

RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS: ECOLOGICAL FATWAS OF SAHAL MAHFUDH AND ALI YAFIE IN INDONESIA

*Yulianto¹, Umaiatus Syarifah¹, M. Mukhlis Fathruddin¹,
Anita Andriya Ningsih¹, Ferdi Arifin²*

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

²University of New South Wales, Canberra Australia

Email: ahmadyulianto2019@uin-malang.ac.id

Received: February 21, 2026

Revised: May 4, 2026

Accepted: May 5, 2026

Abstract

This article examines the role of kyai as cultural religious authorities in responding to environmental crises through ecological fatwas in Indonesia. Previous studies on environmental fatwas have primarily examined institutional eco-fatwas, emphasizing practical limitations in addressing ecological crises. This study fills the gap by showing how pesantren-based scholars integrate classical fiqh with contemporary environmental challenges through social and maqasid-oriented approaches. It focuses on the thoughts of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie as two influential scholars who successfully translated classical Islamic teachings into contextual environmental ethics. Using a qualitative approach based on document analysis, this research reviews the writings, fatwas, lectures, and public statements of both figures related to environmental issues. The findings show that ecological fatwas function not only as religious legal arguments but also as social instruments that shape collective awareness regarding human responsibility toward nature. Sahal Mahfudh emphasizes a social fiqh approach oriented toward public welfare, while Ali Yafie develops environmental fiqh based on maqasid al-shari'ah. The cultural authority of kyai through networks

of pesantren, religious study sessions, and social leadership makes fatwas more easily accepted and translated into community practice. This study contributes to of Islamic cultural studies demonstrating that the effectiveness of ecological fatwas in Indonesia depends not only on normative arguments but also on the social legitimacy of kyai as mediators between Islamic tradition and contemporary ecological challenges. The implication is that strengthening environmental policies in Muslim communities needs to involve local religious authorities so that ecological values are more effectively accepted, practiced, and sustained.

Artikel ini mengkaji peran kyai sebagai otoritas keagamaan kultural dalam merespons krisis lingkungan melalui fatwa ekologis di Indonesia. Studi-studi terdahulu mengenai fatwa lingkungan sebagian besar berfokus pada fatwa ekologis yang dikeluarkan oleh institusi resmi, dengan menekankan keterbatasan praktis dalam mengatasi krisis ekologi. Penelitian ini mengisi kekosongan tersebut dengan menunjukkan bagaimana para ulama berbasis pesantren mengintegrasikan fikih klasik dengan tantangan lingkungan kontemporer melalui pendekatan sosial dan berorientasi maqasid. Penelitian ini berfokus pada pemikiran Sahal Mahfudh dan Ali Yafie sebagai dua ulama berpengaruh yang berhasil menerjemahkan ajaran Islam klasik menjadi etika lingkungan yang kontekstual. Menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif berbasis analisis dokumen, penelitian ini meninjau tulisan, fatwa, ceramah, dan pernyataan publik dari kedua tokoh tersebut yang terkait dengan isu-isu lingkungan. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa fatwa ekologis berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai argumen hukum agama, tetapi juga sebagai instrumen sosial yang membentuk kesadaran kolektif mengenai tanggung jawab manusia terhadap alam. Sahal Mahfudh menekankan pendekatan fikih sosial yang berorientasi pada kemaslahatan publik, sedangkan Ali Yafie mengembangkan fikih lingkungan berbasis maqasid al-shari'ah. Otoritas kultural kyai melalui jaringan pesantren, pengajian keagamaan, dan kepemimpinan sosial membuat fatwa lebih mudah diterima dan diterjemahkan ke dalam praktik masyarakat. Studi ini memberikan kontribusi bagi studi budaya Islam dengan menunjukkan bahwa efektivitas fatwa ekologis di Indonesia tidak hanya bergantung pada argumen normatif, tetapi juga pada legitimasi sosial kyai sebagai mediator antara tradisi Islam dan tantangan ekologis kontemporer. Implikasinya adalah bahwa penguatan kebijakan lingkungan di komunitas Muslim perlu melibatkan otoritas keagamaan lokal agar nilai-nilai ekologis dapat diterima, dipraktikkan, dan dipertahankan secara lebih efektif.

Keywords: ecological fatwas, environmental crisis, Indonesian Islam, Islamic environmental jurisprudence, religious authority

Introduction

Natural disasters do not occur solely due to natural processes, but are largely influenced by human activities. Floods, landslides, and droughts are

often the result of poor environmental management, such as deforestation, uncontrolled land conversion, urbanization in vulnerable areas, and weak environmental governance. This condition shows that humans are not only victims, but also major contributors to the ecological crisis and the increasing risk of disasters (Ceddia et al., 2013; Damasceno et al., 2007; Rockström & Lambin, 2009). Indonesia is one of the countries with the highest disaster risk in the world. The high social, economic, and environmental vulnerability causes floods, landslides, extreme weather, and various other disasters to continually occur in many areas. National data shows thousands of disaster incidents each year that result in casualties, infrastructure damage, and socio-economic disruptions. This condition affirms that the environmental crisis in Indonesia is a serious issue that requires a comprehensive response (Pangaribuan et al., 2019; WRI, 2022; BNPB, 2023; Monalia & Noorratri, 2024).

Religion as a source of values and ethics plays an important role in building public awareness of the environmental crisis. In Islam, humans are positioned as caliphs who are responsible for maintaining the balance of nature, not exploiting it. In Indonesia, attention to environmental issues has increasingly developed through religious discussions, pesantren education, as well as fatwas that emphasize the importance of ecological ethics. This shows that the environmental crisis is not only understood as a technical issue but also as a moral and spiritual issue that requires the active involvement of religious authorities and the community (Jabar-NU, 2025; Kompas, 2024; Muhammadiyah, 2025). In this context, kyai have a strategic position as local religious authorities with significant influence in shaping the views and behaviors of the community. Through fatwas, sermons, religious study sessions, and pesantren networks, kyai play a role in translating Islamic teachings into social responsibilities for environmental stewardship. Compared to formal regulations, the cultural authority of kyai is often more effective in instilling collective awareness at the grassroots level.

So far, studies on environmental fatwas have focused more on institutional fatwas such as those of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI), which serve as moral guidelines in responding to climate change, forest fires, and the exploitation of natural resources (Iskandar & Sofuoglu, 2025; Mufid, 2020). Harnowo and Habib (2024) emphasized the importance of religious involvement in addressing the widespread impacts of climate change and the global environmental crisis. Ansori et al. (2025) showed that the eco-fatwas of local scholars in Riau attempt to respond to environmental damage

are limited to the representation of ideas, narratives, and arguments written in the sources rather than to the direct measurement of social effectiveness in the field. Data validity was ensured through source triangulation and cross-reading between documents (Bowen, 2009; Morgan, 2022).

Findings and Discussion

The Scriptural Basics in the Ecological Fatwa of Kiai

Contemporary environmental crises, such as climate change, deforestation, loss of biodiversity, and recurrent disasters, have driven the emergence of new ethical and legal reflections within religious traditions (Humaida, 2024). In the context of Indonesian Islam, one important response has emerged through the ecological fatwas of the kyai. These fatwas are not merely moral appeals, but a form of Islamic legal-ethical reasoning based on the Qur'an, Sunnah, as well as the treasury of *fiqh* and *ushul fiqh* in responding to modern environmental damage (Suryanullah et al., 2025; Rohmah et al., 2021).

The foundation of revelation plays an important role in the formation of ecological fatwas by kyai because Islamic law is inseparable from religious sources. The Qur'an serves as the main normative framework through the concepts of *fasad fi al-ard* (corruption on earth), *khalifah* (human responsibility), *amanah* (trust), and *mizan* (balance), which position environmental destruction as both a moral and legal issue (Noviani, 2024). Within this framework, the exploitation of nature is understood as a violation of the divine order rather than merely being viewed as a neutral impact of development (Hariati, 2025; Mufid, 2020).

The Sunnah reinforces the ecological principles of the Qur'an through hadiths about the prohibition of causing harm (*la darar wa la dirar*), protection of water, trees, animals, and public spaces. In the context of Indonesia, these hadiths are combined with *fiqh* rules so that environmental damage can be assessed ethically as well as legally. Classical *fiqh* and *ushul fiqh* become the next methodological basis through discussions on water rights, land use, public welfare, and prevention of harm. References such as *al-Muwafaqat*, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, and *fiqh al-mu'amalat* show the continuity between *fiqh* tradition and contemporary ecological issues (Mutakin & Rahman, 2023; Mangunjaya, 2022; Thahir, 2015).

The prominence of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie as authorities on ecological fatwas in Indonesia is rooted in their scholarly capacity, institutional leadership, and ability to respond to contemporary issues. Both come from

through the approaches of *fiqh al-bi'ah* and *maqasid al-shari'ah*, but their implementation still faces economic constraints, allowing exploitative practices to remain dominant.

In this context, Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie are two important figures. Sahal Mahfudh is known for his concept of social *fiqh* oriented towards public welfare, whereas Ali Yafie is known as a pioneer of environmental *fiqh* based on *maqasid al-shari'ah*. Both represent pesantren scholars who are able to bridge the tradition of classical *fiqh* with modern ecological challenges. Based on this, this article examines the construction of ecological fatwas by Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie and the role of *kyai* authority in shaping environmental ethics in Indonesia. This study emphasizes that the effectiveness of environmental fatwas is not only determined by normative evidence but also by the social legitimacy of the *kyai* as cultural authorities within society.

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach based on document analysis to examine the construction of Islamic legal-ethical reasoning in ecological fatwas and statements by Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie. Document analysis is a qualitative method that examines texts systematically to understand both the explicit and implicit meanings contained within them (Bowen, 2009; Nabilah & Jumadi, 2022). The unit of analysis in this study consists of documents that directly contain the views of both figures on the environment, disasters, social responsibility, and Islamic ethics. The primary data corpus includes the works of Sahal Mahfudh, such as *Nuansa Fiqh Sosial* and related writings, as well as the works of Ali Yafie, such as *Merintis Fiqh Lingkungan Hidup*, articles, written fatwas, sermons, lectures, and documented public statements. Secondary data in the form of journal articles, institutional reports, and relevant media coverage, were used as supporting context. The documents analyzed were purposively selected based on theme relevance, clarity of author attribution, source credibility, and the publication timeframe relevant to the research focus.

Data analysis was conducted through qualitative content analysis with stages of document identification, theme categorization, content coding, discourse interpretation, and comparison between documents. The analysis focused on patterns of religious argumentation, the use of normative evidence, the *maqasid al-shari'ah* approach, social *fiqh*, and the construction of *kyai* authority in environmental issues. Because this research is document-based, the findings

the Shafi'i pesantren tradition with a strong foundation in fiqh and *usul fiqh*. Sahal Mahfudh, through social fiqh, emphasizes public welfare, while Ali Yafie uses *maqasid al-shari'ah* by placing environmental preservation as part of the protection of life. Their positions in Nahdlatul Ulama and the Indonesian Ulama Council have extended the influence of these ideas into the public sphere through forums such as *Bahtsul Mass'il* (Rasyid, 2020; Mahfudh, 2020).

Within this framework, environmental damage is understood not as a peripheral issue, but as a threat to the main objectives of sharia (Danhas, 2024; Huda, 2023; Rusli, 2018). Sahal Mahfudh specifically views ecological damage as a form of collective injustice that must be addressed through Islamic law that is responsive to social realities (Abdillah, 2025; Romdloni & Djazilan, 2019).

In the Indonesian Islamic intellectual landscape, Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie represent progressive fiqh rooted in the pesantren tradition and classical fiqh, yet open to contextual reasoning (Siddiq, 2014). Sahal Mahfudh, through social fiqh, views environmental damage as a collective injustice that must be addressed through public welfare (Asmani, 2015). Meanwhile, Ali Yafie formulated *fiqh al-bi'ah* by linking environmental ethics and *maqasid al-shari'ah*, and emphasized the importance of a sustainable environment for the protection of life and human well-being. (Falah, 2018). Both figures demonstrate that fiqh can remain traditional in epistemology while being progressive in application (Husein, 2020). Their ecological fatwas are not merely moral rhetoric, but also normative instruments that translate the Qur'an, Sunnah, and classical fiqh into responses to contemporary environmental crises (Ratnasari & Fadil, 2025; Zahroh, 2024).

Qur'anic Reasoning in the Ecological Fatwas of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie

The results of the document analysis show that the Qur'an occupies a central position in the construction of ecological fatwas by Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie. Both figures do not interpret ecological verses literally, but rather thematically, transforming Qur'anic values into legal-ethical principles. The main themes that emerge are *fasad fi al-ard*, *khalifah*, *amanah*, *mizan*, and *islah*, which form the basis for the prohibition of environmental destruction and the obligation to preserve the environment (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006).

The verse most commonly used is QS. al-Rum: 41 concerning destruction on land and sea caused by human actions (Syarifah et al., 2024). Both figures

interpret this verse as the basis for understanding that deforestation, river pollution, and ecological disasters are modern forms of *fasad* originating from human actions. Therefore, environmental damage is positioned as a prohibited act because it causes widespread harm to society (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006). Although both figures share the same scriptural foundation, they differ in emphasis. Sahal Mahfudh tends to relate these verses to social welfare through a social fiqh approach, while Ali Yafie develops them more systematically within the framework of *fiqh al-bi'ah* and *maqasid al-shari'ah*.

The concept of the khalifah in QS. al-Baqarah: 30 serves as an important reference in the ecological fatwas of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie. Both interpret the verse not as a justification for exploiting nature, but as a basis for human responsibility to manage (*ri'ayah*) and protect (*himayah*) the environment. Ali Yafie emphasizes that the status of khalifah places humans as legal subjects responsible for the ecological impact of their actions, so that negligence or environmental destruction can be regarded as a violation of shar'i law (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006). QS. al-Ahzab: 72 regarding *amanah* also reinforces this construction. Sahal Mahfudh interprets *amanah* as a moral and legal responsibility to maintain the order of life, including environmental sustainability. Within the framework of an ecological fatwa, *amanah* is not understood abstractly, but is operationalized as an obligation to prevent damage that threatens communal life. Therefore, violations against the environment are positioned as a form of betrayal of divine trust, which carries both ethical and legal implications (Mahfudz, 2003).

The concept of *mizan* in QS. Al-Rahman: 7-9 also serves as the foundation for environmental ethics. These verses affirm that nature was created in balance and humans are forbidden from destroying it. Sahal Mahfudh uses this concept to assess that economic development that disregards ecological balance contradicts the principles of creation. In fiqh reasoning, violations against *mizan* are understood as actions that cause structural harm (Mahfudz, 2003). Explicit prohibitions against environmental destruction are also found in QS. al-A'raf: 56, *wa la tufsidu fi al-ard ba'da islahiha*. Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie interpret *islah* not only as social reform, but also as environmental sustainability that must be maintained. Therefore, this verse serves as the basis for preventive prohibitions against activities that have the potential to damage the environment, even before actual damage occurs (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006).

Through a thematic and integrative reading, verses about *fasad*, *khalifah*,

amanah, *mizan*, and *islah* become a strong textual foundation for the ecological fatwas of the kyai (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006). These verses not only reaffirm the moral prohibition against environmental destruction, but also provide a rational framework for legal assessment of contemporary ecological practices. This finding indicates that the Qur'an functions not merely as moral legitimacy, but as a basis for legal argumentation that keeps ecological fatwas in Indonesia faithful to the text while responding to modern environmental crises.

Hadith Reasoning in the Ecological Fatwas of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie

The Prophet's hadith plays an important role in the formation of ecological fatwas by Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie because it serves as a normative bridge between the cosmological principles of the Qur'an and the operationalization of Islamic law in social life (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006). In the tradition of fiqh, hadith is not only understood as the second source of law, but also as an exposition of the values of revelation that can be applied to contemporary issues (Suryanullah et al., 2025). Therefore, both figures use hadiths about the prohibition of danger, resource management, and the protection of living beings to build an environmental ethic that has legal implications (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006). The hadith *la darar wa la dirar* becomes the most fundamental basis in their ecological fatwas. From this hadith, the principle *al-darar yuzal* (harm must be removed) arises, which Sahal Mahfudh uses to assess deforestation, river pollution, and other ecological damage as *darar 'amm* (public harm) that contradicts the purposes of sharia (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006; Sari, 2024). The hadith prohibiting wasteful use of water, even when performing ablution in a flowing river, was used by Ali Yafie to emphasize the principles of efficiency and ecological responsibility. Water is understood not merely as a means of worship, but as a shared resource that determines public welfare. Therefore, this hadith becomes an ethical-legal basis for criticizing excessive and unjust exploitation of water (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006).

Hadiths about the recommendation to plant trees and the prohibition of destroying vegetation also hold an important position in ecological fatwas (Mangunjaya & Praharawati, 2019). The tradition that planting trees is considered a form of charity as long as it provides benefits is understood as Islam's recognition of long-term ecological value. Sahal Mahfudh connects it with the principle of *jalb al-masalih* to support forest and green space conservation policies, while Ali Yafie views the prohibition of illegal logging as a historical

basis for environmental regulation in Islam. Animal protection also becomes an important dimension of the ecological ethics of hadith. The stories of punishment for those who mistreat cats and forgiveness for those who give water to dogs are understood as a basis for the idea that non-human creatures have value recognized by sharia. Sahal Mahfudh uses this principle to criticize economic practices that cause mass suffering to animals and environmental damage (Mahfudz, 2003; Yafie, 2006).

Hadiths about the protection of public spaces, such as prohibiting disturbances to roads, shelters, and water sources, expand environmental ethics into the realm of spatial planning and public rights. Ali Yafie interprets this as a basis for understanding that environmental pollution, blocking access to water, and destroying green spaces constitute violations of the collective rights of the community (Yafie, 2006; Mukti & Efendi, 2020). In general, Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie do not read hadiths literally, but connect them with *maqasid al-shari'ah* and fiqh principles. Therefore, hadiths concerning the prohibition of dangers, water management, protection of vegetation, animals, and public spaces become an important foundation for ecological fatwas that remain faithful to tradition while being responsive to modern environmental crises (Mahfudz, 2003; Bisri, 2025).

Reinterpreting Classical Fiqh for Contemporary Ecological Crisis

Research findings show that the ecological fatwas of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie are rooted in the classical fiqh tradition, which is reinterpreted contextually. References to the 'yellow books' indicate that environmental issues are understood through established Islamic legal concepts, such as public welfare, harm prevention, and the management of shared resources. Thus, their ecological reasoning does not break with tradition but rather reactualizes the fiqh heritage to address contemporary crises (Mangunjaya, 2014). One important reference is *al-Muwafaqat* by Abu Ishaq al-Shatibi, which serves as the basis for the approach of *maqasid al-shari'ah*. The principle of realizing benefits and preventing harm is used by Sahal Mahfudh to assert that environmental protection is an inherent part of the objectives of the sharia, especially through a framework of social fiqh oriented towards public welfare (Rahmani & Alwi, 2025). Meanwhile, Ali Yafie enriches environmental fiqh through the ethical dimension derived from *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* by Abu Hamid al-Ghazali. Values such as self-control, criticism of greed, and moral responsibility are used to interpret environmental damage as a form of modern

ethical crisis (Musta'inah, 2021).

The dimension of public resource management and the responsibility of political authorities towards the environment gain a strong foundation in Al-Mawardi's *al-Ahkam al-Sultaniyyah*. The discussion regarding the state's obligation to regulate water, land, and public facilities shows that classical fiqh has long recognized the potential social harm caused by the unjust distribution of resources (Wijayanti et al., 2024). Sahal Mahfudh uses this reference to assert that environmental regulation by the state has strong legitimacy within the Islamic public law tradition, rather than being viewed as a foreign secular intervention (Mangunjaya, 2015).

The idea of the right to water (*huquq al-miyah*) and land use (*isti'mal al-ard*) is also widely found in the literature of fiqh *mu'amalat* and *hisbah*. In the Shafi'i tradition that developed in pesantrens, water is viewed as a shared resource that should not be monopolized if it harms the broader community. This principle was then actualized by the kyai to criticize the privatization of water and the exploitation of natural resources that disregard public rights (Arifin et al., 2023).

In recent developments, Ali Yafie places *fiqh al-bi'ah* as a synthesis between classical fiqh, *maqasid al-shari'ah*, and modern ecological challenges. By referring to principles such as *al-darar yuzal* and *tasarruf al-imam manut bi al-maslahah*, he shows that the normative framework for environmental protection has actually been available within the Islamic legal tradition, although it requires a contextual re-reading (Ibrahim et al., 2024).

This pattern shows that the use of the yellow book in ecological fatwas rejects the dichotomy between tradition and reform. Sahal Mahfudh emphasizes social fiqh oriented towards collective welfare and the legitimacy of public policy, while Ali Yafie is more practical in translating the legacy of fiqh into concrete issues such as water management, forest conservation, and the protection of shared living spaces. Beyond the juridical dimension, the reinterpretation of classical fiqh can also be enriched by spiritual ethics in the Sufi tradition. Values such as trustworthiness, simplicity, self-control, and criticism of greed provide a moral foundation for human relations with nature. In this context, environmental destruction is understood not only as a legal violation but also as a symptom of an ethical crisis and the loss of spiritual responsibility. This perspective complements the fiqh approaches of Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie by positioning environmental protection as both a legal and moral obligation.

Two Models of Ecological Reasoning: Social Fiqh and Maqasid al-Shari'ah

Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie both use the framework of Islamic law to respond to the environmental crisis, but with different methodological emphases. Ali Yafie highlights the *maqasid al-shari'ah* approach, while Sahal Mahfudh develops social fiqh oriented towards societal realities and public welfare. This difference shows the existence of two complementary models of ecological reasoning within the Indonesian Islamic legal tradition.

For Ali Yafie, environmental damage is a form of *ifsad al-bi'ah* that threatens the fundamental objectives of sharia. Water pollution, forest degradation, and ecological disasters are understood as threats to *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life), *hifz al-mal* (protection of property), and even the sustainability of future generations. Therefore, environmental protection is not positioned as a new legal objective, but rather as a prerequisite for the realization of the classical *maqasid*. Through this framework, he places the prevention of ecological damage as a *shar'i* obligation rooted in the principle of avoiding harm and realizing benefits (Auda, 2022; Islam, 2025; Raimi et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, Sahal Mahfudh develops a social fiqh approach by placing environmental issues as part of the structural problems of society. Deforestation, floods, pollution, and unequal access to resources are understood not merely as technical issues, but as issues of social justice that require responses from Islamic law. Therefore, environmental protection is understood as part of *maslahah 'ammah* and collective responsibility. This approach expands the function of fiqh from merely establishing normative law to becoming an instrument of social transformation that responds to the needs of society.

Although the emphasis is different, both figures use universal principles such as *al-darar yuzal* (harm must be eliminated) and *tasarruf al-imam manut bi al-maslahah* (the policy of public authority must be oriented towards the common good). This shows that the reasoning of *maqasid* and social fiqh are not two conflicting approaches, but rather two paths of *ijtihad* that both strive to translate Islamic principles into concrete ecological responsibility.

The Cultural Authority of Kyai and the Social Effectiveness of Ecological Fatwas

In Indonesia, a fatwa does not merely function as a normative legal product, but also as a socio-cultural instrument intertwined with the structure of local religious authority (Ztf, 2012). In the context of pesantren and rural

communities, fatwas delivered by kyai have a strong social binding power because they are formulated and communicated by taking into account normative fiqh as well as *'urf* (local customs). This condition shows that religious practices in Indonesia take place through the indigenization of Islamic values, rather than through the negation of local culture (Bahren, 2025; Fauzi, 2017). Institutional reports and field data (2024–2026) also show that kyai play an active role in mediating Sharia values with the interests of social harmony and environmental sustainability. Within this framework, fatwas are present not merely as legal-formal orders, but as collective ethical guidelines that operate through cultural language and social habits (Fauzi, 2017; Luthfi et al., 2024).

The manifestation of this cultural authority is evident in various community-based ecological practices. In several pesantren and santri villages, river and environmental cleanliness is presented as part of faith, making communal work understood not only as a social obligation but also as the internalization of religious teachings. This approach is considered more effective in encouraging community participation compared to mere administrative appeals, as seen in the environmental cleanliness movement initiated by young kyai in East Java (Yusuf, 2024). In some other regions, the ban on throwing garbage into rivers is reinforced through socially based sanctions rooted in customary law, such as the concept of *pamali*. This practice shows the integration between Islamic normative principles—for example, the prohibition against causing damage to the earth—and local social control mechanisms, thereby increasing community compliance, especially in flood-prone areas (Mitra, 2025).

Similar dimensions are also seen in ecological rituals based on prayer and charity. The traditions of *istisqa'*, river charity, and modified village feasts by kyai demonstrate how symbolic religious practices can be transformed into concrete ecological actions. In the Brantas and Citarum regions, for example, communal prayers are often accompanied by river cleaning activities and environmental education. This transformation marks a shift in rituals from symbolic expression to faith-based ecological movements (Pranoto & Tondok, 2024; Rindiani & Nabila, 2025).

At the national level, normative legitimacy is reinforced through a fatwa of the Indonesian Ulama Council issued during the 11th National Deliberation in 2025, which stipulates the prohibition of throwing garbage into rivers, seas, and lakes. The statement by the head of the fatwa commission affirms that waste management is part of social worship (*mu'amalah*) as well as a religious response to the environmental crisis (CNA, 2025; Mitra, 2025). However, the

effectiveness of the fatwa greatly depends on the role of the kyai as a translators of normative values into sermons, religious studies, pesantren education, and daily social actions, so that the fatwa transforms from a legal document into a collective cultural movement.

In ecological disaster situations such as floods, the social function of fatwas becomes increasingly apparent. Fatwas do not stop at halal-haram assessments but serve as ethical instruments that encourage collective action. Within Ali Yafie's framework of thought, environmental disasters are a form of *mafsadah 'ammah* that require responses based on *maqasid al-shari'ah*, particularly the protection of life (*hifz al-nafs*) and the sustainability of social life. In line with this, Sahal Mahfudh places fatwas within the framework of social fiqh, namely Islamic law aimed at resolving real societal problems. Therefore, ecological fatwas function as moral legitimization for emergency actions and social solidarity (Nayab, 2025).

Various national and local media reports indicate that networks of Islamic boarding schools and student communities are actively involved in flood response, ranging from evacuating victims, distributing logistics, to post-disaster cleaning, which is often preceded by religious calls (Humas Polri, 2025; MUI Jatim, 2022). From Sahal Mahfudh's perspective, this reflects the function of religious policies that are oriented towards public welfare. Meanwhile, according to Ali Yafie, collective involvement in emergency conditions can be categorized as a socio-religious obligation (*wajib kifayah*), and even becomes *wajib 'ayn* when life safety is threatened.

Ethically, ecological fatwas also shift the public's perspective on disasters: from merely natural calamities to a collective human responsibility as *khalifah fi al-ard*. Documentation of pesantren activities, reports from religious organizations, and official social media of Islamic organizations show that the fatwa narrative encourages the emergence of faith-based solidarity, not just administrative compliance. In Indonesia's religious social structure, kyai therefore function as community-based mitigation agents who bridge sharia values with the practical needs of society. This underscores that the effectiveness of ecological fatwas in Indonesia is highly determined by the kyai's cultural authority and their ability to translate Islamic law into social actions that are adaptive, sustainable, and responsive to environmental crises.

In that context, Sahal Mahfudh represents a model of kyai authority that emphasizes social fiqh, namely the translation of Islamic law into the resolution of real societal problems through public welfare. Meanwhile, Ali

Yafie presents a pattern of normative-intellectual authority that connects environmental issues with the *maqasid al-shari'ah* and the moral responsibility of the community. Both approaches demonstrate how religious leadership operates through social as well as normative channels.

Conclusion

This study shows that the ecological fatwas developed by Sahal Mahfudh and Ali Yafie represent a dynamic synthesis between Islamic scholarly tradition and contemporary environmental challenges in Indonesia. There are three main findings in this study. First, the ecological reasoning of both figures is rooted in sources of Islamic teachings, religious principles, and classical intellectual heritage, which are reinterpreted to respond to modern environmental issues. Second, both figures developed complementary approaches: Sahal Mahfudh emphasized a social orientation focused on public welfare and structural societal problems, while Ali Yafie employed the *maqasid al-shari'ah* approach, positioning environmental protection as part of safeguarding life, well-being, and collective sustainability. Third, the social effectiveness of ecological fatwas is determined not only by the strength of normative arguments but also by the cultural and institutional authority of the kyai who interpret them. Third, the social effectiveness of ecological fatwas is also shaped by the ability of kyai to translate religious teachings into concrete practices through sermons, pesantren networks, and community social mobilization.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the study of Islamic culture by showing that Islamic normative traditions do not function as a static system, but rather as a living ethical framework capable of adapting to changes in social contexts. This study also emphasizes the importance of viewing religious authority not only through formal institutions, but also through the role of kyai as cultural mediators who bridge religious texts, local customs, and ecological actions. In this regard, the case of Indonesia offers an important model of how religious authority can contribute to environmental governance in Muslim communities.

This research has several limitations. As a qualitative study based on document analysis, the research findings rely on texts, public statements, institutional reports, and documented practices, and thus do not yet include direct field observations or interviews with religious actors and the community. Therefore, this study cannot yet comprehensively measure the factual impact of ecological fatwas on changes in community behavior at the grassroots

level. Further research can strengthen these findings through field studies on pesantren environmental movements, comparisons of kyai networks in different regions, or quantitative measurements of the influence of religious authority on community ecological attitudes and practices.

References

- Abdillah, J. (2025). Model fikih akbar khas Nusantara: Sebuah kajian atas manuskrip Majmu' Kiai Saleh Darat. Penerbit Lawwana.
- Al-Ghazali, A. H. M. (n.d.). Ihya' 'ulum al-din. Dar al-Ma'rifah.
- Ansori, A., Juliansyahzen, M. I., & Prihantoro, H. A. (2025). Eco-fatwas and the role of local 'ulama' in addressing environmental issues in Indonesia. *Studia Islamika*, 32(2), 181–209. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v32i2.38706>
- Arifin, H. S., Ma'ali, A., Kholish, M. A., & Musoffa, I. A. (2023). Jihad Ekologis Kaum Bersarung: Melawan Eksploitasi, Meneguhkan Green Constitution. Pustaka Peradaban.
- Asmani, J. M. (2015). Mengembangkan fikih sosial KH. MA. Sahal Mahfudh: Elaborasi. Elex Media Komputindo.
- Auda, J. (2022). Re-envisioning Islamic scholarship: Maqasid methodology as a new approach. Claritas Books.
- Bahren, R. S. A. (2025). Kedudukan fatwa di berbagai negara Muslim. *Qonun*, 9(2), 213–258. <https://doi.org/10.21093/qj.v9i2.12065>
- Bisri, K. (2025). Tafsir & hadis pendidikan: Sebuah pendekatan interdisipliner. Penerbit Lawwana.
- BNPB. (2023). Buku data bencana Indonesia tahun 2023. <https://bnpb.go.id/buku/buku-data-bencana-indonesia-tahun-2023>
- Bowen, G. A. (2009). Document analysis as a qualitative research method. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 9(2), 27–40.
- Ceddia, M. G., et al. (2013). Sustainable agricultural intensification or Jevons paradox? *Global Environmental Change*, 23(5), 1052–1063. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2013.07.005>

- CNA Indonesia. (2025). Fatwa terbaru MUI: Haram membuang sampah ke laut sungai dan danau. <https://www.cna.id/indonesia/fatwa-terbaru-mui-haram-membuang-sampah-ke-laut-sungai-dan-danau-41221>
- Damasceno, L. H. S., Rodrigues, J. A., Ratusznei, S. M., Zaiat, M., & Foresti, E. (2007). Effects of feeding time and organic loading. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 85(4), 927-935. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jenvman.2006.11.001>
- Danhas, B. Y. (2024). *Kitab induk ilmu lingkungan (Environment science) fiqh al-biah*. Deepublish Digital.
- Falah, M. F. (2018). *Pertanggungjawaban Pembuangan Limbah Cair Pada Usaha Pencucian Kendaraan Bermotor: Studi Komparasi Pemikiran Yusuf Qordhowi dan Ali Yafie* [Skripsi, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang].
- Fauzi, N. A. F. (2017). Fatwa di Indonesia. *Jurnal Hukum Novelty*, 8(1), 108-121. <https://doi.org/10.26555/novelty.v8i1.a5524>
- Hariati, P. (2025). Bahasa yang terluka: Ekolinguistik dalam krisis ekologi global. *Serasi Media Teknologi*.
- Harnowo, T., & Habib, F. H. (2024). Islamic law and environment issues. *Ahkam*, 24(1), 101-118. <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v24i1.34161>
- Huda, M. K. (2023). Kontribusi komunitas NU. *Jurnal Dialektika Politik*, 7(30), 17-187.
- Humaida, N. (2024). *Dasar-dasar pengetahuan lingkungan berbasis perubahan iklim global*. UrbanGreen Central Media.
- Humas Polri. (2025). Gotong royong di pesantren terdampak banjir bandang Polres Nagan Raya hadir bantu pemulihan. <https://humas.polri.go.id/news/detail/2220388-gotong-royong-di-pesantren-terdampak-banjir-bandang-polres-nagan-raya-hadir-bantu-pemulihan>
- Husein, M. (2020). *Dialog dengan Kiai Ali Yafie*. IRCiSoD.
- Ibrahim, M. R., Hilmi, A. M. M., Abdullllah, M. I., Omar, I., Baharudin, A. H., Mutalib, L. A., & Shaberi, M. (2024). Parameter darar dalam SOP pandemik. *Journal of Muwafaqat*, 7(2), 100-124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmuwafaqat.2024.100-124>

[org/10.53840/muwafaqat.v7i2.170](https://doi.org/10.53840/muwafaqat.v7i2.170)

- Iskandar, & Sofuoglu, H. (2025). Islamic environmentalism in Indonesia. *Bulletin of Islamic Research*, 3(2), 177–202. <https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v3i2.168>
- Islam, T. (2025). Toward a unified framework for maqasid al-Qur'an. *Ma'alim Al-Qur'an wa al-Sunnah*, 21(2), 301–330. <https://doi.org/10.33102/jmqs.v21i2.560>
- Jabar-NU. (2025). Peran tokoh agama dalam meningkatkan kapasitas masyarakat menghadapi bencana dan krisis iklim. <https://jabar.nu.or.id/opini/peran-tokoh-agama-dalam-meningkatkan-kapasitas-masyarakat-menghadapi-bencana-dan-krisis-iklim-yZZgW>
- Kompas. (2024). Bagaimana agama mengendalikan keserakahan manusia terhadap alam? <https://www.kompas.id/artikel/bagaimana-agama-mengendalikan-keserakahan-manusia-terhadap-alam>
- Mahfudh, S. (2020). *Nuansa fiqh sosial (Edisi ke-4)*. LKiS Yogyakarta.
- Mahfudz, S. (2003). *Nuansa fiqh sosial (2nd ed.)*. LKiS.
- Mangunjaya, F. (2015). *Mempertahankan keseimbangan: Perubahan iklim, keanekaragaman hayati, pembangunan berkelanjutan, dan etika agama*. Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Mangunjaya, F. M. (2014). *Ekopesantren: Bagaimana merancang pesantren ramah lingkungan?* Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Mangunjaya, F. M. (2022). *Generasi terakhir: Aktivisme dunia Muslim mencegah perubahan iklim dan kepunahan lingkungan hidup*. LP3ES.
- Mangunjaya, F. M., & Praharawati, G. (2019). Fatwas on boosting environmental conservation in Indonesia. *Religions*, 10(10), 570. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10100570>
- Mitra, D. (2025). Fatwa MUI membuang sampah ke sungai, laut, danau, haram. <https://dml.or.id/fatwa-mui-membuang-sampah-ke-sungai-laut-danau-haram/>
- Monalia, I., & Noorratri, E. D. (2024). Gambaran kesiapsiagaan masyarakat. *Indonesian Journal of Public Health*, 2(4), 790–807.

- Mufid, M. (2020). Green fatwas in bahtsul masail. *AL-IHKAM*, 15(2), 173–200. <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v15i2.3956>
- Muhammadiyah. (2025). Peran umat Islam dalam menghadapi krisis lingkungan global. <https://tarjih.or.id/peran-umat-islam-dalam-menghadapi-krisis-lingkungan-global/>
- MUI Jatim. (2022). MUI Jatim inisiasi pesantren tangguh bencana. <https://muijatim.or.id/2022/10/01/mui-jatim-inisiasi-pesantren-tangguh-bencana>
- Mukti, R. A., & Efendi, D. (2020). Kampung Hijau Gambiran: Praktik tata kelola lingkungan hidup berbasis collaborative governance. Samudra Biru.
- Musta'inah, A. (2021). Konsep pendidikan mental spiritual dalam kitab Ihya Ulumuddin Al-Ghazali [Skripsi, UIN Siber Syekh Nurjati Cirebon].
- Mutakin, A. & Rahman, A. W. (2023). Fiqh ekologi: Upaya merawat lingkungan hidup berbasis konsep maqashid syariah. *Syariah: Journal of Fiqh Studies*, 1(2), 107–126. <https://doi.org/10.61570/syariah.v1i2.31>
- Nabilah, R. S., & Jumadi, J. (2022). A study of content analysis. *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan IPA*, 8(1), 393-400. <https://doi.org/10.29303/jppipa.v8i1.1293>
- Nayab, S. D. E. (2025). Religious leadership in environmental preservation. *Jurnal Pemuliaan Lingkungan Hidup dan SDA*, 1(1). <https://jurnal.mui.or.id/index.php/lplhsda/article/view/16>
- Noviani, D. (2024). Ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an tentang lingkungan. *Jurnal Kolaboratif Sains*, 7(11), 4367–4381. <https://doi.org/10.56338/jks.v7i11.6423>
- Pangaribuan, J., et al. (2019). Analisis daerah rawan longsor. *Jurnal Geodesi Undip*, 8(1), 288–297. <https://doi.org/10.14710/jgundip.2019.22582>
- Pranoto, J. P., & Tondok, M. S. (2024). Sedekah bumi tradition. *Santhet: Jurnal Sejarah, Pendidikan dan Humaniora*, 8 (2), 1770–1779. <https://doi.org/10.36526/santhet.v8i2.3859>
- Rahmani, I., & Rahman Alwi. (2025). Maqasid syari'ah dan reformasi hukum perceraian. *Journal of Family and Sharia*, 1(2), 102–111. <https://doi.org/10.36526/santhet.v8i2.3859>

[org/10.64845/jfs.v1i2.145](https://doi.org/10.64845/jfs.v1i2.145)

- Raimi, L., Abdur-Rauf, I. A., & Ashafa, S. A. (2024). Islamic sustainable finance and SDGs. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, 17(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/jrfm17060236>
- Rasyid, A. S. (2020). Ekosentrisme Islam dalam perspektif maqasid al-syari'ah [Skripsi, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang].
- Ratnasari, A. R., & Fadil, F. (2025). Peran fatwa dalam menyusun qanun. *Iqtishod*, 4(1), 151–163. <https://doi.org/10.69768/ji.v4i1.81>
- Reuters. (2025). No New Year fireworks in Indonesia as nation mourns Sumatra flood victims. <https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/no-new-year-fireworks-indonesia-nation-mourns-sumatra-flood-victims-2025-12-29/>
- Rindiani, N. A., & Nabila, A. J. (2025). Tradisi sedekah laut. *An Najah*, 5(1), 466–475. <https://journal.nabest.id/index.php/annajah/article/view/839>
- Rockström, J. & Lambin, E. (2009). A safe operating space for humanity. *Nature*, 461(7263), 472–475. <https://doi.org/10.1038/461472a>
- Rohmah, S., Herawati, E., & Kholish, M. A. (2021). Hukum Islam dan etika pelestarian ekologi: upaya mengurai persoalan lingkungan di Indonesia. Universitas Brawijaya Press.
- Romdloni, M. A., & Djazilan, S. (2019). Kiai dan lingkungan hidup. *Journal of Islamic Civilization*, 1(2), 119–129. <https://doi.org/10.33086/jic.v1i2.1322>
- Rusli, A. B. (2018). Nalar ushul fiqh KH. Sahal Mahfudh. *Potret Pemikiran*, 22(2), 55–65. <https://doi.org/10.30984/pp.v22i2.785>
- Siddiq, A. (2014). Pemikiran fikih sosial KH. Sahal Mahfudh dan KH. Ali Yafie Tentang Relasi Mayoritas-Minoritas di Indonesia. *Al-Mazaahib: Jurnal Perbandingan Hukum*, 2(2). <https://doi.org/10.14421/al-mazaahib.v2i2.2857>
- Suryanullah, A. S., Rifai, A., & Darojah, F. S. (2025). Echoing ecological ideas as an option in teaching Islamic education in Indonesia. *Jurnal Living Hadis*,

- 10(1), 43–63. <https://doi.org/10.14421/livinghadis.2025.6204>
- Thahir, A. H. (2015). Ijtihad maqasidi: Rekonstruksi hukum Islam berbasis interkoneksi masalah. LKiS Pelangi Aksara.
- Wijayanti, D., Munir, S., & Syalafiyah, N. (2024). Tinjauan hukum siyasah. *Islamic Law: Jurnal Siyasah*, 9(2), 132–143. <https://doi.org/10.53429/iljs.v9i2.598>
- WRI. (2022). Indonesia negara paling rawan bencana kedua di dunia. <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/lingkungan/statistik/66fb28de787b7a8/wri-2022-indonesia-negara-paling-rawan-bencana-kedua-di-dunia>
- Yafie, A. (2006). *Merintis fiqh lingkungan hidup* (Cetakan I). Yayasan Amanah: Ufuk Press.
- Yusuf, M. (2024). The influence of religious values on participation in environmental initiatives. *Prosiding Fakultas Agama Islam Universitas Dharmawangsa*, 4(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.46576/pfai.v4i1.333>
- Zahroh, A. (2024). *Inisiasi eko-teopolaritas perspektif Al-Qur'an* [Tesis, Institut PTIQ Jakarta].
- Ztf, P. B. (2012). The functions of fatwa in contemporary Muslim societies. *Jurnal Salam*, 15(1). <https://ejournal.umm.ac.id/index.php/salam/article/view/1094>