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Environmental Conservation of Coral Reefs in the Wakatobi Region Based on Islamic Education and Customary Law Approaches

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Abstract: Currently, coral reef conservation in the Wakatobi area is facing various environmental problems that threaten the coral reef ecosystem. These environmental problems are closely related to various community activities, both local, domestic and international. Based on this problem, this research aims to educate the public about how to preserve the coral reefs of Wakatobi, Southeast Sulawesi. This research uses the Participatory Action Research (PTR) method using an Islamic education and customary law approach. The results of this research provide an illustration that preserving the Wakatobi coral reef environment requires a comprehensive approach and from various perspectives. Islamic education instills moral and ethical awareness in protecting the Wakatobi coral reef environment. Customary law provides a stronger protection mechanism for coral reefs. The synergy between the two strengthens conservation efforts by building awareness and behavior based on religious and cultural values. Thus, through Islamic education that conveys formal and informal religious messages supported by traditional values carried out by ulama or preachers, community character can support environmental sustainability. So, coral reefs as part of the marine ecosystem are very important so that the survival of fish and various other habitats can be well maintained.

Keywords: Coral reefs, environmental conservation, Wakatobi area, Islamic education, customary law

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Abstrak: Saat ini, konservasi terumbu karang di kawasan Wakatobi menghadapi berbagai permasalahan lingkungan yang mengancam ekosistem terumbu karang. Permasalahan lingkungan hidup ini erat kaitannya dengan berbagai aktivitas masyarakat baik lokal, domestik, maupun internasional. Berangkat dari permasalahan tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengedukasi masyarakat tentang cara melestarikan terumbu karang Wakatobi, Sulawesi Tenggara. Penelitian ini menggunakan Metode Penelitian Tindakan Partisipatif (PTR) dengan melalui pendekatan pendidikan Islam dan hukum adat. Hasil penelitian tersebut memberikan gambaran bahwa pelestarian lingkungan terumbu karang Wakatobi memerlukan pendekatan komprehensif dan dari berbagai perspektif. Pendidikan Islam menanamkan kesadaran moral dan etika dalam menjaga lingkungan terumbu karang Wakatobi. Hukum adat memberikan mekanisme perlindungan yang lebih kuat terhadap terumbu karang. Sinergi keduanya memperkuat upaya konservasi dengan membangun kesadaran dan perilaku berbasis nilai-nilai agama dan budaya. Dengan demikian, melalui pendidikan Islam yang menyampaikan pesan-pesan keagamaan formal dan informal yang didukung oleh nilai-nilai adat yang dilakukan oleh para ulama atau dai, karakter masyarakat dapat mendukung kelestarian lingkungan. Sehingga dengan demikian terumbu karang sebagai bagian dari ekosistem laut sangat penting agar kelangsungan hidup ikan dan berbagai habitat lainnya dapat tetap terjaga dengan baik.

Kata Kunci: Terumbu karang, konservasi lingkungan, kawasan Wakatobi, pendidikan Islam, hukum adat

Introduction

The Wakatobi marine area is one of eight earth biosphere reserves in Indonesia. The award from UNESCO shows the world's appreciation for the local wisdom of the Wakatobi people, who protect the sea and land as a balanced space for the world's lungs. This determination is also a form of UNESCO's appreciation for the role of Wakatobi culture and society in carrying out nature conservation in Wakatobi.¹

One of the most essential natural conservation areas in Wakatobi is coral reefs. The coral reef environment is a vital ecosystem in the sea. Coral reefs are formed from a collection of coral polyp organisms. Coral polyps build strong structures by producing calcium carbonate. High biodiversity makes coral reefs critical biological hotspots. Various benefits of coral reefs have been reported, including being a source of energy. It also plays a role in protecting beaches from

¹ Turasih Turasih, "Social Construction of Local Wisdom of Kaombo Laut in Binongko Island Communities, Wakatobi Islands." *Jurnal Studi Sosial Keagamaan Syekh Nurjati* 2, No. 2 (2022), p. 120–138.

abrasion. In addition, it acts as a raw material in exploring various types of medicines.²

The latest problems relating to coral reef conservation in the Wakatobi area are the presence of various environmental issues and increasing community activities, such as climate change, seawater pollution, noise pollution, unsustainable fishing, and physical damage such as sand mining and taking coral reefs for decorative purposes.³ These problems encourage the importance of more serious environmental conservation efforts on coral reefs. This includes establishing conservation areas, sustainable management of marine resources, and educating the public about the importance of preserving coral reefs.^{4,5}

Referring to the various problems described above, this research provides a series of actions to protect, restore, and sustainably maintain the coral reef ecosystem in the Wakatobi Region. Coral reef conservation efforts implemented in this research refer to two approaches, namely Islamic education and customary law. It is hoped that these two approaches will create mutually reinforcing synergy in the conservation of the coral reef environment in the Wakatobi area. An approach to Islamic education is essential to integrating environmental values in Islamic religious education so that public awareness of the importance of preserving and protecting the environment, including coral reefs, increases.⁶ The customary law approach is closely related to using the existing customary law system in the Wakatobi community to regulate the use of natural resources, including coral reefs.^{7,8} Apart from that, the environmental conservation of coral reefs in the Wakatobi area, which is based on an Islamic education approach and

² Hoegh-Guldberg, "Coral Reef Ecosystems and Anthropogenic Climate Change." Regional Environmental Change 11 (2011), p. 215–27. Hoegh-Guldberg, et.al., "Coral Reef Ecosystems under Climate Change and Ocean Acidification." *Frontiers in Marine Science* 4 (2017), p. 158. Daniela M. Ceccarelli, et. al., "The Coral Sea: Physical Environment, Ecosystem Status and Biodiversity Assets." In *Advances in Marine Biology, Elsevier*, 66 (2013), p. 213–290.

³ Al Azhar, "The Mapping Resource Conflicts Based on Land Use and Land Cover Data in Kaledupa Island Marine Conservation Area of Wakatobi National Park." *Coastal and Marine Journal* 1, No. 1, (2023), p. 11–21.

⁴ Tamir Caras and Zohar Pasternak, "Long-Term Environmental Impact of Coral Mining at the Wakatobi Marine Park, Indonesia." *Ocean & Coastal Management* 52, No. 10 (2009), p. 539–544.

⁵ Gina Elliott, et. al., "Community Participation in Marine Protected Area Management: Wakatobi National Park, Sulawesi, Indonesia." *Coastal Management* 29 (4) (2001), p. 295–316.

⁶ Lyn Parker, "Religious Environmental Education? The New School Curriculum in Indonesia." *Environmental Education Research* 23, No. 9 (2017), p. 1249–72. Mohamed, Najma, "Islamic Education, Eco-Ethics and Community." *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 33 (2014), p. 315–328.

⁷ Anthea Roberts, "Traditional and Modern Approaches to Customary International Law: A Reconciliation." *American Journal of International Law* 95, No. 4 (2001), p. 757–91.

⁸ Anthony C. Diala, "The Concept of Living Customary Law: A Critique." *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law* 49, No. 2 (2017), p. 143–165.

customary law, is an exciting concept that is in accordance with the local cultural context in Indonesia, especially in areas where the majority of the population is Muslim and has a strong customary law tradition such as in Southeast Sulawesi.

The Wakatobi area that is the object of this research is the Tukang Besi Island. Geographically, the Tukang Besi Islands region (now better known as Wakatobi) consists of 97% sea and 3% land. Therefore, from the past until now the people have a seafaring culture whose priority livelihood is at sea. Even though the sea is an area where they depend for their livelihoods, such as catching fish, lobsters, sea cucumbers, and gelatin farming, due to a lack of ecological knowledge and awareness, sometimes the majority of the island's population uses violent or environmentally unfriendly. This behavior includes bombing and drugging. As a result, the sustainability of fish and coral reefs is threatened, which has implications for fishermen's fishing income and affects the fertility of the seaweed they cultivate. In principle, the local government has minimized the rate of destruction of the aquatic environment, but attitudes and actions based on violence against nature continue to this day. Therefore, one of the important things that must be examined regarding the problem above is building the ecological awareness of local communities through moral messages based on religious values.

Based on the problems described previously, in this research the discussion is based on the focus of the problem and findings in the field at the time the research was conducted. The main problem that will be explained in this study is coral reef conservation in the Wakatobi region, Southeast Sulawesi as an academic effort to support the preservation of coastal and marine areas as part of the wealth and economic resources of the people and state in Indonesia.

This research uses the Participatory Action Research (PTR) method using an Islamic education and customary law approach.⁹ Action research involves action researchers and community members or organizations who seek to improve the situation of the community that is the object of research. The research method is carried out in a participatory manner among community members in a community with the aim of encouraging transformative actions to change living conditions for the better.¹⁰

⁹ Irwansyah, *Penelitian Hukum: Pilihan Metode & Praktik Penulisan Artikel*, Yogyakarta: Mirra Buana Media, 2020. Brita Mikkelsen, *Metode Penelitian Partisipatori dan Upaya-Upaya Pemberdayaan*, Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2001.

¹⁰ Steven Jacobs, "The Use of Participatory Action Research within Education-Benefits to Stakeholders," *World Journal of Education* 6, No. 3 (2016). Cathy MacDonald, "Understanding Participatory Action Research: A Qualitative Research Methodology Option," *Canadian Journal of Action Research* 13, No. 2 (2012).

Building a Tukang Besi Islands Community with an Ecological Character

In the Big Indonesian Dictionary, in terms of terminology, ecology is the science of the reciprocal relationship between living things and their surrounding environment.¹¹ Ecology (Oekologie) was first defined by Ernst Haeckel in 1866 as the science of the relationship between organisms and their environment.¹² Furthermore, Green, et al (1996) define human ecology as the interconnection that exists between humans and their environment.

There is also the term character building, which is a term used by President Soekarno (Bung Karno) to describe the importance of character education for the development of the Indonesian nation, usually conveyed in one breath, namely nation and character building. Meanwhile, character education is a system of instilling character values in school members which includes components of knowledge, awareness or will, and actions to implement these values both towards God Almighty, oneself, others, the environment, and the nation so that they become Kamil human.¹³

Terminologically, the meaning of character was proposed by Thomas Lickona, according to him character is a reliable inner disposition to respond to situations in a morally good way. Furthermore, he added, "Character so conceived has three interrelated parts: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral behaviour". According to Lickona, noble character includes knowledge about goodness, then creates a commitment to goodness, and finally actually does good. Psychologically, the character of the individual is interpreted as the result of the integration of four parts, namely exercise of the heart, exercise of thought, exercise of feeling, and exercise of the heart relating to feelings, attitudes and beliefs or faith, and innovation. Sports are related to perception, readiness to imitate, manipulate, and create new activities accompanied by sportsmanship regarding will, motivation, and creativity which are reflected in concern, image, and creation of novelty.

Based on the definition above, it can be defined that Character is the basic value that builds a person's personality, formed both due to the influence of heredity and environmental influences, which differentiates him from other people and is manifested in his attitudes and behaviour in everyday life. The character that will be realized in this research is ecological, meaning that every community in the Tukang Besi Islands has the insight and awareness to love and maintain the coral reef environment.

¹¹Tim Penyusun, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*, Jakarta: Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1997.

¹²Şirin Gülcen Eren, "An Intervention Method for Environmental Literacy: A Trainers Workshop of Lifelong Learning," *Urban Academy* 13, No. 2 (2020), p. 263-280.

¹³ Agus Sopian, "Model Pendidikan Karakter Di Masyarakat." *Al-Hasanah: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 6, No. 1 (2021), p. 106–113.

Currently, an ecological crisis has occurred, characterized by an ecological system experiencing instability or disruption of the balance of exchange of "energy-material" and information, which in turn results in an imbalance in the distribution functions and accumulation of energy-material between one organism and another and the natural environment. Meanwhile, humans with their technology, behavior, and social organization have not been able to make meaningful adjustments to anticipate or respond to these shocks.¹⁴ It was further explained that this ecological crisis is a crisis of the relationship between humans and their culture and the environment where they take refuge, live, and exploit natural resources.

In various corners of the world today, ecological damage is increasingly becoming prominent and is even starting to trump political and economic issues.¹⁵ Ecological damage is considered a super-sensitive issue. On the one hand, a small number of humans act to destroy the ecology based on ambition and egoism. On the other hand, the negative impacts of ecological damage are felt by almost all humans. It is deemed necessary to make every effort to prevent ecological damage from getting worse. Therefore, da'wah is also required to be able to participate in finding solutions so that ecological damage does not decline to the lowest point of destruction.

Environmental problems cannot be overcome only through repositioning human relations with their natural environment, but must also through reorienting values, ethics and norms of life, both religious and cultural which are then concluded in collective action, as well as restructuring social relations between individuals, individuals and groups, groups with groups, and between groups and larger organizations (eg countries, international institutions). Referring to this, for the people of Buton, especially the Tukang Besi Islands, marine ecology is the main source of life. Destroying the marine environment is the same as destroying life, including destroying the lives of future children and grandchildren. Apart from that, going to sea is also a legacy from our ancestors that has been passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, protecting and preserving the sea from the threat of damage is a primary responsibility.

Islamic Educational Approach

The approach through Islamic education is carried out in a learning process that integrates environmentally friendly character values into subjects. This approach must be instilled from an early age in children and the next generation

¹⁴ A.H. Dharmawan, "Konsep-Konsep Dasar Dan Isyu-Isyu Kritis Ekologi Manusia," *Modul Kuliah Ekologi Manusia*, Bogor: Institut Pertanian Bogor, 2007.

¹⁵ Agus Jatmiko, "Pendidikan Berwawasan Ekologi Realisasi Nilai-Nilai Ekologis Dalam Kurikulum Pendidikan Agama Islam." *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 7, No. 1 (2017), p. 45–62.

of young people. Schools must have an environmental vision because the internalization of grounding ecological character values in society must be institutionally integrated. For example, in educational institutions such as schools, grounding in ecological character must be included in the local curriculum and the learning approach is carried out with a contextual approach. This means that students don't just know that the Wakatobi area has marine beauty and has half of the world's marine biota. However, students must also be given an explanation of the meaning of the jargon "in Wakatobi there is a real paradise under the sea". To instill these character values in students, it is not enough just to have knowknowledge (cognitive), butstudentsbutbut students must be taught to directly recognize the concept of a "real underwater paradise" for example by doing "diving". Education expert, Sears stated that learning (contextual teaching and learning) is a concept that helps teachers relate the subject matter to real worldreal-world situations.¹⁶

Likewise, Berns stated that "CTL is a conception of teaching and learning that helps teachers relate subject matter content to real-world situations, and motivate students to make connections between knowledge and its application for their lives as family members citizens and workers and engage in the hard work that learning requires".¹⁷ Meanwhile, Johnson stated that contextual learning is a holistic system that helps students see meaning in the academic material they are studying by connecting academic subjects with the context of their daily lives Contextual is essentially summarized in three words, namely meaning, meaningful, and meaningful. According to Johnson, every material presented has meaning with various qualities One of the meanings of the word contextual is "experienced" by students. By doing "diving" activities, students not only hear stories from person to person or from the mouths of people who have dived there, but they experience it themselves. Not just students, but teachers or preachers who are tasked with providing education to the community. That is meaningful learning for students which aims to ground the ecological character that they want to achieve.

The slogan "a real paradise under the sea" which makes an analogy of the beauty of Wakatobi's coral reefs is expected to become a slogan known to all levels of society. This is what Syukriadi Sambas means that da'wah is a process of internationalization, transmission, diffusion, institutionalization, and transformation of Islam which involves elements of da'i, message, media, mad'u, goals, and responses, as well as the dimensions of space and time to realize life

¹⁶Susan Jones Sears, "Contextual Teaching and Learning: A Primer for Effective Instruction," *Phi Delta Kappa International*, (2002).

¹⁷ Robert G Berns and Patricia M Erickson. "Contextual Teaching and Learning: Preparing Students for the New Economy. The Highlight Zone: Research@ Work No. 5 (2001).

the *hasanah*, greetings, and light in this world and the hereafter. In the Koran, Surah An Nahl (16): 125, Allah says:

أَدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحِكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۚ وَجَدِلْ لَهُم بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ
أَعْلَمُ بِمَن ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۚ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Meaning: Call (people) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good lessons and refute them in a good way. Indeed, it is your Lord who knows better those who stray from His path and He knows better those who are guided.

It seems interesting that moving from the thoughts of these experts, it is worth underlining the "institutionalization" of da'wah in spreading good values to humanity so that they are coordinated into a unified whole in the system that is built in the community targeted by da'wah. Then, to build people with ecological character in the Ironsmith Islands through strengthening the da'wah institutions, it is necessary to involve mosque sharia, preachers, imams, elements of the taklim council, and traditional leaders. The role of preachers is very important in building people with ecological character on the Tukang Besi Islands. In the governance and management of da'wah, the preachers are institutionally coordinated in one institution called the "Coral Reef Da'wah Network".

The systems and policies developed by the regional government regarding coral reef conservation will be coordinated within the institutional coral reef da'wah network. This is because the regional government's efforts to implement the policies it has made have not been educated with the touch of awareness that should be implemented. The touch of awareness in question must be approached culturally and touch the values of awareness through religious teachings by involving elements of religious activists such as preachers and traditional leaders/elders in the Tukang Besi Islands.

In line with that, according to Herman, an academic at IAIN Kendari, it is very important to instill the implementation of educational values in students from an early age. Because, Islamic education teaches the concept of love for God's creatures, both plants and animals. For Wakatobi children, the sea is one of the places/sources they look for sources of life, so that the sea is protected from various types of damage. Apart from that, Wakatobi's marine life is one of the world's tourist destinations. The implementation of instilling Islamic educational values in children in schools is carried out through "learning integration" carried out by teachers. Furthermore, for Wakatobi children, the sea is a source of life, especially the children of the Bajo tribe, and destroying the sea is the same as destroying their future life.¹⁸

¹⁸Interview with Dr. Herman, Academic at IAIN Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, September 10, 2023.

Furthermore, Herman emphasized that maintaining or preserving the environment is very important in our lives. This is one of our duties and obligations as servants of God (Allah), especially for us Muslims. In the context of Islamic Education philosophy, God has indeed given us responsibilities as *Khlaifah* on Earth, one of the tasks is to care for and protect Allah SWT's creation. The natural environment (*flora and fauna*), plants and animals that live on land and in the sea, are Almighty God's gifts to humans. Humans, animals and plants constitute a living ecosystem that complements each other. Wakatobi is one of the areas given by God with the beauty of the sea and is one of the world's tourist destinations.¹⁹

Customary Law Approaches

Every community has cultural institutions in Indonesia that are rich in local wisdom values from a legal perspective, which is called customary law. Customary law is recognized as part of the national legal system, apart from Islamic law and western (especially Dutch) law.²⁰ The cultural approach is an important model to use as a step to solve many problems, including environmental preservation, especially coral reefs in the *Tukang Besi Islands* community. The people of *Buton* have depended for part of their life on the sea for a long time, because geographically *Buton* is a group of islands. The life of going to sea to earn a living is a choice and a legacy passed down from generation to generation. Therefore, the sea is a source of life. Realizing how important the sea is as a source of life, the preservation of the marine environment must be maintained and protected because destroying the sea is the same as destroying life.

In the context of preserving the marine environment, the *Butonese* people believe in *Butonese* cultural values which characterize local wisdom in managing human relations with the environment. One example is the "*kahombo* culture" carried out by traditional leaders/elders, which is believed to prevent damage to the natural environment (forests and seas). Because, if a protected forest or sea has been marked with a "*kahombo*" sign by traditional elders, it will hurt the perpetrators or people who take wood from the forest, or fish in certain sea areas that have been *kahomboed* by traditional elders. With this tradition, people cannot damage the environment, so that the forest and marine environments are maintained and protected from human oppression. In the *Ironsmith Islands*, the term *Kahombo* is known as "*Mawisasi*", meaning a prohibition on taking

¹⁹Interview with Dr. Herman, Academic at IAIN Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, September 10, 2023.

²⁰ Ahmad Subakir, et.al., "Synergy of Samin Culture with Environmental Fiqh in Central Java," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum dan Pemikiran* 24, No. 1 (2024). Ali Abubakar, et.al., "The Postponement of the Implementation of Inheritance Distribution in The *Seunuddon* Community, North Aceh in The Lens of 'Urf Theory and Legal Pluralism," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 6, No. 2 (2023).

something that has been agreed upon by custom in a certain area of the sea. If it is violated, the person concerned will be subject to customary law so that it can hurt him.

There is a very close correlation between cultural values (local wisdom) which the Butonese people believe to be a philosophy of life which then influences the character of their people. For example, the philosophy "yinda yindamo karo somanomo lipu" means don't be selfish but prioritize the interests of the country, the interests of the environment, the interests of the nation, the common interests. One of the environmental interests here is maintaining environmental sustainability in general. Butonese people believe that destroying the environment is the same as destroying themselves and destroying life. In this context, Nurcholis Madjid said that humans are a microcosm of the universe.²¹ However, not all Butonese people apply this local wisdom, except for certain areas which still uphold traditional institutions. In the Tukang Besi Islands, traditional institutions still play an active role in preserving the environment, collaborating with Regional Government programs. Empowering traditional institutions as a form of local wisdom by the Government is an effective strategy for preserving the natural environment of coral reefs in the Tukang Besi Islands, Southeast Sulawesi Province.

In line with the concept of local wisdom, the Bajo people strongly believe that if coral reefs are damaged there will be no more fish. There are Bajo belief values that are in line with the management of conservation areas, including: (1) it is prohibited to catch fish in conservation areas in excessive quantities; (2) it is prohibited to catch fish that are spawning (3) prohibition of all forms of fishing activities in this area; (4) prohibition of throwing anchors because it will damage the coral at the Tuba location; (5) prohibition of fishing for protected fish. The Bajo tribe, as a tribe of sea people who have a very close relationship with the sea, really respects the sea in fisheries management. This is indicated by the fact that before carrying out activities in this area, Bajo fishermen first carry out a permission ritual for the sea. After arriving at a location that is considered sacred by the Bajo Tribe, fishermen ask permission from the sea dwellers in the following way: dip glasses in water or by the Bajo Tribe usually mirrors, then wash their faces with sea water three times and dip their wrists in the water and say we come as brothers not as enemies. After the ritual is carried out, fishermen can carry out activities in this place.²²

The Bajo tribe in Wakatobi believes that the sea for them is God's medium in providing all blessings. The sea is not only a place to live, it is also a place to

²¹ Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Doktrin & Peradaban*, Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2019. Syaikhu Syaikhu, et.al., "The Maqashid Sharia Construction on Inheritance in Dayak Ngaju Customs within the Tumbang Anoi Agreement," *El-Mashlalah* 13, No. 2 (2023).

²² Interview with Ahmad Majid Rizal Jaya, Village Head and Traditional Leaders of the Bajo Tribe, Southeast Sulawesi, September 8, 2023.

find food and a place for them to find pleasure and relieve sadness. Therefore, it is obligatory for them to carry out the “*ritual pinah di karang*” (ritual offering in the form of betel leaves). This is done to honor (*mpu madilao*, Bajo language) meaning the ancestors of the Bajo people. All sacred sites of the Bajo Tribe are part of marine protected areas, which means that they are open to all forms of environmentally friendly traditional use for taking marine products but you are not allowed to use disrespectful words, and at these sacred sites you are not allowed to throw chilies, acid, or even you are not allowed to wash cooking utensils, especially pots, at this location, because it will bring anger to “*Mbo Janggo*” (according to the Bajo people, *Mbo' Janggo* is the ruler of the sea). The Bajo people believe that “there is a natural law that will directly impose sanctions on fishermen if they commit violations.” The Bajo tribe has a very strong belief that if they commit violations at sea their ship will sink in the sea. Being struck by lightning, the rain will continue continuously and even storms will hit the settlements of the Bajo people, and the ship will sink in the sea.²³

The local wisdom values which are the philosophy of life of the Butonese people, including the Tukang Besi Islands, are very much in line with the values of the Islamic religion. Local wisdom values are explored and sourced from the values of Islamic teachings adhered to by the Butonese people. As an example; for example, the leadership philosophy of “*pobhinci-bhinciki coolie*” which originates from Butonese customs is derived from the teachings of the Islamic religion regarding the four philosophies as follows: *man arafah nafsahu faqad arafah rabbahu*, *Pobhinci-bhinciki coolie*, *jihad fi sabilillah*, and *poromu inda saangu philosophy pogaa inda koolota*. By mastering these four philosophies, a leader must have four intelligences, including intellectual intelligence, emotional intelligence, social/environmental intelligence, and spiritual intelligence.

Butonese people have the principle of not hurting other people, that is the meaning of *pobhinci-bhinciki kuli*. Because if we hurt people, in the future we will also be hurt. Therefore, the philosophy of *man 'arafah nafsahu* (knowing oneself) for the Butonese is the basic principle of knowing human values, which leads to knowing God's creation as the owner of the universe (*faqad 'arafah rabbahu*). Humans are God's creation, as are other creatures (animals and plants), on land and in the sea. All of this is a gift from God, and humans are given advantages (reason), as well as being the custodians of the universe to carry out their functions and responsibilities as *khalifatul fil ardhi*. What is the context of the relationship with environmental maintenance? If the environment is damaged, then the environment will certainly not facilitate human life. Forests are being destroyed, causing smoke haze, flooding, and erosion. Likewise, if the sea is damaged, fish will not be able to live because the moss which is a food source for

²³ Interview with Andre, Youth Leader and Environmental Activist in Wakatobi, Southeast Sulawesi, September 8, 2023.

fish attached to coral will become "dead", as will jelly, sea cucumbers and other marine biota. So the sea will not supply life to humans.

The connection with humans as caliphs on earth or those who have the responsibility to care for nature, not destroy it. According to Kamaruddin, an academic from IAIN Kendari, destroying marine ecosystems, such as bombing fish or drugging them, is *haram*. Because Islamic law does not require this behavior. Therefore, destroying coral reefs and bombing fish are acts that are hated by Allah. Exploitation behavior by humans is not aware of how to use a friendly environment and at the same time, this exploitation illustrates that humans are irresponsible, because they prioritize their own interests. In fact, many fishermen, for example, use pragmatic methods without thinking about the future sustainability of life at sea, for example. That's why one of the actions that Allah hates is doing damage on the face of the earth, committing fraud, doing damage and so on. Therefore, Islamic law "forbids" such acts of "exploitation". Therefore, responsible humans are humans who always determine how this nature can be preserved, how this nature can be looked after, how this nature can be utilized, how its use can be maintained for humans themselves. This Islamic law is in line with the customary law that exists in the Wakatobi community that protecting the sea is something that is highly respected, because the sea is a source of life for them.²⁴

Preserving Coral Reefs Through Islamic Messages to the Tukang Besi Islands Community

Whatever the theory, the concept of environmental conservation as contained in aspects of Islamic education, Islamic law and customs and culture in society, if it is not internalized and socialized, then this concept will not reach society. So herein lies the importance of socializing Islamic teachings to society through da'wah delivered by ulama, da'i, teachers, both in educational institutions such as schools, and in formal institutions such as mosques, taklim assemblies and various other institutions.²⁵

So far, da'wah activities on the one hand and environmental conservation activities on the other have not been running smoothly. At an empirical level, these two activities seem to run independently. If these two activities are combined, it is believed that they will have a huge positive effect, especially during humanity's confusion regarding the future of the environment. In principle,

²⁴ Interview with Dr. Kamaruddin, Academic at IAIN Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, September 10, 2023.

²⁵Ridhwan Ridhwan and Wardhana Wardhana, "Pendidikan Islam Berwawasan Lingkungan Hidup Pada Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Di Bone Sulawesi Selatan," *Mudarrisuna: Media Kajian Pendidikan Agama Islam* 9, No. 1 (2019). Mahrus Ali, "Overcoming the Dilemma between the Clarity and Flexible Norms in Environmental Offenses," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum dan Syari'ah* 14, No. 2 (2022).

da'wah activities aim to foster understanding, awareness, appreciation, and practice of religious teaching values to the targets of da'wah both individually and institutionally as *rahmatan lil alamin*.

In an institutional context, da'wah activities are directed at carrying out more functional da'wah governance. In this case, a preacher must not only have religious knowledge and rhetorical skills but must be supported by the ability to understand the sociological and anthropological factors of a society. Because not being careful in examining the socio-historical and cultural aspects that live in a community or the target of da'wah will have an insignificant impact on the success of da'wah.

From a socio-political perspective, da'wah should also be directed at strengthening the country's socio-political integration while avoiding the possibility of conflict in society, both horizontal and vertical conflicts. Apart from the sociopolitical issues mentioned above, environmental problems that are currently experiencing degradation are also urgent to be approached and managed by missionary institutions. Ecologically based da'wah governance is very important, considering that the essence of Islam's presence on this earth is based on the mission to save nature (*rahmatan lil alamin*). Therefore, the ecological rescue dimension is one of the priority programs in da'wah management. The significance of the da'wah approach in the process of saving the environment is not without strong reasons, especially if we refer to the empirical reality which shows the fact that environmental damage and efforts to preserve it are closely related to the cultural problems of a society. Therefore, a cultural socio-religious approach is necessary, considering that, genealogically, Indonesian society is a society that, within certain limits, still pays great attention to cultural and religious values.

In the local context of the Southeast Sulawesi region, especially in the Tukang Besi Islands as the central area of the world's biosphere, strengthening the capacity and involvement of da'wah institutions that grow in society such as Imam, Khatib, Majelis Taklim, and traditional leaders' participation in building values and ecological insight into the way of thinking of local communities. Therefore, strengthening institutional capacity to support ecological missions is very urgent. Bearing in mind that the Tukang Besi Islands region is the world's main treasurer of biodiversity. The marine park area on this archipelago holds more than half of the world's marine biota assets. However, at the same time, the groups of people who live in this area are generally not even aware that the islands and seas they live in and the place where they live are the center of the world's coral triangle. Weak ecological awareness coupled with the socio-economic pressures commonly experienced by coastal communities often encourage local communities to act "rudely" towards their environment. In fact, the exploitation of marine products by means of "violence" (through bombing and anesthesia) is

an act that violates the law, or is a criminal act and is contrary to customary law which threatens environmental sustainability.²⁶

Departing from the thoughts above, efforts to prevent the rate of destruction of the underwater environment in the Tukang Besi Islands must involve many parties, including da'wah institutions that are rooted in local community culture such as Imam, Khatib, Mosque Community, Taklim Council, and Religious Organizations, urging immediately empowered to inspire their active involvement in environmental action. Thus, efforts to increase institutional capacity; both at the system level, institutional level, and individual level, it is urgent that be done immediately. The forms of strengthening the institutional capacity of da'wah in the Ironsmith Islands community in preventing the rate of damage to coral reefs are as follows:

1. At the institutional level, there is a need for coordinated governance and management of da'wah in the "Coral Reef Da'wah Forum". Through this platform, systems, mechanisms, policies, and regulations established by the government can be socialized simultaneously in society through integrated da'wah carried out by preachers through sermons, taklim majlis recitations, traditional events, and ritual events in society.²⁷
2. At the educational institution level; environmental conservation (coral reefs) is integrated into the local curriculum.²⁸
3. Involvement of traditional institutions as part of local wisdom in preserving the marine biota environment.

The influence of the capacity of preachers in directing, guiding, and inviting the community to join together in developing and protecting the environment is visible and implemented in the third cycle of this research. In the third stage, the da'i who have taken part in da'wah training go directly into the community to deliver sermons and lectures, as an implementation of strengthening the capacity of the da'i. Growing awareness of the insight for ecological reasoning must begin with the preachers. However, it must be realized that every Muslim should preach, call for what is right, and prevent evil (heinous) actions, both directly and indirectly. Because every Muslim has a responsibility for the preservation and continuity of Islam and Muslims in this universe. The

²⁶Mahrus Ali and M. Arif Setiawan, "Penal Proportionality in Environmental Legislation of Indonesia," *Cogent Social Sciences* 8, no. 1 (2022). Michael J. Lynch, "Green Criminology and Environmental Crime: Criminology That Matters in the Age of Global Ecological Collapse." *Journal of White Collar and Corporate Crime* 1, no. 1 (2020), p. 50–61.

²⁷Subhan Abdullah Acim and Suharti Suharti, "The Concept of Fiqh al-Bī'ah in the Qur'an: A Study of the Quranic Verses on Environment in the Ulama's Views of Lombok," *Ulumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 27, No. 1 (2023).

²⁸Siswanto Siswanto, et.al., "Environmental Cultured Education and Its Implication on The Student's Competencies in an Adiwiyata School," *Cakrawala Pendidikan* 38, No. 3 (2019). Karman Karman, et.al., "The Qur'anic Learning Based on Islamic Eco-Theology at Pesantren," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, No. 2 (2023).

responsibility of Islamic propagation that is imposed on every Muslim must be carried out according to their respective abilities. This responsibility is not only in the context of human relations with fellow humans but concerns the relationship between humans and the universe. Maintaining the universe (environment) from being damaged is the same as every individual protecting himself from his health. Because if the environment is damaged, the logic is the same as if someone is unhealthy. If someone is sick, they cannot carry out activities, likewise, if the environment is damaged it cannot produce optimally for humans.

In line with that, according to Ahmad Baharuddin, an academic from IAIN Kendari, explained that the relationship between humans and nature is very related, even very relevant to Islamic jurisprudence and law, *maqashid sharia*, namely protecting religion, protecting the soul, protecting the mind, protecting offspring, and protecting treasure. There is a special item that clearly mentions protecting the environment, so contemporary ulama circles have recently added a sixth *maqashid sharia* safeguard, namely protecting the environment (*hifzh al-biah*) protecting the environment. So the connection or relationship between humans and nature is very significant in Islamic law so that as a good Muslim he is able to protect his environment. There are many verses that mention about protecting nature for humans and it is not permissible for humans to do damage as explained in the Al-Quran, namely: "damage has appeared on the earth, damage has occurred in our environment, because it has been done by human hands. not true, so this once again shows us that the relationship between humans and the environment or nature is very related and very significant."²⁹

This view was confirmed by Kamaruddin, an academic from IAIN Kendari, he explained that the concept of obligation in Islamic law shows a commandment that has an obligation to be able to preserve the environment. Why, so that no damage occurs, because in the Koran al-Baqarah in verse 205, Allah confirms that "and if he turns away from you, he walks on the face of the earth causing damage to it, and destroys crops and livestock, Allah will not loves destruction." This verse illustrates, explains, and at the same time educates that humans have an obligation to ensure that the earth is preserved and processed well so that in the end the environment can provide benefits. And again, in Islamic law it is strictly prohibited to do damage. Because this damage results in unmanaged environmental conservation. If environmental conservation is not maintained and specifically how coral reefs can develop, how can they be maintained, of course don't do any damage. Because that damage is part of "barbarization". We are always obliged to take care of the environment, how it can be created with full blessings. And this is a form of command to humans so that we always protect

²⁹Interview with Dr. Ahmad Baharuddin, Academic at IAIN Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, September 10, 2023.

the environment. Be it the coral reef environment, or the environment for the sustainability of life itself. So once again Islamic law "warns" to always protect and preserve the environment.³⁰

So, da'wah containing Islamic teachings, through the subject of da'wah (da'i) will not mean anything and even da'wah will die if the da'wah is not implemented in human life. Solving the very broad and multi-complex problems of human life is the arena of da'wah and that is where the subjects of da'wah must be able to get involved in fixing them and guiding them to the right path of life. Therefore, a da'i is a leader and even a "sayyid of the people". He lives in a society that is constantly changing, and he must be aware of these changes, and then guide these changes. Moreover, if the changes and progress involve traditional values which must shift towards new (modern) values, then of course this is a challenge for the subject of da'wah in dealing with it by requiring precision and skill in a good and precise manner, and not to the point of damaging or abandon religious values.

The presence of preachers with complex knowledge in society is very much needed to help solve the problems facing humanity. A preacher who will carry out da'wah activities should also have a good personality, both spiritual and physical. Spiritual personality includes traits, attitudes, and abilities. Meanwhile, physical personality includes the physical problems of a person doing da'wah. So that the da'wah material conveyed by the da'i can be accepted and put into practice by the objects of da'wah in their lives.

Indeed, the results of a da'wah process are not immediately visible, but it takes time and is a long process. These changes do not come all at once, but step by step. In the context of the assisted object, the influence that can be seen from the process of strengthening the capacity and institutions of da'wah is the formation of a coral reef da'wah forum (FORUM DATKAR) where the initiators are the participants themselves. The institutional management of this forum has been established and has built cooperation with the Wakatobi Regional Government to provide counselling and guidance to the community to jointly preserve the environment, especially coral reefs.

Thus, through Islamic education that conveys formal and informal religious messages supported by traditional values conveyed by ulama or preachers, the character of society can change to preserve the environment. So, coral reefs as part of the marine ecosystem are very important so that the survival of fish and various other habitats can be well maintained. Because Islamic teachings contain values that teach about preserving the environment, not only on land, but also at sea which must be conveyed by everyone and to all mankind.

³⁰ Interview with Dr. Kamaruddin, Academic at IAIN Kendari, Southeast Sulawesi, September 10, 2023.

Conclusion

Environmental issues today have become sensitive issues for the world community and Indonesia, especially as Indonesia's sea area is wider than land. The Tukang Besi Islands (Wakatobi) with its marine park is a world tourism destination or the centre of the world's coral triangle meeting (the coral triangle world). Strengthening the institutional capacity of da'wah in the Ironsmith Islands is carried out through integrated and integrated preacher training involving mosque syara, imams, preachers, majlis taklim, and traditional leaders/elders. Building the ecological character of the Ironsmith Islands community in preserving coral reefs can be done using three approaches, namely; Islamic education and customary law approach (local wisdom). Coral reef da'wah activities are institutionalized through the "Coral Reef Da'wah Forum" which coordinates environmental da'wah activities with the Wakatobi Regional Government. Thus, through Islamic education which conveys formal and informal religious messages supported by traditional values conveyed by ulama or preachers, the character of society can change to preserve the environment. So that in this way, coral reefs as part of the marine ecosystem are very important for the survival of fish and various other habitats can be well maintained.

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