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Research Article

The Principle of Cosmic Interdependence: Re-reading Al-‘Ālamīn as an Ecophilosophical Category in Indonesian Tafsir and Classical Exegesis

Zasada kosmicznej współzależności: reinterpretacja pojęcia Al-‘Ālamīn jako kategorii ekofilozoficznej w indonezyjskim tafsirze i klasycznej egzegezie

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Abstract

Anthropocentric paradigms in human rights and sustainability discourse continue to marginalize the more-than-human world, a bias that also shapes classical Islamic ethical discourse where maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah traditionally centers on human protection. While recent contemporary developments have introduced ḥifẓ al-bī‘ah (preservation of environment), systemic ecological frameworks remain underdeveloped. The Qur’an opens with a non-anthropocentric claim: al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabb al-‘ālamīn, “Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds” (Q.1:2). This study investigates the semantic and ethical potential of al-‘ālamīn through a qualitative 3-level hermeneutical method (semantic, exegetical, and ethical synthesis). We analyze a structured corpus comprising a classical Arabic comparative baseline (al-Ṭabarī, al-Qurṭubī, al-Rāzī, al-Bayḍāwī, Ibn Kathīr) and key modern Indonesian tafsir works (Hamka, Quraish Shihab, and al-Fansūrī) across two central Qur’anic loci (Q.1:2 and Q.21:107). Our analysis reveals that while classical exegesis establishes a non-anthropocentric cosmological breadth, its ethical horizon remains theocentric. Indonesian exegetes elaborate this semantically using local taxonomies but retain an anthropocentric stewardship model. To bridge this gap, we construct an ecophilosophical synthesis that formulates the principle of cosmic interdependence and proposes ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn (universal rights of all creation). Finally, we distinguish these analytical findings from their proposed normative implications for multispecies justice and sustainable development.

Keywords

Islamic ecotheology, Islam and ecology, al-‘ālamīn, Indonesian tafsir, cosmic interdependence, ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn, non-anthropocentric ethics, Qur’anic exegesis, Islamic environmental ethics, religion and ecology

Streszczenie

Antropocentryczne paradygmaty w dyskursie dotyczącym praw człowieka i zrównoważonego rozwoju nadal marginalizują świat pozaludzki, a tendencja ta kształtuje również klasyczny islamski dyskurs etyczny, w którym *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* tradycyjnie koncentruje się na ochronie człowieka. Choć we współczesnych koncepcjach *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah* uwzględniono *ḥifẓ al-bīʿah* (ochronę środowiska), systemowe ramy etyki ekologicznej pozostają niedostatecznie rozwinięte. Koran rozpoczyna się od stwierdzenia o charakterze nieantropocentrycznym: *al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabb al-ʿālamīn*, „Chwała Allahowi, Panu światów” (K. 1:2). Niniejsze badanie analizuje semantyczny i etyczny potencjał pojęcia *al-ʿālamīn* za pomocą jakościowej, trójpoziomowej metody hermeneutycznej (synteza semantyczna, egzegetyczna i etyczna). Analizie poddano uporządkowany korpus tekstów, obejmujący klasyczne arabskie komentarze (*al-Ṭabarī*, *al-Qurṭubī*, *al-Rāzī*, *al-Bayḍāwī*, *Ibn Kathīr*) oraz najważniejsze współczesne indonezyjskie dzieła z zakresu egzegezy koranicznej (*tafsir* autorstwa *Hamki*, *Quraisha Shihaba* i *al-Fansūrīego*) w odniesieniu do dwóch kluczowych fragmentów Koranu (K. 1:2 i K. 21:107). Wyniki analizy wskazują, że o ile klasyczna egzegeza ujmuje to pojęcie w szerokiej, nieantropocentrycznej perspektywie kosmologicznej, o tyle jej horyzont etyczny pozostaje teocentryczny. Indonezyjscy egzegeci rozwijają to znaczenie, odwołując się do lokalnych taksonomii, lecz zachowują antropocentryczny model sprawowania pieczy nad światem. Aby przezwyciężyć tę rozbieżność, autorzy proponują syntezę ekofilozoficzną, w ramach której formułują zasadę kosmicznej współzależności oraz koncepcję *ḥuqūq al-ʿālamīn* (uniwersalnych praw całego stworzenia). Na koniec wyraźnie oddzielono wyniki analizy od sformułowanych na ich podstawie postulatów normatywnych dotyczących sprawiedliwości międzygatunkowej i zrównoważonego rozwoju.

Słowa kluczowe

ekoteologia islamska, islam i ekologia, *al-ʿālamīn*, indonezyjski *tafsir*, kosmiczna współzależność, *ḥuqūq al-ʿālamīn*, etyka nieantropocentryczna, egzegeza Koranu, islamska etyka środowiskowa, religia i ekologia

1. Introduction

1.1. Anthropocentrism, Contemporary Maqāṣid, and the Research Gap

The global ecological crisis has prompted profound theological re-examinations across religious traditions. Within Islamic environmental ethics, foundational scholarship by Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1968), Ibrahim Özdemir (2003), Fazlun Khalid (2002), and S. Nomanul Haq (2001) established that nature is an ensemble of divine signs (*āyāt*) created in dynamic equilibrium (*mīzān*). However, much of mainstream Islamic jurisprudence and ethical theory has remained anchored in anthropocentric paradigms (Auda 2008). Classical formulations of *maqāṣid al-sharīʿah*—the higher objectives of Islamic law articulated by al-Ghazālī (1997, 172) and al-Shāṭibī (2004, 2:324)—traditionally prioritized five essential human goods: protection of religion [*dīn*], life [*nafs*], intellect [*ʿaql*], lineage [*nasl*], and property [*māl*]. In this classical juristic scheme, non-human creation entered moral consideration primarily as instrumental property or a secondary means for human preservation.

In recent decades, contemporary Muslim scholars have expanded this framework. Modern jurists such as Yusuf al-Qaradawi (2001) and Jasser Auda (2008) have explicitly proposed *ḥifẓ al-bī'ah* (preservation of the environment) as an essential objective of Islamic law or an extension of *ḥifẓ al-nafs* and *ḥifẓ al-māl*. Furthermore, contemporary eco-theology heavily emphasizes the principles of *khalīfah* (vicegerency) and *amānah* (trusteeship) to argue for responsible human guardianship over Earth. Despite these invaluable developments, a critical conceptual limitation persists: existing models remain predominantly stewardship-based, where humans act as benevolent managers governing passive environmental resources. The intrinsic rights of non-human entities independent of human utility remain ethically unformulated. The precise research gap addressed by this study lies in moving beyond stewardship toward a relational ontology grounded in *al-‘ālamīn*, deriving normative duties from divine sustenance (*rubūbiyyah*) rather than human utility.

1.2. The Cosmic Claim of Al-‘Ālamīn in the Qur’an

The Qur’an opens with a radically non-anthropocentric claim: *al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabb al-‘ālamīn*—“Praise be to Allah, Lord of the worlds” (Q.1:2). Morphologically derived from the triliteral root ‘-l-m (“to know”), *‘ālam* denotes an instrument of knowledge or a “sign” through which the Creator is recognized (al-Aṣḥānī 2017, 774). Occurring 73 times across 30 surahs (Abdul-Baqi 1945), *al-‘ālamīn* signals a plurality of ontological realms that far exceeds humankind. Exegetically, it encompasses humans, jinn, angels, animals, plants, celestial bodies, and spiritual dimensions (al-Ṭabarī 2009; al-Rāzī 2012). The invocation of *Rabb al-‘ālamīn* binds all created worlds under continuous divine nurture [*marbūb*], establishing an implicit cosmology of interdependence.

1.3. Aims, Analytical Problem, and Structure of the Study

This study addresses the central analytical problem: why the extensive cosmological breadth of *al-‘ālamīn* in Qur’anic exegesis has historically failed to translate into a systematic non-anthropocentric ecological ethic. The aims of this article are threefold: (1) to trace the semantic reception and elaboration of *al-‘ālamīn* across a structured corpus of classical Arabic baseline works and modern Indonesian tafsir; (2) to engage these exegetical findings in critical dialogue with ecophilosophical frameworks (deep ecology and modified cosmotheandric thought) while preserving Islamic monotheism (*tawḥīd*); and (3) to construct an original normative framework—*ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn* (universal rights of all creation)—and outline its conceptual contributions to sustainability agendas.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 details the hermeneutical method, selection criteria for the tafsir corpus, and methodological limitations. Section 3 presents the empirical results of the semantic and exegetical analysis across the classical baseline and Indonesian works. Section 4 develops the ecophilosophical synthesis, formulates ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn, and delineates proposed normative implications for environmental governance. Section 5 synthesizes the study's conclusions and outlines directions for future research.

2. Methods

2.1. Corpus Selection, Organization, and Pedagogical Context

To examine the semantic trajectory and pedagogical reception of al-‘ālamīn, this study selects eight representative tafsir works organized into two coherent analytical groups:

1. Classical Arabic Comparative Baseline: al-Ṭabarī's Jāmi' al-Bayān (d. 923; early analytical/tradition-based), al-Rāzī's Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb (d. 1210; rational/theological), al-Qurṭubī's al-Jāmi' li-Aḥkām al-Qur'ān (d. 1273; juristic/legal), al-Bayḍāwī's Anwār al-Tanzīl (d. 1286; linguistic/concise), and Ibn Kathīr's Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-‘Aẓīm (d. 1373; tradition-based).
2. Modern Indonesian Exegesis and Vernacular Reception: ‘Abd al-Ra'ūf al-Fansūrī's Tarjumān al-Mustafid (17th century; early Malay-Indonesian vernacular baseline), Hamka's Tafsir al-Azhar (1982; modern socio-literary), and M. Quraish Shihab's Tafsir al-Misbah (2000–2005; modern thematic-contextual).

Selection Justification and Pedagogical Horizon: These works were purposively selected because they constitute the dominant interpretive horizon in Indonesian Islamic higher education. Classical Arabic works such as Tafsīr al-Jalālayn, al-Bayḍāwī, Ibn Kathīr, and al-Rāzī form the mandatory curriculum (kitab kuning) across State Islamic Universities (UIN), State Institutes for Islamic Studies (IAIN), and traditional Islamic boarding schools (pondok pesantren) (Federspiel 1994; Azra 2004; van Bruinessen 1995). Ministry of Religious Affairs curriculum surveys (Kemenag RI 2018) further document the important place of these works in Tafsir and Ulumul Qur'an courses. The inclusion of al-Fansūrī provides the earliest Malay-Indonesian translation baseline, while Hamka and Shihab represent the most widely circulated modern Indonesian commentaries (Johns 1998; Riddell 2001).

Intellectual Genealogy: Modern Indonesian exegetes Hamka and M. Quraish Shihab inherited a substantial methodological orientation from the Middle Eastern reformist tradition, particularly Muḥammad ‘Abduh (d. 1905) and Rashīd Riḍā (d. 1935) through Tafsīr al-Manār (1934). Al-Manār's adabī-ijtimā'ī (literary-social) approach—linking Qur'anic exegesis to contemporary social problems, rational

interpretation, and accessible language—was directly adopted by Hamka (Abdullah 2014; Gusmian 2003; Feener 2007). Hamka explicitly cites ‘Abduh and Riḍā in Tafsir al-Azhar’s muqaddimah (Hamka 1982, 1:12–18). Shihab, while more philologically grounded, continues the Manārī concern for contextual relevance (maṣlaḥah) and was trained in the same reformist exegetical lineage at al-Azhar University (Shihab 2000, 1:xxii; Ichwan 2001). This genealogy explains both their expansion of cosmological categories and their retention of a human-centered stewardship ethic.

Comparability across distinct periods and genres is maintained by treating classical Arabic exegesis as the foundational baseline against which Indonesian vernacular adaptations and contextual elaborations are evaluated.

2.2. Analytical Levels, Textual Indicators, and Selection of Loci

The analysis focuses on two primary Qur’anic loci where al-‘ālamīn bears explicit cosmological and ethical weight: (1) Q.1:2 (al-ḥamdu lillāhi rabb al-‘ālamīn), which grounds ontology in divine sustenance, and (2) Q.21:107 (wa mā arsalnāka illā raḥmatan lil-‘ālamīn), which defines the universal scope of prophetic mercy. These loci were selected as *loci classici* because they represent the theological core of rubūbiyyah and raḥmah. We explicitly acknowledge that this selection does not constitute an exhaustive analysis of all 73 occurrences. Each verse was analyzed across three rigorous hermeneutical levels using clear textual indicators:

Semantic-Lexical Level: Morphological decomposition of the root ‘-l-m using classical lexicons (al-Aṣḥānī 2017) and Qur’anic concordances (Abdul-Baqi 1945) to count total occurrences (73 times across 30 surahs, including prefixed forms bi’l-‘ālamīn and li’l-‘ālamīn).

Exegetical-Categorical Level: Close reading of textual passages to identify four distinct interpretive stances based on explicit textual indicators: (a) Human-centered: text restricting ‘ālamīn exclusively to rational beings (mankind and jinn); (b) Theocentric: text emphasizing God’s absolute creation and lordship over all existence (mā siwā Allāh) without deriving horizontal duties; (c) Cosmo-centric: text explicitly listing species taxonomies (animals, plants, minerals, celestial bodies); and (d) Relational: text linking divine nurture directly to reciprocal ethical duties among created realms.

Ethical Synthesizing Level: Critical assessment of whether the mufasssīr derives moral agency or obligations toward non-human realms, distinguishing historical exegetical findings from the authors’ contemporary constructive proposal.

2.3. Interdisciplinary Dialogue, Ecophilosophy, and Safeguarding Tawḥīd

To articulate the latent ethical potential of al-‘ālamīn, the study engages two contemporary ecophilosophical frameworks as heuristic lenses: Arne Næss’s (1989) Deep Ecology and Raimon Panikkar’s (1993) cosmotheandric intuition. However, to prevent conceptual anachronism and preserve Islamic theological integrity, these frameworks are critically modified and terminologically clarified:

Modification of Deep Ecology: While Næss advocates “biospherical egalitarianism” based on secular intrinsic value, our model rejects secular egalitarianism. In Islamic ontology, the value of creation is grounded not in itself, but in its status as āyāt (signs) and marbūb (divinely sustained entities).

Modification and Terminological Precision: Panikkar’s cosmotheandric model posits an irreducible triad of God–Human–Cosmos. Originating in Christian-Hindu dialogue, it risks pantheistic or monistic confusion if retained uncritically in an Islamic context. To safeguard tawḥīd and avoid anachronism, we do NOT adopt “cosmotheandric” as our operative category. Instead, we propose Cosmic-Tawḥīdic Interdependence (al-ta‘āyuq al-kawnī al-tawḥīdī) as our own constructive term. It denotes that God (Khāliq) remains transcendently distinct, while Humans and Nature (makhḷūq) are bound in vertical dependence on Allah and horizontal interdependence with each other. Panikkar is cited only as a comparative heuristic, not as a theological source (see Figure 1).

3. Results

3.1. Quantitative and Lexical Distribution of Al-‘Ālamīn

A comprehensive reconciliation using Muhammad Fu’ad Abdul-Baqi’s (1945) Qur’anic concordance confirms that al-‘ālamīn occurs exactly 73 times across 30 surahs in the Qur’anic text. This count encompasses the definite noun al-‘ālamīn (61 occurrences) as well as prefixed forms such as li’l-‘ālamīn (7 occurrences) and bi’l-‘ālamīn (5 occurrences). Semantically, these occurrences cluster into three functional theological domains, as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Semantic Clusters and Structural Functions of al-‘ālamīn in the Qur’an

This table lists 3 semantic clusters of al-‘ālamīn—Divine Sustenance, Prophetic Mercy, and Eschatological Accountability—with key verses and an exegetical synthesis.

Semantic Cluster	Structural Function	Key Qur'anic Loci	Exegetical Synthesis
1. Divine Sustenance (<i>Rubūbiyyah</i>)	Establishes God's continuous creation and nurture over all realms	Q.1:2; Q.2:131; Q.26:77	God as sole sustainer of every existing species and domain (al-Ṭabarī 2009; al-Rāzī 2012)
2. Prophetic Mercy (<i>Raḥmah</i>)	Defines the universal, multispecies scope of Muhammad's mission	Q.21:107; Q.25:1; Q.34:28	Mercy extends beyond humans to jinn, animals, plants, and ecosystems (al-Qurṭubī 2007)
3. Eschatological Accountability	Universalizes moral reckoning across all created realms	Q.39:75; Q.83:6	All created "worlds" stand before divine justice (Ibn Kathīr 1999; Shihab 2005)

3.2. Exegetical Scope across the Classical Arabic Baseline

Analysis of the classical Arabic baseline reveals unanimous agreement that al-‘ālamīn is a plural, cosmological category denoting all creation besides God (*mā siwā Allāh*). Al-Ṭabarī (2009, 1:225) defines ‘ālam as “every category of creation” [*kullu šinf min al-khalq*], encompassing humans, jinn, angels, animals, and cosmic epochs. Al-Rāzī (2012, 1:18) reinforces this theological breadth, asserting that al-‘ālamīn includes corporeal, incorporeal, rational, and non-rational entities. Al-Qurṭubī (2007, 1:351) and al-Bayḍāwī (1998, 1:22) emphasize that every realm constitutes a distinct ‘ālam pointing to Allah’s singular lordship. However, Ibn Kathīr (1999, 1:34) introduces a partial anthropocentric narrowing by prioritizing rational beings (*al-‘uqalā’*) in his moral application. Table 2 summarizes the exegetical scope across all five baseline works.

Table 2. Exegetical Scope and Interpretive Stance in Classical Arabic Baseline Corpus

This table compares 5 classical Arabic tafsir baseline works, detailing definitions, included categories, and interpretive stances.

Exegete & Work	Definition of al-‘ālamīn	Categories Included	Interpretive Stance
• al-Ṭabarī (d. 923) Jāmi‘ al-Bayān	Every category of creation	Humans, jinn, angels, animals, cosmic generations	Theocentric/Cosmo-centric
• al-Rāzī (d. 1210) Mafātīḥ al-Ghayb	Everything besides God	Corporeal, incorporeal, rational, non-rational realms	Theocentric/Cosmo-centric
• al-Qurṭubī (d. 1273) al-Jāmi‘ li-Aḥkām	All created entities	Animate, inanimate, celestial, terrestrial beings	Theocentric/Juristic Baseline
• al-Bayḍāwī (d. 1286) Anwār al-Tanzīl	Plurality of existing species	Heavenly bodies, earth, living species	Theocentric/Linguistic
• Ibn Kathīr (d. 1373) Tafsīr al-Qur’ān	Species of creation, emphasis on rational beings	Humans, jinn, angels, devils, animals	Partially Human-centered

3.3. Reception and Contextual Elaboration in Indonesian Tafsir

Indonesian exegesis demonstrates a contextual semantic development of al-‘ālamīn, moving from early vernacular translations to explicit ecological taxonomies. ‘Abd al-Ra’ūf al-Fansūrī’s (1951, 1:4) 17th-century *Tarjumān al-Mustafid* renders rabb al-‘ālamīn as “Tuhan sekalian alam” (“Lord of all realms”), establishing an undifferentiated vernacular totality. In the 20th century, Hamka’s (1982, 1:45) *Tafsir al-Azhar* structures ‘ālamīn through the dyad lahir–batin (visible and unseen) and explicitly incorporates animal and plant realms, following the Manārī method of linking exegesis to contemporary social realities (‘Abduh and Riḍā 1934, 1:56). M. Quraish Shihab’s (2000, 2017) *Tafsir al-Misbah* achieves the highest taxonomic specificity, enumerating five distinct realms: (1) ‘ālam al-insān (human), (2) ‘ālam al-ḥayawān (animal), (3) ‘ālam al-nabāt (plant), (4) ‘ālam al-malā’ikah (angelic), and (5) ‘ālam al-kawākib (planetary/celestial). Table 3 illustrates this trajectory.

Table 3. Semantic Development and Vernacular Reception in Indonesian Tafsir Tradition

This table traces Indonesian tafsir works displaying translations, cosmological scope, and ethical implications.

Mufassir & Work	Translation/Gloss	Cosmological Scope	Ontological & Ethical Implication
• al-Fansūrī (1951) <i>Tarjumān al-Mustafid</i>	Tuhan sekalian alam	Undifferentiated vernacular totality	Theocentric baseline
• Hamka (1982) <i>Tafsir al-Azhar</i>	Alam lahir & batin, dunia & akhirat	Material-spiritual dyad; includes animal/plant realms	Theocentric-stewardship
• Quraish Shihab (2017) <i>Tafsir al-Misbah</i>	Five distinct realms	Explicit multispecies taxonomy	Relational potential: Universal mercy for all realms

3.4. Diagnosing the Ethical Gap: Genealogy and Historical Constraints

Why did the rich cosmological breadth of al-‘ālamīn fail to produce a systematic ecological ethic in classical and modern exegesis? Our analysis identifies two key historical-exegetical factors:

The Theocentric Ceiling in Classical Exegesis: In classical works (al-Ṭabarī, al-Rāzī), the plurality of ‘ālamīn functioned primarily as a theological proof of Tawḥīd al-Rubūbiyyah. Once divine unity was established, the exegetical inquiry rested. Non-human realms were viewed as signs (āyāt) for human contemplation, not as subjects with horizontal moral claims.

Intellectual Genealogy of Indonesian Interpretations: As documented in Section 2.1, modern

Indonesian mufasssirūn (Hamka, Quraish Shihab) inherited substantial exegetical material from Muḥammad ‘Abduh and Rashīd Riḍā’s *Tafsīr al-Manār* (1934), a work that prioritized social reform (iṣlāḥ) and rational compatibility. While Hamka and Shihab elaborate the taxonomy of creation, their normative ethics remains bound to the khalīfah (stewardship) paradigm inherited from Manārī anthropocentric reformism. The specifically Indonesian contribution lies in vernacularizing these concepts into accessible educational categories (sekalian alam) that resonate with Nusantara ecological sensibilities (Johns 1998; Azra 2004), even as the formal juristic framework remained anthropocentric.

4. Discussion: Ecophilosophical Synthesis and Policy Implications

4.1. The Principle of Cosmic Interdependence and Cosmic-Tawḥīdic Model

To bridge the gap between cosmological description and normative ethics, we synthesize our exegetical findings into the Principle of Cosmic Interdependence. This principle asserts that because Allah is Rabb al-‘ālamīn, all created realms exist in a relational network of mutual dependence and shared divine care. Figure 1 illustrates this Cosmic-Tawḥīdic Interdependence model [formerly referenced as cosmotheandric; terminology revised for theological precision].

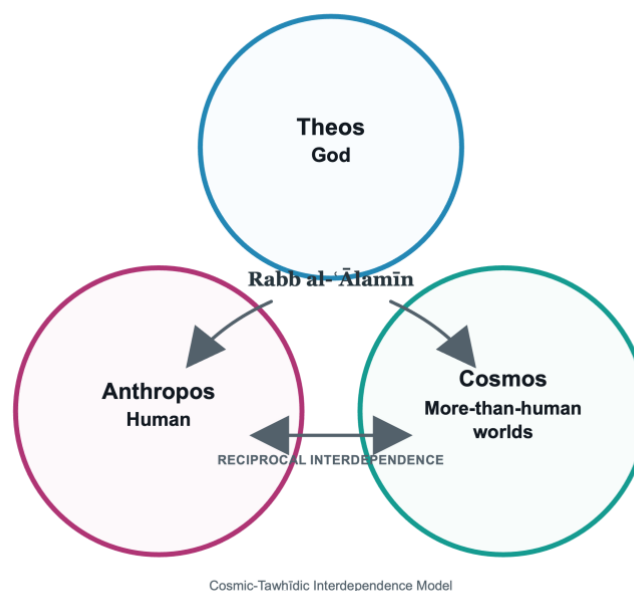


Figure 1. The Cosmic-Tawḥīdic Interdependence Model of Al-‘Ālamīn.

Source: Figure 1 designed by the authors based on a critical adaptation of Panikkar’s 1993 heuristic and the Q.1:2 exegetical synthesis. The model strictly upholds tawḥīd by maintaining the Creator–creation distinction.

As shown in Figure 1 (see Section 4.1), divine rubūbiyyah encompasses the transcendent Creator [Khāliq], human society [Anthropos], and the more-than-human worlds [Cosmos] in a relation of vertical dependence and horizontal interdependence.

In this framework, existence is inherently co-existence. Harming another ‘ālam (e.g., polluting rivers or exterminating species) is not merely an ecological error; it is an ontological disruption of a divinely sustained sign (āyah).

4.2. Formulating Universal Rights: From Human Rights to Ḥuqūq Al-‘Ālamīn

Moving from semantic description to normative construction, we propose expanding classical Islamic jurisprudence from human rights (ḥuqūq al-‘ibād) to Universal Rights of Creation [ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn]. While classical jurisprudence recognizes divine rights (ḥuqūq Allāh) and human rights (ḥuqūq al-‘ibād), ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn establishes that non-human realms possess intrinsic, divinely bestowed rights to exist, flourish, and maintain their structural balance (mīzān). These rights are not granted by human legislation but are grounded directly in divine rubūbiyyah. Violating a species or ecosystem constitutes a direct breach of ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn, elevating environmental protection to a sacred religious obligation (‘ibādah). This represents a constructive proposal by the authors, moving beyond the descriptive semantics of classical exegesis to normative bioethics.

4.3. Proposed Normative Policy Implications for SDG 13: Climate Action as Cosmic Worship

Normative Recommendation (Constructive Proposal): SDG 13 calls for urgent action to combat climate change. Conventional frameworks treat the atmosphere as a carbon sink for human utility. Reframing climate action through ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn conceptualizes the atmosphere as ‘ālam al-hawā’—a divinely sustained realm. Decarbonization and climate mitigation cease to be mere civic compliance; they become conceptual acts of ḥifẓ al-‘ālam (preservation of the cosmic realm) and spiritual praise (ḥamd). Indonesian Islamic educational networks (UIN/IAIN/Pesantren) can deploy this theological framing to mobilize grassroots eco-jihad. This is offered as a conceptual contribution, not as an empirical policy evaluation.

4.4. Proposed Normative Policy Implications for SDG 15: Life on Land and Multispecies Justice

Normative Recommendation (Constructive Proposal): SDG 15 focuses on halting biodiversity loss and forest degradation. Grounding conservation in ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn asserts that animal realms (‘ālam al-ḥayawān) and plant realms (‘ālam al-nabāt) possess sacred rights to habitat integrity. Deforestation in tropical rainforests

(e.g., Sumatra and Kalimantan) represents a violation of ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn in our proposed framework. Q.21:107 (raḥmatan lil-‘ālamīn)—in classical exegesis referring to prophetic mercy for all creation (al-Ṭabarī 2009; al-Qurṭubī 2007)—is here constructively interpreted by the authors as providing an ethical foundation for multispecies justice, establishing legal protection for endangered species as an imperative of Islamic mercy. We distinguish clearly between the historical exegetical finding (raḥmah as universal) and our contemporary normative extension (multispecies justice).

4.5. Proposed Normative Policy Implications for SDG 16: Governance and More-than-Human Institutions

Normative Recommendation (Constructive Proposal): SDG 16 promotes just, peaceful, and inclusive institutions. Re-reading al-‘ālamīn expands justice (‘adl) beyond human society to include non-human realms. Institutional governance should incorporate: (1) legal standing for natural entities (rivers, forests) in Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh al-bī’ah); (2) the inclusion of environmental impact assessments as religious duties; and (3) the institutionalization of ecological guardianship within state religious bodies (e.g., Indonesian Ulema Council / MUI fatwas).

5. Conclusion and Methodological Limitations

5.1. Synthesis of Findings

This study has re-read al-‘ālamīn as an ecophilosophical category of cosmic interdependence across classical Arabic baseline exegesis and modern Indonesian tafsir. Our analysis establishes that while classical mufasssīrūn (al-Ṭabarī, al-Rāzī, al-Qurṭubī, al-Bayḍāwī) recognized the cosmological breadth of al-‘ālamīn as “all existence besides God”, their ethical focus remained strictly theocentric. Modern Indonesian exegetes (Hamka, Quraish Shihab, al-Fansūrī) elaborated this taxonomy into vernacular categories but maintained an anthropocentric stewardship paradigm rooted in the Manārī reformist lineage (‘Abduh and Riḍā 1934). By bringing this tradition into dialogical synthesis with modified ecophilosophy, this study has formulated the Principle of Cosmic Interdependence (Cosmic-Tawḥīdic Interdependence) and proposed ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn (universal rights of creation) as a theological grounding for multispecies justice.

5.2. Methodological Limitations

Several methodological limitations of this study must be explicitly acknowledged: (1) Corpus

Restriction: The analysis was restricted to eight major tafsir works dominant in Indonesian Islamic education; other influential classical commentaries (e.g., al-Zamakhsharī, al-Ālūsī) and contemporary regional works were excluded. (2) Loci Restriction: The investigation was focused primarily on Q.1:2 and Q.21:107; while central, full examination of all 73 Qur’anic occurrences was beyond the scope of a single article. (3) Conceptual Nature: The proposed policy implications for SDGs 13, 15, and 16 are theoretical and normative recommendations rather than empirical impact studies. (4) Edition and Translation Limitations: This study relied on specific printed editions and Indonesian translations available in pesantren and UIN libraries—al-Ṭabarī (Pustaka Azzam Indonesian translation 2009), al-Rāzī (Dār al-Ḥadīth Cairo 2012 Arabic edition), al-Qurṭubī (Pustaka Azzam 2007 translation), al-Bayḍāwī (Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turāth 1998 Beirut edition), Ibn Kathīr (Dār Ṭaybah 1999 edition), al-Fansūrī (Singapore 1951 edition), Hamka (Pustaka Panjimas 1982), and Shihab (Lentera Hati 2000/2017). Variations across manuscripts, editorial choices in tahqiq, and translators’ interpretive biases in Indonesian renderings may affect semantic nuance. Future research should compare multiple Arabic critical editions and examine original Malay manuscripts of Tarjumān al-Mustafid to enhance philological accuracy.

5.3. Future Research Directions

Future research should advance in two directions: (1) Empirical Curricular Studies: Investigating how al-‘ālamīn is currently taught in Indonesian pesantren and UIN/IAIN classrooms and assessing student attitudes toward environmental ethics. (2) Juristic Operationalization: Translating ḥuqūq al-‘ālamīn into concrete Islamic legal jurisprudence (fiqh al-bī’ah) and fatwas governing legal standing for ecosystems in Indonesia.

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