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Gender Analysis in the Islamic Law-Based Ecofeminism Movement for Ecosystem Protection

Ihyani Malik*, Suud Sarim Karimullah, Hüseyin Okur, Rahman

Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia

Gümüşhane Üniversitesi, Türkiye

Kocaeli University, Türkiye

Universitas Adiwangsa Jambi, Indonesia

*ihyani@unismuh.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The ecological crisis reflects the failure of ethical relations between humans, nature, and power structures, thus demanding a review of the paradigm of domination that underlies these relations. This study analyzed how the principles of Islamic law can be integrated with the ideas of ecofeminism to create more inclusive and sustainable environmental policies. The study used an intersectional approach with comprehensive literature analysis and gender analysis frameworks to understand how social identity affects women's participation in ecofeminism and environmental protection based on Islamic law principles. The results of the study state that the integration of the principles of ecofeminism and Islamic law has excellent potential to create fair and sustainable environmental policies based on justice (*'adl*), balance (*mizan*), and responsibility (*khalifah*). The concept of *khalifah* affirms the role of humans as custodians of the earth, provides a theological reason to support environmental conservation and inspires collective responsibility, including the role of women as essential agents. Programs that give women access to land and natural resources increase their participation in agriculture and environmental management, reduce poverty, and strengthen their role as agents of change. However, challenges such as resistance from patriarchal communities, lack of financial and technical support, and the need for ongoing education and training must be overcome. Technology also plays a crucial role in supporting inclusive and sustainable environmental policies.

Keywords: Ecofeminism; Gender; Islamic Law; Ecology; Environment;

ABSTRAK

Krisis ekologi mencerminkan kegagalan relasi etis antara manusia, alam, dan struktur kekuasaan, sehingga menuntut peninjauan kembali terhadap paradigma dominasi yang melandasi hubungan tersebut. Kajian ini menganalisis bagaimana prinsip-prinsip hukum Islam dapat diintegrasikan dengan ide-ide ekofeminisme untuk menciptakan kebijakan lingkungan yang lebih inklusif dan berkelanjutan. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan interseksional dengan analisis literatur komprehensif dan *gender analysis frameworks* untuk memahami bagaimana identitas sosial mempengaruhi partisipasi perempuan dalam ekofeminisme dan perlindungan lingkungan berdasarkan prinsip-prinsip hukum Islam.

Hasil kajian menyatakan bahwa integrasi prinsip-prinsip ekofeminisme dan hukum Islam berpotensi besar menciptakan kebijakan lingkungan yang adil dan berkelanjutan, berlandaskan pada keadilan (*'adl*), keseimbangan (*mizan*), dan tanggung jawab (*khalifah*). Konsep khalifah menegaskan peran manusia sebagai penjaga bumi, memberikan dasar teologis untuk mendukung pelestarian lingkungan dan menginspirasi tanggung jawab kolektif, termasuk peran perempuan sebagai agen penting. Program yang memberikan akses perempuan terhadap tanah dan sumber daya alam meningkatkan partisipasi mereka dalam sektor pertanian dan pengelolaan lingkungan, mengurangi kemiskinan dan memperkuat peran mereka sebagai agen perubahan. Namun, tantangan seperti resistensi dari komunitas patriarkal, kurangnya dukungan finansial dan teknis, serta perlunya pendidikan dan pelatihan berkelanjutan harus diatasi. Teknologi juga memainkan peran kunci dalam mendukung kebijakan lingkungan yang inklusif dan berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Ekofeminisme; Gender; Hukum Islam; Ekologi; Lingkungan;

Introduction

Climate change, environmental degradation, and biodiversity loss have become complex global challenges that threaten the survival of humans and ecosystems worldwide.¹ These issues are not merely isolated ecological problems, but are closely related to various social dimensions, including structures of domination that have long regulated relations between humans and humans and natural world. Ecofeminism has emerged with a radical perspective and asserts the exploitation of nature and the oppression of women do not stand alone, but are deeply rooted in the same system of domination, namely patriarchy.² Ecofeminism critically examines how patriarchal social constructs simultaneously treat women and the environment as inferior and worthy of exploitation for the economic and political gain of certain groups.³ Substantively, the ecofeminist movement aims to dismantle this patriarchal domination, placing women as key actors in the struggle for environmental protection while upholding socio-economic justice.

¹Sukarni and Hafini Bin Mahmud, "Development and Concept of Environmental Fiqh in the Works of Banjar Scholars: Historical and Thought Analysis," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 24, no. 1 (2024): 172–88, <https://jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php/syariah/article/view/12906/3950>; Istianah Zainal Asyiqin, M. Fabian Akbar, and Manuel Beltrán Genovés, "Cryptocurrency as a Medium of Rupiah Exchange: Perspective Sharia Islamic Law and Jurisprudential Analysis," *Volksgeist: Jurnal Ilmu Hukum Dan Konstitusi* 7, no. 2 (2024): 277–92, <https://doi.org/10.24090/volksgeist.v7i2.10975>.

²Bhuvaneswari Vijayaraj, "A Comprehensive Study of Ecofeminism," *The Anthropologist* 30, no. 1 (2017): 68–75, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09720073.2017.1377862>; Napsiah, Muryanti, and Yani Tri Wijanti, "Inequality as a Construct of Customary Law: Access to Home Ownership Rights of Women in Lampung," *El-Usrah* 7, no. 1 (2024): 185–203, <https://doi.org/10.22373/ujhk.v7i1.22456>.

³Sarah-Louise Ruder and Sophia Rose Sanniti, "Transcending the Learned Ignorance of Predatory Ontologies: A Research Agenda for an Ecofeminist-Informed Ecological Economics," *Sustainability* 11, no. 5 (2019): 1479, <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11051479>.

On the other hand, Islamic law offers a normative-ethical approach that emphasizes human responsibility towards the environment and the principle of inclusive universal justice.⁴ Core concepts such as *khilafah* (human leadership over the earth), *amanah* (responsibility to preserve the environment), and *'adl* (equal justice for all humans) are found in many verses of the Qur'an, including *Surah Al-A'raf* verse 31. This *Surah* explicitly prohibits the destruction of the environment after Allah has repaired it. Moreover, Islamic law explicitly promotes gender equality by guaranteeing that women have equal rights to contribute in various areas of life, including decision-making related to environmental management. By placing women as equal *khalifah* on earth, Islam rejects patriarchal restrictions that blocked women's potential as essential actors in maintaining ecosystem sustainability.

Previous studies have begun to explore the common ground between ecofeminism and Islamic law principles in the context of ecological and social justice. In their books, *Ecofeminism*, Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva comprehensively reveal the deep connection between the exploitation of women and environmental degradation, while offering an ecofeminist perspective as an integrative solution to both issues.⁵ On the other hand, Akrum Helfaya et al. specifically highlights the relevance of Islamic principles such as *khilafah* and *amanah* in supporting conservation strategies grounded in religious ethics.⁶ Research by Bina Agarwal further emphasizes that women's involvement in natural resource management leads to more effective and sustainable conservation outcomes.⁷ Similarly, Ammar and Gray demonstrate that integrating ecofeminist approaches with environmental ethics in Islam has the potential to create more inclusive and equitable sustainable development strategies.⁸

⁴Christoph Schwarte, "Environmental Protection in Islamic Law: An Overview on Potential Influences for Legal Developments in Iraq," *Local Environment* 8, no. 5 (2003): 567–76, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1354983032000143725>; Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Humanitarian Ecology: Balancing Human Needs and Environmental Preservation in Islamic Law," *Asy-Syari'ah* 26, no. 2 (2024): 97–116, <https://doi.org/10.15575/as.v26i2.38177>.

⁵Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies, *Ecofeminism* (London & New York: Zed Books, 2014).

⁶Akrum Helfaya, Amr Kotb, and Rasha Hanafi, "Qur'anic Ethics for Environmental Responsibility: Implications for Business Practice," *Journal of Business Ethics* 150 (2018): 1105–28, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-016-3195-6>.

⁷Bina Agarwal, "Environmental Action, Gender Equity and Women's Participation," *Development and Change* 28, no. 1 (1997): 1–44, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-7660.00033>.

⁸Nawal H Ammar and Allison Gray, "Islamic Environmental Teachings: Compatible with Ecofeminism?," *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Religion and Ecology*, 2017, 301–14, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118465523.ch22>.

However, previous studies tend to discuss ecofeminist principles and Islamic law separately or partially, thus failing to provide a holistic conceptual framework that explicitly and deeply integrates the two into a unified approach. This academic gap highlights the lack of analysis specifically addressing how ecofeminist principles and Islamic law can synergistically address ecological issues and gender inequality systematically. Therefore, the study develop an integrative conceptual framework that unites the critical perspectives of ecofeminism with the ethical principles of Islamic law, producing a more effective approach in protecting ecosystems while strengthening gender justice. Through an in-depth exploration of how these two paradigms complement each other, this study hopes to make a significant academic contribution to creating inclusive, sustainable, and socially and gender-just environmental conservation strategies. This study analyzed how the principles of Islamic law can be integrated with the ideas of ecofeminism to create more inclusive and sustainable environmental policies.

Method

The study used an intersectional approach⁹ with integrative and comprehensive literature analysis to understand the interaction of various social identities and structural factors that influence individual and group experiences in gender, ecofeminism, and Islamic law. This approach allows to see how women's gender identities interact with social class, ethnicity, and geographical location, influencing their participation in ecofeminism and environmental protection movements. The research began by collecting and reviewing literature from various fields, including ecofeminism, Islamic law, gender studies, and the environment, such as books, journal articles, research reports, and policy documents. Content analysis was conducted to identify key themes and patterns in the literature, revealing how social identities interact to influence women's experiences. Also, the study reviewed Islamic legal principles that support environmental protection and social justice.

Gender analysis frameworks such as the Harvard analytical framework and Moser gender planning framework were used to systematically analyze gender data and understand how social identities influence access to and control over natural resources.

⁹Negin Ghavami, Dalal Katsiaficas, and Leoandra Onnie Rogers, "Toward an Intersectional Approach in Developmental Science: The Role of Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Immigrant Status," *Advances in Child Development and Behavior* 50 (2016): 31–73, <https://doi.org/10.1016/bs.acdb.2015.12.001>.

The approach generates comprehensive and relevant findings, collects rich and in-depth data on gender dynamics, and develops evidence-based strategies to improve gender equity and the effectiveness of environmental protection efforts. By combining a holistic and participatory approach, this study contributes to the understanding and practicing of gender-equitable ecological protection based on Islamic legal principles. It inspires similar initiatives in different communities and countries for broader and sustainable change in ecosystem protection and women's empowerment.

Findings and Discussion

The Influence of Islamic Law on Gender Justice in Ecofeminism

The influence of Islamic law on gender justice in ecofeminism should be seen from two perspectives: first, how Islamic law is practiced and interpreted in Muslim societies, and second, how Islamic principles can support or hinder the goals of ecofeminism. In many Muslim societies, traditional interpretations of *sharia* have often been used to justify the subordination of women.¹⁰ Frequently cited examples include inheritance laws that give men a greater share than women, testimony laws that consider women's testimony to be half that of men, and dress codes that require women to be strictly covered.¹¹ These practices are often taken as evidence that Islamic law is inherently patriarchal and does not support gender justice.¹² However, this view is challenged by arguing that traditional interpretations of *sharia* do not always reflect the essence of Islamic teachings.

The history of Islam records the role of women in various aspects of life, including in the social, political, or military context. One of the most prominent examples is Aisha bint Abu Bakr, who is not only known as one of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad, but also as a courageous and intelligent leader. In an important event in Islamic history,

¹⁰Annisa Ariftha and Anang Anas Azhar, "Symbolic Violence Against Women in Medan'S Patriarchal Culture," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 11, no. 2 (2023): 709–28, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v11i2.953>; Norani Othman, "Muslim Women and the Challenge of Islamic Fundamentalism/Extremism: An Overview of Southeast Asian Muslim Women's Struggle for Human Rights and Gender Equality," in *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 29 (Elsevier, 2006), 339–53, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2006.05.008>.

¹¹Putra Halomoan Hsb, Fatahuddin Aziz Siregar, and Suud Sarim Karimullah, "Inheritance in the Mandailing Community: Value Changes from a Legal Culture Perspective," *Nurani: Jurnal Kajian Syari'ah Dan Masyarakat* 25, no. 1 (2025): 83–108, <https://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/Nurani/article/view/24870>.

¹²Royan Utsany, Tw Afrizal, and Khamim, "Women's Rights and Gender Equality: An Analysis of Jasser Auda's Thoughts and His Contribution to Renewal of Islamic Family Law in Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Law* 3, no. 1 (2022): 54–73, <https://doi.org/10.24260/jil.v3i1.530>.

Aisha led troops in the Jamal War, which occurred after the death of the Prophet Muhammad and the emergence of political tensions among Muslims.¹³ Although the event ended in defeat, Aisha's actions as commander show that women in Islam, even in the early days, could lead and actively participate in state affairs, including in battles that determined the fate of Muslims. Aisha led troops and served as a source of knowledge and policy on various issues facing Muslims. This role proves that Islam not only opens up opportunities for women in public life, but also rewards their intelligence and courage in facing great challenges.

The example of Aisha in Islamic history is not the only proof of women's important role in the struggle for social justice and environmental protection. In many contemporary Muslim countries, women are once again using Islamic teachings as a basis for fighting for gender equality and environmental protection.¹⁴ The Muslim women's movement that has emerged in countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia has used the principles of justice and compassion found in Islamic teachings to advocate for women's rights. In this context, they fight for women's rights in the social and political spheres to create a more inclusive and fair interpretation of Islamic law, emphasizing gender justice and equality.¹⁵

In Indonesia, one of the clearest examples of the Muslim women's movement fighting for their rights through Islamic teachings is organizations such as Rahima and Fahmina.¹⁶ These organizations not only focus on religious education for women, but also their empowerment in the social and political context. They teach women to understand and apply Islamic principles that support gender equality and justice. In this case, they try to fight against traditional interpretations that are often considered discriminatory against

¹³Fatima Ahmed and Ayesha Siddiqi, "The Role of Women in Islamic History," *Al-Awan* 2, no. 01 (2024): 1–10.

¹⁴Rossa Ilma Silfiah and Humiati Humiati, "The Relevance of Gender Mainstreaming in Indonesia to Women's Rights in Islamic Law," *Lampung Journal of International Law* 5, no. 1 (2023): 15–26, <https://doi.org/10.25041/lajil.v5i1.2757>; Mohamed Sulthan Ismiya Begum et al., "Gender Equity in Muslim Family Law: Modern and Contemporary 'Ulamā's View," *Al-Ahkam* 34, no. 2 (2024): 221–56, <https://journal.walisongo.ac.id/index.php/ahkam/article/view/20773>.

¹⁵Fuady Abdullah, Nova Anggraini Putri, and Youssof Salhein, "Revisiting 'Iddah: A Critical Analysis of Gender Equality in Indonesian Feminist Islamic Legal Discourse," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 2 (2023): 275–90, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i2.10320>; Edy Setyawan et al., "Legal Age for Marriage: SDGs and Maslahah Perspectives in Legal Policy Change in Indonesia," *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam* 17, no. 2 (2023): 183–97, <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v17i2.9506>.

¹⁶David Kloos and Nor Ismah, "Siting Islamic Feminism: The Indonesian Congress of Women Islamic Scholars and the Challenge of Challenging Patriarchal Authority," *History and Anthropology* 34, no. 5 (2023): 818–43, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2023.2249495>.

women, who sometimes get caught up in a narrow understanding of Islamic law.¹⁷ Through a more inclusive approach, they created space for women to be involved in decision-making at the family, community, and state levels.

In Malaysia, sisters in Islam is an organization that has advocated for women's rights and worked to reinterpret Islamic law in a more inclusive and just manner. In addition, some contemporary Muslim scholars have tried to develop an interpretation of ecofeminism under Islamic principles.¹⁸ They argue that Islam offers a holistic view of justice, including gender justice and ecological justice. For example, the idea of *tawhid* (the unity of God) support a view of the interconnection between all forms of life and the importance of ecological balance. The concept of *khalifah* (guardian) emphasize the responsibility of humans to protect the earth and all living things. However, while there is great potential for synergy between Islamic law and ecofeminism, there are also significant challenges and obstacles.

One of the main challenges is resistance to change traditional interpretations of sharia. Many religious scholars and leaders who hold conservative views may resist attempts to reinterpret Islamic teachings in ways of a more inclusive and supportive of gender justice.¹⁹ In addition, in some Muslim societies, patriarchal social and political structures may reinforce gender injustice and become the obstacles of the efforts to promote ecological justice.²⁰ Another challenge is that ecofeminism is often seen as a movement of Western origin and irrelevant to the cultural and religious context of Muslim societies. This view create resistance to the ideas of ecofeminism and make it difficult to integrate the principles of ecofeminism with Islamic teachings. To overcome this

¹⁷Triannah Sofiani, Iqbal Kamalludin, and Raihanah Abdullah, "Violence Against Women in Pre-Marital Relationships : The Ngemblok Tradition among the Muslim Community in Rembang" *Journal of Islamic Law* 5, no. 2 (2024): 147–69, <https://e-journal.iainptk.ac.id/index.php/jil/article/view/2680>.

¹⁸Mona Feise-Nasr, "Islam and Ecology," *Religion and Development* 2, no. 1 (2023): 155–61, <https://doi.org/10.30965/27507955-20230021>; Sadia Afrin and Mashura Shammi, "A Review on the Gendered Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in Bangladesh: Ecofeminist Perspectives on the Response to COVID-19 Pandemic," *Heliyon* 9, no. 3 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e14680>; Suud Sarim Karimullah et al., "The Relevance of Feminism in Promoting Gender Reform in the Context of Progressive Islam," *Jurnal Anifa: Studi Gender Dan Anak* 4, no. 2 (2023): 1–15, <https://journal.iainlangsa.ac.id/index.php/anifa/article/view/7187>.

¹⁹Sumiyati Beddu et al., "From Doctrine to Action: Islamic Law's Journey towards Social Change," *Jurnal Wawasan Yuridika* 8, no. 1 (2024): 1–24, <https://doi.org/10.25072/jwy.v8i1.4177>; Zumiyati Sanu Ibrahim et al., "Islamic Law and Human Rights: Convergence or Conflict?," *Nurani: Jurnal Kajian Syari'ah Dan Masyarakat* 24, no. 2 (2024): 431–48, <https://doi.org/10.19109/nurani.v24i2.19595>.

²⁰Emma Fulu and Stephanie Miedema, "Violence against Women: Globalizing the Integrated Ecological Model," *Violence against Women* 21, no. 12 (2015): 1431–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077801215596244>.

challenge, it needs to develop an approach to ecofeminism that respects and integrates local values and traditions.

One approach is through *ijtihad*, which is an effort to interpret Islamic law that is contextual and relevant to the conditions of the times. *Ijtihad* plays an important role in adapting Islamic teachings to changing social and cultural contexts, including in terms of gender justice and environmental conservation. Progressive scholars use *ijtihad* to interpret Islamic teachings in a more inclusive and gender-just manner, which supports the principles of ecofeminism. For example, in terms of land ownership, *ijtihad* support the women's rights, guaranteed by sharia.²¹ Although the Quran grants women the right to own and inherit property, patriarchal interpretations often become the barrier the application of these rights.

Fatwas play an important role in supporting gender equality and environmental conservation, especially progressive and inclusive-minded ulama. For example, prominent scholars such as Yūsuf Al-Qaradawi and Muhammad Abduh have issued *fatwas* in support of women's rights in various contexts.²² Yūsuf Al-Qaradawi, in his *fatwas*, emphasizes the importance of women's role in society and their equal rights with men, including education and economic participation. Those *fatwas* are used as a foundation to support women's participation in the ecofeminism and environmental conservation movements.

These *fatwas* follow the view that the role of women in society must be valued and empowered, not only as individuals in the family but also as members of society who have the potential to contribute to social, political, and economic development. In the ecofeminism movement, which combines the struggle for gender equality and environmental conservation, *fatwas* support women's rights is a strong foundation for fighting for women's equality in ecological conservation efforts. As emphasized by al-Qaradawi, the *fatwas* that support women's rights in Islam help pave the way for women to play a greater role in protecting and caring for nature, by Islamic principles that underscore the importance of protecting the earth as a mandate from God.

²¹Abdul Kadir Jaelani, Anila Rabbani, and Muhammad Jihadul Hayat, "Land Reform Policy in Determining Abandoned Land for Halal Tourism Destination Management Based on Fiqh Siyasah," *El-Mashlahah* 14, no. 1 (2024): 211–36, <https://doi.org/10.23971/el-mashlahah.v14i1.8051>.

²²Ana Belén Soage, "Sheikh Yūsuf Al-Qaradawi: A Moderate Voice from the Muslim World?," *Religion Compass* 4, no. 9 (2010): 563–75, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2010.00236.x>.

Fatwas that support environmental conservation also have great potential to direct the attention of Muslims to the importance of protecting nature as part of their religious obligations. In Islam, protecting the environment is considered part of every individual's responsibility as a caliph on earth. This is explained in many verses of the Qur'an, which emphasize the planet and all its contents are a trust from Allah that must be protected and preserved. Therefore, the *fatwas* issued by scholars to support environmental protection have a strong moral reason and part of the religious obligations for Muslims. These kinds of *fatwas* can inspire Muslims to care more about environmental issues and play an active role in nature conservation, both locally and globally.

In the history of Islam, many famous figures and thinkers have contributed to the development of understanding about the role of women in society, gender equality, and ecological responsibility. A progressive approach to this understanding not only includes the interpretation of Qur'anic texts, but also more inclusive and equitable social policies that recognize the contributions of women in various aspects of life, including environmental management. Over time, various female thinkers and scholars have attempted to integrate a fair gender perspective with broader Islamic teachings, focusing on the principles of justice and equality in the Qur'an and hadith.

One of the famous figures who influenced the development of Islamic thought was Fatimah al-Fihri, a Muslim woman known as the founder of the world's first University, Al-Qarawiyyin University, located in Fez, Morocco. Fatimah al-Fihri is a clear example that women in Islam have the right to education and act as change agents in society. Her courage in establishing this educational institution shows that women not only have the right to acquire knowledge, but also can contribute to the development of science and education in society. Moreover, in Islam, women have the same right to participate in public life and community development.

Another highly influential female Islamic thinker is Zaynab al-Ghazali, an activist and thinker from Egypt who was involved in the modern Islamic movement in the 20th century. Zaynab al-Ghazali is famous for her efforts to elevate the role of women in Islam, as well as challenging patriarchal interpretations that often limit women's freedom. Zaynab emphasized that Islam provides space for women to participate in social, political, and economic life and preserve and care for the environment. Zaynab argued many understandings that become the barriers for the role of women in society are not by the

original teachings of Islam. She gave examples of women during the time of the Prophet Muhammad played a very important role. Many Muslim societies after the developed more conservative views that placed women in a limited position. With this perspective, Zaynab al-Ghazali emphasizes that Islam is not a religion that limits women, but a religion gives the right to participate in social life and maintain environmental balance fully.

In addition, there are figures such as Rabi'ah al-Adawiyyah, an 8th-century female Sufi famous for her spiritual depth. However, Rabi'ah did not write much about the role of women in society directly, her teachings on love and devotion to God inspired many female Islamic thinkers to see their role in social life and the spiritual world. In Sufi teachings, Rabi'ah's teaching the search for the love of God is not limited to gender or social status. This perspective can be translated in a modern context as a call to see women's equality in all areas of life, including in nature conservation.²³ Rabi'ah teaches that each individual is responsible for maintaining earthly and heavenly balance, which can be translated into concrete actions to protect the environment and ecological sustainability.

A contemporary Islamic thinker who has a major contribution to thinking about gender equality is Asma Barlas, a Pakistani academic and writer who has written extensively on the relationship between Islam and feminism. Barlas argues that centuries of patriarchal interpretations of Islam have obscured the true message of the Qur'an on equality and justice. Asma Barlas emphasizes that, if interpreted correctly and inclusively, the Qur'an teaches gender equality and justice between men and women. In her book, "Believing Women in Islam,"²⁴ Barlas explains that the Qur'an verses often used to discriminate against women need to be understood in the historical and cultural context of the time. For example, Surah An-Nisā (4:1) states that humans are created from the same soul, which shows women and men have equal rights as part of humanity in Islam. By interpreting the Qur'an from an inclusive perspective, Barlas teaches that women can participate in all aspects of life, including environmental management and nature conservation.

²³Mohamad Rana, Tajul Arifin, and Cecep Soleh Kurniawan, "When Religion and Culture Meet Economy: Socio-Legal Factors for the Early Marriages of Muslim Families in Cirebon," *Al-Ahwal* 15, no. 1 (2022): 83–102, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ahwal.2022.15105>.

²⁴Asma Barlas, *Believing Women in Islam: Unreading Patriarchal Interpretations of the Qur'an* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2019).

Amina Wadud, a Muslim thinker and scholar known for her progressive interpretation of the Qur'an,²⁵ argues similarly to Barlas. Wadud criticizes patriarchal interpretations of Qur'anic texts and emphasizes the importance of an inclusive gender perspective in understanding religious teachings.²⁶ Wadud argues many interpretations that limit the role of women in society are driven more by social and cultural factors than by the texts of the Qur'an itself. In her view, the Qur'an gives women equal rights in various matters, including ownership, education, and social participation.²⁷ For example, Wadud quotes Surah Al-Ahzab (33:35), emphasizing men and women of faith have equal rights. In this view, Wadud suggests that women be empowered to engage in environmental management, as part of their responsibility as caliphs on earth and taught in many verses of the Qur'an.

Some examples of practical implementation of interpretations of Islamic law that support gender justice in the context of ecofeminism is found in various Muslim countries. In Indonesia, for example, programs to empower women in forest management and agriculture have shown success in improving women's economic welfare and environmental conservation.²⁸ These programs not only provide better access to natural resources for women, but also recognize their local knowledge on sustainable agricultural practices. In Bangladesh, microfinance programs designed specifically for women have helped them access the capital and technology needed to participate in sustainable economic activities.²⁹ These programs not only improve women's economic welfare but also support environmental conservation by adopting environmentally friendly agricultural practices. In the Middle East, some countries, such as the United Arab Emirates, have taken steps to increase women's participation in various sectors, including

²⁵Yahya Fathur Rozy, "The Hermeneutics Influence On Feminist Exegesis: A Case Study On Amina Wadud," *QiST: Journal of Quran and Tafseer Studies* 2, no. 3 (2023): [369–81](https://doi.org/10.23917/qist.v2i3.2908), <https://doi.org/10.23917/qist.v2i3.2908>.

²⁶Amina Wadud, "Islam beyond Patriarchy through Gender Inclusive Qur'anic Analysis," *Wanted: Equality and Justice in the Muslim Family*, 2009, 95–112, <https://arabic.musawah.org/sites/default/files/Wanted-AW-EN.pdf>.

²⁷Amina Wadud, "Reflections on Islamic Feminist Exegesis of the Qur'an," *Religions* 12, no. 7 (2021): 497, <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12070497>; Amina Wadud, "Towards a Qur'anic Hermeneutics of Social Justice: Race, Class and Gender," *Journal of Law and Religion* 12, no. 1 (1995): 37–50, <https://doi.org/10.2307/1051608>.

²⁸Ari Rakatama and Ram Pandit, "Reviewing Social Forestry Schemes in Indonesia: Opportunities and Challenges," *Forest Policy and Economics* 111 (2020): 102052, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forpol.2019.102052>.

²⁹Salehuddin Ahmed, "Microfinance Institutions in Bangladesh: Achievements and Challenges," *Managerial Finance* 35, no. 12 (2009): 999–1010, <https://doi.org/10.1108/03074350911000052>.

the environment.³⁰ For example, education and training programs designed specifically for women have helped them acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to participate in environmental conservation efforts.

Integration of Islamic Law and Ecofeminism in Environmental Protection Policy

Integrating Islamic law and ecofeminism in environmental protection policy offers a complementary framework for environmental conservation and gender empowerment. Islamic law, with its principles enshrined in the Quran and Hadith, provides comprehensive guidance on human responsibility towards nature.³¹ Ecofeminism, as a movement that combines the principles of ecology and feminism, highlights the link between the oppression of women and environmental degradation. Integrating these two concepts creates more inclusive and sustainable ecological protection policies possibility.

Environmental policy analysis that integrates Islamic law principles and ecofeminism to achieve gender equality and ecosystem protection requires a holistic approach with considering theological, social, economic, and environmental aspects. By combining Islamic teachings that support ecological responsibility and gender equality with ecofeminism principles emphasizing women's empowerment in environmental conservation, these policies create significant and sustainable impacts. One of the critical elements of effective environmental policies is a legal framework that supports women's rights to access and manage natural resources. The Quran gives women the right to own and inherit property, including land, a vital environmental resource.

A critical mechanism in Islamic law-based environmental policy is the application of sharia principles relevant to environmental conservation and gender equality.³² These principles include justice (*'adl*), balance (*mizan*), and responsibility (*khalifah*). The principle of justice demands equal treatment for all individuals, including women, in

³⁰Valerie Priscilla Goby and Murat Sakir Erogul, "Female Entrepreneurship in the United Arab Emirates: Legislative Encouragements and Cultural Constraints," in *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 34 (Elsevier, 2011), 329–34, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2011.04.006>.

³¹Fazlun Khalid, "Islam and the Environment – Ethics and Practice an Assessment," *Religion Compass* 4, no. 11 (2010): 707–16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-8171.2010.00249.x>; Rizal, Ruslan Abdul Ghofur, and Pertiwi Utami, "The Role of Muslim Generation Community at Zakat Collection on Realizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Era of Digital Society 5.0," *Juris: Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah* 22, no. 1 (2023): 105–18, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v22i1.6562>.

³²Achmad Mudhofar Afif, Maskur Rosyid, and Lutfi, "Gender Equality in Islamic Sharia (the Study of Bisri Mustofa's Thought in Al-Ibriz Li Ma'Rifah Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Aziz)," *Syariah: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pemikiran* 22, no. 1 (2022): 69–88, <https://jurnal.uin-antasari.ac.id/index.php/syariah/article/view/6307>.

access to and control over natural resources. Balance emphasizes the importance of maintaining ecosystems to remain balanced and sustainable. And, responsibility requires each individual to act as a guardian of the earth.

The principle of justice (*'adl*) in environmental conservation is vital because it demands a fair and equitable distribution of natural resources.³³ Injustice in the distribution of natural resources often results in environmental damage due to overexploitation by certain groups. In contrast, fair distribution ensures that all individuals have equal access to resources, reducing the possibility of overexploitation and encouraging sustainable use. Furthermore, equality includes gender equality in access to and control over natural resources. Women have limited access to land, water, and forests in many societies. This disadvantages women economically and hinders environmental conservation efforts, as women often have critical roles in natural resource management at the household and community levels.³⁴

The principle of balance (*mizan*) in Islamic law emphasizes keeping ecosystems balanced and sustainable. This balance is reflected in nature's work; each component has an interrelated role and function. When one ecosystem element is disrupted, the overall balance can be jeopardized, result in broader environmental damage. Therefore, maintaining the balance of nature is the responsibility of humans as *khalifah* (custodians) on earth. The *mizan* principle teaches that using natural resources should be done wisely and in moderation. Then, humans should consider the environmental impact of their actions and strive to minimize damage. In practice, this could mean applying sustainable agricultural techniques, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and protecting natural habitats from destruction.

The principle of responsibility (*khalifah*) requires each individual to act as a guardian of the earth. In Islamic teachings, humans as God's representatives on earth, entrusted with the responsibility to protect and preserve the environment. This responsibility is individual and collective, where every member of society has a role in environmental conservation efforts. The *khalifah* principle teaches that ecological

³³Suyahman Suyahman, Suud Sarim Karimullah, and Muh Akbar Fhad Syahril, "Intersectionality in Social Justice: Unpacking the Complexity of Oppression," *Jambura Law Review* 7, no. 1 (2025): 275–308, <https://doi.org/10.33756/jlr.v7i1.27828>.

³⁴Nur Insani, Suud Sarim Karimullah, and Sulastrri, "Islamic Law Challenges in Addressing Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation," *Jurnal Hukum Islam* 21, no. 2 (2023): 357–87, <https://e-journal.uingusdur.ac.id/jhi/article/view/1732/1408>.

damage violates the trust given by Allah, and therefore, any action that damages the environment must be avoided. This responsibility also includes efforts to repair the damage through measures of environmental restoration and conservation of natural resources.

Several initiatives have conducted in various Islamic countries, such as the implementation of sharia principles in environmental policy. Saudi Arabia launched the Green Hajj program, which aims to reduce the environmental impact of the Hajj pilgrimage.³⁵ The program includes multiple measures, such as better waste management, the use of environmentally friendly fuels, and environmental awareness campaigns for pilgrims. This initiative aligns with the Shariah principles of responsibility (*khalifah*) and balance (*mizan*), which teach the importance of protecting the environment.

In Pakistan, a tree planting project known as the "Billion Tree Tsunami" has been initiated to tackle and reduce deforestation and mitigate the effects of climate change.³⁶ The project increases forest cover and involves local communities, including women, in tree planting and conservation activities. The principle of justice (*'adl*) is reflected in efforts to ensure that all community members benefit from the project, both economically and environmentally. In the United Arab Emirates, a sustainable water management program has been implemented to address the challenge of limited water resources.³⁷ The program includes efficient irrigation technologies, seawater desalination, and awareness campaigns on the importance of water conservation. The principle of balance (*mizan*) is reflected in efforts to balance human needs and preserve aquatic ecosystems.

In Malaysia, the water resources management program focuses on the efficient use of water and the preservation of water resources.³⁸ The program includes the development of efficient irrigation infrastructure, training farmers on sustainable agricultural practices, and awareness campaigns on the importance of water conservation. The principle of

³⁵Faisal Abdulrhman Osra et al., "Environmental and Economic Sustainability in the Hajj System," *Arabian Journal of Geosciences* 14 (2021): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12517-021-08533-x>.

³⁶Abdul Waheed et al., "Disaster Management and Environmental Policy Integration in Pakistan—an Evaluation with Particular Reference to the China–Pakistan Economic Corridor Plan," *Environmental Science and Pollution Research* 30, no. 48 (2023): 105700–731, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11356-023-29310-1>.

³⁷Omar Saif, Toufic Mezher, and Hassan A Arafat, "Water Security in the GCC Countries: Challenges and Opportunities," *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences* 4 (2014): 329–46, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13412-014-0178-8>.

³⁸Mohamad Ali Fulazzaky, "Challenges of Integrated Water Resources Management in Indonesia," *Water* 6, no. 7 (2014): 2000–2020, <https://doi.org/10.3390/w6072000>.

balance (*mizan*) is reflected in efforts to balance the water user agriculture and the preservation of aquatic ecosystems. The Malaysian government implemented policies that support gender equality in access to and control over water resources, ensuring that women have a significant role in managing these resources.

Although much progress has been made, implementing Shariah principles in environmental policy faces several challenges. These challenges include a lack of understanding of Islamic teachings relating to the environment, resistance to change, and limited resources. To overcome these challenges, several solutions can be taken. Increasing education and awareness about Islamic teachings relating to the environment is essential to overcoming the lack of understanding. Shariah-based environmental education can be incorporated into school and madrasah curricula. It may be through training programs for religious and community leaders.

Implementation of Islamic Law-Based Environmental Policies that Support Gender Equality

The application of Islamic legal principles in environmental policies that support ecofeminism is seen in various concrete examples from Muslim-majority countries. In Indonesia, the Village Forest program in West Kalimantan grants forest management rights to local communities, including women, to maintain and preserve forests.³⁹ With support from government and non-government organizations, women in these communities are involved in forest conservation and reforestation activities. They are given training on sustainable farming techniques and natural resource management, which improves their skills and strengthens their role as guardians of the environment. This policy demonstrates how Islamic law emphasizing ecological responsibility can be applied to support gender equality and environmental conservation.

In Bangladesh, community-based women's empowerment programs have also successfully integrated the principles of ecofeminism into environmental policy.⁴⁰ One initiative that stands out is the sustainable natural resource management project in rural areas. The program engages women in wetland and mangrove forest management, giving

³⁹Mark E Harrison et al., "Tropical Forest and Peatland Conservation in Indonesia: Challenges and Directions," *People and Nature* 2, no. 1 (2020): 4–28, <https://doi.org/10.1002/pan3.10060>.

⁴⁰A C Smith et al., "Nature-Based Solutions in Bangladesh: Evidence of Effectiveness for Addressing Climate Change and Other Sustainable Development Goals," *Frontiers in Environmental Science* 9 (2021): 737659, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fenvs.2021.737659>.

them access to natural resources previously dominated by men. Women in these communities can develop sustainable small businesses through training and financial support, such as fish and organic farming. This policy helps improve women's economic welfare and contributes to the preservation of the local ecosystem. Bangladesh has created a more inclusive and sustainable environment by adopting an Islamic law-based approach that emphasizes social justice and ecological responsibility.

In Morocco, the government has implemented an environmental policy that supports gender equality through a sustainable village development program.⁴¹ The program aims to empower women in rural communities by providing them access to education and training in sustainable agriculture and water management techniques. Through cooperation with non-governmental organizations and educational institutions, women can learn about the importance of environmental conservation and how they can actively contribute to the efforts. This policy is based on the principles of Islamic law that respect women's rights and emphasize the importance of maintaining ecological balance. Morocco has successfully increased women's participation in environmental conservation efforts by involving women in decision-making processes and natural resource management.

In many Muslim-majority countries, patriarchal interpretations of Islamic teachings often subordinate women, hindering their full participation in environmental conservation efforts.⁴² These interpretations typically emphasize women's traditional role as homemakers and limit their involvement in decisions related to natural resources. As a result, women often have no voice in sustainable environmental management. However, they are the primary users of natural resources in their daily lives.

Lack of financial and technical support is also a frequent obstacle to implementing policies that support environmental conservation and gender equality. Limited financial support limits women's access to the necessary resources to develop and implement

⁴¹Mohamed Elmoukhtar et al., "Promoting Green Entrepreneurship in Morocco as a Roadmap to Sustainable Development: A Literature Review," *International Journal of Accounting, Finance, Auditing, Management and Economics* 3, no. 4 (2022): 174–90, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6612022>; Omar Ben Haman, "The Moroccan Education System, Dilemma of Language and Think-Tanks: The Challenges of Social Development for the North African Country," *The Journal of North African Studies* 26, no. 4 (2021): 709–32, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13629387.2019.1711061>.

⁴²Nur Insani et al., "Empowering Muslim Women: Bridging Islamic Law and Human Rights with Islamic Economics," *De Jure: Jurnal Hukum Dan Syar'iah* 16, no. 1 (2024): 88–117, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j-j-fsh.v16i1.26159>.

sustainable practices. In addition, a lack of technical training and education limits women's ability to participate effectively in environmental conservation efforts. Without adequate knowledge and skills, women often struggle to apply environmentally friendly technologies or manage natural resources efficiently.

To address this issue, some Muslim-majority countries have begun to adopt more inclusive policies emphasizing women's participation in environmental management. For example, in Jordan, the government has developed a program to empower women in sustainable agriculture. The program gives access to credit and other financial support and technical training on environmentally friendly agricultural practices. By involving women in this program, the government hopes to improve their economic while promoting sustainable practices that protect the environment.

The impact of this policy on environmental protection and gender equality is significant. On the one hand, by providing financial and technical support to women, the program helps address the economic injustices. Women who previously had no access to resources can now use the support to increase their agricultural productivity and implement sustainable practices. Moreover, by involving women in environmental management, the program helps strengthen ecological conservation efforts. Women with knowledge and skills in sustainable agriculture are more likely to implement practices that protect the ecosystem and reduce negative environmental impacts.

However, implementing this policy has challenges. One of the main challenges is resistance to change from communities that still adhere to patriarchal views. In many communities, women's traditional role as housekeepers is still influential. Moreover, there is a perception that women should not be involved in decision-making regarding natural resources. To overcome this resistance, it is essential to educate communities about the importance of women's participation in environmental management and demonstrate the benefits of their involvement.

Tunisia gives another example of a policy that supports environmental conservation and gender equality. The government has adopted a community-based approach to natural resource management. Under this approach, women have an essential role in forest and water resource management decisions. Through training and financial support, women in Tunisia have successfully developed projects in improving their economic and protect local ecosystems. For example, some women's communities have developed agroforestry

projects integrating agricultural practices with forest conservation. These projects increase agricultural production, protect biodiversity, and reduce land degradation.

The impact of this approach to environmental protection is very positive. By involving women in natural resource management, the Tunisian government has improved resource efficiency and reduced environmental damage. Women who involved in these projects have the knowledge and skills to manage natural resources sustainably, which helps protect ecosystems. In addition, women's participation in decision-making also helps to ensure that the policies adopted reflect the needs and perspectives of all members of society.

Like in other countries, implementing this policy faces challenges. One of the main challenges is limited resources, both financial and technical. Although the Tunisian government has provided significant support, there is a need for more investment in programs that support women's participation and environmental conservation. Also, there are challenges in terms of cultural and social change. Changing traditional views on the role of women in society takes time and sustained effort. It needs to note that environmental conservation and gender equality cannot be achieved in isolation. These two goals are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. Empowering women and involving them in ecological management not only helps address gender injustice but also strengthens environmental conservation efforts. Conversely, protecting the environment also creates better conditions for achieving gender equality, as women are often highly dependent on natural resources for their daily lives.

Conclusion

Integrating the principles of ecofeminism and Islamic law has excellent potential for creating just and sustainable environmental policies. Basic principles in Islamic law, such as justice (*'adl*), balance (*mizan*), and responsibility (*khalifah*), are essential foundations in developing policies that support gender equality and ecosystem protection. The concept of Khalifah, which emphasizes the role of humans as custodians of the earth, provides a solid theological foundation to support environmental conservation efforts. If applied correctly, this principle can inspire collective responsibility involving women as essential ecological conservation agents. Programs that give women access to land and natural resources have increased their participation in agriculture and environmental management. It helped reduce poverty and strengthened women's role as agents of change

in society. However, various challenges are faced in implementing these policies. One of the main challenges is resistance from communities that still hold traditional solid and patriarchal norms. In many Muslim-majority countries, patriarchal interpretations of Islamic teachings often place women in a subordinate position, hindering their full participation in environmental conservation efforts. Lack of financial and technical support is also a frequent obstacle to implementing these policies. Ongoing education and training are also crucial to ensure women have the necessary skills and knowledge to participate in environmental conservation efforts. Technology also plays a crucial role in supporting inclusive and sustainable environmental policies.

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