

Islam and Eco-Theology: Perspectives and Strategies of Muhammadiyah in Addressing the Environmental Crisis

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Abstract

This article explores the intersection of Islam and eco-theology within the context of Muhammadiyah. It is prompted by the current global environmental crisis, as the earth is facing various environmental challenges, disasters, and diseases. There is a growing awareness of the need to address these crises by drawing upon religious principles, a practice known as eco-theology. The article employs a qualitative research method using literature. Its goal is to delineate Islamic principles and eco-theology that can serve as guiding principles in natural resource management and to compare environmental theology from the perspective of the Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council '*Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah*'. The authors summarize the concept of Islam and eco-theology, which is based on five sharia pillars: monotheism, caliphate, trustworthiness, fairness, and *istiṣlah*. Drawing from these pillars, Muhammadiyah has formulated key policies for environmental da'wah, including environmental charity (waste *sadaqah*), Muhammadiyah's independent environmental audit, *adhiyaya* (environmental care) schools, water use guidelines, environmentally friendly practices in offices, and virtual environmental da'wah and campaigns.

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INTRODUCTION

The emergence of various environmental problems locally, regionally and globally today is increasingly worrying (Masoud et al., 2016). The peace and security of life on earth are now also increasingly fragile due to arbitrary exploitation of nature, without considering the principles of ecology and ecosystems as part of natural laws that apply for sure. The predictions of scientists who are members of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) present a terrible estimate that during 1990-2005 there has been an increase in temperature in all parts of the earth between 0.15-0.30 degrees Celsius (Edenhofer et al., 2024). If this warming continues, it is estimated that by 2040 the ice sheet at the earth's poles will completely melt. As a result, it is predicted that in 2050 there will be a shortage of freshwater so that hunger will spread, the air will be scorching so that millions of people will fight for water and food (Fata, 2015). The destruction of the life chain due to the declining quality of the earth has resulted in a series of disasters that have occurred in the country (Alverbro et al., 2009), such as landslides that buried villages in various areas to bury hundreds of people, the brunt of floods that crushed residential settlements, smoke siege due to forest fires, droughts that hit people's homes. Several areas and the rotation of the seasons are increasingly uncertain.

The discourse on the environmental crisis (Abbasi et al., 2024) among academics began to surface in the 1960s with the emergence of several famous works such as Rachel Carson's *The Silent Spring* in 1962, Lynn White with the title *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis* in *Science* magazine, March 1967, and the *Tragedy of Commons* by Garrett Hardin in 1968 (Quddus, 2012). In analyzing the causes of the global environmental crisis, Fritjof Capra argues that the crisis is the result of worldview and human greed for nature, either greed due to poverty, ignorance or greed to

accumulate a lot of wealth. More specifically, he said that the Earth disaster occurred due to the development of science and technology that lacked spiritual insight (Quddus, 2012). E.F. Schumacher stated that the problem of the environmental crisis is closely related to the humanitarian crisis, to social morality and the crisis of human orientation towards God (Schumacher, 1978).

The crisis that has aroused the attention of the environmentalist community continues to progress as if that cannot stop it, and its impacts are increasingly worrying (Amirpur, 2021). The environmentalists and environmentalists exhaust their thinking energy to stem it with all modern science and technology tools. That made the strategy for formulating the law on environmental protection laws (Qu & Xia, 2024), but the formulation of the law did not show significant results to slow the pace of the crisis. What's scary is that environmentalists are deliberately bumping into laws with the industrial power of the world's big corporations.

According to Val Plumwood, humans lose their positive natural sense when managing their relationship with the environment. They lose their natural sense so that nature is ignored, animals die, and icebergs in Antarctica melt, but they disregard natural facts with damage signals. The orientation of modern human life, which tends to be materialistic and hedonistic, is also very influential. Errors in human perspective or understanding of the environmental system substantially contribute to environmental damage today. The dichotomous perspective views nature as a separate part of humans, and anthropocentric understanding assumes that humans are the center of the natural system and have a significant role in environmental damage (Plumwood, 2001). This anthropocentric perspective (Rauch et al., 2020) has resulted in exploitative and irresponsible behaviour towards preserving natural resources and the environment. In addition, the notions of materialism, capitalism and pragmatism with the vehicles of science and technology have also accelerated and worsened environmental damage both globally and locally, including in Indonesia.

Naess, one of the proponents of ecocentrism and deep ecology, once stated that the current environmental crisis could only be overcome by fundamentally and radically changing human perspective and behaviour towards their natural environment (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). Practical and technical actions to save the environment (Su et al., 2022) with the help of science and technology are not the right solution. What is needed is a change in behaviour and lifestyle that is not just a person, but must become a kind of culture for the wider community. In other words, a new understanding of the universe is needed that can underlie human behaviour.

The author observes that in Indonesia, where the majority of the population is Muslim and where various religious communities emphasize the protection and preservation of the environment, there is a lack of structured efforts to conserve nature and protect the environment. It is noted that many people openly engage in activities that harm the environment, such as illegal sand mining, limestone excavation, marine waste disposal, and deforestation. These actions are not counterbalanced by measures to care for and replenish the natural resources that are being depleted. This indicates a discrepancy between the religious teachings that emphasize environmental preservation and the actual behavior of the people..

Seeing the Islamic concept related to the environment has been partially adopted and has become a principle of environmental ethics developed by environmental scientists. The principles of environmental management (M. Will, 2020) and ethics in Islamic teachings have also been outlined in several world agreements or agreements relating to environmental management. However, the concept of Islamic teachings (Salamat, 2008) seems to be still not widely understood, let alone used as a guide in attitude and behaviour towards the environment by most Muslims. This is indicated by empirical facts, which show that various environmental damages, both nationally and globally, have primarily occurred in environments where most of the population is Muslim. Or perhaps, in this case, caused by an error in the understanding of religious teachings and the approach was chosen by Muslims in various parts of the world.

In dealing with the above problems, Muhammadiyah takes an important role and contributes to this field. Moreover, Muhammadiyah is often considered sluggish in the contribution of

contemporary Islamic thought. The initiation of environmental and ecological thought proves that Muhammadiyah is caring for the transformation of liberation theology in the 80s and 90s, which was once a powerful narrative of the global religious movement. Muhammadiyah can even be considered a unique and distinctive case in the Muslim environmental movement in the world. During the last three decades, the struggle for Islamic environmental thought has been considered only driven by Muslim activists in Iran and Turkey (Sakai, 2009). In the case of Indonesia, Muhammadiyah is utilizing environmental knowledge and promoting it as a public advocacy approach. Recently, the Indonesian government offered Muhammadiyah the opportunity to oversee the mining industry. Mu'ti, as the Secretary General of Muhammadiyah, mentioned that their organization had conducted input analysis, studies, and carefully considered criticisms of mining management. They have also gathered input from academics, mine managers, environmental experts, environmental councils, and mining management institutions. Consequently, on July 13, 2024, Muhammadiyah officially announced its readiness to manage mining in Indonesia, indicating a vote of confidence in Muhammadiyah. Muhammadiyah also asserts that they have trustworthy and professional human resources with experience in the mining sector. Additionally, several Muhammadiyah Universities offer mining study programs, which can contribute to mining businesses as a platform for sound business practices and development.

Abdul Mu'ti stated that mining management must adhere to Islamic teachings, the constitution, and professional governance. It should be trustworthy, responsible, thorough, oriented towards community welfare, and involve reliable human resources with high performance and integrity. This statement highlights Muhammadiyah's concern for nature. The Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council '*Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah*' has developed the concept of eco-theology to protect the environment by incorporating religious values. This concept reflects how Islam considers the environment an essential part of a Muslim's faith in Allah (Johnston, 2012). Human behavior towards the natural environment reflects their morals and faith, making environmental protection an obligation equal to other social worship obligations. This article delves into the concept of eco-theology from the perspective of the Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council.

Several studies have discussed the relationship between religion and the environment in Indonesia. *First*, Ali Noer Zaman's article, he wrote research with the title "Muhammadiyah Advocacy and Environmental Protection". This research tries to describe the role of this Islamic organization in advocating for environmental protection by discussing its theological foundations and practices through institutional programs. Interest group analysis is used to shed light on the social and political behavior of these organizations regarding environmental issues (Zaman et al., 2021). *Second*, the article by Erlan Dwi Cahyo who wrote research with the title "Ecological Interpretation of Muhammadiyah: Muhammadiyah's Role in Environmental Management", this research reveals that Muhammadiyah emphasizes the role of Muslims in preserving the environment. *Third*, an article from Izzatul Mardhiah, he wrote research with the title "Concept for Ecotheological Study of the NU Islamic Movement and Muhammadiyah Mass Organizations". This research concludes that Islam is a religion that has a theological concept with an ecological perspective, and the large Islamic religious organizations in Indonesia (NU and Muhammadiyah) have an important role in integrated efforts to save the environment. (Erlan, 2023) The research study above has similarities with this article, namely discussing the integration of religion and the environment, but experiences differences in the aspect of actualizing the resolution of the environmental crisis. Muhammadiyah integrates human functions as 'abdun and caliph. Muhammadiyah not only prioritizes environmental knowledge, but also encourages it to become a public advocacy approach. So Muhammadiyah has the concept of integration of God, Man and nature.

METHODS

This type of research, known as library research, involves analyzing and examining existing literature related to the research problem (Huberman & Miles, 2002). It encompasses a thorough review and assessment of published materials, including books, journal articles, and other relevant sources, to gather information and insights for the research (Hadi, 1984). The main material consists of written data sources from Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council '*Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah*' as well as relevant works in journals, articles, and e-books. Researchers collect data using the data observation method and record all data related to ecotheology. After the data is collected, the author analyzes it. This research is descriptive analytical, meaning it tells, describes, and classifies the data objectively. It also interprets and analyzes the data (Narbuko, 2001). As this research encompasses environmental and theological themes, a multidisciplinary approach is used by integrating theological and ecological dimensions. The data obtained will be described and analyzed using relevant theories (Bakker & Zubair, 2007).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council

The government and the community have undertaken various efforts to address environmental damage, including the creation of laws and regulations and technical approaches. However, these efforts have not yielded significant results. Overcoming today's environmental crisis may require a new approach, fundamentally changing perspectives and human behavior towards the natural environment. A new theological and cultural approach is needed, and Islam itself considers the environment an inseparable part of faith. In Islam, protecting nature is seen as preserving life, and the religion emphasizes caring for both the natural and social environments (Majeri Mangunjaya & Elizabeth McKay, 2012). However, it appears that many Muslims still do not fully comprehend this and do not use it as a guide for their behavior towards the environment.

In light of the aforementioned concerns and considerations, Muhammadiyah is committed to actively participating in environmental conservation efforts. This is viewed as a responsibility as stewards of the earth, as described in Surah Al-Baqarah verse 30, and as part of the da'wah movement. Additionally, it is an endeavor to promote the prosperity of the earth and the universe, as outlined in Surah Hūd verse 61. In 2003, Muhammadiyah established the Institute for Environmental Studies and Empowerment, integrating environmental programs into its organizational activities. The 45th Muhammadiyah Congress in Malang (2005) transformed it into an Environmental Institution, and the 46th Muhammadiyah Congress (1 Century, 2010) further evolved it into the Environmental Council to enhance program operations and activities. The 47th Muhammadiyah Congress in Makassar emphasized the active role of Muhammadiyah in addressing universal public, national, and humanitarian issues, particularly those related to environmental conservation and management through the Environmental Council.

The Vision and Mission of the Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council is to promote awareness, care and environmentally friendly behavior among Muhammadiyah residents and society in general. This is achieved through the following initiatives: (1) Conducting objective, comprehensive and fair environmental studies to provide accurate information to the leadership and members of Muhammadiyah and society in general. (2) Organizing environmental education and outreach activities to increase public awareness and concern. (3) Advocating for sustainable environmental policies to be implemented by central and local governments, and encouraging the community to participate in these efforts. (4) Establishing collaborations with Muhammadiyah's internal assemblies, as well as domestic and international environmental institutions, to promote environmental development and sustainability.

The Causes of Human and Natural Separation

The environmental crisis leads to humans being blamed for their actions. This is because humans tend to see everything outside of themselves as separate objects, influenced by the dualistic

paradigm of modernity. Their materialistic desires lead to exploitative behavior, posing a threat to nature and its surroundings. Industrialization arises from economic reasons and human needs, disrupting the harmony between humans and nature. According to Surah Al-Furqān verse 67, humans will never be satisfied with their wants and needs as long as they remain within reasonable limits and not excessive.

The crisis condition started with René Descartes when he introduced the idea of substance dualism, suggesting that the mind and body exist as separate entities. This dualistic way of thinking separates people from the world around them. As Plumwood points out, this mindset indirectly leads to humans distancing themselves from nature, positioning humans as superior to and separate from nature, which in turn leads to destructive behavior toward the environment (Plumwood, 2001). Due to this mindset, modern humans have always sought to distinguish themselves from all entities in the universe. If this occurs, then domination will prevail, take control, and rule.

In response to an increasingly sharp dualistic mindset between humans and its significant influence on environmental damage, David Pepper presents a Marxist dialectical view of the relationship between society and nature in his book "Eco-Socialism from Deep Ecology to Social Justice." Pepper suggests that the two interrelationships are intertwined and complement each other, with significant implications (Pepper, 1993). Humans who fail to recognize its existence are individuals who cannot unite subjects and objects into one complementary form to be controlled by their greed (Mahzumi et al., 2019).

Nasr explained that among the leading causes of the emergence of environmental crises in modern civilization, he emphasized the importance of reformulating harmonious relations between humans, nature and God based on spirituality and perennial wisdom. Nasr explained that in the view of modernism, the cosmos or nature is just a collection of inanimate objects (such as a clock system and a machine), lifeless, heartless and has no value, except for economic uses. Humans have treated nature like prostitutes who are exploited without responsibility towards it (Nasr, 1968). In another form of expression, Nasr describes that our earth is suffering due to humans who are no longer friendly to it; in fact, the root of the crisis stems from the disharmony of human relations with God and nature (Nasr, 1996). Secular views that are uprooted from the roots of spirituality and religion make the earth increasingly critical and continue to approach the point of its destruction. Therefore, religion and spiritual awareness help overcome the environmental crisis.

Principles of Islamic Eco-Theology

The term "theology" is more often interpreted as a branch or part of the science of religion that discusses divinity. In the context of this discussion, theology is defined as religious values or teachings (Islam) related to the existence or existence of God. Therefore, the meaning of free theology is a way of "presenting" God in every aspect of human activity, including in the use of natural resources and environmental management. In the practical aspect, theology can be interpreted as a normative guide for humans to behave and relate to nature and their environment (Suyatman, 2018).

The basic understanding of eco-theology is the awareness that the environmental crisis is a secular problem and an acute religious problem because it originates from a wrong religious understanding of life. Discussion about eco-theology is not a rare thing in academia. Several scientific studies have related to this topic, such as eco-theology in terms of gender insight in the Al-Quran, which says that the harmonious interconnection between humans and humans, the environment and God cannot be separated from the complementary and cooperative roles of men and women in relationships. Gender is included in environmental conservation efforts (Febriani, 2017).

In Islam, According to C.A. Qadir contains 750 verses or about one-eighth of all verses of the Holy Qur'an, which encourage believers to study, contemplate, and investigate nature. Analyzing the revelation of the first period in Mecca, we will find that its primary goal is to awaken human consciousness regarding its relationship with God and nature. So that it is clear the stages, namely

changing the whole Arab worldview (polytheism and paganism), then constructing their image, and the last stage is changing their attitudes and feelings in real life related to their relationship with God and nature (Quddus, 2012).

Islam is a path that can mean sharia. Islam is a way of life that is a consequence of the statement or testimony '*syahādah*' of the oneness of God '*tawhīd*'. Shari'ah is a central value system to realize the values inherent in the concept (normative value) or Islamic teachings, namely monotheism, caliphate, *amānah*, *ḥalāl* and *ḥaram*. Based on this understanding, Islamic teachings (concepts) or views on the environment are built on the five pillars of sharia, namely: (1) monotheism, (2) caliphate, (3) trust, (4) fairness and (5) *istiṣlāh*. To ensure that humans who have chosen or taken this path of life can walk towards the purpose of their creation (at a practical level), these five pillars of sharia are equipped with two main signs namely: *ḥalāl* and *ḥaram*. The five pillars and the two signs can be likened to a "building" to place the environmental paradigm as a whole in an Islamic perspective (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011).

Tawhīd, according to Nasr, is the heart of Islamic life. and a worthwhile life is a life that can realize the meaning of the principle of monotheism into the reality of life, namely reaching and uniting various diversity (multiplicity) within the framework of unity (Sayyed Hossein Nasr, 2002). *Tawhīd* is the only source of value in ethics, both personal and group, in various aspects of life, including ethics in managing natural resources and the environment. The belief in monotheism leads to the realization that the universe created by God exists and works according to the laws that He has set (Suyatman, 2018). Starting from the first foundation, namely monotheism, Islam has teachings or concepts called *khilāfah* 'caliphate' and trust. The concept of the caliphate is built based on God's choice and human willingness to become God's caliph (representative or guardian) on earth (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). As caliph, humans are obliged (actively) to represent themselves according to the attributes of Allah. One of God's attributes about nature is as a keeper or guardian of nature '*al-Rab al-Ālamīn*'. It is the duty of humans to protect the Earth and preserve the balance of nature as a place for all living beings. While humans have the right to use natural resources for their survival, this right is not absolute. The control of nature lies with God, and humans are responsible for upholding this mandate. The diverse ecosystem is a reflection of God's creation, and it is essential to maintain balance, or *i'tidāl*, both within individuals and among different groups. Any disturbance, whether natural or caused by human intervention, can disrupt this balance. In Islam, there are two key concepts, *ḥalāl* and *ḥarām*, which serve as guiding principles for humans to maintain the sustainability and harmony of nature and life within it.

These shari'ah values are intended to realize the value of *al istiṣlah* 'public benefit', which is one of the main pillars and the highest goals in Islamic sharia, including environmental management. God explicitly and explicitly forbids humans to do actions that are destructive to the environment, including destroying human life itself, after God has made improvements (Suyatman, 2018). Suppose the concepts of monotheism, caliphate, *amānah*, *ḥalāl* and *ḥaram* are combined with the concepts of *i'tidāl* and *istiṣlah*. In that case, this unity will form a comprehensive "building" (concept) on environmental theology from an Islamic perspective.

Eco-Theology Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council

One of the responses to various problems that arise and are related to the environmental crisis is the emergence of the ecological movement. It is a movement that contains a broad network of individuals and groups that bind together in a collective action to gain or pursue benefits for the environment (Khitam, 2011). The ecological movement itself can be divided into three variants: First, the ecological movement is a product of cultural and structural factors that arise independently in response to the environment. Second, the ecological movement places mediation patterns and influences in environmental lobbies, both from the role of the media and scientists. Third, the ecological movement emerged as a reflection and response to worsening environmental conditions, thus becoming the movement's primary focus (Mahzumi et al., 2019). The eco-theology movement developed by Muhammadiyah Central Environmental Council '*Majelis Lingkungan*

Hidup Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah, among others, discusses human theology with Nature and the principles of nature conservation, which are described as follows:

Theology of Man and Nature

The universe, including the earth in its entirety, is God's creation and created in balance, proportional and measurable or has measurements, both qualitatively and quantitatively as explained in Surah Al-Ra'd verse 8, Al-Qamar verse 49 and Al-Hijr verse 19. Nature itself is an entity or reality (empirical) that does not stand alone but is related to humans and other realities that are supernatural and supra-empirical.

Islam has a different view from the idealist view, which states that Nature is a pseudo or emanation from another non-concrete world called the world of ideas. The Islamic view of Nature (the environment) is unified (holistic) whose components are the Creator, Nature and living things (including humans). Each component has a different role and position but remains in the corridor of Allah's design '*sunnatullah*' (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). So that human existence in Nature is mutual need, compliment and complement each other with different roles.

According to Robert P. Borrong, there are three patterns of development of human relations with nature, namely: *first*, Human Equality with Nature, humans and nature are equal. The relationship between the two is relatively continuous. *Second*, humans control and exploit nature. Humans can change nature according to their needs by using their cultural abilities. The increasing power of humans over nature is marked by the rapid growth of the human species (demography) and the rapid growth of science and technology (Fata, 2015). The development of these two things causes the depletion of natural resources that are used to meet the needs and desires of humanity. *Third*, Nature dominates Man. Various forms of natural disasters that occur have turned out to be disasters for humans, and the science and technology controlled by humans have not enabled humans to succeed in subduing nature (Borong, 1999). What happens is that humans become helpless against nature with the disasters that befall them and humans become dependent on nature.

In the Islamic perspective, the relationship between humans and nature is also explained, as explained in the book "Environmental Theology" of *Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah*: *first*, the relationship between faith and worship. The universe functions as a means for humans to know the greatness and power of God (believing in God) through the universe, because the universe is a sign or verse of Allah. *Second*, the relationship of sustainable use. Nature with all its resources was created by God to meet the needs of human life. However, it is not permissible to utilize natural resources only to meet the needs of the present generation and ignore the utilization rights of future generations. *Third*, A nurturing relationship for all beings. Humans have an obligation to preserve nature for the sake of the continuity of life, not only for humans but for all other living creatures (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011).

Although humans and nature have points in common, humans still have advantages that make them elected as the mandate holder as caliph on this earth. But the doctrine of the caliph *fi al ardh* is often seen as a source of anthropocentrism in Islam and becomes a legitimacy tool for the process of exploitation and destruction of Nature; moreover, several verses of the Koran state that created the universe for the benefit of humans as the caliph listed in the Surah Al-Baqarah verse 29, Al-Jāsiyah verse 13 and Luqman verse 20. However, this assumption does not have a solid theological basis if we pay attention to other verses of the Qur'an related to the position of humans and their duties. In this context, humans are substitutes for Allah on earth who have several tasks, including: worship God, prospering the earth, and uphold justice and do not follow lust (Fata, 2015).

As representatives of God, humans must represent God's role in the universe, including the earth in its entirety, including maintaining '*al-rab*' and spreading mercy in the universe *rahmatan lil' ālamīn*'. Therefore, man's obligation to nature in the context of his dedication to Allah is to take care of Nature (including maintenance of self-life or *hifz nafs*) to maintain the continuity of life in Nature (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). So that to maintain and fulfil their needs, humans are allowed by God to use all-natural resources reasonably, according to their needs, and responsibly.

Nature Conservation Principle

In the book "Environmental Theology", it is stated that Islam holds the view that all creatures were created by God in this world, both known and unknown. For humans it has two main functions, namely: *first*, the function of faith '*tawhīd*' which means that everything that exists in this universe is God's creation and is proof of the existence, wisdom, power and the Almighty and the Womb of God. *Second*, the universe has a social function, namely that nature was created as a place for humans and other living creatures to live and fulfill their living needs (service function) (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). Almighty God has determined (determined) that between one creature and another in this Nature are interrelated and need each other. The interrelationships between these components and their mutual need result in a dynamic balance (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). So that with this balance can maintain the sustainability of life in this Nature.

Another important thing related to the use of Nature is that Nature, with all its natural resources, is to serve or meet human needs and meet the needs of other living things. Islamic laws relating to the use of natural resources developed based on this concept of natural creation must thus explicitly and unequivocally state that all created resources or God's gifts are intended for all living creatures, not only for humans.

And the most important thing is that Nature was created as a sign (verse) of the Almighty and mercy of Allah. This primary and vital function of the creation of Nature needs to be emphasized because some humans neglect and even deny the role of God in the creation of Nature (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). They believe that this Nature occurs because of different causes, naturally and without God's intervention. They forget that without "higher" causes, natural causes in the formation and development of Nature could never exist.

The following will describe the conservation and protection of several vital natural resources from the perspective of *Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Pimpinan Pusat Muhammadiyah*. First, water '*al-mā'*'. God has created water and ordained it as the origin of life as He says: "We have made everything that lives from water" in the Surah Al-Anbiyā verse 30. Apart from being the origin and source of life (biological function), water also has a socio-religious role or function, namely to clean and purify the body and clothes from dirt and uncleanness, so that they can relate to one another or relate to God through *maḥḍah* worship (special worship). First, humans must be in a state of purity and cleanliness both physically and mentally. Almost all legal discussions '*fiqh*' in Islam always begin with a discussion about water and the role of water for self-purification and means of worship.

Based on the verses of the Qur'an and empirical facts that can be observed and felt by humans, there is no doubt that water is a vital natural resource for life on earth. Protection and conservation of this vital natural resource, water, are fundamental. Its functions and benefits must be maintained sustainably for the sustainability of all creatures' lives on the earth's surface, both now and in the future. Therefore, in Islam, the obligation to protect and conserve water has the same value as the obligation to maintain the sustainability of life itself (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). The long experience of Muslims living in the dry Arabian peninsula with minimal water sources has taught them to value and use water sparingly. This is reflected in various Islamic jurisprudence teachings, including the following: (1) When performing ablution, it is enough to wash body parts once; the second and third wash are optional. (2) One should not defecate or urinate in stagnant water as it will pollute it. (3) The classification of water as holy for purification, holy but not for purification, and impure, encourages reuse and saving for other uses. (4) The Prophet strongly recommended that Muslims save water, even when performing ablution, to be conscious of their use in the sight of God. Muhammadiyah believes that preserving water is the same as preserving the continuity of life, so Muhammadiyah offers an old concept recommended by the Prophet Muhammad, namely conserving water according to needs, even for worship such as performing ablution before God.

Second, the air, also known as '*al-rīḥ*', is available everywhere and is free to obtain. However,

its quality is declining due to pollution. Even the ozone layer, a protective layer in Earth's atmosphere, is currently damaged, which poses a threat to human and other life forms. Global warming is also expected to lead to the emergence of various animal and human diseases. Treating these diseases is complex because the viruses causing them result from genetic mutations of existing viruses.

Protection and maintenance of air so that its biological, ecological and social functions are preserved is thus a human obligation because protecting air from pollution and damage (quality and quantity) is as valuable as preserving life itself. In this case, the rule applies: "Everything needed to fulfil important obligations becomes obligatory" (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). All human activities related to the protection of the air are needed for life, then these activities become obligatory, and vice versa.

Responding to increasingly deteriorating air quality, Deputy Chair of the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership Environmental Council, Hening Purwati Parlan, urged the government to take more concrete and structured action. Hening also reminded the government to think about strengthening public transportation as one solution. Apart from that, he hopes that transportation development will not reduce green space and will continue to provide convenience for private vehicle loans (cars and motorbikes). According to him, policy inconsistencies like that will only accumulate like a time bomb. Apart from strengthening public transportation and conserving green open spaces, Hening hopes that the government will support it through policies that minimize environmental pollution.

Third, "earth" or "land" refers to "*al-ard*" in Arabic. God has created land to provide food and other necessities for humans and other living creatures. The land may appear still and lifeless, but it's actually "alive" and constantly changing and moving. Soil contains diverse micro-organisms in various types, shapes, and sizes, which are essential for decomposition and soil formation. God intentionally created this complex land to serve as a source and support for the life of all living things.

Apart from being the origin and source of life (biological function), like water, the land also has a socio-religious role or function, namely to clean and purify the body from uncleanness; as is known in *fiqh*, soil (dust) can be used for *tayammum* when in the absence of water, or there are medical reasons that do not allow parts of the body to be exposed to water (sick). Soil is also an element that can remove large *najis* '*mugalladah*'. Another religious function that this land or expanse of land (earth) is a means of worship (mosque) for all humans (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). As the Prophet Muhammad said, "God has created the entire surface of the earth as a mosque (place of worship) for humans, which is holy and clean".

In this case, Muhammadiyah suggests that if humans want to express their gratitude to God, who has provided the land (earth) with all its contents, humans must express it by protecting and maintaining the soil so that its biological and social functions remain sustainable. The trick is to maintain soil productivity and protect against the threat of erosion, pollution and other threats that can cause degradation of soil function.

Fourth, land ownership and right to use. Islam has made provisions or laws regarding land ownership linked to the pillars of trust and *maṣlaḥah*. Humans have been chosen by God and are willing to carry out the mandate to be God's vicegerent on earth. Meanwhile, the primary purpose of creating the universe, including the earth, is for the benefit and mercy of all creatures. Thus, the primary purpose of this provision of land ownership and use rights is for the public benefit (community) (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). Land and land are gifts from God, so all God's creatures (including humans) have the same rights to take advantage of these gifts. So this land use right is not only for humans, but because God has appointed humans as caliphs on earth, humans have the right and obligation to prosper, maintain and use this earth for mutual welfare.

Fifth, plants and animals. Plants have a unique role in producing food and fibre by harvesting solar energy, the results of which can be used by the plant itself to grow and reproduce and can be food for the sustainability of animal and human life on earth (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011).

Plants also enrich food and nutrients for the soil and protect the soil from rain and wind erosion. Plants also produce O₂, which is needed for human and animal respiration. Among the many plants that grow on this earth, some plants can be used to cure diseases and so on. This is following the statement of God in the Qur'an Surah Al-Wāqī'ah verses 71-73, "Do you not see the flame that comes from the fire wood? Did you make (grow) the wood, or did I (Allah) grow it? I (Allah) have made that as a warning and helpful material (for travellers) in the arid desert.

Animals, on the other hand, provide food and nutrients for plants, other animals, and also humans. Animals also have a role in the atmosphere through their respiration, movement and migration, helping pollination and dispersal of plants. Animals provide food for other animals and humans, provide skin and fur for clothing and other necessities, provide meat, milk, honey, medicine, and so on that are beneficial to human life. As said by Muhamad Agus Mushodiq in his research entitled "Method of Interpreting Zoosemiotics of Al-Qur'an Literature and Its Application in Surah Al-Muddassir Verses 50-51" that Sarra Tlili is of the view that all animals have similarities with humans in terms of intelligence, spirituality, and so on (Mushodiq, 2022).

According to Muhammadiyah, Islam emphasizes the importance of action to maintain the life of all creatures so that each can function optimally according to their respective functions in Nature (Hidup & Muhammadiyah, 2011). The extermination of any animal or plant species by humans is not justified. Likewise, it is not permitted to harvest on a large scale so that it exceeds the ability to regenerate or reproduce naturally for certain animal or plant species.

Islam also has a view of living creatures, animals and plants in two ways, namely: First, as organisms created by God that have the right to live in accordance with God's wisdom and power. secondly, as part of nature that God has provided for humans, humans can carry out their duties in life on earth as servants and caliphs of Allah on earth.

In this case, Muhammadiyah has a concept that is similar to Seyyed Hosein Nasr's concept of *insān kāmīl* with the term universal human, namely integrating God, humans and nature. Tracing Nasr's thoughts about the universal human requires an investigation of Ibn Arabi's thoughts. Nasr explains Ibn Arabi's thoughts about universal humans as follows. Ibn Arabi, according to Nasr, defines the universal human as the total theophany of the Divine Names, which is also seen as the entire universe in its unity as seen from the Divine Essence. According to Nasr, in Ibn Arabi's doctrine, the universal human has three aspects, namely: cosmological, prophetic and initiatory. Cosmologically and cosmogonically, the universal human is the prototype of creation which contains all the archetypes of Universal Being within itself so that all levels of cosmic existence are nothing but branches of the "tree of being" rooted in heaven, in the universe. The Divine Essence, and its stem, or branches, spread throughout the cosmos (Subhi, 2014). Humans in this concept are defined as caliphs on earth. Muhammadiyah emphasizes the function of humans as servants and caliphs who contribute to development, prosperity and the well-being of nature.

CONCLUSION

After conducting the above analysis, it can be concluded that Muhammadiyah is deeply committed to protecting nature. This commitment is rooted in the belief that nature is a divine gift that must be preserved and shielded from exploitation driven by human desires and greed. The Muhammadiyah Central Executive's Environmental Council has demonstrated a strong determination to actively participate in environmental conservation as a responsibility as stewards of the earth. According to environmental theology, Muhammadiyah asserts that the regulations governing the use, protection, and rehabilitation of land, water sources, air, animals, and plants are integral to the principles of environmental management in Islamic sharia. This illustrates that Islam not only cares about the environment, but also exhibits a clear and resolute commitment to it. This environmental commitment is not just articulated as normative principles for environmental ethics, but also as practical principles. Therefore, the concept of Islam and eco-theology is fundamentally based on the five pillars of sharia, namely: monotheism, *khilāfah*, trustworthiness, fairness, and *istiṣlah* 'public interest'. Building upon these five pillars, Muhammadiyah has established

foundational policies for environmental outreach, including environmental charity (waste *sadaqah*), independent environmental audits by Muhammadiyah, *adhiyaya* (environmental care) schools, water usage guidelines, environmentally conscious practices in offices, and virtual environmental outreach and campaigns.

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