



THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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The natural environment plays a crucial role in maintaining the balance of the ecosystem and human survival. However, human activities such as deforestation, pollution, and exploitation of natural resources have caused significant environmental damage. This article discusses the importance of preserving the environment by highlighting the negative impacts of environmental degradation and mitigation efforts. The method used is a literature review of various scientific journals in the last five years. The results of the study show that public awareness and the implementation of sustainable environmental policies can be the main solution in preserving the environment. From an Islamic perspective, environmental stewardship is an ethical and spiritual responsibility rooted in the concept of humans as khalifah (stewards) on Earth. Islam emphasizes balance (mīzān) and prohibits destruction (fasād), reinforcing the notion that protecting nature is a form of worship and social responsibility. Therefore, synergy is needed between the government, society, and the industrial sector to create a healthy and sustainable environment.

Keywords: Environment, Nature Conservation, Pollution, Conservation, Ecosystem, Islamic Perspective

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INTRODUCTION

Maintaining the environment is an obligation for all of humanity. In the Islamic view, humans are appointed as caliphs on earth who have a great responsibility to care for Allah's creations. This is as stated in the Qur'an Surah Al Baqarah verse 30:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Translation: Remember when your Lord said to the angels: "Indeed, I will make a caliph on earth." They said, "Will You place therein one who causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know." (Q.S. Al Baqarah: 30)

In addition, Allah also warns humans not to cause corruption on earth after the balance has been created, as explained in the Qur'an Surah Ar Rum verse 41:

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ ﴿٤١﴾

Translation: There has been visible damage on land and at sea caused by human hands, so that Allah may make them feel some of (the consequences of) their actions, so that they may return (to the right path). (Q.S. Ar Rum: 41).

This verse shows that environmental damage is not merely a result of economic or social activities, but also a form of violation of spiritual responsibility. Thus, protecting the environment is not only an ecological obligation but also a religious command that must be carried out by every Muslim individual (Hamzah, 2021). Therefore, damaging the environment is an action that contradicts Islamic teachings.

The natural environment plays a very important role in supporting life on earth. Nature provides various resources needed by humans, such as clean air, water, food, and raw materials for various needs. In addition, the balance of the ecosystem that is formed naturally allows various species of living things to thrive and interact with each other in harmony. However, in recent decades, human activities have had a significant negative impact on the environment. The condition of the natural environment which continues to experience degradation as a result of continuous damage threatens human safety such as landslides, floods, decreased water discharge, and others. (Niman, 2019) Excessive exploitation of natural resources, deforestation, air and water pollution, and the increasing amount of plastic waste are some of the problems that threaten environmental sustainability..

One of the most pressing environmental issues today is climate change due to increased greenhouse gas emissions. According to research, human activities such as burning fossil fuels and deforestation have increased the levels of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in the atmosphere, which contributes to global warming. This phenomenon causes extreme weather changes, rising sea levels, and threats to various species of flora and fauna. If not addressed immediately, climate change could have a greater impact on human life, including threats to food security, health, and the global economy.

In Indonesia, deforestation and conversion of green land have occurred massively over time. Anthropogenic disasters such as floods, landslides, and tornadoes have become more intensive and extensive. The National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) report noted a serious increase in anthropogenic disasters in the last two decades in various regions in Indonesia. In 2020 alone, 4,650 disasters were confirmed to have occurred throughout Indonesia. According to research (Suprpto et al., 2023), one of the negative impacts felt by the community with forest fires is in the form of economic losses. In addition to economic losses, further losses are in the form of ecological losses, namely reduced forest area, no clean air produced by the forest vegetation process and also the loss of forest function as a regulator of water management and preventing erosion.

This figure is the highest compared to previous years. There are many verses in the Quran that emphasize the importance of protecting the environment and the universe and avoiding damage and excessive use of resources. They also emphasize the responsibility of humans as caliphs of Allah on earth to protect and care for nature. The Quran provides clear guidance on the importance of protecting nature and the surrounding environment. Maintaining the sustainability of nature is the responsibility of humans as caliphs on earth. By protecting nature, we protect the lives and future of future generations (Marlina, 2024).

In addition, environmental degradation due to pollution is also a major concern. Air pollution caused by motor vehicles and industry has increased the risk of respiratory diseases for humans. Water pollution from industrial and domestic waste has resulted in a decline in the quality of clean water sources, which has a negative impact on public health. Meanwhile, soil pollution due to the use of pesticides and plastic waste that does

not decompose in the long term has damaged soil fertility and threatened terrestrial ecosystems (Susilawati et al., 2020)

Uncontrolled urbanization also contributes to environmental damage. Infrastructure development that is not environmentally conscious often sacrifices green spaces and natural habitats, reducing water catchment areas and increasing the risk of flooding in urban areas. In addition, the increasing human population in large cities also produces more waste and higher energy consumption, which ultimately exacerbates existing environmental problems (Saputra, 2024).

On the other hand, low public awareness of the importance of protecting the environment is still a major challenge in nature conservation efforts. Many individuals do not understand the impact of their daily habits on the environment, such as the use of single-use plastics, excessive energy consumption, and lack of participation in recycling and reforestation programs. Therefore, environmental education is needed to increase awareness and encourage changes in behavior that are more environmentally friendly (Masithoh & Anintyawati, 2022).

Various efforts have been made to address these environmental problems, both through government policies, technological innovation, and community movements (Purmadi et al., 2020). Governments in various countries have implemented regulations to limit carbon emissions, better manage waste, and protect forest and marine areas. In the field of technology, the development of renewable energy such as solar and wind power is one solution to reduce dependence on fossil fuels. Meanwhile, community movements such as plastic reduction campaigns, greening, and sustainable lifestyles are increasingly receiving attention and support from various groups (Nasucha et al., 2020).

In this article, we will discuss in more depth the urgency of protecting the environment, the impact of environmental degradation on human life and ecosystems, and steps that can be taken to preserve the environment. In realizing a sustainable environment, it is mainly based on an ecological emphasis, where every ecological component, starting from the smallest, must not be overlooked. Ecological emphasis will be an important component for environmental sustainability, not only because of its potential to reduce the impact of environmental damage, but also because of its potential to introduce new concepts about the relationship between humans and nature (Effendi et al., 2020). Through a literature review of various scientific journals, it is hoped that more effective and sustainable solutions can be found to overcome these increasingly complex environmental problems.

Protecting the environment is not only the responsibility of the government or environmental organizations, but also the obligation of every individual (Hidayat et al., 2023). With awareness and real action from all elements of society, it is hoped that the earth can remain a habitable place for present and future generations (Fisher, 2022)

METHODS

The method used in this research study is a literature review or library review. Library research is research that uses journals, books, and periodicals related to the research study used as primary data and reference materials. This research is presented in a descriptive format with a focus on book and literature reviews and does not require fieldwork. Data were collected from various scientific journals that discuss environmental issues, including climate change, deforestation, air and water pollution, waste management, and environmental conservation strategies. The selected articles were analyzed to understand the impact of environmental degradation on human life and ecosystems, as well as mitigation efforts that can be made by various parties, such as government, industry, and society. Article selection criteria include relevance to the topic, availability of empirical data, and scope of research that focuses on solutions and environmental conservation strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the literature review show that environmental degradation has had a significant impact on human life and ecosystems. Climate change due to greenhouse gas emissions is one of the main issues discussed in various studies. According to research from (Febriani Irma, 2024) The increase in greenhouse gases that is a sign of climate change generally comes from human activities, industry, and natural processes. This causes global climate change with several significant impacts. The results include an increase in global average temperatures, which can cause extreme weather changes, such as floods, droughts, high sea levels that can submerge small islands, droughts and floods and so on. The increase in global temperature has caused extreme weather, melting of polar ice, and rising sea levels that threaten coastal areas (Irma & Gusmira, 2023). In addition, changes in erratic rainfall patterns have an impact on the agricultural sector and the availability of clean water, thus potentially disrupting food security in various regions.

In the Islamic view, the phenomenon of climate change is inseparable from the damage caused by humans. The Qur'an has warned humans not to damage the earth, as stated in Allah's word in Surah Al A'raf verse 56:

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿٥٦﴾

Translation: And do not cause corruption on the earth after its reformation, and invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good (Q.S Al A'raf verse: 56).

This verse conveys a clear message that maintaining environmental balance is an integral part of the behavior of ihsan (goodness) that brings Allah's mercy to humans. In the context of Islamic ecology, the verse is not only normative but also reflective, containing a warning that every form of damage done by humans after nature repaired by Allah is a form of deviation from the responsibility of caliphate. Therefore, maintaining environmental sustainability cannot be separated from the social and spiritual piety of a Muslim, because a healthy environment is part of the manifestation of Allah's love for all creatures (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*) that must be preserved by His people (Hamzah, 2021).

Deforestation is also a major concern in the reviewed studies. Deforestation for industrial, plantation, and settlement purposes has resulted in loss of habitat for various species, which ultimateThe results of the literature review show that preserving the natural environment is a must for the survival of humans and ecosystems. Environmental degradation due to climate change, deforestation, pollution, and excessive exploitation of natural resources have had serious impacts on various aspects of life. Increasing global temperatures, rising sea levels, and increasing air and water pollution have caused health threats, natural disasters, and decreased quality of life of humans. Therefore, efforts to preserve the environment are not only the responsibility of the government or environmental organizations, but also require active participation from the community and the industrial sectoly threatens biodiversity. In addition, the reduction in forest area also reduces nature's ability to absorb carbon dioxide, thereby accelerating the rate of global warming. The reviewed studies also show that deforestation contributes to the increased risk of natural disasters such as floods and landslides due to the loss of forest function as a water absorber (Jainuddin, 2023)

Islam explicitly advocates for environmental preservation. The Prophet Muhammad (Saw) said:

مَا مِنْ مُسْلِمٍ يَغْرِسُ غَرْسًا، فَيَأْكُلُ مِنْهُ إِنْسَانٌ، أَوْ دَابَّةٌ، أَوْ طَيْرٌ، إِلَّا كَانَ لَهُ صَدَقَةٌ

Translation: No Muslim plants a plant, then that plant is eaten by a bird, a human, or an animal, except that it becomes charity for him. (HR. Bukhari and Muslim)

This hadith teaches that planting and maintaining the environment is an act of worship that carries great rewards (Kurniawan, 2022).

Environmental pollution is also a dominant issue in various studies. Air pollution from vehicle emissions and industrial activities causes an increased risk of respiratory diseases such as asthma and bronchitis. Water pollution from domestic and industrial waste has reduced the quality of clean water and threatened aquatic life. Meanwhile, soil pollution from plastic waste and excessive use of pesticides has a negative impact on soil fertility and human health. Various studies emphasize the need for strict regulations in waste management and the use of environmentally friendly technology to reduce the impact of pollution (Husni & Remiswal, 2024).

In an effort to address environmental issues, several studies have identified government policies and the role of technology as the main solutions. Policies such as reforestation, carbon tax implementation, and strict regulation of industry have had a positive impact on reducing emissions and protecting ecosystems (Sa'ban et al., 2020). The use of renewable energy such as solar and wind power is also a solution that is increasingly being implemented to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

In addition to government policies, the role of society is also very important in protecting the environment (Tulalessy, 2018). Several studies have highlighted the effectiveness of environmental awareness campaigns in changing people's behavior, such as reducing the use of single-use plastics, increasing participation in recycling programs, and adopting sustainable lifestyles. Active participation from various parties, including government, industry, and individuals, is key to environmental conservation efforts (Fauziyah et al., 2020).

Islam encourages the involvement of all people in collective good deeds, as mentioned in QS. Al Ma'idah verse 2:

وَتَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْبِرِّ وَالتَّقْوَىٰ وَلَا تَعَاوَنُوا عَلَى الْإِثْمِ وَالْعُدْوَانِ ۗ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ شَدِيدُ الْعِقَابِ ﴿٢﴾

Translation: Do not cooperate in sin and transgression, but cooperate in righteousness and piety (QS. Al Ma'idah verse 2)

Overall, the results of the study indicate that environmental degradation is a complex problem that requires a multidisciplinary approach to be addressed. According to the study (Elmy & Winarso, 2020) in forming a character of environmental concern must be followed by support or encouragement from various parties so that the character can be realized. There needs to be a synergistic role between government policies, technological innovation, and changes in community behavior so that environmental conservation efforts can run effectively and sustainably. In the Islamic view, this collective effort is a form of moral and social responsibility as a trust from Allah that must be maintained together for the welfare of all creatures (Sari, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The results of the literature review show that preserving the natural environment is a must for the survival of humans and ecosystems. Environmental degradation due to climate change, deforestation, pollution, and excessive exploitation of natural resources have had serious impacts on various aspects of life. Increasing global temperatures,

rising sea levels, and increasing air and water pollution have caused health threats, natural disasters, and decreased quality of life of humans. Therefore, efforts to preserve the environment are not only the responsibility of the government or environmental organizations, but also require active participation from the community and the industrial sector.

Various strategies have been identified as solutions to mitigate environmental problems, including environmental protection policies, utilization of renewable energy, and increasing public awareness through environmental education and campaigns. Strict regulation of industry, implementation of carbon taxes, and better waste management are important steps in reducing negative impacts on nature. In addition, an environmentally friendly lifestyle, such as reducing plastic use, implementing the zero waste concept, and increasing participation in reforestation, can help slow down environmental degradation. From an Islamic perspective, all forms of efforts to preserve nature are part of the implementation of human roles as caliphs and a form of moral responsibility for Allah SWT's trust on earth. The principles of sustainability, ecological justice, and collective awareness are values. Important Values in Line with Islamic Teachings on Balance and the Welfare of Living Beings (Sari, 2022). With solid cooperation between the government, industrial sector, academics, and the community, it is hoped that environmental sustainability can be maintained for present and future generations.

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