



Ecology in the Qur'an: Principles of Sustainability and Nature Conservation in Pikukuh Baduy

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Abstract

This study explores the ecological principles of the Qur'an, focusing on sustainability and nature conservation as a moral and spiritual framework for addressing contemporary environmental challenges. As climate change, biodiversity loss, and ecological degradation intensify globally, the integration of religious perspectives into environmental ethics becomes increasingly significant. The primary aim of this research is to examine Qur'anic teachings on how humans should interact with the environment and manage natural resources responsibly. Using a qualitative thematic analysis, the study identifies and interprets relevant verses that emphasize humanity's role as khalifah (stewards) on earth, the prohibition of excess and waste, and the importance of maintaining ecological balance. The findings indicate that the Qur'an provides a comprehensive ethical foundation for sustainability, highlighting values such as justice, prudence, accountability, and compassion. These principles are not only spiritually meaningful but also practically relevant in shaping sustainable behaviors, policies, and community initiatives. Furthermore, the incorporation of indigenous wisdom, such as the Pikukuh Karuhun of the Baduy community, illustrates how Qur'anic ecological ethics can be harmonized with local traditions to promote holistic environmental stewardship. Overall, this research demonstrates that Qur'anic teachings extend beyond spiritual guidance to offer practical solutions for environmental preservation. By integrating spiritual values with sustainability practices, individuals and communities can enhance ecological awareness, foster collective responsibility, and contribute to the creation of a more just, balanced, and sustainable world for present and future generations.

Keywords: ecology, nature conservation, Pikukuh Baduy, Qur'an, sustainability, thematic analysis

Introduction

The world today is facing an unprecedented environmental crisis marked by climate change, biodiversity loss, deforestation, pollution, and large-scale habitat destruction. These ecological challenges have grown into global issues that threaten not only

ecosystems but also human survival and well-being, making sustainability and environmental preservation urgent priorities for humanity (Abu Orabi et al., 2024; Harimurti & Alam, 2024; Alauddin et al., 2021). Environmental Legal Responsibility Of Non-Metal And Rock Mining Business Persons In Sharia



Perspective: Study In The City Of Tidore Islands. *Journal of Transcendental Law*, 3(2), 90-97.). Efforts to Save the Universe: Muhammadiyah's Concern for the Environment. *Suhuf: International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 36(1), 44-54.). While modern science and technology have contributed to developing solutions, they alone are insufficient to address the depth of the crisis. Increasingly, attention is being directed toward cultural and spiritual traditions that provide ethical frameworks for living harmoniously with nature (Sule & Musa, 2025). Among these traditions, the Qur'an emerges as a rich and profound source of guidance, offering moral, spiritual, and practical perspectives on environmental stewardship and resource management (Al Kubaisi, 2024; Beni, 2024).

Although significant research has been conducted on the relationship between religion and the environment, there remains a noticeable gap in exploring the Qur'an specifically as a foundational text on ecological ethics (Beni, 2024). Some scholars and practitioners dismiss religion as irrelevant in addressing contemporary ecological problems, arguing that faith-based approaches cannot adequately respond to global environmental challenges (Alageel & Alomair, 2024). This perception overlooks the depth of Qur'anic principles that can be directly transformed into actionable sustainability practices (Hernanda et al., 2023). Far from being outdated, Qur'anic

teachings emphasize moderation, justice, accountability, and balance—all of which resonate with modern ecological concerns. Consequently, a critical and systematic examination of Qur'anic ecological principles is essential in order to bridge the gap between spiritual guidance and environmental practice (Alrashdi & Al Thobaity, 2024; Beni, 2024).

The central question that drives this research is: "How can the principles of sustainability and nature preservation in the Qur'an be applied to the context of today's ecological challenges?" To answer this question, this study analyzes selected verses of the Qur'an alongside classical and contemporary interpretations of scholars. Through thematic analysis, the research seeks to uncover the Qur'an's underlying ecological values—such as stewardship (khalifah), moderation (wasatiyyah), justice ('adl), and respect for creation (rahmah)—and to demonstrate how these values can inspire practical, community-based solutions for ecological preservation (Borzuoi et al., 2024; Beni, 2024). By highlighting these values, the study aims to show that Qur'anic teachings are not abstract ideals but living principles that can shape human behavior and guide environmental policy (Sule & Musa, 2025).

This research also creates space for evaluating differing perspectives on integrating spiritual values into sustainability discourse. On the one



hand, proponents argue that faith-based ethics strengthen motivation and collective responsibility for ecological action. On the other hand, critics highlight the risk of overly idealistic or symbolic interpretations that may not directly translate into effective environmental management. By examining these perspectives, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of how spiritual and scientific approaches can complement rather than compete with one another in addressing the ecological crisis (Sule & Musa, 2025).

The Qur'an further frames environmental stewardship within the concept of human responsibility as caliphs (khalifah) on earth. This designation entails a moral and spiritual mandate to safeguard creation, prevent corruption (fasad), and preserve ecological balance (Cheema et al., 2024; Alauddin et al., 2021). Through this perspective, sustainability becomes not merely a social or ecological necessity but also a religious duty. Principles such as prudence, justice, accountability, and compassion, which are embedded in the Qur'an, possess significant potential to influence personal behavior, community initiatives, and policy-making processes toward a more sustainable future (Fakhrzad et al., 2024; Costanzo et al., 2021; Ruhullah et al., 2024).

Ultimately, this study aims to enrich the dialogue on ecology and religion by integrating Qur'anic perspectives into broader sustainability

discourse. By situating Qur'anic principles alongside indigenous wisdom, particularly the Pikukuh Karuhun of the Baduy community, the research underscores the possibility of aligning spiritual heritage with local practices in order to develop effective ecological strategies (Turmudi & Iksan, 2023). The findings are expected to inspire greater awareness, inform policymaking, and empower both Muslim communities and society at large to confront the complex environmental challenges of our time. In this way, the Qur'an can be seen not only as a sacred text offering spiritual guidance but also as a timeless ecological charter that continues to provide meaningful direction for humanity's relationship with nature (Beni, 2024).

Method

This study employed a qualitative research design with a focus on thematic textual analysis to explore Qur'anic concepts of ecology, sustainability, and environmental preservation. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows an in-depth interpretation of scriptural texts, enabling the identification of underlying ethical principles that can be connected to contemporary environmental issues (Adlini et al., 2022).

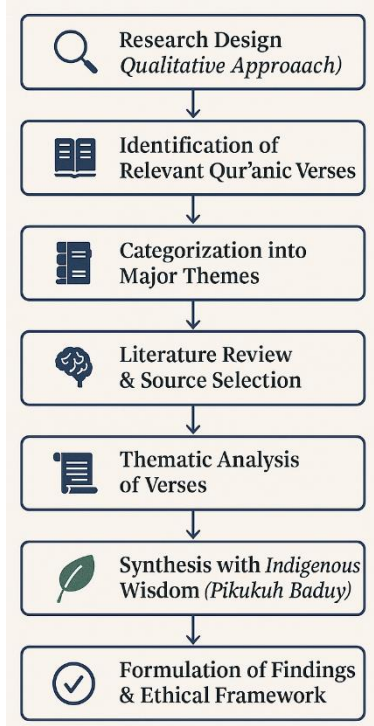


Figure 1. Research Flow

The flow of this research method (Figure 1) can be described sequentially in a structured narrative. The study begins with the choice of a qualitative research design, which is considered appropriate for capturing the depth of meaning and interpretation contained in the Qur'an. From this starting point, the researcher proceeds with the identification of relevant verses, ensuring that only passages directly related to themes of ecology, sustainability, and environmental preservation are selected. Once the verses are collected, they are then organized into thematic clusters to create analytical clarity, such as natural resource management, prevention of environmental damage, maintaining ecosystem balance, and human responsibility. After classification, a

comprehensive literature review is conducted to validate and strengthen the textual findings, drawing on sources from Islamic scholarship, environmental ethics, and sustainability studies.

Following this, the verses undergo thematic analysis, which allows recurring ecological values to be extracted and highlighted. This stage is reinforced by the use of tafsir traditions, both classical and contemporary, so that the interpretation remains multi-layered and authoritative. To enhance contextual relevance, the research also integrates indigenous knowledge, particularly the environmental wisdom of the Baduy community through their *Pikukuh Karuhun*. By combining these perspectives, the study reaches its final stage: the synthesis of findings into an ethical framework that merges Qur'anic ecological principles with practical conservation strategies.

This methodological sequence ensures that the research remains grounded in divine revelation, enriched with academic scholarship, and strengthened by local wisdom, resulting in a holistic framework for understanding sustainability and environmental preservation.

1. Identification of Relevant Verses

Verses of the Qur'an that contain ecological, environmental, and sustainability themes were identified. The selection was guided by keywords such as nature, balance, corruption (*fasad*), justice (*'adl*), and caliphate



(khalifah). Examples of the verses studied include Al-A'raf (7:31) on moderation, Al-Baqarah (2:30) on the role of humans as caliphs, and Al-Hadid (57:25) on justice.

2. Categorization into Thematic Clusters

After identifying the verses, they were grouped into four major themes:

- 1) Natural Resource Management (wise consumption and stewardship)
- 2) Prevention of Environmental Damage (avoidance of corruption and destruction)
- 3) Ecosystem Balance (harmony between humans, nature, and divine law)
- 4) Human Responsibility (caliphal role and accountability before God).

3. Literature Review and Triangulation

A comprehensive review of scholarly works was conducted, emphasizing sources that link Islamic teachings with ecology, sustainability, and conservation. Literature was selected using criteria of relevance, credibility, and timeliness. Triangulation was applied by comparing Qur'anic interpretations with modern environmental studies to ensure validity and comprehensiveness.

4. Interpretation and Thematic Analysis

Each verse was interpreted using classical exegesis (tafsir) and contemporary scholarly perspectives. Thematic analysis allowed recurring ecological values—such as moderation, justice, responsibility, and compassion—to be extracted and contextualized within current environmental challenges.

5. Synthesis with Indigenous Wisdom

The Qur'anic ecological principles were compared with the Pikukuh Baduy values of environmental conservation. This comparative synthesis aimed to highlight convergence between divine guidance and local wisdom as complementary frameworks for sustainable living.

Result and Discussion

1. The Principle of Sustainability in the Teachings of the Qur'an

The principle of sustainability in the teachings of the Qur'an is an important foundation that emphasizes the need to maintain balance and harmony in nature (Gu & Bhatt, 2024). The Qur'an teaches that nature is a creation of Allah that must be respected and protected, and that humans have a responsibility to manage natural resources wisely (Hall et al., 2024). One of the main principles emphasized in the Qur'an is the prohibition of excessive use of natural resources. In QS Al-A'raf: 31, Allah said:



يٰۤاٰدَمُ خُذْ زِينَتَكَ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلْ وَاشْرَبْ وَلَا تُسْرِفْ ۚ اِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ

"Eat and drink, but don't overdo it. Indeed, He does not like people who are excessive."

This verse emphasizes that excessive consumption can damage the balance of ecosystems and threaten the survival of other creatures. In addition, the Qur'an also teaches the importance of preserving the environment (Khazaei-Pool et al., 2024). Deep QS Al-Baqarah 164:

لَا يَتْلُوْنَ

"Indeed, there are signs (of the oneness and greatness of Allah) for the people who think."

God reminds humans of the signs of His greatness found in the creation of nature, such as the heavens, the earth, and various living things. This verse invites humans to reflect and appreciate the beauty and order of nature, which should be a motivation to maintain and preserve it. This concept is in line with the principle of sustainability, where humans play the role of not only users, but also as protectors and guardians of nature (Liu & Lai, 2021).

The principle of sustainability in the Qur'an is also reflected in the teachings on fair and sustainable resource management (Mahmutovic, 2022). In QS Al-Isra: 31, Allah reminds humans not to damage the earth and not to cause damage. This suggests that the management of natural resources should be done in a way that is not detrimental

to the environment and future generations. In this context, sustainable agricultural practices, efficient water management, and protection of biodiversity become highly relevant (Mardani et al., 2024).

The application of sustainability principles in daily life can be done in various ways. For example, individuals can adopt a more environmentally friendly lifestyle by reducing plastic use, saving energy, and supporting sustainable products (Muwaffiqillah et al., 2024). In addition, communities can collaborate on environmental conservation projects, such as tree planting, waste management, and water resource conservation (Puglisi & Buitendag, 2022).

By applying the principles of sustainability taught in the Qur'an, man not only fulfills his responsibilities as caliphs on earth, but also contributes to the well-being of the environment and the survival of all beings, the Qur'an's teachings on sustainability provide a clear guide for humanity to live in harmony with nature. By understanding and applying these principles, we can create a better and more sustainable world, in accordance with God's will and for the good of future generations.

2. Man's Responsibility as a Caliph: Implications for Nature Conservation

The concept of man as a caliph on earth is one of the fundamental teachings



in Islam taken from the Qur'an (Ragozina, 2023). QS Al-Baqarah: 30

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰئِكَةِ اِنِّىْ جَاعِلٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ خَلِيْفَةًۢ ۚ قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا وَیَسْفِكُ الدِّیْمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ اِنِّىْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ

"Remember when your Lord said to the angels: "Surely I will make a caliph on earth". They said: "Why do you want to make (the caliph) on earth a man who will cause harm to it and shed blood, when we are always praising you and purifying you?" The Lord said: "Surely I know what you do not know".

Where Allah says that He will create a caliph on earth. The term "caliph" here refers to the role of man as the manager and leader who is responsible for all of Allah's creation. This responsibility is not only a right, but also a mandate that must be carried out with full awareness and commitment. As caliphs, humans are expected to manage and preserve nature, maintain ecosystem balance, and ensure that natural resources are used wisely and sustainably (Rodríguez-Varela et al., 2024).

Understanding the role of humans as caliphs can encourage more responsible actions towards the environment (Rosyanti et al., 2024). When individuals realize that they are stewards entrusted with protecting the earth, they will be more likely to take steps that support the preservation of nature. For example, awareness of these responsibilities can drive practices such

as waste reduction, the use of renewable energy, and the protection of biodiversity. In this context, collective action from society is essential, in which each individual contributes to creating a better environment.

However, in carrying out the role of caliph, humans are also faced with various challenges. One of the main challenges is economic pressures that often encourage overexploitation of natural resources (Seidu et al., 2024). In many cases, short-term interests often trump long-term interests in preserving the environment. In addition, the lack of awareness and education about the importance of nature conservation is also an obstacle in carrying out this responsibility. Many people do not understand the impact of their actions on the environment, so destructive actions are often done without realizing it.

The Qur'an provides a clear guide to overcoming these challenges. In various verses, Allah reminds humans of the importance of protecting the earth and all its contents (Seitalieva, 2024). For example, in Qur'an Al-An'am: 141, Allah emphasizes that man should not destroy the earth after Allah created it well. This verse reminds us that any action that damages the environment is a violation of the mandate given. In addition, the Qur'an also encourages mankind to collaborate in kindness and help each other in protecting the environment, as stated in QS Al-Ma'idah: 2, which invites the ummah to help each other in kindness and piety.



By understanding and internalizing the concept of responsibility as a caliph, humans can play an active role in the preservation of nature. It includes not only individual actions, but also collective efforts within the community to create policies that support sustainability and environmental preservation (Seitalieva, 2024). Through education, awareness, and consistent action, we can fulfill our mandate as caliphs and preserve the earth as a precious heritage for future generations. Thus, this responsibility is not only a moral obligation, but also an integral part of faith and religious practice in Islam.

3. Environmental Ethical Values in the Qur'an

The Qur'an contains various ethical values that are very relevant in the context of environmental conservation. These values not only provide moral guidance for individuals, but can also serve as the basis for collective action in protecting and preserving nature. One of the main principles emphasized in the Qur'an is justice (Alamdard et al., 2024). Fairness in the management of natural resources means that every living thing deserves a fair share of the available resources. In QS Al-Hadid: 25:

لَقَدْ أَرْسَلْنَا رُسُلَنَا بِالْبَيِّنَاتِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْمِيزَانَ لِيَقُومَ النَّاسُ
بِالْقِسْطِ وَأَنْزَلْنَا الْحَدِيدَ فِيهِ بَأْسٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَنْفَعٌ لِلنَّاسِ وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللَّهُ مَنْ
يَنْصُرُهُ وَرُسُلَهُ بِالْغَيْبِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ قَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ

"Indeed, We have sent Our Messengers with clear proofs and We

have sent down with them the Book of Justice so that people can do justice. And We created iron in which there is great power and benefits for mankind, and so that Allah may know who helps Him and His Messengers, but Allah does not see it. Indeed, Allah is Mighty and Mighty".

God affirms that He sent apostles with guidance and justice, which shows that justice is a fundamental value in all aspects of life, including in man's relationship with the environment.

In addition to justice, responsibility is also a very important ethical value in the Qur'an. Humans are appointed caliphs on earth, which means that they have the responsibility to manage and protect nature ("Coping Discrepancy Between Rationality and Religiosity," 2024). In Al-Baqarah: 30, Allah states that humans are leaders on earth, and as leaders, they must act wisely and responsibly. These responsibilities include the sustainable management of natural resources and the protection of biodiversity. By understanding these responsibilities, individuals and communities can be more aware of the impact of their actions on the environment and seek to reduce the damage they may cause.

Compassion for living beings is also an ethical value emphasized in the Qur'an. God created various living things for a specific purpose, and humans are expected to honor and protect His creation. In Qur'an al-An'am:



38, Allah states that no creature is created in vain, and each creature has its own role in the ecosystem. Therefore, actions that damage the environment and threaten the existence of other living beings are contrary to the principle of compassion taught in the Qur'an.

The integration of environmental ethical values in current policies and practices is essential to create positive change. For example, in environmental policy development, the principle of justice can be applied by ensuring that all groups of people, especially the vulnerable, have equitable access to natural resources. In addition, environmental education based on the ethical values of the Qur'an can help increase public awareness about the importance of protecting the environment and preserving nature.

Practices such as responsible waste management, the use of renewable energy, and the protection of natural habitats can be integrated with the ethical values taught in the Qur'an. Thus, the values of environmental ethics in the Qur'an are not only moral guidelines, but can also be implemented in concrete policies and actions that support environmental conservation. Through the application of these values, humanity can contribute to the sustainability of the earth and create a better world for future generations.

4. The Impact of Environmental Damage: A Review of the Qur'an and Proposed Solutions

Environmental damage has a wide and serious impact, both for humans and other living things. In the perspective of the Qur'an, this damage is seen as a violation of the mandate given to man as a caliph on earth. The Qur'an reminds that acts of destroying the environment not only have an impact on nature, but can also result in serious social and economic consequences. For example, water and air pollution can cause severe health problems, while deforestation can result in habitat loss for various species, which in turn disrupts the balance of ecosystems.

One of the impacts of environmental damage emphasized in the Qur'an is the emergence of disasters and difficulties in life due to irresponsible human actions. In Qur'an Ar-Rum: 41, Allah says that the damage on land and in the sea is caused by the deeds of human hands. This verse shows that environmental damage is the result of human actions that do not pay attention to the principles of sustainability and nature preservation. When humans neglect their responsibilities as caliphs, the negative impact will be felt by all living beings.

To overcome this problem, the Qur'an provides several solutions that can be implemented. First, the importance of environmental awareness and education. People need to be taught about the importance of protecting the environment and the impact of their actions on nature. Education based on Qur'anic values can help raise awareness



of the responsibility of the caliph and encourage more responsible action towards the environment.

Second, the Qur'an encourages collaboration and cooperation in protecting the environment. In QS Al-Ma'idah: 2, Allah invites mankind to help each other in goodness and piety. This means that environmental conservation efforts must be undertaken collectively, where individuals, communities, and governments work together to address environmental issues. Community projects that focus on greening, waste management, and biodiversity protection can be concrete examples of this collaboration.

Third, sustainable management of natural resources is also a solution proposed in the Qur'an. Humans are reminded not to overuse resources and to maintain the balance of the ecosystem. By applying sustainability principles in resource management, we can prevent further damage and ensure that natural resources can be enjoyed by future generations. Therefore, the impact of environmental damage faced today requires serious attention and real action. The Qur'an provides clear guidance on how man should act as a responsible caliph. By raising awareness, encouraging collaboration, and implementing sustainable resource management, we can address environmental challenges and create a better world for all living beings.

5. Principles of Sustainability and Conservation of Nature in Pikukuh Baduy

Pikukuh Karuhun Baduy Tribe is a very important guideline for the Baduy people, which is rooted in the Sunda Wiwitan belief. This belief has no written scripture, but is passed down orally from generation to generation, starting with the supreme leader known as "puun". This pikukuh contains advice and taboos that govern the daily behavior of the Baduy people, including maintaining customary land which is considered sacred. In this context, Pikukuh serves as a living principle that directs people to live in harmony and harmony with nature (Meilani et al., 2022).

One of the important aspects of Pikukuh is the understanding of the creation of the world according to the Sunda Wiwitan beliefs. The Baduy people believe that God created the human world through several phases, starting from the gumulug (dark ages) to developing into the world that is now inhabited by humans. In their view, humans have the responsibility to uphold and implement the teachings of Karuhun which are summarized in Pikukuh and Buyut. Pikukuh contains recommendations, obligations, and prohibitions that must be obeyed, while Buyut includes taboos or prohibited acts.

Violation of the teachings of Pikukuh is considered a sin that can bring disaster. To cleanse the sin, the Baduy people carried out a sweeping ceremony. The level of the offense also



determines the severity of the penalty; The higher the position of the offender, the heavier the punishment. In some cases, the offender can be alienated from society, showing how serious the violation is against Pikukuh.

In the context of biblical values, Pikukuh and Great-Grandfather teach obedience, both to God, others, and nature. Some examples of Pikukuh taught from generation to generation include principles of preserving nature, such as the prohibition of cutting down long trees, connecting short ones, and taking large or small ones without permission. These principles reflect respect for nature and responsibility to maintain the balance of ecosystems.

This is in line with the principles of sustainability and nature preservation taught in the Qur'an. In many verses, the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of protecting and caring for nature as a mandate from God. For example, in Surah Al-An'am (6:38), Allah says that all creatures on earth and in the heavens are His creation and have the right to live. This reflects the view that humans are not only the rulers, but also the guardians and protectors of nature (Sujana, 2020).

The Baduy people also show steadfastness in holding on to their ancestral traditions, which are rooted in a strong religious system. They understand religion as a relationship between the way of thinking and behaving that is taught orally. This can be seen from the simplicity of their lives,

where they do not use electronic devices and stick to traditional values (Sutisna et al., 2023).

However, even though the Baduy people tried to maintain Pikukuh and Buyut, they also made adjustments to the times. For example, a student who visited Baduy Luar reported that although the Baduy people do not use electronic devices in their homes, there is one hut outside the village that has an electricity connection, where a young Baduy man was seen using a mobile phone. This shows that while they are committed to preserving tradition, there is room for adjustment that does not change the essence of Pikukuh and Buyut.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the Qur'an provides a holistic and comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between humans and the environment. The principles of sustainability articulated in the Qur'an emphasize moderation, ecological balance, justice, and the rejection of wastefulness. These principles are inseparable from the human role as khalifah (stewards of the earth), a responsibility that requires awareness, accountability, and commitment to protect natural resources for the benefit of both present and future generations. The ethical values found in the Qur'an—justice, responsibility, and compassion—serve not only as spiritual guidance but also as practical foundations for shaping ecological



policies and everyday practices that foster environmental preservation.

In parallel, the Pikukuh Karuhun of the Baduy people reflects indigenous wisdom that resonates strongly with Qur'anic ecological principles. Their adherence to oral traditions, taboos, and communal rules concerning the environment highlights a lived example of sustainability rooted in cultural and spiritual awareness. This convergence between Qur'anic teachings and indigenous practices illustrates that ecological ethics can be strengthened when divine revelation and local wisdom are integrated.

The increasing impact of environmental damage serves as both a global challenge and a moral warning. The Qur'an calls humanity to respond through education, awareness, collaboration, and sustainable management of resources. Thus, ecological preservation is not only a scientific or social concern but also a spiritual obligation.

Overall, the Qur'an offers more than abstract moral teachings; it provides actionable guidance that aligns with contemporary sustainability efforts. By integrating these Qur'anic principles with local traditions such as those of the Baduy community, humanity is equipped with a multidimensional framework to face environmental crises. Such integration underscores the urgency of combining spiritual values, cultural heritage, and modern science to create a just, sustainable, and

harmonious world for future generations.

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