

# Environmental Conservation Paradigm in Islamic Ecological Perspective

<sup>1</sup>Moh. Najib, <sup>2</sup>Ujang Saefullah, <sup>3</sup>Erni Haryanti, <sup>4</sup>Enden Haetami, <sup>5</sup>Delis Sri Maryati

*Abstract-- The occurrence of an environmental crisis is not just a matter of ecological damage alone, but also a moral and spiritual problem. To overcome this crisis, it must be reviewed comprehensively both ecologically and spiritually. Islam as eternal teaching must be explored so that it becomes a practical guide for Muslims around the world. However, Islamic teachings on the environment cannot be explored effectively without special tools such as theology, Sufism and Usul al-Fiqh. This paper will discuss the role of the Islamic ecology paradigm which includes the approach of ecology, Sufism and eco-usul al-fiqh for environmental conservation.*

**Keywords:** environmental conservation, Islamic perspective, Al-Qur'an.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The elaboration of the principle of environmental conservation in today's religious perspective has become an actual issue in the midst of the threat of a global environmental crisis. Many writers try to make religion - especially Islam - a tool to explore religious analyzes related to environmental conservation. This is done because the environmental crisis has been mentioned and hinted at in the Koran as well as becoming a global concern so that it takes explanations from many experts to be able to provide the capacity of Muslims to contribute in the field of tackling global environmental crisis through the deconstruction of religious understanding. In the context of this study, the author uses the term Islamic ecology, a term whose accuracy is debatable.

The components of environmental conservation in Islam, of course, are global in understanding. New meanings and details related to environmental conservation need to be made to be more operational. This is done by exploring the meaning of Islamic ecology through a re-understanding of works in Islamic science thematically with its analysis units namely theology, Sufism, and Usul al-Fiqh. Therefore, the principles of theology, Sufism and Usul al-Fiqh with all of their branches will be discussed in the framework of the analysis.

## II. METHOD

This research is library research whose data is sourced from library materials, namely literature study by library research. This research is also called concept research or thought nature that will not be separated from

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<sup>1</sup> Moh. Najib, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia, Email: m\_najib\_uin08@yahoo.com

<sup>2</sup> Ujang Saefullah, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> Erni Haryanti, UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia

<sup>4</sup> Enden Haetami, STAI YAPATA Al-Jawami Bandung, Indonesia

<sup>5</sup> Delis Sri Mulyani, STAI YAPATA Al-Jawami Bandung, Indonesia

philosophical approaches consisting of linguistic analysis and concept analysis. Linguistic analysis is used to explore the real meaning, while the analysis of concepts to find keywords that represent an idea.

This study uses descriptive analysis, which explains and illustrates the focus of the main study on concepts relating to environmental conservation by analyzing the opinions of scholars and experts who are competent in this theme so that the presentation becomes easier to understand. Meanwhile, to present conclusions using deductive analysis. Based on the nature, materials, and objectives of this study, the approach used is an interdisciplinary approach that examines problems with two or more disciplinary glasses, after which the results are formulated into a single concept. The application is an environmental problem that will be analyzed using an Islamic ecological perspective.

### **III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **Islam and Environmental Conservation**

Humans are reminded that the environmental damage that occurs as a result of human actions. Allah says in QS. al-Rum (30): 41: It has been seen that damage on land and on the sea is caused by the deeds of human hands so that Allah feels to them part of (the consequences) their deeds so that they return (to the right path). Based on the above paragraph it can be understood that initially the damage occurred on land and then damaged the ocean. This argument can be understood because based on the reality of human exploration begins from the land and then into the sea. The occurrence of damage to nature is not limited to violations of religious doctrines, but also to the outer environment. The negative consequences arising from natural damage should be a warning so that humans have more awareness in preserving the environment. This indicates the need for resources where people are cautious. The indicator of piety here is the existence of environmental awareness so that he does not carry out acts or acts of destruction or that result in damage [1].

The above verse implies that environmental damage is inflicted on humans in addition to being a warning as well as punishment. The warning here can be interpreted that the environmental damage that occurred on this earth is the result of human actions. Therefore, humans should be careful in managing the environment. Meanwhile, as a punishment, it means that all the effects of environmental damage are deliberately left so that humans feel it, with the hope that they can realize their mistakes in environmental management, then they immediately return to the right path, namely by managing the environment in accordance with God's will [2]. Thus, environmental problems arise due to human error in managing them. This is where moral guidance and environmental laws are needed which are sourced from Islamic law so that humans are not mistaken in their duties as environmental managers.

In general, environmental management must be based on Islamic ethics regarding environmental management, namely:

- a. Do Not Violate Religious Norms

Exploration that does not violate religious norms is exploration carried out in accordance with the command

of *ishlah* (making repairs) and prohibiting *ifsad* (doing damage) to the environment. According to Ibn Faris [3], the word *ishlah* (masdar form) originated from the basic root words *shalaha-yashlahu* (*shalahan* and *shalahiyatan*) which means to be good and useful. It can also mean that something has stopped. From this basic word, comes *al-shulhu* which means good and good, as the antonym of the facade (broken and ugly). From this root word *ishlah* above is formed, derived from the verb *aslahayusihihu* which means to repair something that has been damaged, reconcile, and make something useful and useful. The basic verb contains nature connotations, so it does not require the object of the sufferer, while the second is a transitive form of the verb (*muta'adi*) which requires the object of the sufferer. Therefore the verb connotes more deeds [4].

Shihab further explained that the first form gives an understanding of the accumulation of a certain number of values in something so that it can be useful and useful or function properly in accordance with the purpose of its presence. Whereas the second form (transitive verb) gives the sense that if something is missing, so the purpose of its presence is not achieved, then that is when humans are required to present that value to it, and what is done is called *ishlah* [4].

Furthermore, the word *ifsad* comes from the basic verb *fasada* which means broken, perished, rotten. Staple damage or destroy something. Shihab states that destruction on earth is an activity that results in something whose values function well and are beneficial to lose some or all of its value so that it does not or does not function (less useful). In its use, the word *fasada* includes a broad understanding, namely all actions that are not in accordance with religion and that damage the environment [4]. Syaokani, commented on *al-facade* that the damage meant here is general, whether due to human actions themselves such as immoral acts to God, termination of family relations, persecution and killing between fellow humans, or in the form of natural disasters such as drought, reduced crop yields, to the earthquake and flood [5].

*Ishlah* and *ifsad* are two opposite words. Regarding environmental management, these two words become very important. From the description of the meanings above, *ishlah* can be interpreted to improve and preserve the environment. Whereas *ifsad* can be interpreted as damaging and disturbing environmental sustainability. Thus the general meaning of these two words includes efforts to manage the environment, rehabilitate damaged natural resources, preserve and preserve (conserve) the environment, as well as increase their added value through development and industry, in a righteous way and may not be in a *fasid* manner.

#### b. Not Excessive Exploitation

God's Word in QS. *al-A'raf* (7): 31: O son of Adam, wear your beautiful clothes in each (enter) mosque, eat and drink, and don't overdo it. Indeed, Allah does not like people who are overrated.

Often when exploring natural resources, human beings exploit (exaggerate) merely to gain multiple benefits without regard to the negative impacts that occur. For example, in the exploration of marine resources, the use of tiger trawlers continuously and uncontrollably will lead to overfishing in a certain period of time. This situation will certainly harm humans themselves.

In another verse Allah says QS. *Al-Baqarah* (2): 60: Eat and drink the blessings (given) of Allah, and do not

roam the earth doing harm.

The above verses are in line with what Dahuri said, that Some of the main factors that threaten the preservation of the sea and natural resources in it include: Overexploitation of biological resources, the use of techniques and fishing equipment that damage the environment, regional conversion protection becomes the purpose of development, and pollution [6].

c. Maintaining Environmental Conservation

Allah says in QS. al-An'am (6): 54: If those who believe in Our verses come to you, say: "Salaamun-alaikum. Your Lord has appointed Himself compassion, (ie) that whoever is do evil among you because of ignorance, then he repents after working on it and make improvements, then surely Allah is Forgiving, Most Merciful.

It seems that the understanding of the above verse can be attributed to the damage done to the environment. The damage is caused by mistakes because of carelessness and greed in environmental management by human beings as managers, then Allah tells people to do islah. Salim commented on the word islah in the above verse that in the beginning the universe was created by God in good condition (righteous), harmonious and prosperous. But after humans inhabit the earth, damage arises as a result of human hands or actions. God also sent his messenger to call on people so that they are aware of the mistakes that have been made so far and to always do good. Therefore, the business of Allah's messenger is essentially an effort to repair or renew what is called islah [7].

### **Environmental Conservation Paradigm in Islamic Ecology Perspective**

As a term, ecology (in English ecology) is taken from the Greek words oikos and logos. Oikos means a place to stay while logos means knowledge. As a scientific discipline, ecology which is a branch of biology is a science that studies the interrelationships between organisms and the relationship between these organisms and their environment. This term was first introduced by the German biologist Ernst Haeckel in 1866 [8]. In a broader sense, Oikos is not understood to be merely human habitation. Oikos is also understood as the whole universe and all interactions among the intertwined between living things and other living things and with the whole ecosystem or habitat. Thus, Oikos means home to all living things which at the same time describes the whole interaction that takes place in it [9].

In Arabic, ecology is known as' ilm al-bi'ah. Etymologically, the word bi'ah is taken from the verb (fi'il) Bawa, which consists of the letter ba-wau-hamzah which means to stay, stop, and stay. The isim (masdar) form of the word Bawa is a al-bi'ah which means home or residence [10].

From the description above, we can understand the definition of ecology as a science that studies the pattern of relations between all living things in the universe and all interactions that affect and occur within it. In this section, the author tries to elaborate on Islamic paradigms and approaches related to ecology. Specifically, Islamic

ecology offers three conceptual approaches to environmental conservation, namely the concept of ecology, ecology of Sufism, and eco-Usul al-fiqh.

a. Ecoteology Approach

Eco-theology which consists of the words ecology and theology is defined as a theological formula that discusses the interrelation between religion and nature, or between religion and the environment. Eco-theology in general starts from the premise regarding the relationship between religious paradigms or human spiritual paradigms and the destruction of nature [11].

Ecoteology is a form of constructive theology that discusses the interrelation between religion and nature, especially in looking at environmental issues both land and sea. In general, ecoteology departs from the premise that it exists because of the relationship between human religious worldviews and environmental degradation, it reveals interactions between ecological values such as sustainability and human dominance over nature.

In Islamic teachings, eco-theology is defined as the concept of religious beliefs that are related to environmental issues based on Islamic teachings. This theology formula can be used as an environmental theological guide in the management of natural resources and the environment [12].

Through eco-theology, we can understand the harmonious relationship between God, nature, and humans. It can be further explained, the relationship between God, nature, and humans refers to a systemic relationship, namely God as the creator of man and the universe, God as the owner of humans and the universe as well as functionally God as the preserver of humans and the universe [13].

Ecoteology raises a comprehensive awareness of religionists to reinterpret texts that have the potential to damage the environment and return it to the interpretation of environmentally friendly texts. Ecoteology is a promising thing and a religious spirit in the future. Spiritual dimensions, faith, worldview, ethics, morality, and religion are contained in ecoteology so that the combination of these can determine the basis of a more comprehensive human understanding of how we should place ourselves in the universe.

b. The Sufism Ecosystem Approach

Sufism as a whole teaches good behavior or ethics of God, fellow human beings, and the universe and its contents. The reflective depth of Sufism tradition, on the one hand, encourages to be wise to all things while on the other hand, Sufism teaches a morality which is the essence of religion.

The association of Sufism perspective with environmental conservation problem occurs because in Sufism there are very constructive aspects for environmental conservation. These aspects include: aspects of faqr (fakir/poverty for religious reasons), aspects of fikr and zikr (pondering and remembering God), aspects of shabr (being patient) aspects of zuhud (rejection of excessive material) and aspects of hubb (love) [14].

Aspects of environmental wisdom that can be picked from the concept of faqr in the correct sense lie in the potential for self-control of material things. This can be called a thrifty attitude, not excessive and an attitude that is far from the hedonistic attitude. Thus, the contribution of faqr to the environment lies in its potential to grow one's

ability to not be greedy, aggressive, and conqueror of environmental resources. The greed of consumption and hedonism of modern humans through the economic concept of capitalism is perfectly demonstrated by western countries, it has the potential to accelerate environmental crises both on land and at sea.

Fikr and Dhikr reflect the attitude of being reflective, contemplative and respectful towards nature and its creator. The relation of God, nature, and humans in this context is placed in the framework of harmony. Fikr is an effort of deep contemplation which can lead to dhikr (remembering) to the entity behind it namely Allah. Reflective and deep reflection can produce admiration and produce inner wisdom, thoughts, and ultimately action. The effort to take this awareness is by developing the concepts of fikr and dhikr in a holistic sense. Fikr as reflective thinking is an intellectual movement of intuition which in the perspective of Sufism is based on monotheism, giving rise to dhikr that bears fruit in Islam, Faith, and Ihsan. Thus, the basis of Islamic ethics in handling the environment is Faith, Islam, and Ihsan. These three basic ethics are the basis of effective environmental management, utilization, and development.

The concept of shabr in the Sufism tradition is considered vital because it affects the success of a Sufism seeker to endure all temptations, distractions, and passions. The concept of shabr over the temptations of lust does not mean to completely deny lust, because it is needed to encourage the emergence of beneficial actions. This kind of lust is referred to as al-nafs al-muthmainnah, that is, lust that is calm, which according to the Qur'an as such a situation has returned to its Lord. The concept of shabr in the context of economic activity, for example, can be equated with efficiency, effectiveness, saving, not wasteful and not consumptive. Of course, this can significantly help the sustainable development agenda. Awareness of the need for a new paradigm of economics, industry, technology and the like from western circles and modern humans reflects spiritual, ethical, and transcendental awareness whose values can be found in the wisdom of Sufism as in the concept of shabr with all its meaning variants.

The relevance of the zuhd concept for environmental conservation lies in the efforts of the world to look back at the wisdom of consumption and production that is more just, balanced, pay attention to sustainability and cares for the preservation of existing resources in the ocean and sea. As is known, the level of world consumption, especially developed countries, has experienced a very rapid revolution following the movement of the industrial revolution which continues to increase even though the earth's carrying capacity is limited. This has led to a continuous increase in the production of goods and services to meet human wasteful demand. As a result, the depletion of natural resources that are not controlled and endanger the environment. Chapra said that the view of economic materialism provides the basis for a commercial culture that has gone from other forces over the years and has multiplied desires far beyond the capabilities that can be fulfilled by available resources [15]. Therefore, the teachings of zuhd wisdom can be one of the alternatives to prevent the acceleration of the environmental crisis because consumption is done properly, economically, and production runs efficiently, taking into account real needs and not merely fulfilling the greed of human satisfaction.

Finally, the concept of love or hubb, although this concept is basically directed to God, it manifests itself in love for oneself, for others and for the environment. Love for oneself demands all the possibilities that make it physically, spiritually, morally, intellectually and economically. Love for each other enlarges virtues such as sympathy, compassion,

kindness, respect, generosity, and good deeds to others by all means and avoid their harmful attitudes. While love for the natural environment requires humans to increase their sense of responsibility to care for, make the best use of it and prevent damage. Furthermore, love for God (the reality of truth and goodness) has a domino effect on love for justice, truth, compassion, and finally loving the environment, this is very good for environmental conservation efforts that exist both on land and at sea.

c. The Eco-Usul al-Fiqh Approach

Eco-Usul al-fiqh is a combination of the words "eco" and "usul al-fiqh". Eco-usul al-fiqh can be interpreted as the study of the relationship of living things with their environment from the perspective of the science of usul al-fiqh. Or a study of environmental issues from the standpoint of Islamic legal philosophy [16]. The main focus of this concept through the analysis of the theory of maslahat and al-maqashid al-shar'iyyah.

Meaning in principle is useful in principle and rejects damage to maintain the objectives of the Shari'a. In this context, the working principle of maslahat is operated to prevent the occurrence of confusion, which is manifested in the safeguarding of five things namely safeguarding religion, life, reason, descent and wealth. These five things viewed from an ecological perspective are environmental components whose existence is absolute in terms of usul al-fiqh called al-kulliyat al-khams [17].

The doctrine or theory of al-maqashid al-syar'iyyah is a continuation of the concept of benefits proclaimed by the scholars basically benefit should refer to the values of goodness summarized in the five principles above mentioned. Al-maqashid al-shar'iyyah is an effort to uphold maslahat as a basic element of the purpose of the law. Qardhawi, said that protecting the environment is the same as protecting religion, damaging the environment and neglecting the environment is tarnishing the sanctity of religion and negating the objectives of shari'ah [18].

Based on this study, the principle of al-maqashid al-syar'iyyah and mashlahat is the most relevant and most persistent methodology in its relevance to the problems of contemporary life, including in problems and environmental crises and their conservation efforts. However, improvements to the details need to be done so that it favors environmental preservation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Islam is a religion that pays great attention to the environment, this can be seen from the many verses of the Qur'an that explain the environment in question. But in many interpretive literatures, studies on environmental conservation are only generic and not specific, so finding applicable guidelines is certainly difficult to obtain. All that can be obtained is general messages about the ethics of treating the environment. That is why the Islamic ecological argument is intended to explore environmental aspects more specifically through the methodology of Islamic sciences. The use of the ecological, ecological philosophy of Sufism and *eco-Usul al-fiqh* within the Islamic ecological framework described above is a moral and scientific contribution to efforts to overcome the environmental crisis through the exploration of Islamic teachings.

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