

ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATION TAFSIR LINGKUNGAN

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ABSTRACT

As the earth ages, the problem of earth damage also ages. Conservation is a necessity for humans and the environment. In an effort to preserve the environment, effective and efficient approaches are needed to build human awareness as caliphs on this earth. Caring for the environment is the duty and responsibility of all elements, using their respective approaches. Among them, a religious approach through thematic interpretations of ecological verses (*maudhu'i*). Some of the terms that are discussed in environmental interpretation are the environment (*al-bī'ah*), the whole of nature (*al-'ālamīn*), the sky or universe (*al-samā'*), the earth (*al-arḍ*), water (*al-mā'*), air (*al-rīḥ*), and mountains (*al-jabal*). Based on the interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an, in general the things that can be done as an effort to protect and preserve the environment are; humans become caliphs on earth, treating nature based on obedience to Allah SWT, sustainability and balance, and optimizing human potential to manage and utilize the earth's products.

Keywords: environmental interpretation, environment, ecological verses, conservation.

ABSTRAK

Seiring dengan menuanya bumi, masalah kerusakan bumi juga turut menua. Konservasi menjadi kebutuhan bagi manusia dan lingkungannya. Dalam upaya menjaga kelestarian lingkungan, dibutuhkan pendekatan-pendekatan yang efektif dan efisien untuk membangun kesadaran manusia sebagai khalifah di muka bumi ini. Merawat lingkungan menjadi tugas dan tanggung jawab semua unsur, dengan menggunakan pendekatannya masing-masing. Di antaranya, pendekatan agama melalui penafsiran-penafsiran ayat-ayat ekologi secara tematik (maudhū'i). Beberapa term yang menjadi pembahasan dalam tafsir lingkungan adalah lingkungan hidup (al-bī'ah), seluruh alam (al-'ālamīn), langit atau jagad raya (al-samā'), bumi (al-arḍ), air (al-mā'), udara (al-rīḥ), dan gunung (al-jabal). Berdasarkan penafsiran ayat al-Qur'an, secara garis besar hal yang bisa dilakukan sebagai upaya menjaga dan melestarikan lingkungan adalah; manusia menjadi khalifah di muka bumi, memperlakukan alam berasaskan ketaatan kepada Allah swt, keberlanjutan, dan

keseimbangan, dan optimalisasi potensi manusia untuk mengelola dan memanfaatkan hasil bumi.

Kata-kata kunci: *tafsir lingkungan, lingkungan hidup, ayat ekologi, konservasi*

A. INTRODUCTION

In a press release, the Directorate General of Pollution and Environmental Damage Control of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry revealed its success in increasing the Environmental Quality Index (IKLH) by 0.12 points and achieving the national target. The government's success cannot be separated from the urgency of maintaining and maintaining environmental quality for human survival. Environmental problems are indeed one of the contemporary issues and are of global concern, because the impacts they cause greatly affect human life. This has become a warning to humans in the QS. Al-Qashash (28):77.

لَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ God bless you وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْ

And, seek what Allah has bestowed upon you (rewards) in the land of the afterlife, but do not forget your share in this world. Do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you and do not cause harm on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like people who do damage.

This verse briefly describes the symbolic mutualism between the environment and humans themselves. The correlation between the two is very close. Humans can be the main source of damage that occurs on earth. On the other hand, humans can also be the main source of maintaining the balance and existence of the environment. In return, the environment offers goodness to fulfill human needs. The prohibition of doing damage on earth is a mandate for humans wherever they are.

The living environment is defined as the unity of space with all objects, forces, circumstances and living creatures, including humans and their behavior, which influence nature itself (Mulia & Setiawati, 2021) . The environment and all forms of phenomena that accompany it fall into the category of Kauniyah verses, which act as a reminder of the greatness of the Creator. Humans were honored by being crowned as caliphs in charge of maintaining the sustainability of the environment. Human caliphate on earth is interpreted as a friendly relationship, not ownership or exploitation of nature. The goal is to create balance in the ecosystem so that nature is able to run according to the purpose of its creation (Shihab, 2023).

Various approaches were taken in an effort to prevent damage and also preserve it. The policy and legislative approach has given rise to a number of policies, for example Law (UU) Number 32 of 2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management. Likewise with the institutional approach, various efforts have also been made. For example, increasing IKLH which includes the Water Quality Index (IKA), Air Quality Index (IKU), and Land Cover Quality Index (IKTL). In fact, social and cultural approaches through traditional communities also play a role in protecting the environment. However, approaches through the role of religion and ethics are still often ignored (Indonesian Ministry of Religion, 2009). An approach through interpreting the Koran is a necessity and an effort to enlighten the public about the environment.

Environmental or ecological interpretation is not only present to enrich the style of interpretation. However, more than that, ecological interpretation is able to provide enlightenment on the meanings contained in each verse about the environment. So, this meaning will later become a way for humans to build balance with their own environment. Environmental tafsir or tafsir al -bī'i discusses more about the environment (interpreted thematically or *mauḍū'i*) and its *mufasssirs* show their siding with the environment in depth.

There are several studies that discuss the interpretation of verses related to the environment. Among them is an article entitled Humans and Environmental Destruction in the Koran: A Critical Study of Indonesian Mufasssir Thought (1967-2014). This article was written by M. Lutfhi Maulana (2016) who outlined the thoughts of Quraish Shihab and Hamka. Another article was written by Lukman Hakim and Munawir (2020) entitled Ecological Awareness in the Al-Qur'an: Study of Al-Razi's Interpretation of the QS. Al-Rum (30): 41. The focus of this article is to explain Al-Razi's view that damage on the face of the earth is the result of human shirk (Hakim & Munawir, 2020). The two articles above contain interpretations of damage to the earth. Meanwhile, this article will thematically analyze ecological verses and the urgency of environmental conservation as a result of the meaning of these verses. So, through this interpretation, humans are able to properly elaborate each ecological verse so that it becomes a real action in everyday life.

B. DISCUSSION

Environment in Tafsir of the Qur'an

The general expression of environmental terms in the Qur'an is as follows. First, living environment (*al-bī'ah*). According to the theory of Naughton and Larry L. Wolf, the environment is defined as

something related to all external factors of a biological and physical nature that can directly influence the life, growth, development and reproduction of organisms (Lourrins & et al., 2022) . Terminologically, according to Yusuf al- Qaraḏāwī, *al-bīah* is an environment where humans live and live in it, either when traveling or when in exile, where they return (Al-Qaradawi, 2001).

In the Qur'an, the term *al-bīah* is mentioned 18 times. The living environment in general is the unity of space with all objects, forces, conditions and living creatures, including humans and their behavior, which influence the continuity of life and human welfare (Muhirdan, 2008).

Second, all nature (*al-'ālamīn*). The term *al-'ālamīn* is mentioned preceded by the word *Rabb* 42 times and spread across 20 surahs, which means Lord of the worlds. This meaning is clearly stated in QS Al-Fātiḥah (1):2. The term *al-'ālamīn* is mentioned without being preceded by the word *rabb* 31 times and spread across seven surahs.

Third, the sky or universe (*al-samā'*). The term *al-samā'* and its derivations are mentioned 387 times. In its plural form, *namely al-samāwāt* , this term is often followed by the word *al-arḍ* 19 times and this shows the heavens and the earth and the contents between them which constitute the universe (Shihab, 2007). The universe in the view of modern scientists consists of the sun (*al-syams*), the moon (*al-qamar*), stars (*al-burūj*) which are visible matter. Meanwhile, invisible matter includes supermassive celestial bodies. The term *al-syams* is mentioned 33 times in the Qur'an and is the name of one of the surahs, namely *Asy-Syams* . The sun which rotates around the earth causes day and night and also becomes a benchmark for prayer times, as in the QS. Al-Isrā' (17): 78. God willing, God willing, God willing, God willing, God willing may Allah bless him and give him peace.

Establish prayer from the moment the sun sets until the darkness of the night and (also perform prayer) at dawn! Indeed, the morning prayer is witnessed (by angels).

The term *al-qamar* is mentioned 27 times in the Qur'an in the form of *mufrad* . In QS. Al-Furqān (25): 61, this term is in the form of *nakirah* . Another form is *ma'rifat* . What is special is that there is Surah al-Qamar which consists of 55 verses, in which there is information about the splitting of the moon. However, there are differences of opinion, some scholars believe that the splitting of the moon occurred as a miracle of the Prophet Muhammad saw. How-

ever, other scholars are of the view that this will only happen on the Day of Judgment (Shihab, 2007).

Fourth, earth (*al-arḍ*). In the view of the Qur'an, *al-arḍ* is a series of seas and land inhabited by humans (*al-insān*), fauna (*al-an'ām* or *dābbah*), and flora (*al-nabāt* or al-ḥarts). The term *al-arḍ* is used 461 times and is covered in 80 surahs. However, this term is not interpreted as earth in several verses, but rather means material, namely the embryo of the earth, as in QS Hūd (11): 7, QS Al-Anbiyā' (21): 30, QS As-Sajadah (32): 4, QS Fuṣṣilāt (41): 9-12, QS At-Talāq (65): 12 (Shihab, 2007) .

The term *al-arḍ* has two meanings. First, it means the finished planet Earth with the connotation of land as a space for organisms or microorganisms. Second, it means that the environment of planet Earth is in the process of becoming, namely the process of creation and occurrence of planet Earth (Muttaqin, 2020) . From the formulation above, the first meaning is more appropriate to emphasize the meaning of the environment.

God's power created the earth with land for habitation that could grow all kinds of plants. In fact, Allah also makes it easier for humans to inhabit the earth, namely by spreading it out and making it look flat (Shihab, 2020) . This is explained in QS. Al-Mulk (67): 15.

هُوَ الَّذِي جَعَلَ لَكُمُ الْأَرْضَ ذَلُولًا فَامْشُوا فِي مَنَاكِبِهَا وَكُلُوا مِنْ رِزْقِهِ وَإِلَيْهِ النُّشُورُ

He is the one who made the earth for you easy to use. So, explore all corners and eat some of His sustenance. Only to Him will you (return after) being resurrected.

Fifth, water (*mā'*). The Qur'an mentions the terms *mā'* in the form of *nakirah* and *al-mā'* in the form of *ma'rifah* which means water 59 times. Meanwhile, the Qur'an mentions *mā'aki* (your water) once; *mā'ahā* (water) twice; and *mā'ukum* (your water) once. Overall, this term is used 63 times spread across 42 surahs ('Abdul-Baqi, 1994) . Apart from that, there is still the use of similar words related to water, for example *al-nahar* (river), *al-baḥr* (sea), *al-'Ain* (spring), *al-saḥāb* (cloud), *al-Maṭr* (water rain), and so on. (Sawaluddin & Sainab, 2018).

Sixth, air (*al-rīḥ*). The term *al-rīḥ* or *al-riyāḥ* is used 29 times. The Qur'an uses the word *al-rīḥ* in various contexts, including mentioning the properties of wind; good winds and stormy winds (QS Yunus [10]: 22), typhoons (QS Al-Isrā' [17]: 69), cold winds (QS āli 'imrān [3]: 117, strong winds (QS Ibrāhīm [14]: 18), the wind that destroys the infidels (QS al-Aḥqāf [46]: 24) (Shihab, 2007).

Seventh, mountain (*al-jabal*). Mountain with the term *al-jabal* and several forms of its derivatives is mentioned 41 times and spread across 34 surahs. The words *jibillan* in QS Yasin (36): 62 and *al-jibillah* in QS al-Syuarā' (26): 184 are two word formations that do not mean mountain, but rather 'a number or group of people'. So, because of its abundance, it is likened to a mountain. The word *jabal* (mufrad) is mentioned six times in four surahs and *jibāl* is mentioned 33 times in 30 surahs (Shihab, 2007).

From the description above regarding ecological terms contained in the Qur'an, it can be concluded that the environment is described extensively in the Qur'an with a broad meaning. Not only limited to everything on earth or in space, but also in outer space.

Interpretation of Ecological Verses

QS ar-Rum (30): 41

Environmental damage has been described in the Koran, as in QS ar-Rum (30): 41.

There has been visible damage on land and at sea caused by human hands. (Through that) Allah makes them feel some of the (consequences of) their actions so that they return (to the right path).

This verse clearly explains that the cause of damage is human activity. Of a number of terms, the word *fasād* directly indicates the meaning of damage. Muqātil bin Sulaiman is of the view that the term *fasād* in this verse means the retention of rain and the lack of vegetation (Sulaiman, 2011) . In Tafsir al-Misbah, the word *fasād* can mean human corruption that commits murder, robbery, theft and other security disturbances (Shihab, 2005) . Al-Qardāwī interprets the word *fasād* as prioritizing environmental problems, as physical damage that causes health problems in the form of disease, food crises, various pollution that occurs in the human environment and endangers the ecosystem (Al-Qaradawi, 2001).

The meaning of the verse above is that there has been visible damage on land (drought, famine, the emergence of fear of human behavior) and at sea (disasters such as drowning, low yields of sea and river products) caused by human actions themselves. The damage caused on land and in the sea causes an imbalance in the working system of nature and a lack of benefits obtained by humans. As a result, Allah gave them a warning by reducing the impact of their own sins and transgressions on earth. The goal is for them to return to the right path (Shihab, 2005).

Ibn 'Āsyūr grammatically linguistically sees the structure of the verse as cause and effect, namely between the letters al-bā **بما** كسبت (cause) with the letter al-Lām **لِيَذِيقَهُمْ** (consequence), meaning that the environmental ecosystem is greatly influenced by human movements within it. If humans are able to treat nature well, then nature will also provide goodness for humans. On the other hand, if humans do bad things or damage on the face of the earth, then of course the impact of that damage will return to humans themselves as bad things too ('Āsyūr, 1984).

Ibnu Kathir explained that the reduced yield of plants and fruit was the result of immorality, shirk, murder and all forbidden things carried out by the inhabitants of the earth. The disobedience he committed has become part of the destruction of the earth (from a social and mental-spiritual perspective), because sustainability in the universe can only be realized with human obedience to God. The word al-barri is interpreted as a flat place and others interpret it as land, while al-baḥr means a big city and village and others interpret it as sea. (Katsir, 1994). Al-Razi himself interprets the word al-baḥr as an urban area built near water sources and is of the view that damage to land and sea is the occurrence of hurricanes (Al-Razi, 1984).

This is different from Al-Maraghi, who is of the view that damage has appeared on the face of the earth due to war, soldiers with their planes and ships. This damage occurs because people ignore religious teachings, are negligent about the day of resurrection, their lives are filled with lust, and their souls are uncontrolled. Then, Allah sends down punishment as a response to human negligence and disobedience, with the aim that they can move from tyranny to righteousness (Al-Maraghi, 1946).

The prohibition on doing damage on earth is also contained in QS Al-Mulk (67): 16-18 and QS Al-A'raf (7): 56.

وَإِذَا هِيَ تَمُورُ أَمْ آمَنْتُمْ مَّنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ أَنْ يُرْسِلَ عَلَيْكُمْ حَاصِبًا فَسَتَعْلَمُونَ كَيْفَ نَذِيرٍ وَلَقَدْ كَذَّبَ الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ فَكَيْفَ كَانَ نَكِيرِ (الملك/67: 16-18)

Do you feel safe from the Being in the sky, namely (from the disaster) that He immersed the earth with you when suddenly it was shaken? Or, do you feel safe from the Being in the sky, namely (from disaster) that He sends you a rock storm? Later you will know what (the consequences of denying) My warning are. Indeed, those before them also truly lied (His messengers). So, how great is My wrath! (QS Al-Mulk (67): 16-18)

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ (الاعراف/7: 56)

Do not cause damage to the earth after it has been properly regulated. Pray to Him with fear and hope. Indeed, Allah's mercy is very close to those who do good.

From the description of the interpretation above, it can be concluded that the environment and humans have a reciprocal relationship. Environmental damage and sustainability is very dependent on human efforts in treating the environment itself. This treatment is based on obedience to the Creator.

QS An-Naml (27): 60

This verse describes the need for humans to recognize their environment so that they are able to recognize their creator (Zulfikar et al., 2023) .

إِن كَان لَكُمْ أَن تَتَّبِعُوا شَجَرًا مَّا ءَالَاهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ يَتَّبِعُهُمْ فَوْمٌ يَعْدِلُونَ (النمل/27: 60)

Is (what you have partnered with) better or is it the One who created the heavens and the earth and sent down water for you from the sky, then We grew with that water gardens with beautiful views (of which) you would not be able to grow the trees? Are there (other) gods along with Allah? Actually they are people who deviate (from the truth).

Hamka interprets the verse above by outlining the evidence of God's power, starting from the creation of a sprawling earth so that it could be a shelter for humans. Then, there was also the creation of jungles and deserts, waterfalls, trees, rivers, oceans, lakes and various animals. This diversity is an indication for Muslims that Allah SWT is Greatest. Furthermore, Hamka is of the view that based on this verse, it is very clear that God is involved in all processes of plant growth by sending rainwater. From these events and regularities, Hamka shows how humans should know God. All these processes will lead human thoughts to Allah SWT (Hamka, 1990).

Through this verse, Ibn Kathir strengthens that only Allah creates, gives and regulates everything on earth. There is no one but Allah swt. After describing the creation of the heavens and the earth, Ibn Kathir also interpreted (وَأَنْزَلَ لَكُمْ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً) that Allah made the falling water as a cause of sustenance for His servants (Katsir, 1994) .

QS Al-Baqarah (2): 11-12

وَإِذَا قِيلَ لَهُمْ لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ قَالُوا إِنَّمَا نَحْنُ مُصْلِحُونَ أَلَا إِنَّهُمْ هُمُ الْمُفْسِدُونَ وَلَكِنْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

When it is said to them, "Do not cause harm on the earth," they answer, "Indeed, we are only those who do repairs." Remember, in fact they are the ones doing the damage, but they don't realize it.

In this verse, hypocrites are also one of the causes of destruction on earth. Hamka called the tongues of these hypocrites spineless. They disobeyed everything he said before. Hamka classifies humans into three groups in terms of responding to the Koran; believers, infidels and hypocrites (Hamka, 1990). This is in line with the interpretation by the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, that the term *fasād* has the meaning of showing immorality, hypocritical attitudes, and the association of hypocrites and infidels. All three are of course deviant and useless behavior, the impact of which causes damage on the face of the earth. Unfortunately, they are completely unaware of this (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2009).

Imam al-Alūsi, emphasized: "لا تفعلوا ما يؤدي الي الفساد" "all potential that can trigger damage must be minimized, such as denial, lies and violations in managing nature which disrupt the balance (التغيير) (عن حالة ال اعتدال) (Al-Alusi, 1980).

According to Quraish Shihab, if a value or function has decreased or reduced its usefulness, then that is called destruction. The verse above describes people who are truly destructive. The destruction he carried out was repeated and numerous, so it is confirmed by the name destroyer. The command *لَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ* clearly mentions the term *al-ard* (earth). This mention not only explains an order, but also reflects the impacts it will have if it is allowed to continue continuously (Shihab, 2005).

The urgency of environmental conservation

Seeing the crisis that is currently hitting the environment, it is only natural that environmental issues become a shared responsibility. The impact it causes is a long-term and extensive cause and effect, unless the chain of damage is immediately broken. However, to decide, cooperation from all parties is needed, including the role

of religion. Based on instructions from the Koran, some of the things that can be done are as follows.

Humans must grow and develop as caliphs on earth. This decision of Allah SWT is stated in QS Al-Baqarah (2): 30

وَلَقَدْ قَالَ إِنِّي أَغْلُمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ (البقرة/2: 30)

(Remember) when your Lord said to the angels, "I will make a caliph¹³ on earth." They said, "Are You going to place someone there who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we praise You and sanctify Your name?" He said, "Indeed I know what you do not know."

Interacting with nature is based on obedience, sustainability and balance. This command is found in QS Al-Qasas (28): 77

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ لِنَفْسِكَ مَا تَبِغَ الْفَسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ (القصص/28: 77)

And, seek what Allah has bestowed upon you (rewards) in the land of the afterlife, but do not forget your share in this world. Do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you and do not cause harm on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like those who do damage."

Maximizing human potential to manage and utilize agricultural products. This command is found in QS al-An'am (6): 141.

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَ جَنَّاتٍ مَعْرُوشَاتٍ وَغَيْرَ مَعْرُوشَاتٍ وَالنَّخْلَ وَالزَّرْعَ مُخْتَلِفًا ۖ ذَوْنًا وَالرُّمَانَ مُتَشَابِهًا ۚ وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ ۚ كُلُوا مِنْ ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَآتُوا حَقَّهُ يَوْمَ حَصَادِهِ ۚ وَلَا تُسْرِفُوا ۚ إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِينَ

It is He who grows plants that vine and those that do not vine, date palms, plants of various tastes, as well as olives and pomegranates which are similar (in shape and color) and not similar (in taste). Eat its fruit when it bears fruit and give it its due (zakat) when you reap the produce. However, don't overdo it. Indeed, Allah does not like people who exaggerate.

Environmental conservation can be said to be successful if all components build the same understanding, starting with the principles of obedience, balance and sustainability. Environmental

preservation has been studied by many elements and provides each approach according to its role. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that religion - through the guidance of the Koran - has a very important role in preserving the environment. Primarily in building environmental awareness.

C. CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the environment in the view of the Koran plays a very important role in human life. The environment, with its broad concept, is a shared responsibility. Problems that arise related to the environment will continue to undergo updates in overcoming them, for example currently taking advantage of technological advances. However, obedience in maintaining and preserving it must still be based on the instructions outlined in the Koran.

Interpretations of environmental verses are one way to realize strictness in protecting and preserving the environment itself. Warnings about damage occurring on earth are contained in several verses (for example in QS Al-Rum verse 41). However, Allah SWT also provides solutions for every effort to protect and preserve the environment (for example in QS al-An'am verse 141). Mufasssir are required to provide enlightenment regarding every meaning they make of each verse related to the environment, so that humans are able to carry it out based on the Qur'an.

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