harmonious management of nature and its resources, implies a collective awareness for responsible practices of the planet's life, that is a habitable place for everyone (Giovanazzi, 2016). The religions role in environmental protection sometimes does not have as its objective the mere conservation of nature, but the attempt to place it at the service of man in the search for harmony between humanity and the surrounding world (Bagnasco, 2012).

For a religious men it is a moral obligation to behave according the moral teaching of his religion, and therefore the responsibility of the religious communities is to educate their faithful how to care for the surrounding world. Awareness of ecological problems requires a renewed consideration of life and an environmental pedagogy that combines human formation and environmental protection for the protection of life itself in its various historical and cultural forms (Malavasi, 2008).

According to some opinions, educating in the care of creation means leading men along a threefold path: that of cultivating an attitude of gratitude to God for the gift of nature, then that of personally living the responsibility of making creation more beautiful and, finally, that of being authentic witnesses of gratuitousness and service to every human person. It is thus that the custody of creation that allows the encounter between different cultures, between peoples and even, in respect of the identity of each one, between the different religions, and leads everyone to grow in mutual knowledge, in fraternal dialogue, in fuller collaboration. The pedagogical discourse reflects on the sharing of the Earth's resources and on the essential need to cooperate in solidarity, between ecology of the environment,

vigilant to protect the habitat of various living beings, and a human ecology which makes the existence of individual creatures more dignified (Malavasi, 2008).

Religion is also called to promote the responsibility of each in relation to new styles of life that use energy resources more soberly, contain greenhouse gas emissions and promote the liveability of our cities. A further commitment is to encourage studies on improving the energy efficiency of buildings and the construction of spaces in our communities according to rules of sobriety, savings and efficiency (Casile, 2013). To cope with global problems, a spiritual formation is necessary, a planetary consciousness also understood as knowledge of the interconnection between individuals, a feeling of belonging and community, a community united by a single destiny to deal with problems with authenticity, ecological and economic. It is necessary to create a consciousness capable of not closing in on the local dimension, but of opening up in the wider planetary context for a relevant knowledge of the events taking place (Morin and Pasqualini, 2007).

The religion should that part in the cultural conversion of an ethical type. If in order to adequately understand the crisis it is necessary to go back to the subject and to the culture, in order to get out of it, a profound cultural conversion of an ethical type is necessary. "We cannot think of finding a solution to the ecological problem if we do not seriously review our way of thinking and behaviour" (Paolo II, 1990).

According to the theology of creation of the religions as Christianity, Judaism and Islam, and to the ethics that derives from it, is crucial for configuring a new way of thinking (culture) and acting (ethics). For example, the biblically founded theology of creation can be summarized in some fundamental affirmations. 1. Creation, and what it contains (natural elements, plants, animals), is not human construction. For the believer, it is a reality received, given by God the Creator for humanity and the generations that follow one another in history. Creation, in the multiplicity and variety of creatures, is ordered and to be ordered; it is perfect and to be perfected. In this perspective, the natural law consists in completing nature in the sense of creation. It is easy to conclude that the theology of creation does not endorse any pessimism towards science and technology; it does not propose any moratorium or stagnation in scientific-technological research, it instead directs it in the logic of preserving and cultivating (Lorenzetti, 1989).

And from the theology of creation comes an ethics for creation. The ethics that derives from the theology of creation is declined in the categories of sharing, of harmony and, at the root, of oblation love. It is an ethic of solidarity sharing in the use of natural assets. The creation principle is closely linked to the destination of the earth's goods to all peoples. The Earth, and all that it contains (flora, fauna, air, water), is a common good, it belongs to all and to all peoples, to present and future generations (Paolo II, 1991). The result is an ethic of solidarity sharing in the use of the goods of the earth, so that every person, every people, can access the goods of the earth and not be impeded by others.

The ethics of love and justice is particularly underlined in the Christian theology. Love is the animating principle of Christian morality, the ultimate and supreme criterion of human behaviour and of the laws that regulate it. The ecological crisis is therefore of an ethical nature. The rediscovery of the Creator's original mandate invites all men to an overall rethinking of their "being in the world". Man is given a special place in creation and an immense power of transformation of the same through science and technology. The real ethical challenge to be overcome lies in not exercising this power in a despotic way, but in a responsible way so as to guarantee a use of resources and of the same world as a whole intended for future generations. All the educational and proclamation work of the religious communities will not be successful, however, if it is not endorsed by the corresponding testimony of their environmental behaviour and a personal sustainable lifestyle (Lorenzetti, 1989).

3. CONTEMPORARY RELATION BETWEEN RELIGION AND ENVIRONMENT

A number of recent studies have highlighted the "greening" of religion, with "greening" being comprehended as a contemporary social process where religions increasingly engage environmental concerns and adopt sustainable practices. Religious leaders around the world are increasingly insisting on and pointing to the need to protect the environment. Yale University has compiled a wide range of climate change declarations made by international religious leaders, whereby all unanimously recognise that climate change is an urgent global challenge (Yale University, 2006). In doing so, these declarations reveal a striking convergence over the diagnosis, critique, and necessary political responses to global warming - notwithstanding their remaining disagreements on fundamental issues of metaphysics, authority, doctrine and other areas. About this trend, Gottlieb points out that there is a "explosive growth in theological writings, scholarship, institutional commitment, and public action" on ecological issues (Gottlieb, 2006). In doing so, important multi-faith initiatives have occurred. Among them, a recent phenomenon is the formation of religious environmental nongovernment organizations (RENGOs), whose intention is to conserve threatened species and biodiversity. This is a specific form - an organizational hybrid of religious beliefs and social activism locally, nationally and internationally, of a new kind of religious actors trying to

influence global policy. According to Jonathan Chaplin, the growing interest of religious interventions in the specific challenges posed by climate change stems from their interpretation of environmental crises, such as climate change as a particular revelation of deeper cultural and social pathologies that have long been considered to belong to their theological, pastoral, missionary or prophetic mandates (Chaplin, 2016).

Sociologist Stephen Ellingson examined and analyzed the process of religious “greening”, classifying the most prevalent forms of innovation. In doing so, he specified the separate forms into four groups of facilitators of religious environmental engagement: Mining and reframing traditions for environmental models; Frame bridging by relating the environment to other ethical concerns; Bricolage, or recombining available legitimate concepts, scripts, models, and other cultural artifacts; and Enhancing ecodimensionality by creatively adapting arts, ritual, piety, and coda (Ellingson, 2016).

Nevertheless, given one of the crucial segments of religious teachings - morality, it is important to note that some of the most recent analyzes of the relationship between religion and the environment, highlight the agreement of religious traditions on the many important points of environmental ethics. In one of those analysis, such as UNEP’s ‘Environment, Religion and Culture in the Context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’ (UNEP, 2016), highlights K.P.Pedersen’s observations regarding the agreement of religious traditions on environmental ethics: “The natural world has value in itself and does not exist solely to serve human needs; There is a significant continuity of being between human and non-human living beings, even though humans do have a distinctive role; Non-human living beings are morally significant, in the eyes of God and/or in the cosmic order; The dependence of human life on the natural world can and should be acknowledged in ritual and other expressions of appreciation and gratitude; Moral norms such as justice, compassion and reciprocity apply (in appropriate ways) both to human beings and to non-human beings. The wellbeing of humans and the wellbeing of non-human beings are inseparably connected; There are legitimate and illegitimate uses of nature; Greed and destructiveness are condemned, restraint and protection are commended; Human beings are obliged to be aware and responsible in living in harmony with the natural world, and should follow the specific practices for this prescribed by their traditions.” (Pedersen, 2000).

4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The empirical basis for determining the influence of religion on the attitude of Macedonian citizens towards the environment was based on the findings of the research project entitled "Moral Lessons in the Holy Books, the Quran and the Bible about the man-nature relationship" (Cacanoska et al., 2019) completed during 2018. The research included 22 respondents, of which 3 women and 19 men, and all of them had completed higher theological education. For the purposes of this paper, the questions, that is the answers to the questions related to the influence of religion, religious leadership and moral teachings from the holy books on the ecological awareness of the believers were singled out. In order to protect the anonymity of the respondents, all interviews were numbered and all quotes were given with a number (in brackets) of the interviewee. Additionally, the comparative method was incorporated in this study, which was applied in the analysis of the findings from the thematic analysis with the available secondary data. The comparison refers to the data from the project for monitoring the citizens' perception of religion and its role in multi-confessional societies in the period from 2019 to 2021, conducted by Institute for Political Research - Skopje and the Internet portal "Religija.mk", with the support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

5. THEMATIC DATA ANALYSIS

After the data collection, a thematic analysis of the interview responses was performed, which was aimed at generating data themes. The approach used in the data analysis was inductive, with categories and themes derived from the interviews. In doing so, the qualitative analysis of the selected questions focused on interpreting the responses of the interviewees. Thereby, from the thematic analysis of the data, the following themes have been defined: *Limited impact of initiatives encouraged by religious leaders; Influence of religion on nominal/traditional and assured believers; Criticism of the engagement of religious communities/clergy.*

The analysis of the mentioned topics that arose from the indicated questions was in accordance with the established goals of this study for contextual consideration and understanding of the mentioned topics (Bryman, 2012). Additionally, the quotations of the respondents were used as: proof of their views, better understanding of the key concepts, illustration, and they are in function of the findings and conclusions of this paper. In certain categories, there is saturation or repetition to some extent, which was noticeable during the stratification of the answers. Also, despite the presentation of the themes as discrete, there is overlap between them.

Limited impact of initiatives encouraged by religious leaders

In the analysis of the answers to questions related to the influence of moral teachings, as well as of the leadership of religious collectives, the emphasis on the limited influence of environmental initiatives of the religious collectives

was immediately noticeable. Thereby, the respondents pointed out two types of constraints - spatial and social. Regarding the social constraint, most of the respondents point out that this attitude stems from the previous perceptions about the possibilities of influencing religion on social trends:” I think they have very little influence because the twentieth century, among other things, has left religion without clothes at a crossroads. As a consequence, faith is conceived only in terms of formal prayers and doctrinal obligations, and not as a entirety of life.” (14); “Religious-political topics, which manage to provide greater interest, occasionally manage to suppress attempts to promote and actualize a number of issues, including those in the field of ecology.” (5); “We can not talk about the "role of religion" in itself, but I think that, realistically, at this time religious communities, with honorable exceptions, have no influence on the development of environmental awareness.” (9); “Due to recent events in Islamic countries, little space remains to be devoted to environmental protection.” (12).

More than half of the respondents point to the spatial constraint of the initiatives encouraged by religious leaders. In doing so, most of them emphasize the local dimension of such initiatives:” Each individual initiative can only represent goodwill and be limited to a very small area.” (3); “The engagement is mainly within the local church communities” (19); “...the initiatives are especially evident when it comes to the parish as a small church.” (11). Also, some of these respondents emphasize the role of the clergy, emphasizing that: “but the results depend on the charisma of the clergy as well as the consumers.” (8)

In addition to such perceptions, some of the respondents point out certain alternatives for changing this situation: “The average believer usually does not (or extremely rarely) have the ability to influence decisions that lead to capital anti-environmental practices. But that does not absolve him of the responsibility for everyday actions that require special care for the environment. Engagement in the social activities of local church communities can also be included in these activities.” (20); “... then, through our caring for the world, we will have some real role in the broader context of our society, and not simply in the microcosms of our small Eucharistic communities and domestic churches.”(16).

Influence of religion on nominal/traditional and assured believers

The formation of this topic arose from the content of the answers to almost all groups of questions. Despite the fact that none of the questions asked the respondents to categorize the believers, nor to point out any difference between the believers in their religious collective, most of the respondents clearly emphasized the categorization among the believers. Regarding this, we should mention that the perceptions about the different categories of believers in the Macedonian society have been present in almost all research related to religion for many years. Hence, such attitudes of the respondents are quite expected, as well as the need to emphasize them in the answers. During the categorization, two categories of believers are usually distinguished: nominal or traditional and assured believers.

In the answers, the respondents indicate the different degree of influence of religion on the attitudes towards the environment among different categories of believers:” The role is potentially huge, but in reality extremely small, because, I remind you, we have a huge number of nominal and too few devoted church believers... So, our "religious collectivity" has little impact.” (9); “Differently, where there is a practice of church life, in the sense where the apostolic messages are received and practiced (lived according to them) there is a result. Otherwise - none.” (17); “The more people become acquainted with the teachings of the Church and thus progress in repentance and self-improvement as individuals, the more their awareness of this serious problem grows.” (21).

While emphasizing the different degree of influence of religion among the mentioned categories of believers, a large number of respondents emphasize the impact of moral teachings in a particular religion on the degree of environmental awareness of believers:” Believers who live a true Christian life respect and adhere to Christian moral standards, including these.” (2); “In my opinion, as everywhere in the world, so in the Macedonian society we have different believers in terms of their belief and acceptance of religious norms. For example, believers only declaratively, they are not affected by the moral teachings of the holy books, secondly, there are believers who understand the teachings of the holy books only from a spiritual aspect (prayer, going to the mosque, ecology only inside the temple and in their homes), and third, believers at the same time, both declaratively and in practice. I think that in the last group, moral lessons influence their behavior.” (12).

Criticism of the engagement of religious communities/clergy

In addition to the question that referred directly to the role of the leadership of religious collectives in raising environmental awareness, the formation of this topic also included parts of answers to other questions. In fact, critical attitude towards religious leaders, that is the clergy was present in the answers to almost all questions related to the impact of religion on environmental awareness. Thereby, within this group of questions, the saturation of the answers was immediately evident:” Religious leadership in our country does not show any awareness of the environmental challenges that people face. There is almost no mention of raising environmental awareness and knowledge in the sermons.” (13); “In terms of leadership, even among them, environmental awareness is not at the level required by religious provisions.” (1).

This critical attitude of the respondents stems from their recognition of the role of religious leaders as key drivers in raising the environmental awareness of believers, as well as in society as whole.” As with all other issues, the role of religious leadership is primary and hence depends on the attitude of the lower clergy and the faithful towards various topics at the state level.” (15); “I think that the role of the leadership of religious collectivity in raising the environmental awareness of their members is great, but, unfortunately, they are not aware of their role in the society in general, hence neither of raising environmental awareness.” (22); “Regarding the role of religion in raising environmental awareness in modern society in the Republic of Macedonia, here we have a lack in the presentation of religious knowledge by religious leaders to their believers, in accordance with the Qur'an and the Bible.” (10). Despite this saturation of the answers, some of the respondents have a more moderate attitude towards religious leaders, whereby they initially emphasize the influence of religion on raising environmental awareness. Thereby, the difference in the structure of answers was noticeable, as they initially emphasize the influence of religion on raising environmental awareness, and then state their position on the role and action of religious leaders:” I think that the role of religious communities and their leadership is great if they put these issues on their agenda intensively and correctly.” (7); “I think that the society in Macedonia is still sensitive to religion and holy books, but the leadership does not do enough in the direction of presenting environmental problems.” (18).

6. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In addition to the findings of the thematic analysis, we applied a comparative analysis, stating the findings of the research of perception of religion and its role in multi-confessional societies in the period from 2019 to 2021, conducted by Institute for Political Research - Skopje and the Internet portal "Religija.mk", with the support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. In doing so, the findings of two such studies were analyzed: the study of religion and ethical values among young people (Божиновски и др., 2019) and the study of perception among believers about their attitude towards nature and environmental protection (Божиновски и др., 2021).

The first survey included only the young population of the country, that is a representative sample for research at the national level. In this survey, when asked: "Can you say that you are religious", 47% of young people said they were religious and an additional 36% said they were somewhat religious. The ratio of the representation of these two groups of believers in the Macedonian society, confirms the justification of attitudes of the respondents from which the second topic emerged. It is quite expected that the impact of religious teachings, including those aimed at protecting the environment, has a different impact depending on the level of religiosity of the believers.

In the survey on the attitude of believers towards environmental protection, 64% of respondents consider pollution of nature to be disrespectful to God's work, and also 65% of respondents believe that pollution and irresponsible attitude towards nature is a sin. Furthermore, 68% of respondents believe that religious teachings can affect the attitude of believers towards the environment. This perception further confirms the claim for correlation between the degree of religiosity, that is knowledge and practice of faith and its impact on the ecological awareness of the believers. Criticism of the engagement of religious communities, that is the clergy in raising the environmental awareness of believers corresponds to the position of 65% of respondents, who would participate in environmental action, if their religious community called them.

7. CONCLUSION

Today's environmental challenges cannot be solved by relying on science and technology alone, even if they were equally accessible to all countries. Despite all the technological progress, man remains the initiator and implementer of all activities. Given recent global surveys of the percentage of people belonging to different religious groups, it is clear that religion does not belong only to the past and that we do not live in a new time of thinking (so-called advanced without the influence of religion). This undoubtedly indicates that religion remains an important determinant of human behavior and moral responsibility, that is religious beliefs are still the main source of motivation for a responsible relation towards the environment.

Urgent and increased pollution and environmental degradation requires the involvement of all social actors that can help overcome this trend. Thereby, the need for active involvement of religious leaders and organizations in the achievement of the goals for sustainable development is emphasized. This position has been implemented in a number of official documents and strategies, which emphasize the relevance of religion in raising environmental awareness. In doing so, it is pointed out the need to upgrade the continuity of engagement and large presence of religious communities in health and educational institutions, as well as the trust that most religious leaders enjoy in the communities.

According to the presented answers it can be seen that the influence of religious teachings, as well as the environmental initiatives encouraged by religious leaders is limited due to the influence of spatial and social constraints. The local dimension of such initiatives limits their impact within a particular municipality. Social

constrains, on the other hand, arise from the comprehension of religion only within the framework of formal prayers and doctrinal obligations, not taking into account the possibility of influencing various social spheres.

Based on the answers processed it can be concluded that majority of the respondents clearly emphasize the categorization of the believers as nominal or traditional and assured believers. From this categorization arises the degree of influence of religious teachings on the environmental awareness of the believers. This perception is followed by the findings of the research stated in the comparative analysis, whereby some of the respondents stated that they were religious, while some of them stated that they were somewhat religious. In addition, these studies show a large percentage of respondents who believe that religious teachings can affect the attitude of believers towards the environment, as opposed to a significantly smaller number of respondents who consider themselves religious.

The analysis of the answers indicates a critical attitude towards religious leaders, that is the clergy, regarding their engagement on environmental issues. In doing so, respondents point out that religious leaders do not recognize their own potential for influence in raising the environmental awareness of believers. This position corresponds to the findings of the comparative analysis, which states that 65% of the respondents would take part in an environmental action, if they were called by their religious community.

Finally, it can be concluded that in Macedonian society there is a will and support to increase the impact of religion on environmental awareness of believers, as well as the population in general.

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