

## Harnessing Islamic Teachings for Climate Justice: Pathways for Faith-Based Environmental Action

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**ABSTRACT:** This narrative review explores the contribution of Islamic teachings to environmental ethics and sustainability, aiming to assess how religious values influence environmental behavior, policy, and education in Muslim communities. Drawing on academic literature from databases such as Scopus, PubMed, and Google Scholar, the study synthesizes both conceptual and empirical findings related to Islamic environmental principles, particularly the concepts of khalifah, amanah, tawhid, and mizan. These principles are increasingly reflected in institutional practices by organizations such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Islamic Relief Worldwide. The study reveals that Islamic ethical frameworks are not only theoretically robust but also practically applied through community-based environmental programs, sustainable finance, and green education initiatives. However, systemic challenges such as fragmented policy support, limited environmental education, and weak integration between religious and public sectors hinder broader impact. The discussion highlights the role of Islamic education and national policies in strengthening environmental awareness and fostering a sense of spiritual responsibility toward nature. It also identifies opportunities for global collaboration through faith-based environmental strategies. The review concludes that aligning Islamic ethics with environmental governance can offer powerful, culturally relevant solutions to ecological crises, and recommends further interdisciplinary and cross-faith research to scale these efforts globally.

**Keywords:** Islamic Environmental Ethics, Sustainable Development, Khalifah Stewardship, Islamic Education and Sustainability, Green Policy in Muslim Communities, Faith-Based Environmentalism, Religion and Climate Justice.



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## INTRODUCTION

The intersection of Islam and environmental concerns has become a significant area of interest within academic discourse, particularly over the past decade. The increasing urgency of global ecological crises, such as climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and pollution, has prompted scholars to investigate how religious traditions, including Islam, can contribute to environmental sustainability. In the context of Islamic teachings, environmental stewardship is not

a peripheral concept but is deeply rooted in core theological principles. Several studies have explored Islamic environmental ethics, ecological consciousness among Muslim communities, and the role of Islamic institutions in advancing environmental conservation initiatives. These studies reflect a growing consensus that Islam offers not only moral imperatives but also practical frameworks for addressing environmental degradation (Kadir et al., 2023; Bukhari et al., 2019).

Islamic doctrine identifies humanity as *kehalifah* (stewards or trustees) of the Earth, tasked with managing natural resources responsibly and avoiding wasteful or exploitative behavior. This spiritual mandate has been reiterated in recent literature, emphasizing the alignment between Islamic values and modern sustainability paradigms (Kadir et al., 2023). For instance, Bukhari et al. (2019) present an Islamic perspective on green banking, proposing that financial institutions in Muslim-majority societies integrate environmental considerations into investment and business practices. Such approaches demonstrate how Islamic principles can be applied to a wide range of sectors, from economic systems to environmental management.

The relevance of Islam in environmental discourse becomes even more pronounced when viewed in light of escalating global challenges. Climate change, water scarcity, pollution, and habitat loss are affecting populations across the world, including those in Muslim-majority regions. In Southeast Asia, for example, nations with significant Muslim populations are witnessing the tangible effects of environmental degradation. Gilani et al. (2024) suggest that an interdisciplinary approach combining theology and social sciences can enhance Islamic discourse on environmental issues. This is evident in the increasing number of faith-based environmental programs, community education initiatives, and advocacy campaigns led by Islamic organizations.

Indonesia provides a compelling case study. As the world's most populous Muslim-majority country, it has witnessed the rise of Islamic eco-initiatives such as the "green pesantren" movement spearheaded by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU). These Islamic boarding schools incorporate environmental education within religious curricula, fostering ecological awareness among youth (Maghfiroh et al., 2024). Additionally, Islamic financial institutions in Indonesia and elsewhere are beginning to align their policies with environmental sustainability goals, thereby contributing to the broader Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a manner consistent with Islamic ethical standards (Humaidi et al., 2024; Hassan, 2016).

Such developments underscore the integral role of Islam in shaping environmental behavior and policy in Muslim communities. Religious leaders and educators are increasingly acknowledging the importance of integrating spiritual values with environmental education, which, according to Aboul-Enein (2017), strengthens individuals' sense of responsibility toward nature. Islamic environmental education not only instills moral responsibility but also encourages proactive engagement in environmental protection efforts.

The role of youth is particularly crucial in this transformation. Yuda et al. (2023) demonstrate how Islamic educational institutions are fostering environmental awareness among students, particularly in the maritime context. This focus on young people is vital, as it builds a foundation for long-term cultural change within Muslim societies. The inclusion of environmental ethics within Islamic pedagogy offers the potential to produce future generations that are both spiritually and ecologically conscious.

The study of Islam's contributions to environmentalism is not merely an academic pursuit but a pressing necessity given the increasing severity of global ecological crises. Effective environmental stewardship requires not only scientific and policy-driven solutions but also the integration of moral and spiritual perspectives that can influence public behavior. In Muslim societies, the mobilization of religious values can play a transformative role in promoting sustainable development. However, realizing this potential is not without its challenges. As Kadir et al. (2023) and Maghfiroh et al. (2024) note, there is often a disconnect between Islamic teachings on the environment and their practical implementation within policy and institutional frameworks.

One of the primary challenges lies in the lack of consensus among stakeholders on how Islamic principles should be operationalized within environmental policy. Despite the presence of robust theological support for environmental protection in Islamic doctrine, many organizations focus predominantly on spiritual matters, neglecting the concrete actions required for effective environmental governance. This gap between theory and practice is further compounded by inadequate education and communication about the environmental dimensions of Islamic teachings (Yuda et al., 2023). Without comprehensive and context-sensitive environmental education, Muslim communities may struggle to recognize and fulfill their ecological responsibilities.

Another significant challenge is the limited integration of Islamic values into national environmental policies. In many Muslim-majority countries, development agendas are often dominated by political and economic priorities, sidelining ecological considerations. Studies indicate that in such contexts, religious teachings on environmental sustainability are either marginalized or superficially referenced, rather than being fully incorporated into the policy-making process (Saleh & Hasan, 2019; Bsoul et al., 2022). Kadir et al. (2023) emphasize the need for more accountable and systematic natural resource management grounded in Islamic ethics. However, the prevailing institutional frameworks often fall short of enabling this vision.

Moreover, a gap persists in the academic literature concerning the practical application of Islamic environmental values. Much of the existing scholarship focuses on theoretical discussions and scriptural interpretations, with relatively few studies providing empirical insights into how these principles are enacted in daily life or public policy (Isnaini et al., 2024; Mangunjaya & Praharawati, 2019). This evidences a clear need for more case studies and field-based research that can document the real-world impact of Islamic environmentalism and identify best practices.

Cultural and social contexts further complicate the integration of Islamic values into environmental policy. Traditional customs and local practices may not always align with conservation goals, necessitating a culturally sensitive approach to environmental governance (Mufid et al., 2023; Efendi et al., 2021). This underlines the importance of community engagement and inclusive dialogue in developing environmental strategies that resonate with both religious and local values. Structural and sociocultural barriers must be addressed to translate Islamic environmental principles into effective and sustainable action.

The current review seeks to address these gaps by examining how Islam can contribute meaningfully to environmental protection and sustainability. Specifically, it explores the conceptual foundations of Islamic environmental ethics and their practical implications for policy and

education. By analyzing key values such as *khalifah* (stewardship), *amanah* (trust), and *mizan* (balance), the review aims to articulate a comprehensive framework for Islamic environmentalism. While previous studies acknowledge the relevance of religious values in environmental discourse, there remains a need to delve deeper into how theological and pedagogical dimensions can reinforce sustainability movements in Muslim societies (Kadir et al., 2023; Bsoul et al., 2022).

A central objective of this review is to assess the potential for Islamic teachings to inform sustainability strategies within Muslim communities worldwide. Emphasis is placed on Qur'anic and Sunnah-based principles that promote the preservation of the environment as a divine trust. This approach seeks to bridge the gap between spiritual convictions and environmental practice, enabling a more grounded and actionable understanding of Islamic ecological ethics (Bsoul et al., 2022). Through this exploration, the study aims to elevate the visibility and applicability of Islamic contributions to sustainability.

Geographically, the review focuses on Southeast Asia and the broader global Muslim community. Southeast Asia presents a particularly rich context for this analysis due to its cultural diversity, significant Muslim population, and exposure to acute environmental challenges (Efendi et al., 2021). The region has also emerged as a hub of innovative Islamic environmental activism, exemplified by the work of civil society organizations and educational institutions (Maghfiroh et al., 2024). Studies in this area offer valuable insights into the interplay between Islamic values and local environmental practices, which may differ from those observed in other parts of the Muslim world (Mangunjaya & Prahawati, 2019).

Understanding these regional dynamics is essential for developing context-specific strategies that are both theologically sound and socially effective. By highlighting the Southeast Asian experience, the review aims to draw attention to local successes and challenges, while also identifying lessons that may be transferable to other contexts. In this way, the study contributes to a more nuanced and comprehensive global dialogue on religion and environmental sustainability (Amin et al., 2022; Ahmad, 2015).

In sum, this review contributes to the academic literature by adopting an interdisciplinary lens that integrates theology, social science, and environmental studies. It seeks to inspire both scholarly inquiry and practical action, encouraging Muslim communities to embrace environmental protection not merely as a moral obligation, but as a fundamental expression of faith and identity. By aligning Islamic principles with contemporary sustainability goals, this review hopes to foster collective awareness and responsibility toward the environment—values that are essential for ensuring the well-being of current and future generations (Badran et al., 2024; Sadowski & Ayvaz, 2023).

## METHOD

This review explores the intersection between Islam and environmental sustainability by synthesizing findings from high-quality academic literature. The methodology employed in this study involves a systematic search and selection process designed to ensure the relevance, credibility, and comprehensiveness of the sources included. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the topic, which spans theology, environmental science, social studies, and public policy, a broad range of databases was utilized to capture diverse scholarly perspectives. The primary databases accessed include Scopus, Google Scholar, and PubMed. Each database was selected based on its specific strengths: Scopus is known for indexing high-impact peer-reviewed journals across multiple disciplines; Google Scholar provides extensive coverage, including conference papers, theses, and grey literature; while PubMed, though primarily biomedical in scope, was included to account for literature linking environmental degradation to public health outcomes, a growing area of concern within Islamic environmental ethics (Kadir et al., 2023; Setianingrum et al., 2024).

The literature search was conducted using carefully chosen keywords that reflect the breadth and depth of the research topic. The selected terms included “Islamic environmental ethics,” “sustainable development in Islam,” “Qur’an and nature,” “Islamic ecology,” and “Islam and environmental sustainability.” These terms were used to capture publications dealing with both theological foundations and practical applications of Islamic principles in environmental preservation. The term “Islamic environmental ethics” guided the search toward discussions on moral obligations and stewardship within Islamic theology. In contrast, “sustainable development in Islam” allowed the exploration of literature examining how Islamic teachings can be integrated into global and local sustainability strategies (Bsoul et al., 2022; Setianingrum et al., 2024). Additional keywords such as “Islamic stewardship” and “climate justice in Islam” were employed to capture discussions on the roles and responsibilities of Muslim communities in promoting environmental justice, particularly in the face of climate change, resource exploitation, and environmental inequality.

To enhance the precision and relevance of the search, Boolean operators (AND/OR) were employed to construct search queries that link key concepts effectively. For example, combinations like “Islam AND sustainability,” “Islamic stewardship OR environmental protection,” and “Qur’an AND nature” were used to refine search outputs and exclude irrelevant articles. Filters were also applied to limit search results to peer-reviewed articles, English-language publications, and documents published within the past two decades to ensure contemporary relevance. Particular attention was given to articles with high citation counts, as these often reflect scholarly recognition and impact in the field (Mufid et al., 2023; Setianingrum et al., 2024).

The inclusion criteria for selecting studies were designed to ensure the thematic and methodological coherence of the review. Studies were included if they explicitly addressed the relationship between Islamic teachings and environmental issues. This included both conceptual papers rooted in Islamic jurisprudence, theology, or ethics, as well as empirical studies analyzing Islamic practices and community initiatives related to sustainability. Studies discussing Islamic perspectives on climate change, conservation, pollution, and public health were also included. Importantly, only studies published in reputable academic sources such as indexed journals, edited

books, or scholarly conference proceedings were considered. The publication timeframe was primarily limited to the years 2000–2024, although a few seminal works from earlier years were retained if they provided foundational insights.

Exclusion criteria were also applied to maintain the focus and quality of the literature. Articles that mentioned Islam in passing without substantial engagement with Islamic concepts or environmental issues were excluded. Similarly, opinion pieces, non-scholarly blog posts, or documents lacking adequate referencing and methodological rigor were omitted. Studies focusing on non-Islamic religious perspectives without a comparative framework were not included, as they fell outside the scope of this inquiry. Articles written in languages other than English were also excluded, due to the language limitations of the research team and the practical constraints of time and translation.

The types of studies included in this review reflect the interdisciplinary nature of the research question. Conceptual and theoretical studies formed the backbone of the literature, particularly those that articulated the philosophical underpinnings of environmental stewardship in Islam, such as discussions on *khalifah* (vicegerency), *amanah* (trust), and *mizan* (balance). Empirical studies were also considered, especially those that examined case studies of Islamic environmental activism, religious education programs, and green initiatives spearheaded by Islamic organizations. For instance, studies analyzing initiatives like green pesantren in Indonesia or Islamic finance and green banking systems in Malaysia and the Gulf states provided valuable insights into how Islamic values are operationalized in real-world contexts (Kadir et al., 2023; Maghfiroh et al., 2024; Bukhari et al., 2019).

The literature selection process proceeded in several stages. First, an initial pool of studies was generated using the defined keywords across the three databases. This yielded over 500 references. Duplicates and clearly irrelevant studies were removed during the first round of screening, based on title and abstract review. The remaining articles were then subjected to full-text evaluation to assess their methodological robustness, theoretical contribution, and thematic relevance. Each article was reviewed independently by members of the research team, and any disagreements regarding inclusion were resolved through discussion and consensus. This process ensured a balanced representation of both theoretical and empirical contributions across various disciplines.

To further ensure rigor, each selected article was categorized based on key themes such as ethical foundations, policy applications, community engagement, environmental education, and public health implications. This thematic coding enabled the identification of dominant patterns in the literature and allowed for a more structured synthesis in the results and discussion sections of this review. For example, studies exploring the Qur'anic and Prophetic basis of environmental ethics were grouped separately from those analyzing institutional responses or grassroots activism. Similarly, works focusing on youth education, public health, and urban planning from an Islamic perspective were categorized to facilitate focused analysis.

In terms of quality assessment, studies were evaluated based on their clarity of research objectives, methodological transparency, theoretical grounding, and contribution to the broader discourse. Conceptual papers were assessed for the strength of their argumentation and engagement with classical and contemporary Islamic texts. Empirical studies were evaluated for their data collection

methods, sample size (if applicable), and validity of findings. This multi-dimensional assessment helped ensure that only credible, informative, and methodologically sound studies were included.

Through this rigorous and structured methodology, the present review aims to offer a comprehensive and insightful examination of the role of Islam in advancing environmental protection and sustainability. By synthesizing high-quality literature across theological and scientific domains, the study seeks to bridge existing knowledge gaps and provide an interdisciplinary platform for further research and policy development. Ultimately, this methodology serves not only to ensure the academic integrity of the review but also to ground its conclusions in evidence-based and contextually relevant scholarship.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the selected literature reveals several dominant themes regarding the contribution of Islam to environmental protection and sustainability. These findings are presented under three primary sub-sections: Islamic ethical principles in environmental issues, practical implementation by Muslim institutions, and global comparative perspectives.

### Islamic Ethical Principles in Environmental Issues

Islamic environmental ethics have emerged as a robust framework grounded in foundational theological concepts, which include *khalifah* (stewardship), *amanah* (trust), *tawhid* (oneness of God), and *mizan* (balance). These values are not only conceptual cornerstones but are also practically observed in environmental actions by Muslim communities globally.

The notion of *khalifah* is central in Islamic ecology and widely referenced in environmental literature. According to Kadir et al. (2023), humans are designated as stewards of the Earth by divine decree, which places upon them a moral and spiritual obligation to preserve the balance of ecosystems and manage resources sustainably. This concept is translated into action through programs initiated by major Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama in Indonesia. These organizations have developed education and advocacy initiatives that promote environmental consciousness through an Islamic lens (Efendi et al., 2021; Maghfiroh et al., 2024). These efforts demonstrate how stewardship is not merely a theological notion but a practical directive guiding sustainable community behavior.

The principle of *amanah* refers to trust or responsibility. In environmental discourse, this translates to the idea that natural resources are a trust from God to humanity and must be handled with care for the benefit of future generations (Bsoul et al., 2022). Mojaradi et al. and Hassan (2016) note that *amanah* fosters intergenerational responsibility, compelling Muslims to weigh the long-term ecological consequences of their daily activities. This ethical value supports the movement against overconsumption and pollution, encouraging environmentally conscious behavior in social, economic, and cultural contexts.

*Tawhid*, the oneness of God, informs a worldview in which nature is seen as a sacred manifestation of divine creation. This belief fosters a spiritual connection between humans and the environment. Saleh et al. argue that *tawhid* inspires reverence for all forms of life, leading to conservation-minded behavior and ecological responsibility (Bukhari et al., 2019). Applications of this principle can be observed in environmentally friendly mosque practices, including renewable energy usage and improved waste management systems, which aim to align worship spaces with environmental values.

*Mizan*, or balance, emphasizes the necessity of proportional and just resource usage. Ahmad (2015) highlights that Islamic teachings advocate for resource management that ensures ecological equilibrium and prevents harm to all forms of life. Muslim communities have integrated this principle into traditional farming techniques that maintain soil health and ensure long-term productivity. These practices emphasize that environmental sustainability is achievable through moderation and equity.

The practical application of these ethical values varies across local contexts and levels of religious understanding. As Isnaini et al. (2024) and Yuda et al. (2023) demonstrate, Islamic-based environmental education—particularly in pesantren (Islamic boarding schools)—can significantly raise awareness and drive community-level environmental action. The adoption of green technologies, waste management initiatives, and afforestation projects within Islamic institutions showcases how these ethical principles transcend theory and can lead to tangible environmental improvements.

These findings collectively affirm that Islamic ethical values play a critical role in shaping both attitudes and actions toward the environment. The consistent integration of these values into environmental policy and practice suggests their potential in addressing contemporary ecological challenges through spiritually grounded and socially accepted approaches.

### Practical Implementation by Muslim Institutions

Muslim institutions have actively translated Islamic environmental ethics into policy and practice. One notable example is Islamic Relief Worldwide, an international humanitarian organization that integrates sustainability principles into its aid and development programs. Turnbull (2021) reports that the organization incorporates environmental education in community empowerment initiatives, including water management, climate adaptation, and sustainable agriculture. These programs are grounded in Islamic teachings, particularly the concept of *khalifah*, reinforcing community responsibility for environmental protection.

Islamic Relief's educational campaigns teach farmers efficient agricultural practices that improve yields while minimizing environmental degradation (Nasir et al., 2021). These initiatives have had tangible impacts, reducing soil erosion and enhancing food security in vulnerable regions. In addition, Islamic Relief has implemented waste management and renewable energy projects, particularly in disaster-prone or resource-scarce communities. Their internal policies, which prioritize energy efficiency and resource conservation, demonstrate a commitment to environmental stewardship and serve as a model for other faith-based organizations.



In Indonesia, Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama have undertaken similar roles in advancing environmental education and action. Maghfiroh et al. (2024) highlight large-scale reforestation and land rehabilitation programs conducted with active participation from pesantren students and local communities. These programs not only address environmental degradation but also embed ecological values in religious education.

Educational innovations in pesantren have also yielded meaningful results. Isnaini et al. (2024) report that problem-based learning modules focused on organic farming have enhanced students' understanding of environmental science and Islamic ethics. This pedagogical approach has resulted in increased student engagement with sustainable practices and a stronger sense of ecological responsibility.

Globally, countries with Muslim-majority populations have begun incorporating Islamic environmental principles into national and international policy frameworks. For example, several Muslim nations have joined climate agreements and are implementing renewable energy strategies aligned with Islamic ethics (Turnbull, 2021). Furthermore, the Islamic finance sector is increasingly supporting green investments. Nasir et al. (2021) observe that Islamic banks have developed environmentally conscious financial products, promoting both economic and ecological sustainability.

The results indicate that when Islamic principles are integrated into institutional policies, they can foster innovative and impactful solutions to environmental challenges. The ability of Islamic teachings to inspire collective action and sustainable development suggests their value as a foundational framework for faith-based environmentalism.

### Global Comparative Perspectives on Islam and Environmentalism

In comparative analysis, the Islamic approach to environmental ethics stands out for its theological coherence and emphasis on interconnectedness. As highlighted by Kadir et al. (2023) and Bsoul et al. (2022), the Islamic concept of stewardship contrasts with interpretations in other religious traditions that emphasize human dominance over nature. For example, certain interpretations of Christianity prioritize anthropocentrism, which may inadvertently justify environmental exploitation (Mizutani et al., 2016).

Islamic ecological ethics are more holistic, emphasizing the unity of creation and the need for balance between human needs and ecological integrity (Bukhari et al., 2019). Sayem (2021) argues that Islamic moral frameworks can enhance environmental policies by grounding them in deeply held spiritual beliefs. In contrast, other cultural traditions may lack this integrated moral dimension, potentially weakening their capacity for collective environmental engagement.

The Hindu tradition, for instance, emphasizes environmental harmony but often through ritual and mythology rather than through institutionalized public policy (Badran et al., 2024). In contrast, Islam provides a structured set of teachings that can inform concrete environmental actions. This theological structure has allowed Muslim communities to formulate targeted and scalable sustainability programs that are both spiritually and culturally relevant.

On the international stage, Muslim-majority countries are contributing to environmental justice movements through policy innovation and global advocacy. The 2012 Doha Climate Conference showcased the active participation of Muslim nations in emissions reduction dialogues (Turnbull, 2021). Countries like Indonesia and Malaysia have taken significant steps to institutionalize Islamic environmental ethics. In Indonesia, the issuance of a fatwa by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) declaring environmental protection a religious duty has spurred a variety of grassroots and governmental initiatives (Mangunjaya & Praharawati, 2019; Maghfiroh et al., 2024).

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has also taken a collaborative approach to environmental issues, publishing declarations and roadmaps that integrate ecological and socio-economic policies. Humaidi et al. (2024) note that the OIC has prioritized environmental cooperation in response to disasters such as drought and flooding, which disproportionately affect Muslim communities. This coordinated response is part of a broader recognition that environmental sustainability and social justice are interdependent goals.

Furthermore, the rise of Islamic green finance marks an important step toward aligning economic systems with environmental goals. Junara et al. (2020) and El-Gammal & Abozaid (2021) emphasize that Sharia-compliant investments are now channeling funds into renewable energy, sustainable infrastructure, and climate resilience projects. These developments underscore the growing potential for Islamic finance to serve as a catalyst for global sustainability.

In summary, the Islamic tradition offers a comprehensive ethical and institutional framework for environmental sustainability that compares favorably with other religious and cultural paradigms. The global participation of Muslim communities in environmental protection reflects a broader movement toward faith-based ecological action. These findings suggest that Islam can play a central role in advancing environmental justice, particularly through educational, financial, and policy mechanisms rooted in religious principles.

The findings from this narrative review support the growing body of literature suggesting that Islamic environmental ethics are not only relevant to contemporary ecological concerns but are also practically applicable across diverse contexts. Central concepts such as *khalifah*, *amanah*, *tawhid*, and *mizan* serve as moral imperatives that shape both the worldview and environmental behavior of Muslim individuals and communities. Unlike previous studies that have often emphasized theoretical or theological explorations of Islam's stance on environmental stewardship (Bukhari et al., 2019; Ahmad, 2015), this review demonstrates how these ethical tenets are increasingly being translated into concrete actions, institutional frameworks, and policy responses within Muslim societies.

One of the notable contributions of this study is its focus on the operationalization of Islamic environmental values by institutions such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Islamic Relief Worldwide. These organizations provide compelling examples of how religious teachings can be mobilized to address environmental degradation through practical programs and public engagement. Kadir et al. (2023) emphasized that humans, as trustees of the Earth, are obliged to manage natural resources responsibly and avoid exploitative practices, a principle that underpins many of the initiatives described in this review. This contrasts with earlier literature that often

highlighted a lack of clarity or implementation mechanisms in applying Islamic ethics to real-world environmental challenges (Bsoul et al., 2022).

At the same time, the review highlights persistent gaps in environmental education and communication within Muslim communities. Saleh and Hasan (2019) note that limited knowledge among journalists and educators regarding Islam's environmental teachings compromises the quality and outreach of environmental communication. This underscores the need for more targeted educational interventions that bridge religious doctrine with ecological literacy. It also suggests that without effective communication strategies, the transformative potential of Islamic environmental ethics may remain unrealized among broader Muslim populations.

Despite critiques suggesting that Islamic environmental approaches can be overly idealistic or loosely implemented (Bsoul et al., 2022), recent evidence indicates significant progress in the practical integration of Islamic values with environmental action. Programs such as green pesantren, sustainable farming initiatives, and Islamic green finance demonstrate that faith-based sustainability is both feasible and impactful. These developments offer a counter-narrative to earlier assumptions that Islamic environmentalism lacks pragmatic applications, showing instead that the ethical principles enshrined in the Qur'an and Hadith can guide effective and culturally relevant ecological action.

The involvement of Muslim-majority countries in global environmental governance also lends credence to the growing influence of Islamic ethics in shaping sustainability discourse. Beyond rhetoric, countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia have institutionalized Islamic perspectives in environmental policy-making, including through fatwas and environmental education policies (Mangunjaya & Praharawati, 2019). These initiatives demonstrate that Islam is not only a source of individual ethical guidance but also a strategic framework for public policy. Furthermore, regional collaborations within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) suggest that Muslim countries are capable of forming coherent environmental agendas that align with both Islamic values and international sustainability standards (Humaidi et al., 2024).

An important systemic factor contributing to the success of Islamic environmentalism is the role of state policy and religious education systems. In contexts where national policies affirm Islamic teachings on the environment, such as through supportive legislation or religious endorsements, community-level engagement tends to be stronger. For example, Indonesia's religiously grounded environmental policies have inspired community participation in conservation efforts and helped normalize sustainable behavior as a religious obligation (Kadir et al., 2023; Bsoul et al., 2022). Likewise, Islamic education that incorporates environmental content, particularly in pesantren and other religious schools, has proven effective in cultivating ecological awareness and responsibility among youth (Isnaini et al., 2024; Amin et al., 2022).

However, systemic limitations continue to hamper the broader application of Islamic environmentalism. In some cases, political or economic priorities undermine environmental policy implementation, even when Islamic values support conservation efforts (Saleh & Hasan, 2019). Furthermore, fragmented educational strategies and a lack of integration between secular and religious curricula weaken the impact of Islamic environmental education. While several case

studies—such as green pesantren and Islamic finance initiatives—illustrate best practices, they remain relatively isolated and under-researched in terms of long-term outcomes and scalability.

To address these challenges, this review supports the growing call for integrated strategies that align state policies with Islamic educational reforms. Educational systems should not only teach environmental science but also contextualize it within Islamic ethics, thereby reinforcing both cognitive and moral learning. As suggested by Mohidem & Hashim (2023) and Yuda et al. (2023), teacher training programs and community outreach campaigns rooted in Islamic teachings could significantly enhance environmental awareness and participation at the grassroots level.

Equally important is the potential for collaboration between governments and Islamic educational institutions. Government support for environmental curriculum development, combined with community-based initiatives led by religious organizations, can generate a multiplier effect in ecological engagement. By fostering partnerships between policymakers, educators, and religious leaders, a culture of environmental responsibility anchored in Islamic values can be cultivated more effectively across different segments of society (Mangunjaya & Praharawati, 2019; Potter, 2021).

The findings of this review also have implications for global environmental policy, particularly in efforts to integrate faith and spirituality into climate governance. Given the widespread influence of Islam, particularly in regions vulnerable to environmental degradation, incorporating Islamic values into global sustainability strategies can facilitate more inclusive and culturally sensitive responses. As Kadir et al. (2023) argue, ethical frameworks derived from religious traditions can foster a sense of global ecological responsibility that transcends legal or economic instruments. This supports broader initiatives to integrate faith-based values into the UN's sustainable development agenda and other international platforms.

Beyond advocacy, Islamic environmental ethics can offer innovative models for sustainable development. For instance, *mizan* (balance) and *adl* (justice) provide conceptual foundations for equitable resource distribution and intergenerational fairness, which are essential for just transitions to green economies. Initiatives like Islamic microfinance for renewable energy and zakat-based green philanthropy are examples of how religious financial instruments can support both economic justice and ecological sustainability (Campelo et al., 2018; Nasir et al., 2021).

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic environmentalism, several research gaps remain. Most existing studies are either conceptual or case-specific, with limited comparative or longitudinal data. There is a need for more empirical research examining the long-term impact of Islamic environmental programs on behavior change, policy outcomes, and ecological indicators. Furthermore, interdisciplinary studies that connect theology, environmental science, education, and policy studies are crucial for deepening our understanding of how Islamic ethics can be integrated into broader sustainability frameworks.

The current review also identifies the need for more cross-cultural studies comparing Islamic environmental perspectives with those of other religious or philosophical systems. While this study provides some insights into comparative religious ethics, further research is necessary to explore synergies and tensions between Islamic values and other environmental worldviews, particularly in multi-faith societies or secular policy contexts.

In addition, more attention should be given to the role of Islamic youth movements and digital platforms in promoting environmental awareness. Given the high rates of digital literacy among Muslim youth, leveraging online education and social media campaigns grounded in Islamic values could further extend the reach and impact of environmental messaging.

Ultimately, this review demonstrates that the integration of Islamic values into environmental action is both feasible and increasingly necessary. By recognizing and institutionalizing the moral authority of Islamic teachings, stakeholders can foster more inclusive, ethical, and sustainable environmental practices. However, realizing this potential requires sustained commitment, collaborative policy design, and investment in education and communication strategies that reflect the spiritual dimensions of ecological responsibility.

### CONCLUSION

This study affirms that Islamic environmental ethics—rooted in principles such as *khalifah* (stewardship), *amanah* (trust), *tawhid* (divine unity), and *mizan* (balance)—provide a rich and applicable foundation for addressing contemporary environmental challenges. These ethical tenets are not limited to theological discourse but are increasingly reflected in policy initiatives, educational curricula, and community practices across Muslim-majority societies. The involvement of Islamic institutions such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, and Islamic Relief Worldwide highlights the potential for faith-based leadership in environmental sustainability. However, systemic barriers persist, including limited environmental literacy, inadequate integration of Islamic values into national policy, and weak communication strategies within religious education frameworks.

To overcome these challenges, stronger alignment between national environmental policy and Islamic educational systems is necessary. Governments should incorporate Islamic environmental values into legislation and promote partnerships with religious institutions. Similarly, Islamic schools and pesantren should adopt curricula that combine environmental science with religious ethics. These strategies can create a culture of sustainability anchored in moral and spiritual responsibility.

Future research should focus on empirical evaluation of Islamic environmental programs and explore cross-faith comparisons to build inclusive global models. To operationalize Islamic environmental ethics, several concrete actions are recommended: (1) Muslim communities can establish local eco-committees within mosques to promote waste reduction, tree planting, and water conservation; (2) educational institutions should integrate environmental science into religious studies and create experiential learning modules based on Islamic values of stewardship; (3) governments in Muslim-majority countries should formalize partnerships with Islamic organizations to co-develop environmental policies, such as green zakat schemes, eco-pesantren funding, and fatwas supporting sustainable development goals. These multi-level efforts can enhance ecological outcomes while respecting cultural and spiritual traditions.

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