



Water Pollution and Eco-Theology: Legal and Ethical Approaches to Environmental Protection in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the intersection of ecotheological perspectives and environmental law in addressing water pollution in Indonesia, with a focus on three critical locations: the Citarum River in West Java, the Brantas River in East Java, and the Musi River in South Sumatra. The research explores how Islamic religious teachings, through an eco-theological lens, interpret the relationship between humans and nature, and how these teachings can be integrated with legal frameworks for environmental protection. The study examines verses in the Qur'an and hadiths related to creation, ecological responsibility, and the human-nature relationship, linking them with current environmental laws that govern water pollution. It also investigates the role of legal and ethical approaches in enhancing public awareness and promoting sustainable practices to mitigate water pollution. The findings reveal that Islamic perspectives on ecological stewardship, when applied to legal frameworks, can encourage more proactive and sustainable actions. Legal and ethical approaches, grounded in religious teachings, significantly enhance public awareness and encourage behavioural changes to protect water resources.

Keywords: Eco-theology, Water pollution, Ecological stewardship, Environmental law

Introduction

The increasingly severe global ecological crisis (Rees, 2009; Leigh, 2005; Harris, 1991), such as climate change (Yakovlev & Belyaev, 2023), biodiversity loss (Adla et al., 2022), and other (Pooja, 2023) environmental damage, requires a new approach involving all life sectors, including the religious world. Religion is important in shaping values and ethics that guide human actions towards nature (Elsayed et al., 2023). Although awareness of the importance of nature conservation has increased, there is a lack of studies that specifically interpret sacred texts in the context of ecotheology amid this ecological crisis. This gap highlights the need for research that connects the interpretation of sacred texts with contemporary environmental challenges, particularly within legal and ethical frameworks.

Water pollution is one of Indonesia's most pressing environmental issues, given the community's dependence on water sources for both consumption and agriculture. The Citarum River in West Java, the Brantas River in East Java, and the Musi River in South Sumatra are clear examples of severe water pollution in Indonesia. This pollution is caused by various factors, ranging from industrial and domestic waste to environmentally unfriendly agricultural



practices (Pramono et al., 2024; Wulandari et al., 2024). Although various efforts have been made to address this issue, a comprehensive and sustainable solution is still urgently needed.

The Citarum river, known as one of the most polluted rivers in the world, has long been a symbol of Indonesia's environmental crisis. The pollution in this river is largely caused by industrial waste and domestic garbage, which threaten the water quality and health of the surrounding community (Marselina et al., 2022; Fahimah et al., 2023; Idris et al., 2019). People who depend on this river for their daily needs face enormous health risks, and restoration efforts have been initiated by the government to improve the situation.

The Brantas river, which flows through an area densely populated with industrial and agricultural activities, is polluted by waste from both sectors. As one of the main rivers flowing through East Java, the Brantas is not only a source of water for millions of people but also for important agricultural irrigation in the region. Water pollution in this river can affect food security and public health, adding to the urgency of resolving this issue (Hayati et al., 2017).

The Musi river in South Sumatra has suffered significant pollution, mainly due to palm oil and petroleum industries operating along its course. The Musi River plays an important role as a transportation route and as a water source for the city of Palembang. The pollution has threatened the sustainability of the river's ecosystem and the health of the communities that rely on the river for their basic needs (Purba et al., 2023; Rendana et al., 2022). This issue is particularly relevant in ecotheology, which links religious understanding with human responsibility towards nature.

Amidst the threat of pollution that increasingly endangers the preservation of nature, many parties have begun to pay attention to how religious perspectives, particularly eco-theology, can contribute to overcoming these environmental problems. Eco-theology, which combines religious thought with environmental studies, offers a perspective that connects the understanding of God's creation with humanity's responsibility to protect and care for nature. This approach is highly relevant in the Indonesian context, given the richness of existing religious traditions, particularly in the Islamic tradition.

However, although ecotheology has been applied in the environmental context in many countries, research linking ecotheological understanding to water pollution in Indonesia is still limited. Most previous studies have focused more on applying ecotheology in the context of nature conservation in general, such as forest and land management (Hansson & Angelstam, 1991; Nur et al., 2025). There is research that touches on the philosophical aspects of religion in overcoming the ecological crisis, but very little links this understanding specifically to water pollution in areas facing clean water crises, such as the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers, thus indicating a research gap in connecting religious interpretations to water pollution, particularly in the context of ecotheology in Indonesia.

The novelty of this research lies in its approach, which combines eco-theological interpretations with water pollution, a topic that has not been widely explored in the Indonesian context. This research provides a new perspective on how interpretations of sacred texts in Islam can be applied to address environmental issues, particularly in specific local contexts, namely water pollution in the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers. This theoretical research offers practical solutions that can be applied in everyday community life.

The academic contribution of this research is to enrich the field of eco-theology by providing a new, more applicable, and contextual perspective on water pollution issues and integrating religious understanding with an ecological approach to addressing environmental issues. This research is expected to contribute to developing religious and environmental studies by demonstrating how religious principles can be adapted to support sustainable environmental policies.



From a social perspective, this research has the potential to have a significant impact on communities living near polluted rivers. According to religious teachings, this research can encourage communities to take greater responsibility for protecting their environment by providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between humans and nature. This research can help encourage the government and religious institutions to pay attention to the role of religion in ecosystem restoration efforts and encourage active participation in water and environmental conservation programs.

Methodology

This study utilizes a descriptive qualitative method (Creswell & David Creswell, 2018) with an eco-theological approach that combines the analysis of religious texts with environmental studies. This method was chosen because it aims to gain a deeper understanding of the interpretation of Islamic religious texts related to the relationship between humans and nature and human responsibility in maintaining ecosystem balance, particularly in water pollution.

Research Design

This study analyzes sacred texts in the Qur'anic verses, hadith, and tafsir that are relevant to environmental issues, particularly those related to water pollution in the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers. The selection of these three rivers is based on the significant level of water pollution and its impact on the surrounding ecosystems and communities. These rivers have experienced serious environmental degradation, making them a primary focus in efforts to protect river ecosystems in Indonesia. The researchers chose to analyse the water pollution issues in these rivers as a case study that is representative of water pollution problems in Indonesia. Researchers will examine verses from the Qur'an relating to human responsibility towards nature and the relationship between humans and natural resources, especially water. In selecting the texts to be analysed, the researcher will focus on verses from the Qur'an, sayings of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), and interpretations (tafsir) that discuss topics related to nature, creation, and the balance of ecosystems. The criteria for selecting these texts are based on their relevance to the topic of water pollution and the principles of ecotheology.

The criteria for selecting the texts are as follows: The Qur'anic verses selected are those that discuss the relationship between humans and nature and the responsibility of humans to maintain the balance of ecosystems, particularly in relation to water resources. The hadiths chosen are those of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH that emphasize the importance of preserving nature and natural resources, as well as the importance of ecosystem balance. The tafsir serves to provide explanations of the Qur'anic verses related to the environment and water, which are considered relevant to the principles of ecotheology.

Analytical Approach

The analytical approach used in this study is conceptual-theological analysis and normative ethical inquiry. The researcher will identify the ecotheological principles that can be derived from Islamic sacred texts and relate them to the issue of water pollution in the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers. Through this approach, the researcher will assess how these ecotheological principles can be applied to address water pollution issues and improve the river ecosystem conditions in Indonesia.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis techniques use two methods, namely text content analysis and ecological context analysis. In text content analysis, researchers will analyze the content of Islamic



scriptures to identify teachings relevant to ecology and human responsibility towards nature. The main focus of the analysis is on verses that talk about nature, creation, and ecosystem balance. Meanwhile, in ecological context analysis, researchers relate the results of the analysis of sacred texts to the water pollution conditions occurring in the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers. Researchers will identify how ecotheological principles can be applied to overcome water pollution problems and improve the condition of river ecosystems in Indonesia.

Ecotheological Perspectives in Islamic Religious Texts on the Balance of Man and Nature

A growing view of eco-theology today focuses on the understanding that religion not only offers moral and spiritual principles for the relationship between humans and God (Messias, 2024), but also provides relevant guidelines for the relationship between humans and nature (Körtner, 2022), based on the belief that nature is not a separate entity from the spiritual dimension of humans, but an integral part of God's creation that must be respected and managed wisely. In the Islamic tradition, sacred texts in the Qur'an explicitly speak of creation and humanity's relationship with nature as God's creation, which in many ways is often understood as the basis of ecological teachings, such as the verse from surah Al-Baqarah verse 164, which states, "Surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth, the alternation of night and day, the ships that sail the seas carrying what is beneficial to mankind, and all that is in the earth which Allah controls, there are signs for those who think." This verse shows that the universe was created with a clear purpose and contains signs of Allah's greatness that can only be understood through deep reflection, providing the theological basis that the universe, including the earth and everything in it, has an intrinsic value that is more than just an object to be utilized, and thus nature is part of God's creation that must be understood and managed with respect (Ahmad, 2020).

Another verse in Surah Ar-Rahman, verses 7–9, states, "And the heavens He has raised, and He created balance, so that you should not destroy that balance," which indicates that the universe was created with a very delicate and balanced system, where the word *mizan* here does not only mean physical scales but also reflects equality, justice, and universal order (Shihab, 2002). When this balance is disrupted due to human activity or natural disasters, the entire system of creation will be affected, creating irregularities that lead to environmental damage. In Surah Al-Qamar verse 49, Allah states, 'Indeed, We have created everything according to measure,' which means that every element of nature, from planetary orbits and water cycles to the air we breathe, has a predetermined proportionality and balance. So that damage or manipulation of one part can cause an imbalance in another part. The importance of maintaining *mīzān* indicates that humans coexist with nature and are responsible for the sustainability of this harmony (Harun, 2003), reflecting the Qur'an's visionary ecological view, and is in line with modern sustainability principles.

In addition, hadiths of the Prophet (PBUH) show the importance of protecting and caring for nature. The Prophet's message to plant trees even in difficult situations shows Islam's concern for environmental balance. The Prophet reminded us that Allah is the source of all natural growth and sustenance. As in the hadith of the Prophet, which prohibits damaging the environment, 'No Muslim plants a tree or cultivates a crop, then people, birds, or animals eat from it, except that it is considered charity for him.' (Hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim). And the words of the Prophet about the preservation of water sources. The Prophet Muhammad PBUH warned against throwing impurities into water sources and spreading disease. He said, 'No one throws anything into a water source, and then the people who use that water become sick because of it, except that he will bear that sin on the Day of Judgement.' (Hadith narrated by Ibn Majah). The Qur'an and the hadith emphasize treating nature responsibly, maintaining balance, and respecting Allah's creation.



This perspective aligns closely with the concept of eco-theology, which emphasizes the importance of ecological balance between humans and nature, where humans are not seen as owners of nature but as responsible managers, a role known in Islam as *khalifah*, meaning manager or God's representative on earth. The human duty as *khalifah* requires Muslims to maintain the balance of nature and avoid causing harm that could disrupt the harmony of God's creation, with the understanding that damaging nature is equivalent to damaging God's creation and, consequently, damaging the divine will. Furthermore, this concept of human responsibility towards nature is reinforced in Islamic ethical teachings that advocate for balance and harmony in God's creation, as reflected in the Qur'an, where God says in surah Al-A'raf verse 31, "And dress well and eat and drink, but do not overdo it. Verily, Allah dislikes those who exaggerate," a verse that teaches the importance of sustainable consumption and the responsible use of natural resources while warning against overexploitation that can lead to ecological damage.

In interpreting Islamic religious texts, teachings regarding the importance of human awareness of their vulnerability as God's creatures can be found, as in the Qur'an, where God reminds humanity of their dependence on God and nature. In Christianity, ecotheology is closely related to similar principles. In the Bible, there is the teaching that humans were created as stewards of the earth. In the Book of Genesis (1:28), humans are given the task of ruling and tending to the earth, which means a responsibility to care for and maintain the harmony of nature. This teaching aligns with the ecotheological view that humans are not the absolute rulers of nature but rather caretakers who must ensure the sustainability of nature as part of their moral and spiritual responsibility. Similarly, in Judaism, the concept of Tikkun Olam (repairing the world) in the Torah conveys the teaching that humanity has an obligation to care for the earth and protect God's creation. This principle is reflected in various laws in the Torah that emphasize environmental preservation, such as the commandment not to destroy fruit-bearing trees (Deuteronomy 20:19-20) and to protect animals and the land.

QS. Luqman: 20 says, "Do you not see that Allah has subjected for you what is in the heavens and the earth and perfected for you His favors, both visible and invisible?" This verse reminds humanity to be grateful for Allah's blessings, including the nature provided as a harmonious place to live. This understanding aligns with the ecotheological view that humans are part of nature and not its sole rulers, encouraging humanity to be more sensitive to environmental damage caused by human actions, such as deforestation, pollution, and global warming. As *khalifah*, or managers, religious communities must play their role in preserving nature more responsibly and sustainably.

In addition, within the secular framework, several environmental philosophies and ethical theories, such as deep ecology and environmental ethics, offer the view that humans must understand themselves as part of a larger ecosystem and have a moral obligation to protect the environment. Deep ecology, for instance, holds that all forms of life have intrinsic value, and humans should treat nature with respect and responsibility, not only because of its benefits to humanity, but because of its inherent right as part of life itself.

In this comparison, although there are differences in language and cultural contexts across each religious tradition, there is a fundamental similarity in these teachings: humans have a responsibility to care for and protect nature as part of their moral and spiritual duties. Each tradition, whether in Islam, Christianity, Judaism, or from a secular perspective, emphasizes the need for awareness of the interconnectedness between humans and nature and the responsibility to preserve its continuity.

Sacred texts in eco-theology emphasize the importance of working with fellow human beings to preserve nature. In Islamic religious teachings, this cooperation is not limited to fellow believers and all parties, including those of different faiths. Islamic religious texts from the Qur'an and hadith provide a strong foundation for ecotheology development. This perspective



emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between humans and nature by promoting sustainability, moral responsibility, and ecological justice. Through this understanding, religious communities are invited to act as wise stewards of nature, not just users of it. Consider the following table:

Table 1: The Concept of Eco-theology in Islamic Traditions and Its Implementation

Concept	Islamic Tradition	Application of Eco-theology
Nature as God's creation	Nature is God's creation that must be respected and managed wisely.	Encourages religious people to nurture and protect nature as part of the divine will.
Human as khalifah (manager of the earth)	Humans are given the mandate as caliphs to maintain the balance of nature.	Emphasises the moral responsibility to preserve nature through concrete and sustainable actions.
Sustainability	Teaches the importance of moderation in the use of natural resources.	Wise management of nature, reduction of waste, and application of sustainability principles in daily life.
Ecological justice	In Islam, people are instructed not to overexploit nature.	Open up space to protect living beings and maintain the balance of ecosystems through collective action.
Love and cooperation	The teaching on God's love includes love for nature and living beings.	Encourages interfaith collaboration in protecting the environment and respecting all of God's creations.
Moral responsibility towards nature	Destroying nature means destroying God's creation and divine will.	Invites people to act fully aware that caring for the earth is a moral and spiritual duty.

After reviewing Table 1, which explains the concept of eco-theology in the Islamic tradition and its application, it can be concluded that each concept within the Islamic tradition provides a strong moral foundation for involving the community in preserving nature. The first concept, nature as God's creation, emphasizes that nature is God's creation that must be respected and managed wisely. The application of eco-theology in this regard encourages the community to view environmental preservation as part of religious duty, so the relationship between humans and nature is not only functional but also spiritual. This explanation underscores that the act of preserving nature is part of the moral obligation as God's creation.

Furthermore, the concept of human as khalifah stresses that humans are given the role of khalifah (steward) of the earth, meaning they have a responsibility to maintain the balance of nature. The application of this concept requires concrete actions to sustain ecosystems through sustainable and responsible practices. Thus, ecotheology in Islam not only addresses belief but also provides practical guidance for protecting the earth through policies in line with religious teachings.

Next, the concept of sustainability, which teaches the importance of moderation in the use of natural resources, is highly relevant in the modern world, which is facing an environmental crisis. The application of this principle encourages reducing waste and implementing eco-



friendly practices in daily life, prompting the community to apply Islamic values in managing nature efficiently, without excess, and based on principles of equity. Therefore, eco-theology is not just an abstract concept but a foundation for concrete actions in safeguarding the earth as a trust from God.

Ecological Legal Aspects and Some Perspectives

Yustitiani et al., (2025) assert that Indonesia encounters numerous challenges in the area of environmental management. While the government has made great efforts through drafting numerous legal policies, for example the Law on Environmental Protection and Management, the application and enforcement of environmental law is still not the best it can be. The foremost problems confronted comprise relatively weak law enforcement, and of course the usual global conflicts between economic and environmental interests. In addition, communities lack an ability to meaningfully participate in decision making. Many cases of environmental pollution echo the challenges in executing sustainable environmental laws and justice procedures. Stricter law enforcement and greater active community participation and consistent rehabilitation efforts are required (Yustitiani et al., 2025). The Environmental Protection and Management Law (UU No. 32/2009, delivers a comprehensive legal framework for environmental management and protection in Indonesia as it requires companies to prepare and implement AMDAL (*Analisis Mengenai Dampak Lingkungan*) which is basically an environmental impact assessment. This is an obligatory environmental study essential for particular business activities or projects before they can be finally approved and licensed to operate in Indonesia.

AMDAL helps to predict and manage environmental impacts of any proposed project, and it helps to ensure sustainable development so that environments and health are protected (Putra, 2020). This means that any mining and oil and gas projects, power plants and energy facilities and also large factories and industrial estates, all need to have sound eco-friendly policies in place.

There is also *inter alia*, Government Regulation No. 22/2021 which consolidates Indonesia's environmental rules, replacing several older regulations (including older rules on water pollution control). This regulation is now the key reference on water pollution control within the broader environment law framework. Under the current legal framework (Law 32/2009 & PP 22/2021) all companies and projects must observe the water quality standards before discharging and authorities must monitor water bodies regularly and classify water status as either good or polluted. If pollution is discovered, the responsible parties must clean up or the authorities will likely intervene at the polluter's cost. In addition, all communities have rights to information and involvement in environmental governance, including water quality oversight (Zahroh & Najicha, 2021).

People have to comply with needed environmental quality standards and in addition, the concept of sustainable justice accentuates the importance of bearing in mind the long-term impacts of decisions made and actions taken in Indonesia that affect the natural environment and especially water (McLaren, et al., 2022). People have a responsibility to safeguard that future generations have the same or better quality of life than today by participating in the wise management of all natural resources, especially water and by reducing the negative impacts on the natural environment (Nicolaidis et al., 2026).

Indonesia faces various challenges in enforcing environmental laws, including weak supervision and a lack of active community involvement in decision-making processes (Yustitiani et al., 2025). While regulations are in place, such as Law No. 32/2009 and Government Regulation 22/2021, the application and enforcement of these regulations are still hindered by conflicts between economic interests and environmental preservation. Some



gaps in this implementation are reflected in the ineffectiveness of monitoring water quality standards and the environmental impact of industrial projects.

The principles of ecotheology, emphasizing human responsibility as khalifah (steward) of the earth, can strengthen this legal framework by encouraging the community to be more concerned about environmental sustainability, including the protection of water quality. From an ecotheological perspective, human actions toward nature are not only of worldly interest but a moral and spiritual responsibility that must be accountable before God (Imamulhadi, et al., 2025).

Therefore, the principles of ecotheology can complement existing legal policies by emphasizing the importance of morality in environmental management and criticizing actions that damage nature as violations of the harmony of God's creation. The concept of sustainability in ecotheology teaches not only to consider current needs but also those of future generations, strengthening the argument for stricter regulations and more effective enforcement.

Moreover, through the teaching of environmental balance, ecotheology can serve as an ethical foundation to encourage greater compliance with the law by educating the public about the importance of preserving ecosystems as part of religious duty. In this way, the challenges of enforcing environmental laws can be minimized, and gaps in regulatory implementation can be addressed more holistically. A recent study by Christian scholars has also ascertained that it is one's ethical duty to conserve nature and prevent degradation of marine environments to the glory of the Creator God who has made humans custodians of the earth (Nicolaidis et al., 2026).

The principles of ecotheology can critique regulations that focus solely on technical and administrative aspects, without involving a deeper moral dimension, which can influence public behavior in environmental preservation (Purwanto, & Silalahi, 2024). An approach that emphasizes legal compliance without fostering moral awareness of the importance of ecosystem sustainability risks creating compliance that is temporary or pragmatic, rather than long-term behavioral change. Ecotheology asserts that the relationship between humans and nature is not merely functional but also spiritual, where every human action toward nature has a profound ethical dimension. Therefore, regulations that do not integrate moral values and spiritual responsibility are likely to be less effective in shaping long-term behaviors that truly protect the environment. Integrating ecotheology into the legal framework can shift the public's perspective from merely a legal obligation to a moral calling, fostering a deeper sense of responsibility for the preservation of nature.

Proposed Solutions to Water Pollution in Indonesia: An Ecotheological Perspective

In the Indonesian context, water pollution is a pressing issue, particularly in areas such as the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers. The choice of the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers in this study is primarily based on the severe and widespread water pollution issues they face, which have significant environmental, public health, and socio-economic implications. These rivers represent critical case studies in Indonesia, where the environmental degradation of water resources has reached alarming levels. The Citarum River, for example, has been recognized as one of the most polluted rivers in the world, with pollution caused by industrial waste, domestic waste, and agricultural runoff, impacting millions of people who depend on it for drinking water and irrigation. Similarly, the Brantas River is vital for both public water supply and agricultural irrigation in East Java but suffers from similar pollution due to industrial and agricultural activities. The Musi River, which flows through South Sumatra, is also severely affected by pollution, particularly from palm oil and petroleum industries. These rivers are representative of the broader challenges Indonesia faces in managing water quality and aligning environmental protection efforts with sustainable development.



In the context of eco-theology, these three rivers offer compelling examples where the integration of religious principles, particularly those found in Islamic teachings, can be applied to environmental law and public policy. The teachings in the Qur'an regarding the sanctity of water as a vital resource for life, alongside the ethical responsibility to avoid wastefulness and destruction of nature, provide a framework that is both spiritually and practically relevant to the specific pollution challenges in these regions. By focusing on these rivers, this study aims to bridge the gap between eco-theological insights and environmental policy, promoting both religious and legal approaches to restoring and protecting water sources in Indonesia.

The ecotheological approach focuses on the understanding that nature is God's creation, which must be protected and preserved. Several verses in the Qur'an remind us not to destroy the earth (environment), such as in surah Al-A'raf verse 56 and surah Al-Baqarah verse 205, including not polluting water as a source of life (hadith narrated by Abu Dawud). The principle of wise use of natural resources, such as water, is strongly emphasized, with a prohibition against wastefulness (Surah Al-Isra verses 26-27), which can be applied in the economical use of water in daily life and industrial activities.

1. Prohibition against vandalism and causing damage

According to Quraish Shihab in *Tafsir Al-Misbah: The Message, Impression, and Harmony of the Qur'an*, this verse indicates that humans are prohibited from destroying the earth after Allah has created it perfectly and in harmony. This destruction includes all actions that can damage the balance and harmony of nature, such as environmental pollution, illegal logging, and war. According to him, this verse explains that Allah SWT has created the universe with love and mercy. Therefore, as caliphs on earth, humans must protect and preserve it as best as possible (Shihab, 2002).

In the book *Tafsir As-Sam'ani*, written by Imam Abu Muzhaffar as-Sam'ani, there is a quote from the tabi'in Ad-Dhahak stating that acts of destroying the earth include activities such as blocking water flow, cutting down fruit-bearing trees, and damaging gold and silver coins. These actions contradict the principles of wisdom, destroy the universe's balance, and disrupt order on earth (As-Sam'ani, 1997).

Fakhruddin ar-Razi, in his book of exegesis *Mafatihul Ghaib*, argues that Surah al-A'raf verse 56 contains Allah (Glorious and Exalted is He)'s command to mankind to protect the earth and not destroy it after Allah has repaired it. This command is an important warning to protect the environment and life on Earth. The verse prohibits all actions that destroy nature, social life, and religious values. Preserving the earth means maintaining the balance of nature, conserving natural resources, and preventing pollution. Preserving social life means maintaining good relations with others, building a peaceful and prosperous society, and upholding moral and ethical values. Preserving religious values means practicing religion correctly, spreading goodness, and avoiding the spread of destruction and evil (ar-Razi, 1420 H).

The concrete actions of prohibiting destruction and causing damage, as stated in Surah Al-A'raf verse 56, can be interpreted in the context of water pollution through several concrete steps to prevent and reduce environmental damage, especially water pollution. Some concrete actions that can be taken include:

1). Stricter management of industrial waste

One of Indonesia's main causes of water pollution is the discharge of industrial waste into rivers and other water sources. In this verse, one action that can be taken is to require companies to manage their waste responsibly by using environmentally friendly technology



and complying with strict waste treatment standards. This reflects the principle of not damaging the earth by dumping waste and hazardous waste into the water ecosystem.

2). Education and awareness campaigns on water pollution

The community needs to be educated about the importance of maintaining clean water sources and the negative impacts of water pollution, both on human health and the sustainability of ecosystems. Through campaigns, seminars, and educational programs based on religious teachings, the community can become more aware and take care not to dispose of waste or chemicals into rivers and waterways.

3). Stricter law enforcement

To prevent the indiscriminate disposal of rubbish and waste, stricter law enforcement is required. Sanctions against those who damage natural resources must be consistently enforced. This action aligns with religious teachings that remind people to be responsible for their actions towards nature and the environment.

4). Water ecosystem restoration and river rehabilitation

Polluted river restoration projects, such as those carried out in several major rivers in Indonesia, can be a tangible step in reducing the damage that has been done. Such projects seek to restore the river's function as a source of life and improve the quality of polluted water, in accordance with the teachings of the Qur'an to preserve the earth and water.

5). Creation of an efficient water treatment system

One way to respond to the prohibition of destroying the earth is to develop efficient water treatment systems that reduce pollution and recycle water for reuse. This is important to reduce dependence on polluted water sources and maintain the sustainability of aquatic ecosystems.

2. Maintaining and using water wisely

The interpretation of Surah Al-Isra' verses 26-27 contextually has an important role in overcoming the challenges of consumptive lifestyles in the digital era. Extravagance arising from social pressure from digital media can be considered a contemporary form of *israf* that requires strengthening the values contained in the Qur'an. Consumption should be returned to its primary purpose: to fulfill needs, not to satisfy ego or seek social recognition. Therefore, this verse is relevant as a normative basis to direct students' consumption behavior to follow the principles of justice, balance, and social responsibility taught in Islam.

Sayyid Quthb in *Fi Zhilalil-Qur'an* states that the Qur'an prohibits the waste of wealth (wasteful behavior). According to the interpretation of Ibn Mas'ud and Ibn Abbas, waste of wealth is spending on things that are not right. Spending on falsehood and disobedience makes one a friend of the devil (Quthb, 2003). This interpretation confirms that those who waste do not fulfill their obligation to be grateful for Allah's blessings by spending them in the way of obedience to Him and by fulfilling the rights of others, without exaggeration or extravagance.

Muhammad Hasbi in *Tafsir Al-Quranul Majid An-Nur* interprets that the prohibited *israf* includes excessive spending, miserliness, and excessive use of halal objects (Ash-Shiddieqy, n.d.). This interpretation emphasizes that *israf* is comprehensive—not only related to material waste but also to imbalance in spiritual and social aspects. In the context of Gen-Z, this tafsir reminds us that *israf* is not just about money but also time (e.g., spending too much time on social media) and attitude (such as being miserly or consumptive). Even though an object is halal



(such as food or drink), its use must still be done proportionally, such as over-ordering contemporary drinks just for social media content.

Concrete application of Surah Al-Isra' verses 26-27 on mitigating water pollution can be seen in the following steps:

1. Wise use of water resources

In QS. Al-Isra' verses 26-27, Allah (Glorious and Exalted is He) reminds mankind not to overuse everything, including water. Concretely, this can be applied by utilizing water for necessary purposes and avoiding waste in household and industrial activities. For example, the use of water-saving technologies in household devices such as taps and showers and the implementation of more efficient drip irrigation systems in the agricultural sector. This includes the maintenance of existing infrastructure to prevent leaks and wasted water.

2. Responsible management of natural resources

One concrete way to manage water wisely is by investing in environmentally friendly technologies, such as effective wastewater treatment systems. Water filters, wastewater treatment systems for recycling, and technologies to reduce pollution's impact on water sources can help maintain water quality. In addition, attention should be paid to protecting water source ecosystems, such as forests that play a role in maintaining the water cycle, by preventing illegal logging and environmental destruction that can worsen water quality.

3. Prohibition of polluting water sources

Surah Al-Isra' verses 26-27 teach mankind to keep the resources given by Allah clean and sustainable, including water. Polluting water sources, such as dumping garbage, industrial waste, or hazardous chemicals into rivers, lakes, or seas, is against the principle of keeping nature clean and sustainable. This action damages the water ecosystem and jeopardizes the health of humans dependent on these water sources. Concretely, this means that communities, governments, and the industrial sector must have strict policies to prohibit acts of pollution of water sources. Implementing good waste treatment technology, such as wastewater treatment plants (IPAL), and strict supervision of industries to reduce waste discharge into water bodies can be taken. The public should be taught the importance of keeping water sources clean by not dumping rubbish or hazardous substances.

4. Environmental education and awareness

Efforts to reduce water pollution require the participation of all elements of society. Improved education and awareness on keeping water clean should be prioritized. This can be done through counselling campaigns on the dangers of littering into rivers or seas and the importance of properly managing household waste. In addition, training programs on wastewater management and recycled water treatment in communities can help reduce negative impacts on water quality.

5. Obligation to protect the environment of water sources

Surah Al-Isra' verses 26-27 emphasize the importance of protecting the environment, which includes the environment around water sources. Every individual and community is obligated to care for and protect ecosystems that support clean water, such as forests that maintain the water cycle, soil that filters water, and areas around springs or rivers. The environment around water sources must be safeguarded from damage that could lead to a decline in water quality,



such as deforestation, land conversion into residential areas without proper management, or pollution from uncontrolled industrial activities. Concretely, this obligation can be translated into implementing conservation policies involving reforestation, protected forest protection, and sustainable land management. The community needs to be educated on the importance of protecting the environment around water sources, such as not littering and avoiding land clearing that destroys the balance of the ecosystem. This is not only for the water source's sustainability but also for the well-being of the people who depend on it.

Conclusion

In this study, integrating ecotheology with the interpretation of Islamic religious texts offers a valuable framework to address contemporary environmental issues, particularly water pollution in Indonesia. Sacred texts, especially the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasize the interconnectedness between humans and nature, as well as the responsibility of humans to maintain ecological balance. This responsibility is reflected in the concept of khalifah (representative of God), which places humans as managers, not exploitative users of nature.

Water pollution cases in the Citarum, Brantas, and Musi rivers are urgent reminders of the environmental damage caused by industrial waste, domestic garbage, and unsustainable agricultural practices. By adopting ecotheological principles, interpretations of religious texts offer practical solutions to restore ecological balance, encourage sustainable water management, and promote community-based efforts in conserving water resources.

This research highlights the importance of a more comprehensive understanding of how religious teachings can encourage environmentally responsible behavior. By interpreting sacred texts through the lens of ecotheology, communities can be empowered to act proactively and ethically in managing the environment, contributing to long-term sustainability. The findings from this study not only enrich the academic discourse on ecotheology but also have the potential to influence community policies and actions in reducing water pollution and conserving natural resources for future generations.

While this research provides valuable insights into the integration of ecotheology with environmental management, it has several limitations. First, the study focuses primarily on the interpretation of Islamic texts in relation to water pollution, which may not fully encompass the diversity of religious perspectives within Indonesia, where other faiths also play a significant role in environmental stewardship. Additionally, the research is confined to three major rivers in Indonesia (Citarum, Brantas, and Musi), which, while representative, may not capture the full extent of water pollution issues across the nation. The scope of this study limits the exploration of practical solutions within specific community settings, as broader socio-political factors affecting policy implementation and religious interpretations have not been fully addressed. Finally, the reliance on textual analysis may overlook the lived experiences and perspectives of local communities directly impacted by water pollution, thus limiting the study's ability to reflect a complete socio-ecological understanding.

Future research could expand on this study by incorporating a comparative approach, analysing how different religious traditions, both within and outside of Islam, interpret environmental responsibility and its implications for water pollution management. Additionally, further studies could focus on the practical application of eco-theology in local communities, exploring how religious teachings can be effectively integrated into policy and grassroots movements aimed at environmental conservation. Investigating the role of local religious leaders and communities in promoting sustainable practices would offer a more nuanced understanding of how eco-theology can be a catalyst for change in regions facing water pollution. Moreover, longitudinal studies that assess the impact of eco-theological teachings on long-term environmental outcomes could provide valuable evidence of the effectiveness of this approach in fostering sustainable behaviour.



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