Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir
https://ejurnal.iiq.ac.id/index.php/alfanar

Ecological Values in the Quran: A Maqasidi Tafsir Perspective

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Article Information:
Received May 7, 2025
Revised June 11, 2025
Accepted July 11, 2025

Keywords: *Ecological values, environmental conservation, maqasid al-shariah, maqasidi tafsir*

Abstract

Environmental degradation and climate change have become global challenges that require strong ethical, moral, and spiritual foundations to support environmental preservation efforts. As the primary source of Islamic teachings, the Quran contains numerous principles that emphasize human responsibility in maintaining ecological balance and environmental sustainability. This article aims to analyze the ecological values embedded in the Quran through a *maqasidi tafsīr* perspective and to examine their relevance to contemporary environmental conservation. The study employs a qualitative method using a content analysis approach. Primary data consist of Quranic verses related to environmental issues, while secondary data are drawn from classical and contemporary *tafsīr* literature, *maqaṣid al-sharīʿah* scholarship, and relevant academic publications. Data were collected through document analysis and examined using the *maqasidi tafsīr* approach to identify the objectives of Islamic law reflected in ecological verses. The findings reveal that the Quranic ecological framework encompasses *ḥifẓ al-bi'ah* (environmental protection), *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (protection of human life), and *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (protection of religion). These values demonstrate that environmental preservation is not merely an ecological concern but also an integral component of achieving public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) and realizing the higher objectives of Islamic law. The study implies that Quranic ecological values can serve as ethical and normative foundations for promoting sustainable development and addressing contemporary environmental challenges.

INTRODUCTION

The ecological crisis is one of the global challenges that threaten the sustainability of human life and the balance of ecosystems. Various environmental issues, such as deforestation, water pollution, land degradation, and climate change, indicate that the relationship between humans and nature is increasingly dominated by patterns of exploitation that disregard the principle of sustainability (Arsyad & Hasanah, 2025). From an Islamic perspective, environmental conservation is not merely a social and ecological issue but an integral part of humanity's stewardship on Earth (Azis, 2025). Humans are not only required to utilize natural resources but are

How to cite: Siregar, M., Nasrullah, F., Pratama, Y., Novriadi, N., Juliano, M. R. (2025). Ecological Values in the Quran: A Maqasidi Tafsir Perspective. *Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir*, *8*(2), 95-113.

E-ISSN: 2622-4658
Published by: Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta

also obligated to maintain their balance and sustainability as a form of responsibility toward Allah.

Data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry show that net deforestation in Indonesia in 2023 reached 7,826.70 hectares, with 5,751.40 hectares of that occurring outside forest areas. This situation not only reflects physical environmental damage but also indicates a weakening of awareness regarding the prohibition against causing harm (*fasād*) and the obligation to maintain balance (*mīẓān*), as taught in the Quran. Therefore, it is necessary to reinvigorate a contextual understanding of religion so that the ecological values of the Quran can serve as a moral and spiritual foundation for building environmental awareness (Maula & Muhammad, 2025; Yusran et al., 2026).

In this context, the Quran serves as a source of Islamic teachings containing universal principles relevant to addressing various humanitarian issues, including environmental concerns (Isfahani & Arifin, 2025). One verse that explicitly prohibits causing harm to the earth after Allah has restored it is Surah Al-A'rāf 56. This verse not only conveys a normative message regarding the prohibition against causing harm (*fasād*) but also embodies ethical and spiritual values related to humanity's responsibility toward the environment. Through the *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach, this verse can be understood more comprehensively by exploring the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*) contained within it. This approach ensures that interpretation does not stop at the textual meaning alone but extends to the dimension of public interest, which is the primary objective of Islamic law. Thus, environmental conservation can be positioned as part of the realization of the objectives of Islamic law, which are oriented toward the protection of life, the sustainability of ecosystems, and human well-being.

A number of previous studies have addressed the issue of environmental conservation from an Islamic perspective. Galib & Abubakar, (2025) explain that the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) contain various principles that emphasize the importance of preserving the environment as a means of preventing damage and disasters caused by human actions. Sulistyo, (2018), through a thematic exegesis (tafsir *maudhu*'i), demonstrate that the Quran implicitly illustrates Allah's concern for the sustainability of all living creatures and commands humanity not to cause destruction on Earth.

Meanwhile, Willya et al., (2022) examined environmental conservation from the perspectives of Islamic law and positive law, concluding that the state bears the responsibility for ensuring a good and healthy environment. Nevertheless, most of these studies still focus on normative, legal, or general environmental themes, and thus have not specifically examined the ecological values in the Quran through the perspective of *maqāṣidī* exegesis, which is oriented toward revealing the objectives of Islamic law underlying the Quran's ecological messages.

A search of the Scopus database for studies on ecological values found 44 documents from 2022 to 2026. This analysis clearly shows that no studies have yet been found related to the ecological values of the Quran from an exegetical perspective. The following is a visualization of the VOSviewer bibliometric analysis based on the themes of ecological, environmental conservation, and Islam.

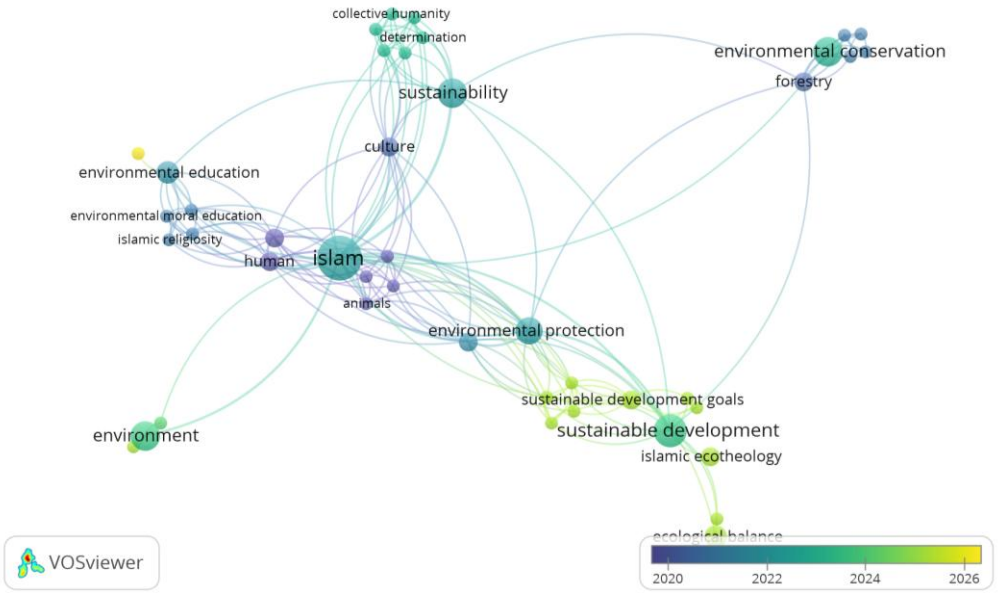


Fig 1. VOSviewer visualization analysis of the study on ecological values in the Quran, based on the keywords ecology, environmental conservation, and Islam (Base data Scopus 2020–2026)

Based on the above discussion, the research gap in this article lies in the discrepancy between the teachings of the Quran which emphasize ecological responsibility and the reality of ongoing environmental degradation, as well as the limited number of studies that specifically analyze the ecological values of the Quran through a *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach. The novelty of this article lies in the use of the *maqāṣidī* exegetical perspective to identify and analyze the ecological values contained in Quranic Surah Al-Aʻrāf 56, particularly the concepts of *ḥifẓ al-bi'ah* (environmental protection), *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (protection of life), and *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (protection of religion) as part of the objectives of Sharia. This approach not only examines the textual meaning of the verse but also reveals its relevance in addressing contemporary environmental issues. The implications of this article are to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of contemporary exegetical studies based on *maqāṣid al-syarīʻah* and to enrich the discourse on Islamic eco-theology. Furthermore, the findings of this article are expected to serve as an ethical, spiritual, and normative foundation for the public, academics, and policymakers in fostering ecological awareness and promoting sustainable environmental conservation practices based on the values of the Quran.

METHODS

This article was written to analyze ecological values in the Quran through the perspective of *maqāṣidī* exegesis, with an emphasis on revealing the objectives of Islamic law contained in verses related to environmental conservation. This study employs a qualitative approach as it is oriented toward a deep understanding of the meanings, values, and normative messages found in the Quranic text. A systematic analysis of various primary and secondary sources was conducted to identify ecological concepts relevant to contemporary environmental degradation issues. Through the *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach, this article seeks to explain the interconnection between religious messages, human welfare, and ecological responsibility as part of the implementation of *maqāṣid al-syarīʻah* in modern life.

Methods and Types

This article was written using qualitative methods, specifically content analysis, and the *maqāṣidī* interpretive approach. Content analysis was used to identify, categorize, and interpret the ecological values contained in the verses of the Quran,

while the *maqāṣidī* exegetical approach was used to uncover the objectives of Islamic law (*maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*) that underpin the Quran's ecological messages. This approach enables an understanding that is not only oriented toward the textual aspects of the verses but also toward the dimensions of public interest, moral values, and their relevance to contemporary environmental conservation (Engkizar et al., 2024; 2026; Gunawan et al., 2026).

Data Sources

The data sources in this article consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data consists of Quranic verses related to environmental conservation, with a primary focus on Surah Al-A'rāf 56 as the object of analysis. To enrich the interpretation, this article also draws upon a number of representative exegetical works, such as Tafsir al-Munīr by Wahbah al-Zuḥailī, Tafsir al-Miṣbāḥ by M. Quraish Shihab, and Tafsir Al-Azhar by Hamka. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from literature on *maqāṣid al-syarī'ah*, academic books, scholarly journal articles, and previous studies discussing environmental exegesis, Islamic ecological ethics, and the concept of *ḥifẓ al-bi'ah* in contemporary Islamic studies (Makfud, 2026; Nafis, 2026; Putri et al., 2024).

Instruments

The primary instrument in this article is the author (human instrument), who plays a role in determining the focus of the study, selecting data sources, classifying information, and interpreting the data obtained. Data collection was conducted through documentary research, namely the collection and examination of various relevant documents, including verses from the Quran, books of exegesis, literature on *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, reference books, and scholarly articles related to the theme of environmental conservation. This technique was chosen because it allows for the acquisition of comprehensive conceptual and theoretical data to explain the ecological values of the Quran from a *maqāṣidī* exegetical perspective (Creswell, 2018; Engkizar et al., 2025; 2026; Htay et al., 2025; Mustafa et al., 2026; Sugiyono, 2022).

Analytical Techniques

The data analysis in this article employs content analysis and thematic analysis. Content analysis is used to identify the meanings contained in the verses of the Quran and the interpretations of the exegetes, while thematic analysis is used to group the main themes related to ecological values. The analysis process was conducted in several stages, namely: i) identifying verses relevant to the theme of environmental conservation; ii) analyzing the linguistic aspects of the structure and meaning of key terms in Surah Al-A'rāf 56; iii) examining the interpretations of classical and contemporary exegetes; iv) identifying the of Sharia contained in the verse, particularly *ḥifẓ al-bi'ah* (environmental protection), *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (protection of life), and *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (protection of religion); and v) analyzing the relevance of the findings to various issues of environmental degradation in the contemporary era. These steps are carried out systematically to produce a comprehensive understanding of the Quran's ecological values from the perspective of *maqāṣidī* exegesis (Engkizar et al., 2026; Rusmana, 2015; Seminikhyna & Lutsenko, 2024).

Framework for the Application of Exegesis

The application of *maqāṣidī* exegesis in this article focuses on efforts to uncover the objectives of Sharia underlying the textual message of Quranic Surah Al-A'rāf 56. Therefore, the analysis is directed not only toward the prohibition against causing corruption (*fasād*) on earth but also toward the values of public interest that the verse seeks to realize. This analytical framework is used to explain that environmental conservation is an integral part of the *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, which is oriented toward environmental protection (*ḥifẓ al-bi'ah*), the sustainability of human life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), and the strengthening of religious responsibility toward nature (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*). Thus,

maqāṣidī exegesis provides a theoretical foundation that allows the ecological values of the Quran to be understood in a more contextual, practical, and relevant manner in addressing today's global environmental challenges (Mansyur et al., 2019; Rusmana, 2015).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study examines environmental conservation from the perspective of Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56, using a *maqashidi* exegesis approach. This verse prohibits all forms of destruction on Allah's earth, calls for its restoration, and encourages prayer with a sense of both fear and hope. The study highlights the importance of Islamic sharia values as the foundation of ecological awareness.

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ بَعْدَ اِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوْهُ خَوْفًا وَّطَمَعًاۗ اِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللّٰهِ قَرِيْبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ

Meaning: *And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good.* (QS. Al-A'raf: 56)

This verse forbids humans from causing corruption on earth whether physically, such as by damaging nature and the environment, or socially, including acts of oppression, fraud, and incitement to hostility after Allah created it in a state of balance and goodness. Allah commands humanity to pray with a deep sense of awe of His punishment and hope in His mercy, so that their hearts remain obedient and free from arrogance. Allah also reminds us that His mercy is especially close to those who do good that is, those who perform acts of righteousness in both worship and social interactions. Thus, this verse teaches the importance of balance in preserving the environment, social relationships, and one's spiritual connection to Allah.

Abdul Saeed, in his exegesis titled contemporary reflections on the Quran, states that safeguarding this planet is humanity's responsibility as Allah's vicegerents, and environmental destruction constitutes a betrayal of that responsibility. He also emphasizes that the feelings of fear and hope experienced during prayer reflect the spiritual psychology of a believer who is both aware of his sins and optimistic about Allah's mercy; thus, this verse serves as an important foundation for ecological teachings in Islam and the character development of Muslims.

The Environment

Allah the Almighty created the universe as a provision for humankind. Therefore, at the same time, humans are obligated to protect and preserve the environment to ensure a healthy one. Since human daily life is inseparable from the use of the environment, it is only right that humans protect the environment from anything that threatens its destruction. The reality today is that the environment is facing various serious problems and has suffered significant damage caused by a range of factors, including: first, indirect causes, such as natural environmental disasters for example, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, earthquakes, and others (Pratama et al., 2025).

Second, damage caused by human activities involving excessive exploitation driven by pressing needs, greed, or perhaps a lack of awareness regarding the importance of environmental conservation for example, illegal logging, dumping trash into rivers, damming river flows, and so on. Therefore, the environment, which has suffered various forms of damage, requires serious efforts to restore it or prevent further, more severe damage caused by human activities that exceed acceptable limits (Shihab, 2016).

Conservation and the natural environment are inseparable from humanity's role as God's vicegerents on Earth. God created humankind as His vicegerents, endowing them with the knowledge necessary to care for this world. As vicegerents, humans also have a duty to preserve the universe and the environment to the best of their ability so that life on earth may be prosperous, peaceful, and full of blessings

and serve as provision for the Day of Judgment (Italiana & Hafsari, 2023; Masruri, 2014; Syauqi et al., 2025).

Environmental management can be defined as an integrated effort to preserve the functions of the environment, encompassing policies regarding the planning, utilization, development, maintenance, restoration, monitoring, and control of the environment (Article 1, Point 2 of Law No. 23 of 1997 on Environmental Management). The mandate of this article implies a correlation between the State whose legal actions take the form of policy-making and a responsible environmental governance system (Sriyanti, 2023).

The term "sustainable" means "lasting forever" or "eternal and unchanging." The word "conservation" refers to the effort to preserve, maintain, and protect something from change. In Arabic, "conservation" is synonymous with "*al-ishlah*," which means ensuring something remains as it is and safeguarding its existence out of a sense of love and compassion (Qamar, 2014). Thus, environmental conservation efforts involve safeguarding the environment based on love and compassion. "*Ishlah*" can also be interpreted as repairing something that has previously been damaged or destroyed (Istianah, 2019). Thus, environmental conservation efforts involve safeguarding the environment based on love and compassion. "*Ishlah*" can also be interpreted as repairing something that has previously been damaged or destroyed (Quran 7:56).

This verse prohibits causing corruption on earth, as causing corruption is a form of transgression. Allah SWT created the universe in a state of harmony and balance, designed to meet the needs of all creatures. Allah SWT has made it in a good state and commanded His servants to improve it. One way Allah SWT improves it is by sending prophets to set things right and improve life in society. Therefore, causing destruction after something has been improved is far worse than before it was improved. Since this verse explicitly underscores this prohibition, exacerbating damage or destroying something that is good is also forbidden.

This prohibition against causing damage encompasses all areas, such as harming social relationships, the physical and spiritual well-being of others, livelihoods and sources of sustenance (agriculture, trade, and so on), damaging the environment, and so forth. Allah SWT created the earth with all its bounties for humanity to utilize to the best of their ability for their well-being (Fahmiyah, 2025).

The environment is an indispensable part of human life. This is because humans cannot live in isolation. In meeting their needs such as finding food and drink humans are heavily dependent on the environment. The environment also provides various natural resources that serve as the foundation for human life. Thus, humans, animals, and plants can derive energy from it. It is also through the environment that humans can be creative and develop their talents or artistic skills (Siahaan, 2017).

Explanation of the verse and interpretation of its objectives: This verse contains two prohibitions and one recommendation that form an important foundation of Islamic environmental ethics: First, the prohibition against damaging the earth. The phrase "*wala tufsidu fil-ard*" (do not cause corruption on earth) indicates a strict prohibition against actions that lead to environmental damage, such as: Deforestation (unregulated logging) Air and water pollution Unrestricted exploitation of natural resources Ecological injustice. In the *maqashidi* interpretation, this prohibition is related to *hifẓh al-bi'ah* (preserving the environment), which is part of the supplementary *maqāṣid* (*tahsiniyyāt*). Preserving the earth means safeguarding the trust entrusted by Allah to humanity as His vicegerents (Quran 2:30).

Second, after Allah had set it right. The phrase "*ba 'da iṣlāḥihā*" affirms that Allah created the earth in a state of goodness, balance (*mīzān*), and abundance of blessings. Humans are entrusted with the responsibility to preserve this balance and

not to disrupt it. This relates to the *maqashid: Hifẓh an-nafs* (preserving life), because environmental destruction directly impacts human lives; and *Hifẓh al-mal* (preserving wealth), because such destruction affects the economy, agriculture, and the means of survival.

Third, the exhortation to pray with both fear and hope. Allah commands humanity to pray with a sense of fear (*khawf*) of His punishment if they neglect to care for the earth, and with hope (*ṭama'*) for His mercy if they act righteously and preserve nature. In the context of *maqāṣid*, this reflects a spiritual balance between faith, good deeds, and social responsibility. It underscores the need for theological and moral awareness in our interactions with the environment.

Description of the Meaning of Verse 56 of Surah Al-A'raf

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوْا فِى الْاَرْضِ بَعْدَ اِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوْهُ خَوْفًا وَّطَمَعًاۗ اِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللّٰهِ قَرِيْبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ

Meaning: *And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good.* (QS. Al-A'raf: 56)

This verse addresses the prohibition against causing destruction on earth. Causing destruction is a form of overstepping boundaries. Allah SWT created the entire universe in a state of harmony, balance, and sufficiency to meet the needs of His creatures. Allah created it in a good condition and even instructed His people to improve it. For causing destruction after something has been improved is far worse. Therefore, this verse explicitly underscores this prohibition, although, of course, exacerbating damage or destroying what is good is also highly reprehensible (Shihab, 2016).

In Tafsir al-Misbah, Quraish Shihab explains that this verse contains a strict prohibition against all forms of destruction on Earth after Allah created it in a state of balance and goodness. The corruption referred to here is not limited to physical destruction such as the destruction of nature and the environment but also includes moral, social, and spiritual corruption. According to him, humans, as Allah's vicegerents on earth, must preserve the order that Allah has established. The call to pray with a sense of both fear and hope reflects the balance in a believer's spirituality: they must be mindful of the consequences of their actions while continuing to place their hope in Allah's mercy. The closing part of the verse, which states that Allah's mercy is close to those who do good (*muḥsinīn*), serves as motivation for humanity to continue caring for the earth with full responsibility and kindness (Muhammad, 2022).

In Tafsir Al-Azhar, Hamka interprets Quranic Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56, as a stern warning from Allah that humans should not cause corruption on Earth after Allah has set it right. According to Hamka, the corruption referred to in this verse is not limited to physical damage to nature and the environment, but also includes corruption of character, morals, and social order. Hamka emphasizes that people often fail to realize that all the comforts, life, and natural balance they enjoy are forms of *ishlāḥ* (restoration) from Allah, and that causing corruption amounts to betraying that trust.

Furthermore, the command to pray to Allah with *khauf* (fear) and *ṭama'* (hope) indicates that in facing worldly life, a believer must maintain a balance between fear of Allah's punishment and hope for His mercy. Hamka explains that this is the spiritual attitude humans must possess in their actions in this world, including in preserving the environment. He also emphasizes that those who practice ihsan that is, those who preserve the earth and do not cause destruction are the ones who will receive Allah's mercy, as explained at the end of the verse.

Hamka's interpretation emphasizes that environmental conservation is not merely a moral and social obligation, but rather an integral part of religious teachings. He views *fasād* (corruption) as a symbol of humanity's injustice toward the trust of

stewardship on Earth, and Allah's warning in this verse is an expression of His mercy, urging humanity to return to the awareness of tawhid, gratitude, and responsibility as stewards of the Earth (Hamka, 1990).

In Tafsir al-Munir, Wahbah az-Zuhaili also provides a comprehensive explanation of Quranic Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56. He begins by emphasizing that this verse contains a strict prohibition from Allah SWT against humanity causing corruption (*fasad*) on Earth after Allah created it in a state of balance, order, and filled with goodness. The word "*fasād*" here, according to az-Zuhaili, encompasses various forms of oppression, injustice, social chaos, moral decay, deviation from religious values, and even physical destruction of the environment and natural resources.

The damage in question is not merely ecological or physical in nature such as pollution and the exploitation of nature but also encompasses damage to the social order, such as hostility, bloodshed, legal violations, and the violation of divine values. Az-Zuhaili emphasizes that Allah has fundamentally arranged the earth in perfect harmony. Therefore, any human action that disrupts that order constitutes a betrayal of the trust of khalifah fil-ardh that Allah has entrusted to humankind.

Furthermore, regarding the verse "*and pray to Him with a sense of fear and hope*," az-Zuhaili explains that Allah commands His servants not only to protect the earth from destruction but also to always pray with a balanced state of mind between khauf (fear of His punishment and wrath) and *ṭama'* (hope for His mercy and reward). According to him, this is a great spiritual principle in Islam: that a believer, in every deed, must possess two main pillars fear and hope fear so as not to overstep boundaries, and hope so as to remain optimistic and never lose hope in Allah's mercy.

Az-Zuhaili concludes his exegesis of this verse by explaining that Allah links His mercy to those who practice ihsan (*muhsinin*). According to him, the muhsinin are those who perfect their deeds not merely by formally carrying out Allah's commands, but also by performing them with complete sincerity, noble character, and concern for their social environment and the natural world around them. This is what makes them worthy of Allah's mercy. Furthermore, az-Zuhaili implies that protecting the earth from destruction is part of the maqashid the primary objectives of Islamic law which include the protection of life (*hifẓ al-nafs*), property (*hifẓ al-mal*), religion (*hifẓ al-din*), reason (*hifẓ al-'aql*), and lineage (*hifẓ al-nasl*) (Hardianto & Fata, 2025). In a contemporary context, the protection of the environment (*hifẓ al-bi'ah*) can also be added as an important part of Islamic Sharia ethics. Thus, according to Wahbah az-Zuhaili, Quranic Surah Al-A'raf: 56 not only prohibits destructive actions but also presents a comprehensive spiritual, social, and moral framework that is relevant to efforts to preserve the environment and maintain the balance of human life on Earth (Mahendra & Nugraha, 2025).

Imam Asy-Syaukani interprets the prohibition "*Do not cause corruption on earth after (Allah) has set it right*" as encompassing various forms of corruption, both physical and moral. This includes murder, the destruction of homes, the killing of animals, the cutting down of trees, the drying up of rivers, disbelief in Allah, sin, and violations of Sharia after Allah has established it. Asy-Syaukani explains that the command "*pray to Him with fear and hope*" implies that when praying, a servant must feel fear that the prayer might not be accepted and hope that the request will be granted. This reflects a balance between fear and hope in worshiping Allah. The closing part of this verse, "*Indeed, the mercy of Allah is very close to those who do good,*" according to Asy-Syaukani, indicates that Allah's mercy is very close to those who practice ihsan. Those who practice ihsan are those who combine faith in Allah and the unseen, fulfill their obligations to Allah, avoid His prohibitions, and feel that they are being watched by Allah, thereby improving their deeds (Lathifah et al., 2025).

Sayyid Quthb interprets Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56, with an emphasis on the spiritual dimension and humanity's awareness of servitude within a cosmic order that is fully submissive to Allah. According to him, the prohibition against "*causing corruption on earth after (Allah) has set it right*" is a call for humanity to align with the cosmic order one marked by complete submission and harmony with God's will. Quthb explains that the corruption (*fasad*) prohibited in this verse encompasses various forms, both external (environmental, social, economic) and internal (deviation from sharia, denial of God). Humans are forbidden to deviate from the values of ubudiyah because all of creation is subject to Allah's laws and commands. When humans reject Allah's laws and follow their own desires, this is a tangible form of corruption that disrupts the balance of nature.

Furthermore, the command to pray with a sense of fear (*khauf*) and hope (*tama'*) is not merely a ritualistic call, but a reflection of an inner attitude of humility, which should form the foundation of humanity's relationship with God and His creation. Sayyid Quthb emphasizes the importance of gentleness in prayer, not merely a loud voice or mere formality. True prayer is that which springs from a heart filled with acknowledgment of Allah's power, not from arrogance or worldly interests. The closing phrase of this verse "Indeed, the mercy of Allah is very close to those who do ihsan" according to Sayyid Quthb, reinforces that spiritual and social harmony with Allah's laws is the key to attaining His mercy. Those who do ihsan are those who are not only formally obedient but also protect the earth, act justly in their dealings, and spread goodness.

In a broader context, Sayyid Quthb links this verse to the awareness of tawhid and humanity's place in the natural world. He invites readers to observe how the entire universe submits to Allah in a calm and orderly manner, and that humanity should be part of that harmony, not a source of chaos. Thus, the prohibition against fasād here is not merely a matter of ecological ethics, but also a call toward total submission (*ubudiyah*) within the divine system that He has established on earth and throughout the universe (Qutb, 2003).

Analysis of Surah Al-A'raf, Verse 56, Based on the Maqashidiy Exegesis

The concept of environmental conservation is a matter of great importance in the Quran; there are numerous verses in the Quran that discuss environmental conservation, such as Surah Al-A'raf: 56, which we are examining here. Additionally, another verse containing a command to maintain and conserve the environment is found in Surah Al-A'raf: 58, which reads:

وَالْبَلَدُ الطَّيِّبُ يَخْرُجُ نَبَاتُهٗ بِاِذْنِ رَبِّهٖ وَالَّذِيْ خَبُثَ لَا يَخْرُجُ اِلَّا نَكِدًاۗ كَذٰلِكَ نُصَرِّفُ الْاٰيٰتِ لِقَوْمٍ يَّشْكُرُوْنَ ۝

Meaning: *And the good land - its vegetation emerges by permission of its Lord; but that which is bad - nothing emerges except sparsely, with difficulty. Thus do We diversify the signs for a people who are grateful.* (QS. A'raf: 58)

This verse describes the conditions of different regions and the efforts required to preserve them. The verse indicates that there are fertile lands and barren lands; both are the result of how humans, as vicegerents, manage and preserve the natural resources on Earth. People with good character and personality will always protect and preserve what Allah has entrusted to them on Earth as best as possible, so that they may reap the long-term benefits and effects of what they have cultivated and safeguarded, thereby bringing welfare to themselves and their communities. On the other hand, people with inherently bad character and personality will act recklessly without regard for the ecosystem from which they derive their benefits, and this does not have a positive long-term impact. As the land becomes degraded and unable to support the growth of what is planted on it, they gain no benefit whatsoever from it but instead suffer great losses.

In a Hadith of the Prophet, it is explained:

الرَّاحِمُونَ يَرْحَمُهُمْ الرَّحْمَنُ ارْحَمُوا مَنْ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَرْحَمْكُمْ مَنْ فِي السَّمَاءِ الرَّحِمُ شُجْنَةٌ مِنْ الرَّحْمَنِ فَمَنْ وَصَلَهَا وَصَلَهُ اللَّهُ وَمَنْ قَطَعَهَا قَطَعَهُ اللَّهُ

The Messenger of Allah, may Allah's peace and blessings be upon him, said: "Those who show compassion will be shown compassion by the Most Merciful; show compassion to everyone on earth, and surely He who is in heaven will show compassion to you. The term Ar-Rahim (mercy or compassion) is derived from the term Ar-Rahman; therefore, whoever maintains family ties, Allah will surely maintain them (with His mercy), and whoever severs family ties, Allah will surely sever them (from His mercy). (Narrated by Tirmidhi, No. 1847).

From the sources cited above, it can be concluded that environmental stewardship is a principle that must be manifested in the life of every Muslim. Wherever we may be, we must preserve the environment so that we may reap abundant benefits and earn the pleasure of Allah SWT (Azzahra & Maysithoh, 2024).

First is linguistic analysis. As an initial step in dissecting the content of this verse, an exegete must understand the linguistic aspects contained within it; this is essential so that the meaning of every word in the verse can be clearly explained, thereby broadening our interpretive horizons. The linguistic aspects that must be analyzed are the vocabulary (*mufradat*) and grammatical case (*i'rab*) of the surah under examination. First is the vocabulary: the phrase (وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَٰحِهَا) (And do not cause corruption on earth after [Allah] has set it right). Allah SWT forbids them from causing corruption on earth in any way, whether minor or major, including killing people, destroying their homes, cutting down trees, and polluting their rivers. Among the forms of corruption on earth are disbelief in Allah, committing shirk, and committing sins against Him. The meaning of (بَعْدَ إِصْلَٰحِهَا) is after Allah has set it right by sending messengers, revealing scriptures, and establishing the Sharia.

The key phrase in this verse is "*laa tufsidu*." The word "*fasad*" in Lisan al-Arab means corruption, destruction, and evil. The word "*fasad*" also signifies a deviation from a good or upright state. At the same time, it is the antonym of the words "*salah*" or "*islah*," which mean goodness or righteousness. According to *Lisan* al-Arab, the word "*fasad*" is used to describe a deviation from the right path, justice, or morality, encompassing all forms of evil, sin, and injustice. In the Quran, this word is often used to describe various forms of corruption on earth, whether physical such as disasters caused by human actions or non-physical such as shirk, injustice, the spread of lies, and war.

The phrase (وَٱدْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا) (and pray to Him with fear that your prayer will not be answered and hope that it will be granted) has two possible grammatical constructions, as previously explained in the phrase (خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا) (with humility and a soft voice). This indicates that Allah prescribes that the person praying should feel fear that his prayer will not be answered and hope that Allah will grant his prayer. If, in his prayer, he combines this fear with hope, then he will receive what he asks for. *Al-Khauf* is a state of anxiety over something one fears might happen. Ath-Thama' is the anticipation of the occurrence of things one hopes for.

Second, *i'rab*. In the sentence إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ ٱللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ, Allah uses the word قَرِيبٌ (masculine) for three reasons. First, He made it masculine because the meaning of "*rahmat*" (mercy) conveys compassion or the hope for compassion, which is expressed in the masculine form. Second, because what is meant by "*rahmat*" is "*matar*" (the masculine form) due to attribution. Or it is an attribute of an omitted noun, which functions as an object (*maf'ul*), or because the feminine form of the word "*rahmat*" is not the literal meaning.

Scholars differ in their opinions on this matter. Az-Zajjaj said, "*Indeed, the word ar-rahmah is interpreted as ar-ruhm because it means forgiveness and mercy*." This interpretation

is favored by An-Nuhas. An-Nadhr bin Syamuel said, "*Ar-Rahmah* is a mashdar meaning '*at-tarahhum*,' and the proper form of the mashdar is in the masculine (*tadzkir*) form." Al-Akhfasy Sa'id said, "What is meant by '*ar-rahmah*' here is '*al-mathar*' (rain), and it is permissible to use the masculine form ('*tadzkir*') for some feminine nouns." From this, the word *qarib* is in fact not associated with *rahmat*, but with Allah SWT. And since the word Allah is masculine, the word *qarib* must also be masculine."

The word لْمُحْسِنِين is the plural form of the word "*muhsin*." For a human being, this quality represents the pinnacle of goodness that can be attained. It is when a person sees himself in another person, so that he gives to that other person what he himself should take. Meanwhile, *ihsan* toward Allah the Almighty is the dissolution of the human self so that one "sees" only Allah the Almighty. For this reason, a person's *ihsan* toward fellow human beings is that they no longer see themselves but see only others. Whoever sees himself in the position of another's need and does not see himself while worshiping Allah the Almighty that person is called a *muhsin*, and at that moment he has reached the pinnacle in all his deeds. Such is the opinion of al-Harli, which the author has outlined while interpreting (Quran 2:58). A "*muhsin*" holds a higher status than a just person, because the just person demands all his rights and does not withhold the rights of others he gives them their due whereas the "*muhsin*" gives more than he is required to give and willingly accepts less than his due (Shihab, 2016).

Second is the overall meaning of the verse. Taken as a whole, this verse forbids humans from causing corruption on the earth that Allah has created as perfectly as possible in other words, its creation is already perfect. The phrase "after (it was created) in the best of forms" implicitly affirms that Allah has created the universe in a harmonious and balanced state, requiring humans, as His vicegerents, to preserve and nurture it not to distort or destroy it, whether physically in terms of the environment or in terms of moral and social order. This prohibition forms the foundation of ecological and social ethics in Islam. Furthermore, this verse provides guidance for spiritual interaction with Allah through the command to pray with a balance between fear (*khauf*) and hope (*thama'*).

Fear of Allah fosters caution against sin and encourages self-reflection, while hope in His mercy cultivates optimism and confidence in every supplication. This balance creates a healthy relationship between the servant and God, free from despair or excessive complacency. The culmination of this verse is the promise that God's mercy is very close to those who do good (*muhsinin*). The semantic meaning here is that preserving the earth from destruction and praying with proper etiquette are manifestations of *ihsan* itself. Thus, this verse seamlessly links human responsibility toward nature, spiritual ethics, and divine reward: obedience in preserving the earth and supplicating to Him will yield *ihsan*, which in turn will draw near the mercy of Allah (Zuhayli, 2003).

Third is historical and contemporary analysis. Nature and its contents form an inseparable unity; the two complement one another, necessitating harmony between humans and the surrounding natural environment. The existence of mountains, forests, rivers, oceans, and plants is part of the natural ecosystem that must be protected and preserved (Fadli et al., 2025). Historically, this verse was revealed as a warning to humanity not to destroy the earth and to always protect the surrounding ecosystem. Originally, the universe was created in a perfect and orderly manner. Humans utilize it so that they may give thanks for His blessings. However, in utilizing it, they must not exceed limits to the point of causing damage. Nature, which has been bestowed upon humanity, is passive in nature; it is humanity that must manage it in accordance with the will of Allah SWT.

Natural resources can be utilized for good purposes, or they can be exploited for negative purposes that endanger human life itself. The provisions of life in nature are provided with the purpose of making it easier for humans to worship Allah SWT. Any good deed performed by a person, if intended as an act of worship to Allah SWT, will be rewarded accordingly. This includes taking care of one's own needs (Islam, 2024). The micro-level context of environmental stewardship refers to the actions and attitudes of individuals in their daily interactions with the environment. This verse implicitly calls on every Muslim not to cause destruction on Earth. This includes things that may seem small but have a significant cumulative impact, such as: personal waste management disposing of trash properly, reducing the use of single-use plastics, and recycling; conserving energy and water turning off lights when not in use, using water sparingly; and switching to renewable energy sources whenever possible; maintaining the cleanliness of the surrounding environment: not polluting rivers, lakes, or public areas with waste; and respecting biodiversity: not damaging plants, not overhunting animals, and participating in conservation efforts.

At the micro level, caring for nature also involves spiritual awareness. The phrase "*pray to Him with fear (that it will not be accepted) and hope (that it will be granted)*" indicates that the act of preserving nature is not only about the physical aspect but also the spiritual one. There is a fear of God's punishment if we destroy His creation, and hope for reward if we preserve it. This fosters an environmental ethic rooted in piety.

The macro context of environmental conservation relates to policies, systems, and collective actions involving various stakeholders, ranging from the government and corporations to the general public. This verse reminds us not to cause destruction "on the earth after (God) has set it right." This points to the existence of a harmonious and balanced natural order created by God, and our duty is to preserve that harmony, not to destroy it. At the macro level, environmental conservation includes: Developing sustainable environmental policies: The government is responsible for creating regulations that protect forests, oceans, and other natural resources from overexploitation. Implementing environmentally friendly technologies: Industries and corporations are encouraged to use low-pollution technologies and harness renewable energy. Environmental education and campaigns: Promoting environmental awareness in the community through educational programs and public campaigns. International cooperation: Addressing cross-border environmental issues, such as global climate change or marine pollution, through cooperation among nations. Green economic development: Promoting economic growth that aligns with the principles of sustainability, minimizing negative impacts on the environment.

The phrase "Indeed, the mercy of Allah is very close to those who do good" at the end of this verse serves as an affirmation that every effort to preserve nature, whether on a micro or macro scale, is part of "doing good" (*ihsan*). This indicates that actions to protect the environment are acts of worship that bring about the mercy and blessings of Allah SWT. Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56, provides a strong theological foundation for the preservation of nature, whether on a micro or macro scale. It calls on every individual to take responsibility for their environment and encourages all segments of society to work together to maintain the balance of the ecosystem. By understanding and putting these teachings into practice, it is hoped that humanity can become trustworthy stewards, preserving the earth for the sustainability of life for future generations, and continually drawing closer to the mercy of Allah SWT.

Fourth is the *maqashid* output of the verse. After understanding the historical and linguistic context of the verse, to narrow the scope of this study, the aspects of *maqashid* will be elaborated based on the principles of *maqashid al-shari'ah* from Surah

Al-A'raf, verse 56. First, the *Ashl* of the understanding of *maqashid* in this verse is the affirmation of Allah's *Tawhid* and *Rububiyah* as the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. This verse implicitly states that the earth has been perfected and organized by Allah, demonstrating the perfection of His creation. The destruction caused by humans is a form of defiance against Allah's *Rububiyah* (sustainer). Another foundational principle is the general prohibition against causing corruption (*fasad*). This prohibition is universal and encompasses all forms of corruption whether moral, social, or environmental. In the context of this verse, the prohibition specifically pertains to corruption on the face of the earth. It also includes the obligation to preserve *maslahah* (the public good) and avoid *mafsadah* (corruption), which are fundamental principles of Sharia. It can be concluded that the fundamental legal principle (*hukm ashl*) derived from this verse is to Preserve the Common Good and Avoid Harm (*Jalb al-Mashalih wa Daf'u al-Mafasid*).

Second, *Furu'* refers to the implementation or application of these fundamental principles in various aspects of life. From the prohibition against causing destruction on Earth arise various branches of law and ethics, including: The prohibition against environmental destruction: Any action that damages ecosystems, pollutes water and air, or eliminates biodiversity is strictly prohibited. This includes uncontrolled deforestation, the indiscriminate disposal of industrial waste, or poaching. The obligation to conserve and rehabilitate: If damage has already occurred, there is an obligation to undertake rehabilitation efforts, such as reforestation or pollution cleanup. The ethics of wise consumption: Encouraging a lifestyle that avoids wastefulness, reduces waste, and promotes recycling, since wastefulness is a form of destruction. Prohibition of excessive exploitation: Natural resources must not be exploited recklessly without considering sustainability for future generations. Development of environmentally friendly science and technology: Encouraging innovations that can solve environmental problems and promote sustainability.

Next, *washilah* is a means or method for achieving a goal (*ghayah*) through the practice of *ashl* and *furu'*. In this verse, the *wasilah* explicitly mentioned is: praying to Allah with *khauf* (fear) and *thama'* (hope) (Fadli et al., 2025). Prayer is a means to draw closer to Allah, seek His help, and demonstrate submission. *Khauf* (fear of not being answered) motivates sincerity in prayer and keeps one away from sinful acts, while *thama'* (hope that one's prayer will be answered) provides optimism and confidence in Allah's mercy. Doing good deeds (*ihsan*). This verse states that "indeed, Allah's mercy is very close to those who do good." Doing good is a means of attaining Allah's mercy and bringing about improvement on earth. Ihsan encompasses good conduct toward Allah (sincere worship) and toward fellow creatures (preserving the environment, performing righteous deeds). *Ghayah* is the ultimate goal or primary purpose of the commands and prohibitions in Islamic law. In Surah Al-A'raf, verse 56, the *ghayah* is the realization of public interest and well-being on earth. By refraining from causing harm and consistently doing good, a harmonious, safe, and prosperous life will be created for all creatures. This leads to receiving the mercy of Allah SWT. This verse explicitly states that "the mercy of Allah is very close to those who do good." This is the highest spiritual goal: to attain the love, blessings, and forgiveness of Allah in this world and the hereafter.

Maqashid **of the Verse on Environmental Preservation: QS. Al-A'raf, Verse 56**

The following is an analysis of the relationship between the interpretation of QS. Al-A'raf verse 56 and *maqashidi* theories, including: (values, aspects, and the hierarchy of *maqashid*). First, the value aspect (*Muhafazhah*) in the *maqashid* of QS. Al-A'raf verse 56. The prohibition against causing destruction on earth applies to both physical damage to the environment and ecosystems as well as non-physical damage, such as moral and social harm. This prohibition encompasses various aspects of life, such as disrupting social relationships, causing physical and mental harm to others,

and damaging livelihoods and sources of sustenance like agriculture and trade. Furthermore, this prohibition also includes the destruction of the natural environment and other related matters. Allah SWT created the earth and all its elements such as mountains, valleys, rivers, oceans, and forests for humanity to utilize to the best of their ability for their own well-being. Therefore, humans are obligated to preserve and manage the earth properly so as not to cause harmful damage.

An affirmation of humanity's responsibility as stewards who must protect and preserve the earth. The verse (وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي ٱلْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَٰحِهَا) ("And do not cause corruption on earth after [Allah] has set it right") points to a harmonious order, the harmony of which must be preserved by humanity. As stewards, humans are required to protect the environment for the sake of sustainable life for future generations. Deriving benefits from it without excess so as not to lead to *mafsadah* (corruption) is a form of protecting and preserving the environment (Kholil, 2026).

The phrase (وَٱدْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا) "and pray to Him with fear and hope," emphasizes that Allah not only commands humanity to protect the earth from destruction but also to constantly offer prayers with a heart balanced between fear (*khauf*) of His punishment and wrath, and hope (*ṭama'*) in His mercy and reward. According to him, this spiritual balance is one of the great principles of Islam: every believer, in performing good deeds, must have two main foundations fear, so as not to transgress boundaries, and hope, so as to remain faithful and not lose hope in Allah's mercy. Strengthening spiritual awareness through prayer performed with fear of punishment and hope for Allah's mercy (Jannati & Hamandia, 2022).

The affirmation that Allah's mercy is close to those who do good, thereby encouraging ihsan in daily life. The phrase "Indeed, Allah's mercy is very close to those who do good" at the end of this verse affirms that all efforts to preserve and care for the environment whether on a small or large scale fall under the category of good deeds (*ihsan*). This signifies that preserving nature is a form of worship that brings mercy and blessings from Allah SWT. This verse in Surah Al-A'raf provides a solid theological foundation for environmental conservation, calling on every individual to take responsibility for their surroundings, and encouraging all segments of society to work together to maintain the balance of the ecosystem. By understanding and putting this message into practice, humans are expected to fulfill their duty as responsible stewards, safeguarding the earth for the survival of future generations, while also drawing closer to the mercy of Allah SWT (Lazuady et al., 2022).

Second is the aspect of the *maqashid* contained therein. This verse encompasses five aspects of the maqashid of Sharia known as al-dharuriyyat al-khamsah, namely: Hifz al-Din (Preserving the Religion): Protecting the religion from deviations that could cause harm (Islam, 2024). As explained above, harm is not limited to physical harm but also includes social and moral harm. *Hifẓ al-Nafs* (Preserving Life): Prohibiting acts of violence and murder that destroy life. *Hifẓ al-Mal* (Preserving Property): Prohibiting acts that damage property, such as theft and fraud. *Hifẓ al-'Aql* (Protecting the Mind): Prohibits damage to the mind, for example, by avoiding the consumption of alcoholic beverages. This will certainly affect mental well-being and cause harm to oneself as well as others. Loss of consciousness leads to harm; therefore, one is commanded to protect the mind, which plays a crucial role in decision-making. *Hifẓ al-Nasl* (Preserving the Lineage): Prohibiting acts that harm the lineage and social order, such as adultery and other reprehensible acts. All these aspects are interrelated and demonstrate that corruption on earth has far-reaching effects on various dimensions of human and societal life.

Third, the *Maqashid* hierarchy in this verse is *Adh-Dharuriyyat*: This verse primarily emphasizes the protection of these basic needs, because preserving the

Earth is the cornerstone of human survival. Since the Earth is the only place where humans can live, it is essential to cultivate environmental conservation and avoid destruction, as this verse states. This ensures that human survival is not threatened in the future (Pratama, 2015). *Al-Hajiyyat*: In the context of this verse, environmental conservation is not limited to nature but also begins with small actions. It is necessary to pay attention to and maintain the personal conduct and behavior of each individual (Husna & Sarjan, 2024). At-Tahsiniyyat: In this regard, cooperation can also be fostered to realize the concept of environmental conservation outlined in this verse. Mutual assistance ensures that this noble mission proceeds smoothly. Of course, it is also essential to foster awareness in each individual regarding the importance of preserving the environment, which serves as the setting for our lives. Environmental damage caused by external factors particularly human actions can be prevented through various efforts, one of which is establishing a waste bank. In this way, trash will not be scattered throughout the environment, thereby helping to prevent floods (Mubarok, 2022).

CONCLUSION

This article demonstrates that the ecological values of the Quran occupy a significant position within the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* as a foundation for promoting public welfare (*maṣlaḥah*) and maintaining the balance of life. The analysis reveals that environmental preservation extends beyond the protection of the physical environment and encompasses the protection of human life (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*), the preservation of religious values (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*), and the sustainability of various aspects of human well-being. Accordingly, environmental stewardship constitutes an integral part of humanity's responsibility as *khalīfah* on earth, tasked with maintaining harmony between humans, nature, and God. The Quranic ecological values further emphasize the prevention of environmental degradation, the preservation of ecological balance, and the cultivation of spiritual awareness in human interactions with the natural world as an expression of obedience to Allah.

The novelty of this article lies in its application of the *maqāṣidī tafsīr* approach to identify and interpret the ecological values of the Quran through the framework of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*, particularly *ḥifẓ al-biʾah* (environmental protection), *ḥifẓ al-nafs* (protection of life), and *ḥifẓ al-dīn* (protection of religion). This approach offers a more comprehensive understanding by moving beyond the textual meaning of the Quranic verses to uncover the higher objectives underlying their ecological messages. The implications of this study are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, it contributes to the development of Quranic interpretation based on *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* and enriches contemporary Islamic eco-theological discourse. Practically, the findings provide an ethical, spiritual, and normative framework for scholars, religious leaders, policymakers, and the wider community in fostering ecological awareness and promoting environmental sustainability. Consequently, environmental preservation should be understood not merely as an ecological and social necessity but also as a religious responsibility aimed at realizing collective welfare and sustainable development.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the success of this research.

DECLARATIONS

Author contribution

Maisaroh Siregar: data curation, writing-original draft preparation, **Fauzi Nasrullah & Yoga Pratama:** analysis, conceptualization, **Novriadi & M. Raffi**

Juliano: methodology, visualization, and editing.

AI Statement
The data and the grammatical structure in this article have been validated and verified by English language experts and no AI-generated sentences are included in this article.

Funding statement
The author(s) declare that no financial support was received for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Conflict of interest
The authors declare that this research was conducted without any conflict of interest in the research.

Ethical clearance
The research company has agreed to carry out the research and is willing if the results of this research are published.

Publisher's and Journal's Note
Department of Qur'anic and Tafsir Studies, Faculty of Ushuluddin and Dakwah, Institut Ilmu Al-Qur'an (IIQ) Jakarta in collaboration with Asosiasi Ilmu al-Qur'an dan Tafsir (AIAT) as the publisher and Editor of Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir state that there is no conflict of interest towards this article publication.

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Al-Fanar: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir

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