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Environmental Ethics in the Perspective of Muhammad Qutb: A Philosophical Review and Its Relevance to the Modern Ecological Crisis

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ABSTRACT

This research discusses the concept of environmental ethics from the perspective of Muhammad Qutb, emphasizing the relationship between humans, nature, and moral responsibility in Islamic teachings. The increasing environmental crisis, such as pollution, exploitation of natural resources, and ecosystem destruction, demonstrates the need for an ethical foundation capable of fostering human ecological awareness. This study aims to analyze Muhammad Qutb's views on environmental ethics and their relevance to modern life. The research method employed is library research using a descriptive-analytical approach through the examination of Muhammad Qutb's works and other supporting literature. The findings of the study indicate that, according to Muhammad Qutb, humans are khalifah (stewards) on earth who bear the responsibility of maintaining the balance of nature as part of Allah's trust (amanah). In his view, environmental ethics are built upon the principles of tawhid (the oneness of God), balance (mīzān), responsibility, and the prohibition against causing destruction (fasād) on earth. This perspective affirms that the relationship between humans and the environment is not merely material, but also spiritual and moral. Muhammad Qutb's concept of environmental ethics is relevant in addressing modern ecological challenges because it can encourage religious awareness and environmentally friendly behavior within society.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental problems in the modern era have become a global issue that continues to receive serious attention from various groups. Deforestation, water and air pollution, climate change, and the excessive exploitation of natural resources indicate the existence of an ecological crisis that affects not only nature but also human life. Fundamentally, this crisis arises from patterns of human interaction with the environment that tend to be exploitative and disregard moral values as well as responsibility

toward nature (Muhammad Halif Asyroful Bahana, 2025). Islam, as a universal religion, places great emphasis on environmental preservation. The Qur'an explains that humans were created as khalifah (stewards) on earth, entrusted with the duty of maintaining and preserving the balance of nature (Raya et al., 2016).

Environmental destruction is viewed as a consequence of human behavior that exceeds limits and disregards the commands of Allah SWT (Manurung et al., 2025). Therefore, Islamic teachings regulate not only the relationship between humans and God and among fellow humans, but also the relationship between humans and the universe. Values such as balance (mīzān), the prohibition against causing destruction (fasād), and social responsibility serve as important foundations in building Islamic environmental ethics. One contemporary Islamic thinker who paid close attention to issues of morality and human civilization is Muhammad Qutb. In many of his ideas, Muhammad Qutb emphasized the importance of shaping human beings based on tawhid and spiritual values in living their lives (Hajiannor, 2016).

According to him, the destruction occurring on earth cannot be separated from the moral crisis of modern humanity, which has distanced itself from religious teachings. This view provides the foundation that environmental preservation requires not only scientific and technological approaches, but also ethical and spiritual approaches. Environmental ethics in the perspective of Muhammad Qutb stems from the concept of tawhid, which positions humans as part of Allah SWT's creation. Nature is viewed not merely as an object of exploitation, but as a trust (amanah) that must be protected and utilized proportionally (Nurfalina, 2024), (Qaradawi, 2001). Humans have a moral responsibility to maintain the balance of ecosystems for the sustainability of life for both present and future generations. Thus, the relationship between humans and the environment possesses dimensions of worship and accountability before Allah SWT.

Environmental ethics has become an important field of study because it examines the moral values that govern the relationship between human beings and nature. Environmental ethics does not merely view the environment as an object to be utilized; rather, it regards it as an integral part of the system of life whose balance must be maintained. Various approaches to environmental ethics have emerged, ranging from anthropocentrism, which places humans at the center of value, to biocentrism, which recognizes the intrinsic value of all living beings, and ecocentrism, which emphasizes the importance of preserving entire ecosystems. However, these approaches often fail to provide a sufficiently strong spiritual foundation for transforming human behavior toward environmental protection. Therefore, religion has become one of the most important sources of values in fostering ecological awareness within society (Alapján-, 2016).

As a universal religion, Islam offers comprehensive teachings concerning the relationship between human beings and nature. The Qur'an and Hadith not only regulate the relationship between humans and Allah and among fellow human beings, but also govern the relationship between humans and the natural environment. From an Islamic perspective, the universe is a creation of Allah endowed with purpose and order. Human beings are not positioned as absolute rulers over nature; rather, they are appointed as khalifah (vicegerents) entrusted with the responsibility of preserving, managing, and utilizing natural resources responsibly. Principles such as tawhid (the oneness of Allah), amanah (trust and responsibility), mizan (balance), 'adl (justice), and the prohibition of fasad (corruption or destruction) constitute the foundation of environmental ethics in Islam (Anieg, 2024).

The concept of khalifah occupies a central position in Islamic environmental ethics. The Qur'an affirms that human beings were created as khalifah on earth, tasked with maintaining ecological

balance and environmental sustainability. This status of vicegerency does not grant unrestricted authority to exploit nature; rather, it represents a trust that entails moral and spiritual responsibility. The utilization of natural resources must therefore be conducted proportionally and with consideration for the welfare of future generations. Numerous studies suggest that the concept of khalifah can serve as an alternative paradigm for addressing contemporary ecological crises because it positions human beings as stewards of the earth rather than its absolute owners (Hidayat et al., 2025).

One contemporary Muslim thinker who paid significant attention to the role and responsibility of human beings on earth is Muhammad Qutb. As a scholar who extensively developed ideas concerning education, civilization, and the Islamic worldview, Muhammad Qutb emphasized that human beings have been granted a noble status by Allah to fulfill their trust as khalifah. According to Muhammad Qutb, all aspects of human life should be grounded in the principle of tawhid, so that every human activity, including the utilization of nature, reflects accountability before Allah (Maskur & Program, 2024). This perspective rejects excessive exploitation of the environment because human beings are merely trustees of Allah's creation rather than absolute owners who may act according to their own desires.

Muhammad Qutb's understanding of human beings as khalifah is highly relevant to contemporary environmental issues. He argues that the crises affecting modern life, including environmental degradation, originate from a spiritual and moral crisis caused by humanity's disconnection from divine values. When human beings perceive themselves as the center of all existence and neglect their responsibility toward Allah, nature is reduced to a mere object of exploitation. Conversely, when people recognize their position as servants and vicegerents of Allah, they develop an awareness of the need to preserve environmental balance and sustainability as part of their worship of Him. This view is consistent with the principles of Islamic environmental ethics, which emphasize balance, responsibility, and sustainability (Sari & Wahyudi, 2024).

Although numerous studies have examined environmental ethics in Islam, most have focused primarily on analyses of Qur'anic verses, Hadith, or the ideas of scholars such as M. Quraish Shihab and Seyyed Hossein Nasr. In contrast, studies that specifically connect environmental ethics with the thought of Muhammad Qutb remain relatively limited. Yet Muhammad Qutb's ideas regarding humanity, tawhid, and vicegerency make a significant contribution to the development of an environmental ethics paradigm grounded in Islamic values (Roni & Anzaikhan, 2022). This limitation in the existing literature indicates a research gap that warrants further exploration.

Furthermore, the increasing level of environmental degradation in many Muslim-majority countries demonstrates that religious teachings have not yet been fully internalized in society's ecological behavior. Therefore, efforts are needed to reconstruct Islamic environmental ethical values through the thought of contemporary Muslim scholars. Muhammad Qutb's perspective offers a valuable alternative because it integrates theological, moral, and social dimensions in understanding the relationship between human beings and nature (Falhan, 2022). Consequently, environmental ethics should not be understood merely as a social obligation, but also as an expression of devotion to Allah and the fulfillment of the trust of khalifah entrusted to humankind.

Research on environmental ethics from the perspective of Muhammad Qutb is important because it offers moral and religious solutions to the modern ecological crisis. So far, environmental discussions have been dominated by scientific and policy approaches, while spiritual and ethical aspects have often received less attention. In fact, ecological awareness based on religious values can serve as a strong foundation for building environmentally conscious behavior within society (Hidayatullah, n.d.). Based

on this background, this study aims to analyze the concept of environmental ethics according to Muhammad Qutb and its relevance in addressing environmental problems in the modern era. This study is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic environmental ethics studies while also serving as a reference in fostering ecological awareness in society based on Islamic values.

2. METHODS

This study employs a library research method, namely research conducted by collecting and analyzing various literary sources related to environmental ethics from the perspective of Muhammad Qutb. The primary data sources in this study are Muhammad Qutb's works discussing the concepts of humanity, morality, and the relationship between humans and life, while the secondary data sources are obtained from books, scientific journals, articles, and other literature relevant to the themes of environmental ethics and contemporary Islamic thought (Feny Rita Fiantika, Mohammad Wasil, Sri Jumiyati, Leli Honesti, Sri Wahyuni, Erland Mouw, Jonata, Imam Mashudi, Nur Hasanah, Anita Maharani, Kusmayra Ambarwati, Resty Noflidaputri, Nuryami, 2022) (Sugiyono, 2020). The approach used in this study is a descriptive-analytical approach. The descriptive approach is employed to systematically describe Muhammad Qutb's thoughts on environmental ethics, while the analytical approach is used to examine and interpret concepts related to human responsibility toward nature, the principle of tawhid, balance (mīzān), and the prohibition against causing destruction (fasād) on earth (Moleong, 2018), (Nurrisa & Hermina, 2025).

The data collection technique was carried out through documentation, namely by reviewing various literature related to the object of the study. The data obtained were then analyzed using the content analysis method, which involves identifying, understanding, and interpreting Muhammad Qutb's thoughts on environmental ethics in depth. Furthermore, the results of the analysis were connected to the conditions of the modern environmental crisis in order to determine the relevance of Muhammad Qutb's thought within the context of contemporary life (Murjani, 2022), (Annasthasya et al., 2025). The steps of the research include: (1) collecting data from primary and secondary sources, (2) classifying the data based on the themes of discussion, (3) analyzing Muhammad Qutb's thoughts on environmental ethics, and (4) drawing conclusions based on the results of the analysis that has been conducted (Ayu et al., 2024), (Bungin, 2015).

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

a. Environmental Ethics from the Perspective of Muhammad Qutb

Environmental ethics is a branch of applied ethics that focuses on providing a moral foundation for environmental preservation and improvement (Sholeha, 2019), (Irawati, 2007). According to A. Sony Keraf (2010), environmental ethics is a discipline that discusses moral norms and rules governing human behavior in interacting with nature, as well as the values and principles that underpin such behavior. Meanwhile, Istamar Syamsuri (1996), (Rahendra Maya, 2017) states that environmental ethics is a guide for behavior that contains positive values in order to maintain environmental functions and sustainability. Environmental ethics addresses how a person should act toward their environment. Furthermore, he explains that an environmentally ethical person is someone who is environmentally aware, loves their natural surroundings, has environmental concern, and participates in ecological preservation. In a similar vein, (Quthub et al., 2015), Herwan Parwiyanto (2009) defines environmental ethics as an effort to build rational foundations for a system of moral principles that can be used as guidance for how humans should treat natural ecosystems and their surrounding environment.

Environmental ethics is a branch of ethics that examines moral principles governing the relationship between human beings and nature. In contemporary discourse, environmental ethics emerged as a response to environmental degradation caused by excessive exploitation of natural resources, industrialization, and consumerism. Environmental ethics seeks to establish moral guidelines that encourage responsible human interaction with the environment and promote ecological sustainability. From an Islamic perspective, environmental ethics is rooted in divine revelation. The Qur'an and Sunnah provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between human beings, God, and nature. Unlike secular environmental ethics, which often focuses solely on human interests or ecological values, Islamic environmental ethics integrates theological, moral, and spiritual dimensions. Nature is viewed as a creation of Allah that possesses purpose, order, and inherent value. Consequently, protecting the environment is not merely a social responsibility but also an act of worship and obedience to Allah (Basri, 1989) (Yusuf & Marjuni, 2022).

The foundation of Islamic environmental ethics begins with the principle of tawhid (the oneness of Allah). Tawhid affirms that all creation belongs to Allah and exists according to His divine wisdom. Human beings, therefore, cannot claim absolute ownership over natural resources. Instead, they are entrusted with the responsibility of managing them according to Allah's guidance. The concept of tawhid establishes a spiritual connection between humans and nature, encouraging environmental stewardship based on accountability to God rather than mere economic interests (Hajiannor, 2016), (Bsoul et al., 2022).

Another essential principle is amanah (trust or responsibility). Islam teaches that human beings have been entrusted with the responsibility of safeguarding the earth and its resources. This trust requires humans to utilize natural resources wisely and avoid actions that lead to environmental destruction. The Qur'an repeatedly warns against wastefulness and corruption on earth, emphasizing that humans will ultimately be accountable for how they fulfill this trust (Rahendra Maya, 2017), (Gulzar et al., 2021).

The principle of mizan (balance) also plays a crucial role in Islamic environmental ethics. Allah created the universe in a state of balance and harmony. Human activities should therefore maintain rather than disrupt this equilibrium. Environmental degradation, pollution, and excessive resource consumption are considered violations of this divinely established balance. Sustainable development, from an Islamic perspective, involves preserving ecological harmony while meeting human needs (Firdaus & Zulaeha, 2023), (Kazmi, 2024).

Furthermore, Islam emphasizes 'adl (justice), which extends beyond human relationships to include justice toward nature and future generations. Environmental exploitation that benefits a small group while causing harm to society and ecosystems contradicts Islamic teachings on justice. Therefore, environmental conservation is closely linked to social justice, intergenerational equity, and responsible resource management (Anam, 2023), (Muhammad et al., 2024). The Qur'an also condemns fasad (corruption or destruction) on earth. Environmental damage caused by deforestation, pollution, excessive mining, and unsustainable consumption can be categorized as forms of fasad. Such actions violate the ethical principles established by Islam and undermine the ecological balance created by Allah (Mukhlis Yusuf Arbi, 2023), (Zuhdi et al., 2024).

According to Sastrapratedja (Istamar Syamsuri, 1996), there are several principles of environmental ethics that regulate human attitudes toward the environment:

a. The principle of non-maleficence (the rule of non-maleficence), which means not harming the environment, not destroying species populations or biotic communities, and not harming what does not harm humans.
b. The principle of non-interference (the rule of non-interference), which means not restricting the freedom of any organism.
c. The principle of fidelity (the rule of fidelity), which means not trapping, deceiving, or setting traps for living beings solely for human interests.
d. The principle of restitutive justice (the rule of restitutive justice), which means restoring justice for what humans have damaged by providing compensation (Syamsuri, 1996).

The elements of environmental ethics as expressions of human responsibility toward nature include several aspects:

a) Respect for nature. Nature should not be seen merely as something useful for humans, but as something that has its own intrinsic value. If humans must interfere in natural processes, it should be done only when necessary and while preserving its integrity. All living beings should be regarded as fellow beings.
b) Internalizing a sense of special responsibility toward the local environment.
c) Responsibility for the sustainability of the biosphere. Biosphere sustainability is important because humans are part of the biosphere and ecosystems must not be disturbed.
d) Solidarity with future generations. Such solidarity should serve as a permanent reference in interacting with the environment.
e) Environmental ethics must include a strict prohibition against damaging, polluting, and poisoning nature.
f) Development of the principle of proportionality. This means that development activities must be proportional and must not excessively exploit or damage nature.
g) The principle of assigning costs to the cause of environmental damage. This means that the costs of environmental restoration or repair must be borne by those who cause the damage (Muhammad Yuslih, 2022).

Environmental ethics in Islam is based on the principle of tawhid, which places the entire universe as Allah's creation that must be maintained in balance. From the perspective of Muhammad Qutb, the relationship between humans and nature is not exploitative, but rather one of trust (amanah) and moral responsibility. Nature is viewed as part of the signs of Allah's power (ayat kauniyah) that must be preserved and utilized wisely (Qutb, 1993). In the view of Muhammad Qutb, the modern environmental crisis arises from the loss of the spiritual dimension in human life. Modernity, which is overly oriented toward materialism, leads humans to regard nature merely as an economic object rather than as a trust from Allah (Quthub et al., 2015), (Qutb, 1993).

b. Humans as Khalifah and Responsibility toward the Environment

The concept of khalifah is the main foundation of environmental ethics in Islam. Allah SWT says:"(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels, 'Indeed, I will place upon the earth a khalifah (successive authority/vicegerent).'"(QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 30). This verse explains that humans are entrusted with managing the earth responsibly. According to Muhammad Qutb, the status of humans as khalifah does not mean that humans are free to exploit nature without limits; rather, they are tasked with maintaining balance and environmental sustainability (Quthub et al., 2015), (Qutb, 1993).

The concept of khalifah contains two main dimensions: 1) The utilization of natural resources for human needs, 2) Moral responsibility in maintaining the sustainability of ecosystems, 3) In the modern context, various environmental damages such as: a) Illegal deforestation, b) River pollution c) Mining exploitation d) Global warming.

indicate a failure of humans to fulfill the responsibility of the khalifah role. This shows that modern humans tend to prioritize economic interests over environmental sustainability (Nor & Dahliana, 2025), (azra, 2012). Among the most significant concepts in Islamic environmental ethics is khalifah (vicegerency or stewardship). The Qur'an states that Allah appointed human beings as khalifah on earth, granting them the responsibility to manage and care for creation. This concept has profound implications for environmental ethics because it defines humanity's role not as master and owner of nature but as trustee and caretaker.

The concept of khalifah implies both privilege and responsibility. Humans possess intellectual and moral capacities that enable them to manage natural resources effectively. However, these capacities must be exercised within ethical boundaries established by divine revelation. The authority granted to humanity is therefore conditional upon fulfilling the responsibilities associated with stewardship (Kusuma et al., 2024), (Syihabuddin et al., 2023). As khalifah, human beings are required to preserve biodiversity, protect ecosystems, and ensure that natural resources remain available for future generations. The exploitation of nature solely for short-term economic gain contradicts the spirit of vicegerency because it neglects the trust entrusted by Allah. Consequently, environmental conservation becomes an essential aspect of fulfilling the role of khalifah.

Several contemporary Muslim scholars argue that the concept of khalifah offers an alternative paradigm to modern anthropocentrism. While anthropocentrism often justifies environmental exploitation by prioritizing human interests above all else, the Islamic concept of khalifah emphasizes responsibility, accountability, and stewardship. This perspective encourages a balanced relationship between humans and nature, recognizing that all creation ultimately belongs to Allah (Murjani, 2022), (Ali, 1992)

Muhammad Qutb is one of the prominent contemporary Muslim thinkers whose ideas contribute significantly to Islamic ethical discourse. Although he did not formulate a systematic theory of environmental ethics, his writings on Islamic worldview, human nature, and civilization provide valuable insights for understanding environmental responsibility. Muhammad Qutb argues that human beings occupy a unique position within creation. They are honored by Allah with reason, moral consciousness, and freedom of choice. These qualities distinguish humans from other creatures and enable them to fulfill their role as khalifah. However, this privileged status does not justify domination or exploitation of nature. Instead, it increases human responsibility toward Allah and His creation, (Madani, 2025).

According to Muhammad Qutb, the foundation of all human activity should be tawhid. Human beings must recognize that their existence, knowledge, and resources originate from Allah. Therefore, every action—including the utilization of natural resources—must reflect obedience to divine guidance. Environmental exploitation driven by greed, materialism, and selfish interests represents a deviation from the principle of tawhid because it elevates human desires above divine commandments.

Muhammad Qutb further argues that many crises of modern civilization stem from a spiritual vacuum and the separation of human life from religious values. Modern societies often emphasize material progress while neglecting moral and spiritual development. As a result, nature is treated merely as an economic commodity rather than a trust from Allah. This worldview contributes

significantly to environmental degradation and ecological imbalance. For Muhammad Qutb, genuine progress cannot be measured solely by technological advancement or economic growth. True civilization must harmonize material development with moral and spiritual values. Such an approach encourages sustainable interaction with nature and prevents destructive patterns of exploitation (Sarif, 2016).

c. The Principle of Balance (Mīzān) in the Environment

Islam teaches the principle of balance (mīzān) as the foundation of the order of the universe. Allah SWT says:"And the heaven He has raised, and He has set the balance." (QS. Ar-Rahman [55]: 7). According to Muhammad Qutb, the balance of nature is evidence of the perfection of Allah's creation. Therefore, humans are not permitted to engage in actions that damage the ecological order. The concept of mīzān has strong relevance to modern environmental issues. Ecosystem damage caused by excessive exploitation leads to: a) climate change b) floods c) landslides d) clean water crises (Syukron et al., 2024), (Fitriani et al., 2025).

One of the fundamental principles of Islamic environmental ethics is mīzān (balance). The concept of mīzān originates from the Qur'anic worldview, which emphasizes that Allah created the universe in perfect order, proportion, and harmony. Every component of creation functions according to a divinely established system that maintains the stability of life. The Qur'an explicitly refers to mīzān as a manifestation of divine wisdom and commands human beings not to disturb this balance. In Islamic thought, mīzān extends beyond physical equilibrium and encompasses moral, social, and ecological dimensions. It signifies the harmonious relationship between humans, nature, and the Creator. Environmental degradation occurs when this balance is disrupted through excessive exploitation, wastefulness, pollution, and irresponsible consumption. Therefore, maintaining ecological balance is regarded not merely as an environmental concern but as a religious obligation (Fanani & Triani, 2023), (Kazmi, 2024). Contemporary scholars argue that the principle of mīzān provides a comprehensive framework for sustainable environmental management because it integrates ethical responsibility with ecological sustainability. Through this principle, Islam promotes moderation and discourages any form of excess that may lead to environmental destruction (Sholeha, 2019), Bsoul et al., 2022).

Although Muhammad Qutb did not formulate a specific theory of environmental ethics, the principle of balance occupies a central position within his broader understanding of the Islamic worldview. His writings consistently emphasize that Allah created the universe according to a precise order and that human beings must live in accordance with this divine system. According to Muhammad Qutb, Islam is a comprehensive way of life that seeks harmony between all dimensions of existence. He rejects the separation between spiritual and material aspects of life, arguing that true human development requires balance between worldly needs and spiritual obligations. This understanding can be extended to environmental issues, where balance becomes a guiding principle for human interaction with nature.

For Muhammad Qutb, human beings are not autonomous entities free to use natural resources without limitation. Rather, they are servants of Allah and trustees of His creation. Their relationship with nature should therefore reflect the balance established by Allah. Any action that disrupts ecological harmony represents a deviation from the Islamic worldview because it violates the divine order governing creation. Muhammad Qutb further argues that modern civilization has largely abandoned the principle of balance (HS, 2024), (Haq et al., 2025). Contemporary societies often prioritize economic growth, technological advancement, and material accumulation while neglecting

moral and spiritual considerations. As a result, environmental exploitation has become widespread, leading to ecological crises that threaten both humanity and the natural world.

A key aspect of Muhammad Qutb's thought is the importance of balancing human needs with ethical responsibility. Islam does not prohibit the utilization of natural resources. On the contrary, Allah created the earth and its resources for human benefit. However, this utilization must occur within moral limits and according to the principle of moderation. Muhammad Qutb emphasizes that human beings should avoid both extremes: excessive exploitation and complete neglect of natural resources. The Islamic approach encourages responsible utilization that satisfies legitimate human needs while preserving environmental sustainability. This balanced perspective differs from purely anthropocentric approaches that prioritize human interests regardless of environmental consequences (Murjani, 2022).

From Muhammad Qutb's perspective, environmental resources are part of Allah's trust (amanah). Consequently, humans are accountable for how they use and manage these resources. Overconsumption, wastefulness, and environmental destruction contradict the principle of mīzān because they exceed the limits established by divine guidance (Muhajirin, 2017), (Gulzar et al., 2021). This understanding is particularly relevant in addressing contemporary environmental challenges such as deforestation, climate change, and resource depletion. By adopting the principle of balance, societies can pursue development while maintaining ecological integrity and protecting the rights of future generations.

Muhammad Qutb strongly criticizes modern materialistic civilization for undermining the balance that should characterize human life. In his analysis, modern society often defines progress exclusively in terms of economic productivity, industrial expansion, and technological innovation. While these achievements may contribute to material prosperity, they frequently occur at the expense of environmental sustainability and moral responsibility (Mukhlis Yusuf Arbi, 2023).

According to Muhammad Qutb, environmental crises are symptoms of a deeper spiritual crisis. When human beings become disconnected from divine values, they begin to view nature solely as an economic commodity rather than as a sign of Allah's creation. This reductionist perspective encourages unlimited consumption and justifies the exploitation of natural resources without regard for ecological consequences (Nor & Dahliana, 2025).

The principle of mīzān offers an alternative to this materialistic worldview. By recognizing that the universe operates according to divinely established balance, humans are encouraged to exercise restraint, moderation, and responsibility. Economic development should therefore be guided by ethical considerations rather than driven solely by profit and consumption. This critique remains highly relevant today, particularly in discussions surrounding sustainable development. Many environmental problems stem from development models that prioritize short-term economic gains while ignoring long-term ecological impacts. Muhammad Qutb's emphasis on balance provides a moral framework for evaluating and reforming such models. This shows that violating the principle of balance has a direct impact on human life itself. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "A Muslim who plants a tree or sows seeds, and then a bird, a human, or an animal eats from it, it is regarded as charity for him." (HR. Bukhari).

This hadith shows that protecting the environment and planting trees are part of righteous deeds in Islam. Muhammad Qutb's thought on environmental ethics is highly relevant to current ecological conditions. The global environmental crisis shows the need for a development paradigm that is not only oriented toward economic profit but also considers moral and sustainability aspects. In the Indonesian context, various cases such as: a) deforestation b) forest fires c) river pollution d)

exploitation of natural resources become evidence of the weak environmental et become evidence of the weak environmental ethical awareness of modern society.

d. Preaching Environmental Ethics from an Islamic Perspective

Environmental degradation has become one of the most pressing global challenges in the contemporary world. Climate change, deforestation, pollution, biodiversity loss, and the excessive exploitation of natural resources have threatened the sustainability of life on earth. These environmental problems are not merely technical or scientific issues; they are also ethical and moral concerns that require changes in human attitudes and behavior. Consequently, environmental ethics has emerged as an important framework for guiding human interaction with nature and promoting ecological responsibility (Munawir, 2019), (Bsoul et al., 2022).

Within the Islamic tradition, environmental ethics is inseparable from the concept of da'wah (Islamic preaching). Da'wah is not limited to inviting people to perform religious rituals but also encompasses efforts to cultivate moral awareness and responsible behavior in all aspects of life. This includes educating individuals and communities about their obligations toward the environment as part of their religious responsibilities. Therefore, preaching environmental ethics from an Islamic perspective seeks to integrate ecological consciousness with faith, spirituality, and moral accountability (Yusuf & Marjuni, 2022).

Islam views nature as a sign (*ayah*) of Allah's greatness and wisdom. The Qur'an repeatedly encourages human beings to observe, reflect upon, and learn from the natural world. As a result, environmental conservation becomes an act of worship and obedience to Allah rather than merely a social or political obligation. Da'wah that incorporates environmental ethics thus serves as a means of fostering ecological awareness grounded in religious values.

Islamic environmental ethics is founded upon several key principles, including tawhid (the oneness of Allah), amanah (trust), khalifah (stewardship), mizan (balance), and ‘adl (justice). These principles establish a comprehensive ethical framework that governs the relationship between human beings and nature. The principle of tawhid emphasizes that Allah is the Creator and Owner of the universe. Consequently, human beings do not possess absolute ownership over natural resources. Instead, they are entrusted with the responsibility of managing them according to divine guidance. This understanding fosters humility and discourages exploitative attitudes toward the environment (Muhammad et al., n.d.), (Gulzar et al., 2021).

The concept of khalifah further strengthens environmental responsibility by assigning human beings the role of stewards on earth. As khalifah, humans are expected to preserve ecological balance and ensure that natural resources are utilized responsibly. Environmental destruction is therefore viewed as a violation of the trust entrusted by Allah.The principle of mizan highlights the balance and harmony that characterize Allah's creation. Human activities should maintain rather than disrupt this equilibrium. Pollution, overconsumption, and environmental degradation represent forms of imbalance that contradict Islamic teachings (Kazmi, 2024). Together, these principles provide a strong foundation for environmental ethics and offer important themes for Islamic preaching. Through da'wah, these values can be communicated to individuals and communities, encouraging environmentally responsible behavior.

Muhammad Qutb is recognized as one of the leading contemporary Muslim thinkers who contributed significantly to discussions on Islamic education, civilization, and worldview. Although he did not specifically develop a systematic theory of environmental ethics, his writings contain ideas that

are highly relevant to environmental responsibility and ecological awareness. According to Muhammad Qutb, da'wah is fundamentally an effort to restore humanity's connection with Allah and guide people toward living according to Islamic principles. He argues that many contemporary crises-including social, moral, and environmental problems—originate from humanity's alienation from divine guidance. Modern civilization, in his view, has become excessively materialistic and has neglected spiritual and moral values.

Muhammad Qutb emphasizes that Islam provides a comprehensive framework for human life. Religious teachings should not be confined to personal worship but should influence all aspects of social behavior, including interactions with nature. Therefore, environmental responsibility becomes part of a broader Islamic mission to establish harmony between human beings, society, and the natural world. For Muhammad Qutb, effective da'wah must transform not only beliefs but also behavior. It should cultivate moral consciousness and encourage individuals to fulfill their responsibilities as servants of Allah and stewards of the earth. Consequently, environmental ethics should be integrated into da'wah efforts as an essential component of Islamic moral education.From Muhammad Qutb's perspective, environmental ethics can be understood as an important subject of Islamic preaching because environmental problems reflect deeper spiritual and moral deficiencies. Environmental destruction often results from greed, selfishness, materialism, and the absence of accountability before Allah. Therefore, addressing environmental issues requires more than technological solutions; it requires moral and spiritual transformation (Kusuma et al., 2024).

Islamic preaching can contribute to environmental protection by emphasizing the religious significance of environmental stewardship. Through sermons, educational programs, community initiatives, and religious institutions, da'wah can promote values such as moderation, responsibility, gratitude, and respect for nature. Muhammad Qutb's emphasis on the Islamic worldview is particularly relevant in this context. He argues that human beings should perceive the universe as a manifestation of Allah's signs rather than merely a collection of resources for economic exploitation (Fanani & Triani, 2023). This perspective encourages believers to develop a respectful and caring attitude toward the environment. Furthermore, da'wah can challenge the consumerist culture that contributes to environmental degradation. Muhammad Qutb criticizes modern materialism for encouraging unlimited desires and excessive consumption. By promoting Islamic values of moderation and self-restraint, environmental preaching can help reduce behaviors that harm ecological systems.

Muhammad Qutb emphasizes the transformative role of education and da'wah in shaping human consciousness. Environmental awareness cannot be achieved solely through laws and regulations; it requires the internalization of ethical values. Da'wah plays a critical role in this process by cultivating moral commitment and spiritual responsibility. Religious leaders, educators, and Islamic institutions can contribute significantly to environmental protection by incorporating ecological themes into their preaching and educational activities. Topics such as conservation, sustainable consumption, waste reduction, and environmental justice can be framed within Islamic teachings to make them more meaningful and relevant to Muslim communities. Moreover, da'wah can encourage collective action by emphasizing the communal dimensions of environmental responsibility (ur Annisa Tri Handayani, 2024). Environmental protection is not merely an individual obligation but also a social duty that requires cooperation and solidarity. This perspective aligns with Muhammad Qutb's vision of Islam as a comprehensive system that integrates personal morality with social transformation.

Considering the importance of environmental ethics for environmental preservation, it needs to be preached and socialized to the wider community. According to the author, at least three strategic

domains can be developed to promote environmental ethics in society: the family, educational institutions, and religious scholars (ulama).

a. Family

The family is the first educational institution a child experiences from birth. Through the family, a child obtains their first learning experiences. It is also within the family that a child's intellectual capacity and moral character are first formed. Therefore, those closest to the child—especially parents-play a crucial role in shaping and instilling ethics and morality, including environmental ethics. Parents can teach and instill environmental ethics from an early age, educating children about the importance of loving and caring for the environment.

b. Islamic Educational Institutions

The dissemination of environmental ethics from an Islamic perspective can also be carried out through Islamic educational institutions. Education is an appropriate medium to systematically and sustainably promote environmental ethics within an Islamic framework. Through education, the internalization of environmental ethics from an early age becomes easier. This is because education is not only a medium for transferring knowledge, but also for transferring moral values and ethics. In Islamic educational institutions, individuals are trained in both intellectual capacity and moral character.

c. Ulama (Islamic Scholars)

In addition to family and educational institutions, the dissemination of environmental ethics in Islam will be effective if it involves ulama. Without disregarding the role of other leaders, ulama are recognized as having a central role in society. Moreover, Indonesian society is known to be highly paternalistic, where ulama are often regarded as role models (Munawir, 2019).

4. CONCLUSION

Although environmental destruction is increasingly severe and natural disasters continue to strike Indonesia, these conditions have not yet led to widespread awareness among some members of society. On the contrary, destructive behavior toward nature is increasingly rampant in this resource-rich country. Under various pretexts, many people in Indonesia recklessly clear and destroy forests without remorse. Natural resources are continuously exploited without regard for ecological damage. This situation must not be allowed to continue and concrete steps must be taken to stop it.

Based on the discussion of environmental ethics from the perspective of Muhammad Qutb, it can be concluded that environmental ethics in Islam is grounded in the principles of tawhid, khalifah (vicegerency), balance (mīzān), trust (amanah), and the prohibition of corruption (fasād) on earth. Nature is viewed as Allah's creation that possesses order and balance, and therefore humans, as khalifah, have a moral and spiritual responsibility to preserve it. Muhammad Qutb emphasizes that the modern environmental crisis is essentially the result of a moral and spiritual crisis in humanity, which has become detached from divine values. A materialistic paradigm and excessive exploitation of natural resources have caused humans to lose awareness that the environment is a trust from Allah that must be responsibly maintained. One of the steps that must be taken is the preaching (da'wah) of environmental ethics to all levels of society. Environmental ethics is one of the solutions to the environmental crisis affecting Indonesia and the world today. Through environmental ethics, humanity is made aware of the dangers of environmental destruction. It also reminds humans that all living beings have equal rights to live and exist on this planet Earth.

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