

# Contextualising *fasad* for environmental stewardship: Islamic spirituality and the hierarchy of values in contemporary ecotheology

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Received: November 16, 2025  
Revised: January 5, 2026  
Accepted: March 20, 2026  
Published: April 27, 2026

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## Abstract

The global ecological crisis represents a fundamental ethical shift, yet Islamic ecotheology often remains at the level of normative affirmation without an operational framework. This study aims to reframe the Qur'anic concept of corruption (*fasad*) as ecological corruption and map its normative status within contemporary environmental stewardship. Employing Abdullah Saeed's contextualist hermeneutics and the hierarchy of values framework, the research adopts a normative-analytical design to derive a measurable logic of responsibility. The study finds that by situating the prohibition of *fasad* as a universal protection value, environmental stewardship transcends optional virtue to become a mandatory legal-ethical parameter. This classification allows for a rigorous distinction between substantive ecological reform and destructive pseudo-reform often found in developmental rhetoric. Furthermore, the research integrates ecospirituality as an infrastructure of meaning to ensure the internal consistency of pro-environmental behaviour. By synthesising *fasad* protective boundary, the khalifah mandate, and *hifdz al-bi'ah* of *maqasid al-shariah*, this study offers a disciplined moral architecture for public policy. This study provides a methodological foundation for translating sacred texts into adaptive governance instruments that address intergenerational justice and systemic ecological integrity.

**Keywords:** *fasad*; ecological corruption; stewardship, hierarchy of values; Abdullah Saeed; ecotheology

## Introduction

The contemporary ecological crisis, manifested in phenomena such as climate change, massive deforestation, and transboundary pollution, is a fundamental public ethical crisis (Scheffran, 2025). This issue reflects a moral economy that normalises extractive entitlement while labelling it improvement. This fundamental ethical problem requires further exploration of the moral sources that shape human perspectives on nature, including the Islamic religious tradition (Nasir et al., 2022). Over the past two decades, academic discourse on the relationship between Islam and sustainability has increased significantly (Al-Jayyousi et al., 2023). However, despite the rapid growth, the integration of fundamental theological-ethical concepts such as *tawhid* and stewardship

**To cite this article (APA Style 7<sup>th</sup> Edition):** Lestari, S. H., Al-Ayyubi, M. Z. (2026). Contextualising *fasad* for environmental stewardship: Islamic spirituality and the hierarchy of values in contemporary ecotheology. *Al'Adalah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 28(2), 171-186. <https://doi.org/10.35719/aladalah.v28i2.658>



(*khalifah*) into an operational environmental ethics framework remains relatively weak when compared to discussions on other derivative themes (Husamah et al., 2025).

Furthermore, several recent studies have sought to establish a conceptual basis for Islamic environmental ethics by identifying core values, such as stewardship mandate (*khalifah*), divine trust (*amanah*), cosmic balance (*mizan*), justice (*‘adl*), and mercy (*rahmah*). These values are consistently examined and linked to modern sustainability agendas (Bsoul et al., 2022). In line with this, studies on ecological spirituality (ecospirituality) reinforce the argument that the ecological crisis reflects a crisis of relationships. This crisis concerns how believers interpret the Earth; whether as a sacred cosmological community and moral trust, or merely as a utilitarian object with unlimited potential for exploitation (Alhinai & Ringer, 2025; Welch & Rahman, 2024).

In Islamic studies, responses to this ecological challenge have also gained significant momentum. Contemporary scholars employ ecological hermeneutics and integrative exegesis approaches to bridge textual reading with modern ecological issues. This effort allows the Qur’an to be read as a normative text, and also as a source of inspiration for the formation of an ethical-spiritual paradigm capable of driving socio-ecological transformation (Amin et al., 2025). In line with global developments, Islamic studies at the national level also show similar dynamics. The *maqasid* studies (objectives-based) interpretative approach has begun to be used to formulate Qur’anic environmental ethics more operationally, one of which involves placing the prohibition of corruption or destruction (*fasad*) at the centre of analysis and explicitly linking it to the contemporary global crisis (Muhammad & Syaifudin, 2025).

Although the studies above have made significant contributions, two fundamental weaknesses still represent research gaps for scholars of Islamic environmental ethics. First, many discussions within environmental theology (ecotheology) remain at the level of normative affirmation, such as the recommendation to care for the Earth. These affirmations are often not accompanied by adequate value logic that can systematically classify the normative status of a verse: at what level of value it operates, its application boundaries, and its evaluative parameters, especially in the complex contemporary crises. Second, the hierarchical device of values analysis (hierarchy of values) within the contextual approach proposed by Abdullah Saeed has demonstrated significant analytical potential for analysing ethical-legal verses (Barsihannor et al., 2023). However, this device has not been widely adopted systematically to reframe the concept of *fasad* as ecological corruption relevant to modern issues; to develop the normative logic of stewardship, such as action priorities, limitations, and consequences, more measurably; and to integrate this logic with the dimension of spirituality as an internalisation mechanism for ecological ethics.

Accordingly, this study has three objectives. First, to reframe the concept of *fasad* as ecological corruption without losing its consistency with moral discussions in the Qur’an.

Second, to map the normative position of the prohibition of *fasad*, thereby producing a more measured and applicable stewardship logic based on a hierarchy of values. Third, to strengthen the role of Islamic spirituality in internalising ecological values, so that stewardship becomes an ethics consistently implemented.

This article argues that mapping the concept of *fasad* through hierarchical value analysis allows the prohibition of damage to serve as a protection value. This value normatively demands the protection of the order of life, while also opening space for the formulation of concrete actions and policy designs. Meanwhile, reinforcement from the eco-spirituality dimension, which encompasses awareness of *amanah*, the human position within the cosmological community, and moral discipline, serves as an internal moral factor that ensures the sustainability and consistency of ecological ethics implementation. By integrating Saeed's hierarchy of values with ecological hermeneutics, this study offers a methodological contribution to Islamic ecotheology and a practical framework for faith-based environmental governance.

## Literature Review

The term *fasad* in the Qur'an denotes corruption, damage or decay, encompassing moral, social, and material dimensions:

*“And when it is said to them, Do not cause corruption on the earth, they say, We are but reformers. Unquestionably, it is they who are the corrupters, but they perceive it not.”* (Al-Baqarah [2]: 11-12)

In ecotheological discourse, this definition expands into ecological corruption—a degradation of the human-nature relationship that manifests as pollution, deforestation, and climate crises. The current environmental predicament is a tangible manifestation of *fasad*—a normative crisis that distorts human responsibility toward God's creation (Amin et al., 2025). By prohibiting the act of corruption (*ifsad*), the Qur'an establishes an ethical warning system essential for sustainable planetary governance.

Historically, the term *fasad* was predominantly interpreted as moral corruption. However, in response to the escalating ecological crisis, contemporary scholarship has shifted toward an ecological reading. By utilising thematic exegesis (*tafsir mawdu'i*), the higher objectives of the Qur'an (*maqasid al-Qur'an*), and ecological hermeneutics, the researchers link the term *fasad* to ecosystemic destruction (Helmi et al., 2026). The *maqasid* approach, for instance, positions ecological verses as an ethical foundation for reinforcing the human role as the guardian of the Earth and maintaining cosmic equilibrium (Pohan & Saputra, 2026). Concurrently, integrative ecological hermeneutics bridge textual analysis with empirical environmental data, ensuring that the prohibition of *fasad* transcends abstract conceptualisation and becomes a pragmatic framework for socio-ecological transformation (Amin et al., 2025).

In this discourse, environmental stewardship is anchored by three primary pillars: *khalifah*, *amanah*, and *mizan*. These principles are relevant to the modern sustainability

agenda, influencing both public policy and institutional ethics (Bsoul et al., 2022). Nevertheless, while the study of Islam and sustainability has proliferated, the integration of profound theological concepts such as *tawhid* and the spiritual dimensions of *khilafah* often remains fragmented. This gap necessitates a more robust ecotheological approach that is not only normative but also empirically grounded (Husamah et al., 2025). To establish stewardship as a robust ethical framework, a hierarchy of values is required to distinguish between fundamental and instrumental values. Such a hierarchy prevents ecological ethical arguments from devolving into mere moralising. Furthermore, these principles must be translated into a governance ethic supported by legal, educational, and philanthropic instruments (Abd Rahman et al., 2020).

A critical weakness of purely normative approaches is the frequent neglect of motivational dimensions and habit formation. This is where spirituality becomes pivotal. The human-nature relationship is governed not only by external regulations but also by internal formation that fosters consistent behaviour (Lengieza et al., 2023). Spiritual practices and theological internalisation serve as an infrastructure of meaning, transforming nature from a utilitarian object into a sanctified space of trust (Welch & Rahman, 2024). In Indonesia, this is being realised through the reconstruction of a theology of kindness in digital spaces, integrating faith with tangible ecological action (Yudaningsih et al., 2025).

Building on this spiritual foundation, its cultivation from early childhood through formal education becomes crucial. The value of *tawhid* can serve as a meaningful framework for both science and conservation practices (Abd Rahman et al., 2020). By integrating sacred texts into environmental curricula, a child's ecological consciousness becomes deeply rooted in religious tradition. Consequently, stewardship evolves into a stable character trait rather than a transient response to environmental campaigns (Noor & Anwar, 2025).

Finally, to ensure that the concept of *fasad* remains relevant and actionable in contemporary contexts, contextualisation is imperative to provide Qur'anic verses with clear applicative parameters. Abdullah Saeed's contextualist approach offers a solution through the hierarchy of values. This framework categorises Qur'anic values ranging from the universal-fundamental to the instructional level (Barsihannor et al., 2023). Under this model, the prohibition of *fasad* is situated at the fundamental level (protecting life), while technical policies for damage prevention are placed at the implementational level.

## Method

This study employs library research with a conceptual-hermeneutic analysis design. Its main aim is to reformulate the ethical categories in the Qur'an, particularly the concept of *fasad*, so that it can function as a framework for environmental stewardship relevant to contemporary ecological crises. To achieve this goal, the study employs the contextual approach developed by Abdullah Saeed, operationalised specifically through his hierarchy

of values framework (Nurani, 2021). The researchers chose this approach because it can link the moral language of revelation with modern social-ecological realities without falling into an ahistorical, moralistic reading. The research design is normative-analytical; it unpacks the meaning, value structure, and ethical-spiritual implications of *fasad*, then derives the normative logic of stewardship by mapping these values.

The researchers divide the data sources in this research into two categories: primary and secondary. Primary data includes the text of the Qur'an as well as methodological works by Abdullah Saeed that discuss contextual interpretation and the hierarchy of values. Meanwhile, secondary data comprises various supporting literature, such as classical and contemporary tafsir, studies on Islamic eco-theology, environmental ethics, the concept of environmental stewardship, and analyses of the construction of moral categories based on the Qur'an in environmental issues.

This research employs two data analysis techniques: document analysis and hermeneutic-contextual analysis. The first stage involves identifying the meaning of *fasad* and its relation to the concept of reform or repair (*islah*). This initial step aims to understand the boundaries of *fasad's* initial meaning and its potential expansion, especially in relation to *islah*, to build a comprehensive understanding before entering the contextualisation stage. Subsequently, the researchers reconstruct the micro and macro contexts, which involves developing an understanding of the micro-context (the internal discourse structure of the verse) and the macro-context (the historical-sociological background of the verse). This is done by comparing various tafsirs and relevant literature, so that the meaning of *fasad* is not understood in isolation from the reality surrounding it (Khodijah & Musafa'ah, 2025).

In the next stage, the researcher applies the hierarchy-of-values device developed by Abdullah Saeed to map the normative status of the prohibition of *fasad*. Here, the researcher categorises the values contained in the prohibition—whether fundamental, protective, implementational, or instructional—to determine which are universal and which are contextual. Based on the value mapping in the previous stage, the researcher then formulates the normative logic of environmental stewardship as a derived ethical framework. At this stage as well, the dimension of Islamic spirituality is integrated as an internalisation mechanism for ethics, so that the values produced are not only normative but also shape inner consciousness and behaviour (Amin et al., 2025). By integrating textual analysis with contextual hermeneutics and value hierarchy, this methodological framework offers a replicable model for future studies in Islamic environmental ethics.

## Results and Discussion

### Semantic Mapping of *Fasad* and *Islah*: From Moral Corruption to Ecological Corruption

The semantic mapping of *fasad* requires a distinction between its basic meaning and relational meaning. In its basic sense, *fasad* denotes a deviation from an ideal or

harmonious state, resulting in the loss of public interest (*maslahah*)—whether at the moral, social, or physical level. Within the Qur'an, its semantic spectrum extends from disobedience (QS. al-A'raf [7]: 56) and violence (QS. al-Maidah [5]: 32-33) to the destruction of the vital order of life (QS. al-Baqarah [2]: 205). The term *fasad* operates in value opposition to *islah*, perfection or excellence (*ihsan*), and goodness (*khayr*). In other words, *fasad* serves as an ethical red flag against actions or structures that undermine the viability of life (Hamimi et al., 2022).

The most crucial relationship is the opposition between *fasad* and *islah*. Etymologically, these terms are antonyms; while *salaha* signifies the cessation of damage and the emergence of benefit, *islah* represents an active effort to restore or enhance the quality of an object to optimise its utility. Consequently, *islah* does not merely imply peace-making in the context of conflict but constitutes a normative act of restoration and repair aimed at returning the order to its ideal state (Haddade, 2019).

However, the Qur'an provides a sharp methodological warning; *islah* is frequently co-opted as rhetoric to conceal *fasad*. In the Qur'an, the claim of being a “reformer” (*muslihun*) must be verified through the reality of its impact rather than mere assertion. This is where relational meaning becomes pivotal, as *fasad* often presents itself as destruction cloaked in claims of improvement. As a result, authentic *islah* must be critically defined as an action that tangibly halts destruction and restores public benefit (Adila et al., 2025). This mapping provides an ethical diagnostic tool to distinguish substantive reform from destructive pseudo-reform.

The transition from moral corruption to ecological corruption represents a logical, semantic, and normative step. According to Amin et al. (2025) and Naswa et al. (2025), *fasad* encompasses environmental degradation caused by human agency—such as extractive exploitation, deforestation, and pollution—as these acts destroy the order that sustains life. Furthermore, Helmi et al. (2026) argue that “corruption on earth” (*fasad fi al-ard*) serves as a diagnostic indicator for specific ecological crises, asserting that ecological *islah* demands a shift in ethical paradigms rather than mere technical solutions.

Consequently, ecological corruption is a form of *fasad* at the ecosystemic level, characterised by actions that undermine the sustainability of life, thereby nullifying public benefits and escalating intergenerational harm. This definition is coherent with the Qur'anic view that the utilisation of nature must remain within the boundaries of the prohibition of transgression (*i'tida*) and be directed toward sustainable development (Muhamad et al., 2020). Ecological damage, in this context, is not merely a technical issue but a moral violation of human existence on Earth (Muhamad et al., 2019). Accordingly, ecological stewardship (*islah*) in this study is a measurable normative action to terminate *fasad* and restore ecosystem integrity.

## Reconstructing Socio-Historical Grounds for Contextualising *Fasad*

Contextualising *fasad* requires more than the mere application of moral labels to modern issues; it necessitates a profound reconstruction of the reasons why Qur'anic discourse employs *fasad* as a cautionary category within specific social contexts. A comprehensive interpretation must traverse the macro-context (the socio-political landscape of the prophetic era) and the micro-context (the concrete situations found in *asbab al-nuzul*) before formulating messages relevant to contemporary reality (Faiz, 2024). Within this framework, the recontextualisation of *asbab al-nuzul* should not be reduced to a mere historical footnote. Rather, it must be integrated into a macro-ethical paradigm so that Qur'anic norms become value-based interventions in tangible social dynamics (Khodijah & Musafa'ah, 2025).

At the micro-textual level, the warning “do not cause corruption” (*la tufsidu*), which is juxtaposed with the counter-claim “we are only reformers” (*innama nahnu muslihun*), appears in Medinan passages as a demarcator between believers and ambiguous liminal groups—the hypocrites (*munafiqun*). According to Sinai (2023), the critique in Al-Baqarah [2]: 8-16 is directed at a group characterised by insincere faith and the rejection of prophetic authority. Here, *fasad* is not an abstract moral category but a diagnosis of behaviour that undermines the social order while sheltering behind the rhetoric of reform (*islah*).

From a macro-sociohistorical perspective, the categories of “the hypocrites” and “those in whose hearts is a disease” functioned as a reservoir for individuals who were neither fully inside nor outside the newly formed Medinan community (Suhail et al., 2025). In this transitional phase, the conceptual pair of *fasad-islah* transformed into a politico-moral critique of performative reform. The Qur'an asserts that claims of improvement are not automatically valid; they must be tested to determine whether they truly restore public benefit (*maslahah*) or, conversely, exacerbate systemic chaos (Sinai, 2023).

This reconstruction provides a clear direction for contextualising contemporary *fasad*. It is insufficient to state that ecological damage constitutes *fasad* merely; we must demonstrate that modern environmental destruction often reproduces the same moral structure: harm packaged as renewal. The rhetoric of development or extractive technocracy that results in systemic damage is a tangible manifestation of *fasad* in the guise of improvement (Faiz, 2024). By understanding this foundation, we can map the normative status of *fasad* through a hierarchy of values to derive the logic of environmental stewardship.

## The Normative Status of the Prohibition of *Fasad* through the Hierarchy of Values

The Hierarchy of Qur'anic Values developed by Abdullah Saeed aims to prevent simplification in the reading of ethico-legal texts—specifically, the tendency to treat every

Qur'anic command as equally universal and static. This methodology serves as an evaluative tool for classifying Qur'anic provisions based on their ethical weight, universality, and contextual implementation (Barsihannor et al., 2023). Abdullah Saeed identifies five systematically interconnected levels of values. The structure begins with obligatory values, which encompass core obligations for determining *halal* and *haram* (Muhammad & Rahman, 2022). This progresses to fundamental values, representing basic ethics such as justice and universal *maslahah*. Below these are protection values, which serve as protective norms for those fundamental values—for instance, the prohibition of all forms of deception and exploitation (Nurani, 2021).

It is crucial to note that the first three layers are categorised as universal values that transcend space and time. Meanwhile, the operationalisation of these values is realised through implementation values—namely the sanction mechanisms or technical procedures historically attached to the protection of fundamental values—and instructional values, which consist of specific social regulations responding to particular historical circumstances. Unlike the first three layers, these final two levels are dynamic and perpetually open to contextual reinterpretation in response to changing socio-historical conditions (Khodijah & Musafa'ah, 2025).

Situating the prohibition of *fasad* within this hierarchy requires rigorous evaluative criteria. The term *fasad* encompasses deviations from the ideal order in moral, social, physical, and ecological domains. Its function, repeatedly positioned as the antithesis of *islah*, indicates that the prohibition “do not spread the corruption” operates as a high-level moral boundary (Adila et al., 2025). Therefore, the most justifiable position for the prohibition of *fasad* is as a protection value that guards fundamental values, primarily justice (*‘adl*) and *maslahah*. As a protection value, preventing *fasad* is equivalent to other universal protective norms. It functions to obstruct actions and structures that damage public welfare and intergenerational ecological balance (Kurniawan & Fadlillah, 2025). If the prohibition of *fasad* is universal, then its preventive instruments—such as environmental policies, emission regulations, or conservation laws—fall within the implementation and instructional layers. These layers are, by design, adaptive to socio-historical changes (Khodijah & Musafa'ah, 2025).

Operationally, environmental stewardship in a contemporary context is the normative translation of the *fasad* protection imperative into tangible implementative steps. As long as these steps remain faithful to the higher ethical objectives of the Qur'an (fundamental values), variations in policy and community action across different times and places are methodologically valid (Amin et al., 2025; Helmi et al., 2026).

### **Deriving the Normative Logic of Environmental Responsibility**

Once the prohibition of *fasad* is established as a universal protection value within Saeed's hierarchy, the next methodological step is to derive the normative logic of

environmental responsibility into a more concrete operational framework (Muhammad & Rahman, 2022). Following Saeed's hierarchy, where protection values guard fundamental ethical commitments, this obligation translates into concrete evaluative mechanisms (Barsihannor et al., 2023). This derivation process aims to bridge the gap between general Qur'anic ethical principles and technical governance policies by providing a value-based intermediary that translates abstract principles into measurable evaluative criteria (Akilah et al., 2026). By positioning *fasad* as a protective boundary (protection value), environmental responsibility is no longer formulated as a vague moral exhortation, but as a legal and ethical imperative with clear evaluative parameters.

First, environmental responsibility must be defined as a theological obligation (*taklif*), rather than a mere optional virtue (*fadilah*). The preservation of nature is an integral manifestation of the *khalifah* mandate and *amanah*, positioning nature as a divine testimony of God's wisdom and requiring its preservation as an act of reverence (Obaideen & Alnidawi, 2025). Within this logic, the ontological status of humans as God's servants mandates protecting ecosystems as a form of social worship. Consequently, environmental degradation is not a morally neutral economic externality, but a direct violation of the protective function of *fasad*, carrying implications for both spiritual and legal accountability (Bsoul et al., 2022).

Second, the operational moral test for this responsibility is conducted through the principle of harm prevention. In the Islamic legal tradition, legal maxims (*qawaid fihiyyah*) such as "harm must be eliminated" (*al-darar yuzal*) serve as evaluative instruments to assess the extent to which human activity can be tolerated (Wan Halim et al., 2022). This is reinforced by the maxim *dar' al-mafasid muqaddam 'ala jalb al-masalih*, which asserts that preventing systemic harm must take precedence over pursuing partial gains. This logic provides a robust foundation for rejecting developmental narratives that sacrifice environmental carrying capacity for short-term economic growth, such as unchecked deforestation justified in the name of development, but ultimately leading to long-term ecological and social costs (Kholis, 2026).

Furthermore, this principle of harm prevention demands a transformation in public decision-making. Ethical responsibility requires honest environmental impact assessments that treat ecosystem restoration as a non-negotiable normative obligation (Bond et al., 2021). If a developmental project is proven to cause widespread *fasad*, then based on these maxims, halting the destructive activity becomes a legal necessity (Shaham, 2020). Thus, Islamic ethics provides a framework capable of penetrating pseudo-green development rhetoric by demanding proof of substantive and sustainable benefit (*maslahah*).

Third, environmental responsibility must be framed as an intergenerational *maqasid* imperative. Contemporary discourse has proposed environmental preservation (*hifdz al-bi'ah*) as a fundamental objective (*al-daruriyyat*) due to its crucial role in sustaining the

five classical goals (religion, life, intellect, progeny, and property). Without a stable environment, protecting life and progeny becomes impossible. Therefore, ecological integrity is an absolute prerequisite for the realisation of holistic human welfare amidst the threat of the global climate crisis (Kurniawan & Fadlillah, 2025).

Finally, environmental responsibility becomes a robust moral architecture for public policy. Nature protection is no longer merely a supporting instrument, but an integral part of social stability and intergenerational justice. By synthesising the protective boundaries of *fasad*, the *khalifah* mandate, and *maqasid al-shariah*, we construct an ethical bridge that positions Islamic environmental ethics as a credible and necessary contributor to global sustainability discourse.

### Islamic Spirituality, Ethical Implications, and Future Directions in Eco-Theology

Environmental responsibility within an Islamic perspective will only achieve broad social effectiveness if it is deeply internalised through robust ecospirituality (Bensaid, 2023; Sinha, 2025). The principles of *amanah* and the concept of *ummah* cultivate a relational ethic that transcends anthropocentrism. This phenomenon gives rise to what is termed “more-than-human kinship,” a realisation that humans and other living beings exist within a single, interdependent existential bond. This moral psychology serves as the primary anchor for stewardship’s sustainability, ensuring it persists as a long-term commitment that goes beyond mere reactive activism during ecological crises (Alhinai & Ringer, 2025). Thus, spirituality is not merely an additional element in ecotheological discourse, but a constitutive component that transforms abstract concern into tangible practice or praxis (Abdelzاهر et al., 2019).

The internalisation of these spiritual values automatically shifts the primary focus of ecotheology from merely seeking normative arguments for “why” Muslims should care to a methodological exploration of “how” that care is implemented (Aryanto et al., 2025). In Indonesia, this transformation is beginning to manifest through various strategic channels, including the digital public sphere. The development of a “theology of kindness” in the online realm has successfully integrated aspects of faith with ecology-based *da’wah* strategies, creating a more inclusive and progressive discourse (Yudaningsih et al., 2025). Meanwhile, in the education sector, traditional institutions such as *pesantren* have begun operationalising the values of *tawhid* and *khalifah* into practical curricula focused on conservation. Nevertheless, the future challenge remains the need for more rigorous evaluation of the long-term behavioural impacts of such educational interventions (Syukri et al., 2024).

For contemporary ecotheology to evolve into a rigorous discipline, future research must prioritise several strategic areas. The primary agenda should be directed toward empirical studies capable of testing the real correlation between an individual’s spiritual disposition—such as gratitude and moderation—and concrete, measurable pro-environmental behaviour. Methodologically, there is an urgent need for broader

hermeneutic comparisons that place Abdullah Saeed's hierarchy-of-values framework alongside other eco-hermeneutical approaches. This is essential for mapping the strengths and limitations of each theory in addressing the increasingly complex environmental crisis challenges across various cultural contexts.

Furthermore, the strengthening of ecotheology must be pursued through more intense interdisciplinary collaboration, particularly by linking decolonial ecospirituality with environmental communication. This step is crucial to avoid epistemic closure and to remain free of a rigid theological viewpoint, while simultaneously highlighting relational accountability in Muslim ecological praxis (Alhinai & Ringer, 2025). Finally, the greatest challenge lies in academics' and policymakers' ability to perform norm translation, specifically translating the anti-*fasad* protective prohibition into applicable institutional governance policy tools. By remaining faithful to Qur'anic principles of justice and public interest, this translation is expected to transform environmental ethics from mere theological discourse into a substantive instrument for social change (Abdelzaher et al., 2019; Bsoul et al., 2022).

## Conclusion

Addressing the global ecological crisis from an Islamic perspective requires a radical shift from mere moral affirmation to a measurable normative logic. The mapping of the concept of *fasad* through Abdullah Saeed's hierarchy of values positions the prohibition of environmental destruction as a universal protection value with clear normative boundaries. By situating *fasad* at this protective level, environmental stewardship is no longer an optional ethical exhortation but a normative parameter capable of testing the validity of developmental claims. Within this framework, any restorative effort (*islah*) must demonstrate its capacity to halt systemic damage and restore public interest, rigorously distinguishing substantive ecological reform from destructive, pseudo-developmental rhetoric.

In this article, the integration between contextualist hermeneutics and eco-spirituality has produced an operational ecotheological framework. This research offers a disciplined moral architecture by integrating anti-*fasad* protective boundaries, the khalifah mandate, and *maqasid al-shariah*, especially *hifdz al-bi'ah*. This article provides a methodological foundation for Islamic studies scholars and policymakers to translate sacred texts into adaptive environmental governance instruments while remaining faithful to the principles of Qur'anic principles of justice. The emphasis on spirituality as an infrastructure of meaning also offers an internal solution to the consistency of pro-environmental behaviour amid complex global challenges.

This research is limited by its predominantly conceptual-normative nature, thereby requiring further validation through field studies. Future research should focus on empirical testing of the extent to which the internalisation of values such as gratitude and *amanah* correlates with pro-environmental behavioural changes across diverse Muslim

communities. Additionally, more technical translation efforts are required to derive the anti-*fasad* protective norm into institutional governance policies, environmental legal instruments, and more specific educational curricula. Interdisciplinary collaboration among Islamic law scholars, environmentalists, and public communication experts is a critical imperative to ensure that ecotheology transcends theological discourse and becomes a transformative and sustainable social praxis.

### Statement of Interest

All authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

### Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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