

From Anthropocentric to Ecocentric Jurisprudence: A *Maqasid*-Based Reconstruction of Islamic Environmental Ethics toward Intergenerational Equity

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Abstract

This article reconstructs Islamic environmental ethics from a stewardship framework that is persuasive towards an ecocentric jurisprudence based on *maqasid*, which responds to the demands of intergenerational equity. Using a normative-conceptual approach, this study analyses the anthropocentric bias in the discourse and governance of Islamic environmental issues. The main findings indicate that anthropocentrism rarely appears as an explicit doctrine but operates as a recurring pattern of legal reasoning in framing problems, policy priorities, and institutional design. As a result, this article outlines a typology of anthropocentric reasoning, specifically instrumental-extractivist, normative-symbolic dualism, sectoral-coordinative fragmentation, and centralisation-participation deficits. It also identifies normative anchors for the shift towards an ecocentric perspective, where *maqasid* and *maslahah* serve as a grammar of justification requiring the reading of consequences and the prevention of ecological mafsadah; the Qur'anic ontology as a principle of limitation; and classical conservation institutional memory as an inspiration for modern ecological accountability. Within this framework, intergenerational equity is formulated as a normative horizon that tests short-termism, burden shifting, and the safeguarding of ecological baselines for the future. The contribution of this article is an analytical and reconstructive framework that bridges Islamic environmental ethics and intergenerational justice, while also proposing an initial institutional pathway for more consistent Islamic environmental governance across sectors and generation.

Keywords: *Maqasid al-Shariah, Islamic environmental ethics, Ecocentric jurisprudence, Intergenerational equity, Environmental governance*

Introduction

The contemporary ecological crisis, manifested in climate change, biodiversity degradation, and the intensification of disasters, increasingly demonstrates that environmental damage, beyond being a technical issue, is also a matter of intergenerational justice (Behrendt, 2024). The political-economic benefits are often

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enjoyed in the present, while the ecological risks and burdens are transferred to future generations who do not have the opportunity to approve these decisions (Sands et al., 2012). In this context, the demands for intergenerational equity are strengthened through the expansion of sustainable development discourse, the precautionary principle, and even through the mobilisation of young actors and climate litigation that position the future as a normative horizon demanding public accountability (Kotzé and Knappe, 2023). This problem becomes increasingly urgent in countries under pressure from extractivism and resource governance fragmentation, as short-term policy decisions tend to lock in damage (path dependency) and narrow the scope for adaptation for subsequent generations (Stoddard et al., 2021).

So far, studies on Islamic environmental ethics have provided a strong theological-ethical foundation through the cosmology of *tawhid*, the concept of *khalifah*, *amanah*, *mizan*, the prohibition of *fasad*, and critiques of modernity that sacralise nature (Nasr, 1990). In recent developments, Islamic environmental ethics are also encouraged to shift from individual morality towards a public ethics relevant to climate governance and policy (Khalid, 2019), and are understood as a spectrum of practices (Muslim environmentalism) present in education, activism, advocacy, and institutional arenas (Gade, 2019). At the normative authority level, responses through green fatwas and efforts to Islamise environmental law demonstrate important dynamics, but also raise issues of symbolism when not connected to compliance mechanisms and policy instruments (Mufid, 2020; Najemi and Rapik, 2024).

Nevertheless, various studies integrating *fiqh al-biah* and *maqasid* into the sectors of water, waste, and resources show progress, but at the same time indicate recurring limitations. Sectoral fragmentation, implementation gaps, and an ongoing anthropocentric tendency continue to assess environmental protection primarily based on its benefits for current generations of humans (Maskun et al., 2025; Yusuf et al., 2025). Therefore, the main problem here is not the absence of ethics, but rather the lack of an ecocentric jurisprudence that provides stable legal reasoning criteria to correct anthropocentric bias while also incorporating cross-generational sensitivity.

This article aims to answer the question of how to explain the persistence of anthropocentric reasoning in Islamic environmental jurisprudence, and how to reconstruct Islamic environmental ethics into an ecocentric jurisprudence based on *maqasid* that can position intergenerational equity as a normative horizon. To this end, the article gradually maps the typology of anthropocentric legal reasoning within the discourse and governance of Islamic environmental issues; then identifies the normative anchor of eco-centrism through *maqasid*, the Qur'anic ontology of nature, and classical conservation institutional memory; and subsequently formulates intergenerational equity as a normative horizon informed by *maqasid* and relevant for strengthening Islamic environmental governance.

This article argues that anthropocentrism persists not because of the weakness of Islamic moral vocabulary, but because of the dominance of reasoning modes and institutional architecture that treat the environment as a policy object subordinate to economic-political interests, as well as sectoral fragmentation that weakens cross-generational evaluative consistency. Epistemically, anthropocentric bias can endure because the human-nature relationship is always mediated by how nature is read. The dominance of modern interpretative objectification can reduce nature to a control object even when religious language is still used. Normatively, *maqasid* provides a grammar of justification to resist short-termism by shifting evaluation standards from benefits for the current generation of humans towards restrictions based on the prevention of ecological harm and the safeguarding of ecological baselines as a public trust across generations. With this reconstruction, the shift from an anthropocentric approach to ecocentric jurisprudence is not understood as the adoption of an external ideology, but rather as a reordering of how Islamic law interprets ecological obligations to align with the environmental crisis as a problem of intergenerational justice.

This article offers an analytical-reconstructive framework that bridges the study of Islamic environmental ethics and the discourse on intergenerational justice, by positioning *maqasid* as a conceptual device to transform ethics into a more operational jurisprudence. It also seeks to improve the way we define problems (anthropocentrism as a pattern of reasoning), strengthen the normative foundation (*maqasid* and Qur'anic ontology), and direct institutional consequences (the pathways of accountability and representation of future interests) as prerequisites for just Islamic environmental governance for future generations.

Literature Review

In contemporary literature, Islamic environmental ethics is generally understood as a normative framework that derives ecological obligations from the cosmology of *tawhid*, which views nature as part of the divine order and places humans as *khalifah* and trustees responsible for maintaining balance (*mizan*), preventing corruption (*fasad*), and limiting wastefulness (*israf*) (Bagheri and Al-Ali, 2018). Because it is rooted in this theological-ethical horizon, the ecological crisis is often seen as a worldview problem, where the human-nature relationship must be restored as a moral-spiritual responsibility that restrains the logic of domination and exploitation (Kellert and Farnham, 2013). This emphasis on correcting the worldview is clearly evident in Nasr's (1990) interpretation, which views the modern ecological crisis as a spiritual crisis resulting from the desacralisation of nature within modern epistemology; thus, ecological restoration requires a renewal of the worldview towards nature as a cosmic reality full of meaning.

In the context of the climate crisis, Khalid (2019) expands the argument into the realm of public ethics by emphasising the need for adequate Islamic environmental ethics to respond to modern governance, policies, and structural impacts of modernity.

Meanwhile, Gade (2019) demonstrates that this ethics is not singular but exists within the domains of education, activism, advocacy, and institutional practices (Muslim environmentalisms), illustrating how religious norms are translated into social movements. However, despite being strongly justified on theological grounds and moral articulation, this often remains at the level of stewardship ethics, which has not yet been fully operationalised into stable legal criteria. As a result, anthropocentric bias (the prioritization of human interests over those of nature) and the limitations of conceptual frameworks for understanding intergenerational responsibility remain prominent.

Typologically, studies on Islamic environmental ethics can be categorized into several currents, which distinguish them by normative focus, authority mediums, and implementation strategies. The discussions are also diverse, ranging from spiritual cosmology and socio-religious activism to *fatwas* and the authority of Islamic scholars (*ulama*), as well as integration into governance and sectoral policies related to water, waste, and mining. This mapping is essential because each current contributes different strengths. Some studies sharpen epistemic critiques of modernity, while others emphasise the mobilisation of public ethics, formal normative channels (*fatwas*), or translating ethics into policy designs. However, these variations also reveal the same weakness: the disconnection between ethical claims and consistent juridical mechanisms to safeguard nature in an ecocentric and intergenerational manner. The cosmological-spiritual current, for example, places the ecological crisis as a spiritual-modern crisis, and therefore emphasises a reorientation of worldview and the recovery of moral consciousness (Nasr, 1990). The currents of public ethics and climate theology shift the focus from personal morality to social-institutional responsibility, which is relevant to climate crisis policies and the political economy (Khalid, 2019).

The currents of pluralist practice (Muslim environmentalism) emphasise that Islamic environmental ethics operate across many arenas, not just through a single channel of authority (Gade, 2019). Meanwhile, the *fatwas*-oriented and Islamisation of environmental law streams make green fatwas a medium of social legitimacy that attempts to formalise religious responses to the ecological crisis (Mufid, 2020; Najemi and Rapik, 2024). The governance/policy integration stream seeks to connect *fiqh al-bi'ah*, *maqasid*, and Islamic ethics with the design of regulations and sectoral policies, so that ethics do not remain merely slogans, but approach the logic of policy instruments (Maskun et al., 2025; Yusuf et al., 2025). This map indicates that the shift from theology to institutions and policies has already begun, but remains partial in many cases. Ethics are only slogans, *fatwas* are merely symbols, and policies are sectoral patches that have yet to form an ecocentric jurisprudence with stable reasoning criteria.

To assess this shift more precisely, studies on environmental ethics and philosophy offer a conceptual distinction between anthropocentrism and ecocentrism. Anthropocentrism evaluates nature as a tool for human interests, so that the value of nature is derivative (Ghijselinck, 2023; Lenart, 2020), whereas ecocentrism asserts that

nature is a community of life and ecological systems that possess intrinsic value, or at least relational value that cannot be reduced to short-term benefits for humans (Samways, 2023). This distinction is important for the study of Islamic environmental ethics and law, because the formulation of stewardship can remain within an anthropocentric horizon, where the obligation to preserve nature is read as a strategy to maintain human well-being, rather than as a delineation of legal boundaries that recognise the validity of environmental protection norms as entities worth safeguarding in their own right (Guzmán and Velazco, 2024).

Contemporary critiques of modernity reinforce this point by demonstrating that ecological problems do not solely originate from human behaviour, but also from the way humans perceive and interact with nature. The relationship between humans and nature is always mediated by interpretative frameworks, so that dominance over nature can be rooted in epistemic constructions of nature (Sherman, 2020). In the Islamic tradition, a similar argument is presented through the thesis that the modern ecological crisis is a spiritual crisis resulting from a disconnection from the sacredness of nature, which drives the need to reorient the human-nature relationship within the framework of *tawhid* as a corrective to modern reductionism (Salman and Asmanto, 2024). Furthermore, the development of contemporary Islamic environmental ethics is also beginning to strengthen the moral status of non-human entities. For example, through the integration of divine command, *maqasid*, and virtue ethics as efforts to transcend anthropocentric utilitarianism and pave the way for a more explicit ecocentric orientation (Mohamed, 2025). Thus, anthropocentrism versus ecocentrism functions as an analytical device to examine whether Islamic environmental ethics move from ‘protecting nature for humans’ towards ‘protecting nature as a cosmic trust and moral community’.

At the jurisprudential level, anthropocentrism in Islamic environmental discourse rarely appears as an explicit doctrine concerning human dominance. Instead, it operates as a pattern of reasoning embedded in the way ecological issues are defined, normative goals are established, and solutions are institutionalised. Categorisation is necessary to recognise and correct such biases, because a discourse can appear pro-environment rhetorically, yet remain anthropocentric at the epistemic and juridical levels when the environment is treated as a policy object that is always subordinated to the economic and political interests of the current generation. The first pattern is instrumental anthropocentrism, which justifies environmental protection mainly through utilitarian calculations, such as financial benefits, social stability, or public health, thus understanding nature primarily as a means. This phenomenon is evident in studies that frame resource management in terms of trade-offs in development and normalize damage as a cost (Susana et al., 2025). The second pattern is short-termist anthropocentrism, where ecological issues are treated as short-term, sectoral problems without adequate conceptual frameworks to understand cross-decade impacts. Therefore, Islamic public

ethics are required to respond to long-term structural risks, not merely transient moral appeals (Khalid, 2019).

The third pattern is institutional-symbolic anthropocentrism, which occurs when normative responses stop at symbols and legitimacy without institutional design, compliance, and incentives that alter decision-making structures. This critique arises from the reinterpretation of the green *fatwa*, which demands integration with legal-policy frameworks to prevent it from merely becoming moral branding (Najemi and Rapik, 2024). The fourth pattern is sectoral patchwork anthropocentrism, where environmental ethics/*fiqh* are translated into sectoral patchwork policies without a consistent meta-normative framework, making environmental agendas easily revert to exploitative logic when faced with economic pressures and governance issues. This fragmentation can be observed in studies that attempt to integrate *fiqh al-bi'ah* and *maqasid* into water, waste, and resource management, but also highlight the need for an ecocentric jurisprudential orientation that unites across sectors (Hamdi et al., 2025; Maskun et al., 2025; Yusuf et al., 2025). This typology emphasises that the main issue is not the absence of Islamic environmental ethics, but rather the failure to transform it into a stable ecocentric jurisprudence in terms of reasoning, institutions, and cross-sectoral coherence.

On the other hand, the literature on ethics and environmental law provides a normative horizon that directly challenges short-termism, namely intergenerational equity. This principle is generally understood as justice regulating the distribution of benefits, risks, and ecological burdens across time, with the assumption that the current generation bears the obligation not to damage ecological conditions that are prerequisites for a decent life for future generations (Bertram, 2023; Davies, 2020). Its urgency arises because many environmental damages are long-term, cumulative, and sometimes irreversible, so laws that are solely oriented towards the interests of the present generation tend to legitimise the shifting of burdens to the future, even though the economic benefits are enjoyed in the present (Humphreys, 2022; Lawrence, 2022; Sheehy, 2022).

In environmental law doctrine, intergenerational equity is closely tied to sustainable development, the principles of prevention and precaution, as well as the state's obligation to manage long-term risks through regulatory instruments and policies (Cheong, 2025). Its status is even reinforced as a legal obligation that demands normative justification and institutional consequences, especially when current decisions create path dependency that locks in damage or closes off adaptation options for future generations (Behrendt, 2024). The development of climate litigation and mobilisation of young actors also demonstrates how the future is positioned as a normative horizon translated into human rights, protection, and public accountability, thereby strengthening the relevance of intergenerational equity as a standard of critique against short-term policies (Knappe and Renn, 2022). Thus, intergenerational equity serves as an evaluative principle to assess whether today's environmental governance maintains or erodes the ecological conditions for the future.

If intergenerational equity is not merely a normative slogan, this principle is often elaborated into conceptual dimensions that can be used to interpret sustainability across generations in resource management and ecological risk (Bertram, 2023). This categorisation is important because breaches of intergenerational justice often occur not through a single action, but through a combination of decisions that seem rational in the short term but result in the accumulation of vulnerabilities for the future. Therefore, a conceptual framework is needed to recognise burden shifting and option foreclosure experienced by future generations. One dimension is temporal harm and irreversibility, which involves assessing long-term damage that is difficult to restore, such as ecosystem degradation, persistent pollution, or climate damage, which narrows the adaptive capacity of subsequent generations (Sands et al., 2012). Another dimension is burden shifting and asymmetry, highlighting the injustice of the current generation enjoying economic and political benefits while future generations bear the burden. At the same time, ecological costs, such as disaster risks, health impacts, or loss of biodiversity, are transferred to future generations who have no opportunity to agree or refuse these decisions (Davies, 2020).

The dimensions of representation and accountability demand an institutional mechanism that ensures future interests are present in decision-making processes, whether through state mandates, precautionary procedures, or social legitimacy support that restrains exploitative decisions. In climate litigation practice, the interests of future generations are often articulated through human rights, public responsibility, and climate justice (Kotzé and Knappe, 2023). According to Crabtree (2020), the dimensions of capability and minimum ecological baselines underscore the obligation to maintain a minimum threshold of environmental conditions that enable a dignified life. Specific indicators, such as clean water, productive land, and a stable climate, serve as ecological capital that the current generation should not deplete (Bateman and Mace, 2020). These dimensions provide a normative horizon to assess whether Islamic legal reasoning and environmental governance can limit short-termism, prevent the transfer of ecological burdens, and preserve ecological baselines for the future.

Method

The research design employs a qualitative-normative approach based on library research, with a focus on conceptual analysis and normative reconstruction within a *maqasid* framework. Operationally, this design functions through two movements: *first*, mapping the typology of anthropocentric legal reasoning in Islamic jurisprudence/environmental argumentation; *second*, reformulating the normative ecocentric anchor supported by *maqasid*, the Qur'anic ontology of the cosmos as a moral order, and classical conservation institution precedents. With this design, the article does not stop at an ethical call; instead, it extracts the logic of reasoning and the institutional prerequisites necessary for environmental ethics to become an operational jurisprudence.

The data sources in this article are categorised into primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include religious texts and relevant normative products related to resource management, as well as fatwa documents and institutional guidelines containing environmental arguments. Meanwhile, secondary sources encompass the latest academic literature on Islamic environmental ethics, eco-theology, ecological philosophy (including anthropocentrism and ecocentrism), and environmental law literature concerning intergenerational equity and cross-generational accountability mechanisms. The utilisation of these two layers of sources aims to maintain the connection between the normative basis and problem governance without blurring the distinction between textual authority, tradition, and scientific elaboration. The data collection procedure was conducted through systematic desk review and document analysis (Bowen, 2009). Literature searches were guided by thematic keywords and filtered based on direct relevance to conceptual frameworks and/or normative arguments, including definitional/analytical frameworks that can be mapped, and providing institutional implications or critiques of the limitations of stewardship ethics.

The data analysis technique employed in this article combines qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis to gradually build categories (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005). The first stage involves coding forms of anthropocentric reasoning to produce a typology that can be tested across various texts. The second stage consists of the extraction of ecocentric normative anchors through the reading of *maqasid*, Qur'anic ontology, and classical conservation institutions as sources of legal boundaries and governance principles. The third stage involves synthesizing intergenerational equity as a normative horizon to assess shifts in ecological burden over time, then anchored in a coherent, reconstructive argument. To ensure traceability, the analysis is documented through a trail of categories, data, and inferences, then compared across sources (source triangulation) so that conclusions do not rely on a single type of text or a single stream of literature (Miles et al., 2013).

Results and Discussion

Typology of Anthropocentric Legal Reasoning in Islamic Environmental Jurisprudence

According to Elmahjub (2021), the anthropocentric pattern does not appear as an explicit doctrine of human dominance, but rather as a recurring logic of legal reasoning in how regulation is framed, Islamic ethics are positioned, and community institutions and actors are involved. Key findings from the *maqasid* critique of resource policies indicate an orientation that is exploitative and anthropocentric, short-term in nature, and neglects intergenerational equity. These problems are exacerbated by four structural issues: legal dualism, the weak institutionalization of *Shariah* principles, sectoral fragmentation, and the centralization of authority, which marginalizes indigenous communities.

Table 1.

Typology of Anthropocentric Legal Reasoning in Islamic Environmental Jurisprudence

No.	Type of Anthropocentric Reasoning	How the Legal Rationale Operates (Core Features)	Manifestations in Environmental Governance / <i>Fiqh al-Bi'ah</i>
1	Instrumental-extractivist	Nature is framed as development capital; ecological degradation is normalised as an acceptable policy <i>trade-off</i> .	Policies purport to balance economic extraction with environmental protection and community rights, yet frequently result in implementation gaps and the predominance of economic interests.
2	Normative-symbolic dualism	Environmental ethics and Islamic jurisprudence primarily serve as a moral legitimisation rather than a binding juridical standard that guides legal reasoning and enforcement.	A persistent separation between state law and Islamic ethical-normative commitments, alongside weak institutionalisation of <i>Shariah</i> -informed environmental principles within policy design.
3	Sectoral-coordination fragmentation	Regulation and implementation proceed in siloed sectors, marked by overlap, inconsistency, and limited cross-agency synergy.	Sector-by-sector approaches and centre-local disharmony undermine governance effectiveness (e.g., solid waste management), including recurring deficits in financing and enforcement capacity.
4	Centralisation-participation deficit	Local community interests and future-oriented considerations are structurally absent from decision-making processes.	Centralised authority marginalises indigenous and local communities; strengthening participatory governance remains a recurrent and unresolved agenda.

Note. This typology is derived from the normative-conceptual analysis of Islamic environmental ethics, *fiqh al-bi'ah*, and environmental governance literature.

Substantively, each of the above types displays a pattern that reinforces itself. *Firstly*, the instrumental-extractivist reasoning begins its analysis from the needs for growth and economic certainty, so environmental protection tends to be conditional. Even when packaged within a narrative of balancing extraction and protection, mining studies reveal that gaps in implementation and weak ethical foundations often overshadow environmental protection and community rights, making them easily overshadowed by extraction interests (Yusuf et al., 2025). *Secondly*, the dualism between normative and symbolic aspects causes Islamic jurisprudence and ethical frameworks to operate as adjunct morality (moral reinforcement) rather than as binding juridical reasoning, as evidenced by the dualism between state law and Islamic ethics and the weak institutionalisation of sharia principles (Susana et al., 2025).

Thirdly, sectoral-coordinative fragmentation divides ecological problems into technical sectors (such as water, waste, and mining), resulting in responses that are merely patchwork. Related to this, studies on waste management, for example, emphasise that weak law enforcement, regulatory disharmony, minimal central-regional synergy, and

inadequate fiscal support are the main obstacles to effectiveness (Maskun et al., 2025). *Fourthly*, the deficit in centralisation-participation locks governance into an administrative, top-down logic and marginalises the most affected subjects (including indigenous communities), which conceptually overlaps with the absence of future representation in policies (Susana et al., 2025).

This finding suggests that the anthropocentrism that needs correction is a problem with the reasoning mode in law and institutional architecture. This is evident when policies remain oriented towards short-term economic goals and systematically neglect ecological balance, distributive justice, and intergenerational equity. Meanwhile, Islamic jurisprudence and ethical frameworks have not been established as evaluative standards capable of resisting short-termism and enforcing cross-temporal accountability.

Ecocentric Normative Anchors: Maqasid, Qur'anic Ontology, and Classical Conservation Institutions

In contemporary *fiqh al-bi'ah* studies, one of the most consistent normative anchors for integrating environmental ethics into operational jurisprudence is the concept of *maqasid* and *maslahah*. Nasir et al. (2022) indicate that the environment is not merely a derivative issue, but can be positioned as a structural prerequisite for the realization of the fundamental objectives of *Shariah*. In other words, the preservation of life, intellect, and social welfare cannot be coherently considered without an adequate ecological horizon. In this logic, *maqasid* functions as a reasoning device that allows the expansion of benefit-harm standards from mere short-term human interests towards more stable and long-term benefits, while still anchoring claims of benefit so as not to fall into arbitrary preferences. Therefore, ecocentrism can be methodologically supported by emphasising that ecological conditions are the foundation that also determines the validity, weight, and boundaries of policies or decisions based on *maslahah* (Salman and Asmanto, 2024).

The second anchor emerges from what can be called the Qur'anic ontology of the universe, which mentions the earth (*al-ard*), balance (*mizan*), trust (*amanah*), and the prohibition of corruption/ruin (*fasad*), not only as moral rhetoric but also as normative vocabulary that can be read juridically. On one hand, the prohibition of *fasad* is often treated as a strong evaluative principle, even discussed as a legal as well as ethical idea, which allows environmental degradation to be positioned as a reprehensible and forbidden act, including in contemporary environmental fatwa reasoning (Al-Damkhi, 2008; Ismail and Firas, 2024). On the other hand, the interpretation of environment in the compilation of thematic verses often relies on Qur'anic ontology keywords, which affirm that ecological issues within the tafsir-theological tradition indeed have a well-established conceptual entry point. When the principle of *mizan* is read alongside the statement that the earth has been placed for all creatures, its normative orientation moves beyond human-centred utility, meaning that nature appears as an order with measures,

boundaries, and moral claims that demand the regulation of human actions (Ali et al., 2025).

The third anchor, which makes ecocentrism closest to the institutional framework, can be seen in classical conservation devices and compliance enforcement mechanisms within the Islamic tradition. Classical institutions, such as *hima*, *ihya' al-mawat* and *harim*, serve as prototypes of protected areas or sanctuaries based on norms, demonstrating that the Islamic legal tradition has an institutional memory regarding restrictions on the utilization of space and resources for the sustainability of the community of life (Umam et al., 2024). At the same time, the concept of *hisbah* is constructed as a principle of accountability and enforcement (including attention to public interest and the prevention of apparent wrongful actions), thus providing a basis for reinterpreting the role of ecological oversight within modern governance (Khaleel et al., 2024; Zawawi et al., 2025). Recent environmental policy studies reinforce that without effective institutional counterparts, prohibitions on *israf* and *fasad* tend to remain as theological ideals, while pollution practices continue due to weak enforcement infrastructure (Abd-Elsalam et al., 2024; Ismail and Firas, 2024; Ramlan, 2019). At this point, the practice of *waqf*, for example, in providing access to water through *waqf* wells or channels is also important because it demonstrates a resource management model that is inherently long-term oriented and potentially intergenerational (Thomas, 2025).

Table 2.

Eco-Centric Normative Anchors in Islamic Environmental Jurisprudence: Concepts, Juridical Functions, and Governance Implications

Normative anchor	Core concepts / institutions	Juridical function (how it works)	Operational governance implications
Maqasid-Maslahah as a jurisprudential reasoning device	<i>Maqasid al-Shariah</i> , <i>maslahah</i> , benefit-harm (<i>jalb al-masalih / dar' al-mafasid</i>), long-term welfare	Re-weights legal reasoning from short-term human utility toward stable, long-horizon goods; anchors public benefit claims so they remain methodologically constrained rather than discretionary	Provides a normative basis to treat ecological integrity as a structural precondition for safeguarding life, intellect, and social welfare; justifies stricter limits on extractive policies when they undermine ecological baselines
Qur'anic ontology as legally intelligible normative terminology	earth (<i>al-ard</i>), balance (<i>mizan</i>), trust (<i>amanah</i>), corruption or ruin (<i>fasad</i>), waste (<i>israf</i>), earth for all creatures	Converts theological-ethical vocabulary into evaluative legal criteria: environmental degradation can be framed as normatively prohibited (<i>fasad</i>)	Supports eco-centric constraints in policy and <i>fatwa</i> reasoning (pollution, land conversion, biodiversity loss); strengthens an

		rather than merely regrettable; <i>mizan</i> functions as a constraint/measure that disciplines human action	interpretive baseline for treating non-human life and ecosystems as morally relevant subjects of protection
Classical conservation and compliance institutions as institutional memory	<i>hima, harim, ihya' al-mawat, hisbah</i> (accountability or enforcement), <i>waqf</i> (resource endowment)	Supplies institutional templates: spatial restrictions and protected zones (<i>hima/harim</i>), accountability and prevention of public wrongs (<i>hisbah</i>), and durable resource provisioning (<i>waqf</i>)	Translates ecocentrism into implementable governance pathways: protected areas, compliance monitoring, enforcement infrastructure, and intergenerational provisioning (e.g., water access via <i>waqf</i>)

Note. This table synthesises the normative-conceptual analysis by mapping three recurring ecocentric normative anchors: *maqasid-maslahah* reasoning, Qur’anic ontological terminology, and classical conservation/enforcement institutions, into their juridical functions and governance implications.

Intergenerational Equity as a *Maqasid*-Informed Normative Horizon

In the literature of environmental ethics and law, intergenerational equity is positioned as a principle of justice that governs the distribution of benefits, risks, and ecological burdens across time (Bertram, 2023). According to Emina (2021), the fundamental assumption is that the current generation bears the obligation not to deplete the ecological prerequisites that determine the possibility of a decent life for future generations. This formulation becomes increasingly rigid when environmental damage is understood to be long-term, cumulative, and sometimes irreversible, so that decisions made today can create path dependencies that lock in damage or close off adaptation options in the future (Behrendt, 2024). The development of climate litigation and the articulation of intergenerational justice in the public sphere also demonstrate how the future is no longer merely understood as a moral horizon, but as a normative reference increasingly translated into public obligations, accountability, and climate justice (Kotzé and Knappe, 2023).

In this case, a consistent pattern can be summarised into four dimensions that can be used to interpret intergenerational equity operationally. *First*, the dimension of temporal harm and irreversibility assesses whether policies cause long-term damage that is difficult to reverse and reduces the adaptive capacity of future generations (Humphreys, 2022). *Second*, the dimension of burden shifting highlights injustice when the current generation enjoys economic and political benefits. At the same time, ecological costs, such as disaster risks, health degradation, and biodiversity loss, are transferred to the future

without consent (Davies, 2020; Teshome, 2024). *Third*, the dimension of representation and accountability, which demands mechanisms that make the interests of future generations present in collective decision-making, is often mediated in contemporary practice through the mobilisation of young actors and rights-based arguments in climate litigation (Donger, 2022; Jodoin and Wewerinke-Singh, 2025). *Fourth*, the dimension of minimum ecological baselines, which affirms the obligation to maintain minimum ecological thresholds, such as access to clean water, productive land, and climate stability as ecological capital that should not be depleted by the current generation (Bithas, 2020; Hamilton, 2020).

When examined through the framework of *maqasid*, these four dimensions function as a normative horizon that sharpens the question: does Islamic jurisprudential reasoning or Islamic environmental ethics merely manage the interests of the current generation, or does it also close the door to cross-decade harm (*mafsadah*) that threatens the sustainability of future generations' lives? On a methodological level, *maqasid* provides a foundation for linking ecological obligations to the principles of bringing about benefits (*jalb al-masalih*) and preventing harms (*dar' al-mafasid*), as well as to the demands of reading consequences (*i'tibar al-ma'alat*) so that normative validity does not stop at moral claims but is tested through projected impacts (Al-Raysuni, 2005; Kamali, 2003).

Meanwhile, the contemporary *maqasid* reading, which emphasises systemic coherence and the broadening of the horizon of welfare, helps justify why environmental protection must be positioned as a structural prerequisite for safeguarding human needs across generations, rather than merely as an instrument for immediate well-being (Auda, 2008). Thus, intergenerational equity is not presented as a standalone policy test, but rather as an evaluative orientation guiding the reconstruction towards ecocentric jurisprudence, where legal reasoning that restrains short-termism, prevents the transfer of ecological burdens, and maintains ecological baselines as a collective trust across time.

Explaining the Persistence of Anthropocentrism: Epistemic, Institutional, and Policy Drivers

Anthropocentrism, which often implicitly appears in Islamic environmental jurisprudence, is caused by the mode of legal reasoning that shapes how ecological issues are understood, prioritised, and institutionalised. Its practical implications are profound; when the dominant reasoning remains instrumental and short-termist, environmental protection tends to become conditional, considered valuable only as long as it supports the economic and political interests of the current generation. At the same time, long-term damage is read as a reasonable trade-off in development (Susana et al., 2025).

In such situations, Islamic ethics often fall short of persuasive stewardship, yet remain weak as a binding legal standard, resulting in dual dysfunction. *First*, the emergence of symbolic compliance (moral legitimacy without enforcement mechanisms), which is evident in the use of green *fatwas* or religious narratives without integration into legal-

policy frameworks (Mufid, 2020; Najemi and Rapik, 2024). *Secondly*, the patchwork reproduction of sectoral policies, which are unstable over time, makes it challenging to ensure the protection of ecological baselines and intergenerational justice (Maskun et al., 2025). On a broader level, this dysfunction renders Islamic public ethics inadequate to respond to the climate crisis as a structural problem of modernity; it remains strong in normative justification but weak in its capacity to lock in public decisions so as not to transfer ecological burdens to future generations (Behrendt, 2024; Khalid, 2019).

Structurally, the persistence of anthropocentrism can be explained through three mutually reinforcing drivers: epistemic, institutional, and policy. At the epistemic level, the dominance of viewing nature as an object, rather than a moral community, is shaped by modern interpretative frameworks that normalise the human–nature relationship as one of control; because knowledge constructions always mediate ecological relations, anthropocentric bias can persist even when discourse appears religious and pro-environmental (Sherman, 2020). At the institutional level, two mechanisms often emerge. *First*, legal dualism, which separates Islamic ethics from positive law frameworks, so that ethics functions as an adjunct morality rather than part of binding legal reasoning. *Second*, weaknesses in the design of accountability (supervision, compliance, and incentives) render prohibitions against *fasad* and *israf* non-operational, while also explaining why *fatwas* tend to fall into symbolism if not linked to regulatory instruments (Najemi and Rapik, 2024).

At the policy level, the economic and political pressures of extractivism and growth orientation drive the logic of short-termism and sectoral fragmentation, which complicate the formation of a consistent, normative framework across sectors and over time (Maskun et al., 2025). This combination of three drivers explains why the 'shift' from stewardship ethics towards ecocentric jurisprudence does not occur automatically, as it requires a more definitive normative reconstruction as well as an institutional pathway that ensures ecological interests and intergenerational considerations are incorporated into public decision-making (Behrendt, 2024).

A *Maqasid*-Based Reconstruction of Ecocentric Jurisprudence

The key issue in environmental preservation lies in the absence of a jurisprudential architecture capable of transforming ethics into a stable, cross-sectoral, and cross-temporal standard of legal reasoning. The scientific implication is the need to shift from *maqasid* merely as a rhetoric of *maslahah* to a juridical reconstruction device that binds the direction and limits of public decisions. Environmental protection is no longer justified solely as long as it supports short-term human interests. However, it is positioned as a normative prerequisite for the sustainability of life communities and for maintaining cross-generational benefits (Auda, 2008). Without such reconstruction, stewardship ethics tend to produce dysfunction, where ethics become moral persuasion, *fatwas* become symbolic legitimacy, and policies become sectoral patches that easily revert to an

extraction logic when faced with economic and political pressures (Najemi and Rapik, 2024).

Conversely, a reconstruction based on *maqasid* allows for a stronger function, namely by locking in the prohibitions of *fasad* and *israf* as constraint principles that prevent the normalisation of damage as a cost of development, placing *mizan* as an orientation for measurement and ecological boundaries, and shifting policy reasoning from ‘maximising benefits now’ towards ‘preserving ecological baselines’ that maintain the capacity for future life (Khalid, 2019; Mohamed, 2025). In other words, the *maqasid* approach in this context serves as a conceptual basis to shift the focus from human-centered utility to ecocentric constraint, while maintaining the methodological coherence of Islamic law.

Structurally, the reconstruction of *maqasid* towards ecocentric jurisprudence can be explained through three key correlations between the objectives of *Shariah*, the Qur’anic ontology, and the institutional memory of classical conservation. *Firstly*, at the methodological level, *maqasid* provides a grammar of justification that links environmental protection with the principles of the pursuit of benefits (*jalb al-masalih*), the prevention of harms (*dar’ al-mafasid*), and demands a reading of consequences (*i’tibar al-ma’alat*) so that claims of *maslahah* do not stop at short-term preferences. This is why cumulative and irreversible ecological damage can be positioned as a structural *mafsadah* that invalidates the legitimacy of extractive policies, even if they bring short-term economic benefits (Al-Raysuni, 2005; Behrendt, 2024; Kamali, 2003).

Secondly, at the normative ontological level, Qur’anic terminologies such as *mizan*, *amanah*, the prohibition of *fasad*, and respect for the earth as a framework for all creatures can shift the locus of evaluation from solely human interests towards the integrity of the ecological order. Therefore, ecocentrism is not constructed as an external ideology, but as a juridical elaboration of the principles of human limitations and accountability within the cosmic order (Khalid, 2019). *Thirdly*, at the institutional level, reconstruction will be fragile if it stops at norms; it requires institutional counterparts that transform norms into practice. Here, the classical Islamic conservation tradition provides important memory, for example, *hima*, *ihya’ al-mawat*, and *harim* as prototypes of protected areas, and *hisbah* as a mechanism for overseeing public interests, which can be reinterpreted as inspiration for modern ecological accountability design (Khaleel et al., 2024; Umam et al., 2024; Zawawi et al., 2025). The correlation of these three levels explains why ecocentric jurisprudence based on *maqasid* represents a restructuring of legal reasoning, shifting from short-term benefit calculations towards restrictions based on ecological *mafsadah* and maintaining balance as a trust across generations.

Institutional Pathways for Intergenerational Equity in Islamic Environmental Governance

Intergenerational equity will not be adequate if it is only positioned as an ethical horizon. This principle requires an institutional pathway that incorporates future interests into the architecture of public decision-making, particularly when an extraction logic, sectoral fragmentation, and weak compliance prevail in resource governance. At this point, the practical consequences of the typology of anthropocentrism become clear: without accountability mechanisms, Islamic ethics can easily become slogans, *fatwas* can become symbols, and the integration of Islamic jurisprudence and policy tends to be partial, thus insufficiently robust to withstand short-termism and burden shifting to future generations (Behrendt, 2024; Najemi and Rapik, 2024). Therefore, the institutional pathway offered by Islamic environmental governance should be understood as an effort to shift *maqasid* and the prohibitions of *fasad* from the narrative level to the level of compliance conditions, where procedures, authority, incentives, and oversight are built to compel public decisions to consider cross-decade impacts. Practically, weak enforcement, regulatory disharmony, limited central–regional coordination, and fiscal support constraints are variables that systematically hinder the effectiveness of environmental management. These variables ultimately determine whether the normative commitment to sustainability and future generations has practical efficacy or not (Maskun et al., 2025).

Structurally, the institutional pathways towards intergenerational equity within the context of Islamic environmental governance can be explained through three correlations: the mechanism of normative authority, the mechanism of compliance and supervision, and the mechanism of representation and participation. *Firstly*, normative authority requires an attachment between environmental ethics, *fiqh al-bi'ah*, and legal-policy instruments, to prevent dualism that separates religious legitimacy from the coercive power of regulation. Studies on green *fatwas* suggest that *fatwas* have the potential to serve as a channel of social legitimacy. However, their impact is limited unless they are integrated into policy design, compliance rules, and incentive structures (Mufid, 2020). *Secondly*, the mechanism of compliance and supervision necessitates a modern equivalent of the traditional *hisbah* as an institutional principle that mandates the prevention of public harm through routine and verifiable oversight. Without stable oversight mechanisms, prohibitions against *fasad* and *israf* will not deter extractive practices driven by economic and political interests (Zawawi et al., 2025).

Thirdly, the mechanism of representation requires the expansion of participation, including local communities and vulnerable groups, as well as the establishment of procedures that enable the interests of future generations to be represented in decision-making. The dynamics of climate litigation and the role of young actors demonstrate how the interests of future generations are often articulated through human rights and accountability, which in turn can strengthen the state's mandate to safeguard ecological

baselines as a public trust (Knappe and Renn, 2022; Kotzé and Knappe, 2023). These three pathways collectively explain that Islamic governance oriented towards intergenerational justice does not rely solely on moral awareness but also requires an institutional design that combines normative legitimacy, enforceable compliance, and participation that broadens decision-making horizons from current interests to cross-temporal responsibilities.

Conclusion

This article demonstrates that anthropocentrism in Islamic environmental jurisprudence does not appear as an explicit doctrine, but rather as a recurring pattern of legal reasoning in the way ecological issues are defined, normative objectives are prioritised, and institutional responses are designed. The identified typologies, such as instrumental-extractivist, normative-symbolic dualism, sectoral-coordinative fragmentation, and centralisation-participation deficit, explain why Islamic environmental ethics often stop at persuasive stewardship but remain weak as a stable legal standard. The shift from anthropocentric to ecocentric perspectives necessitates changes in reasoning modes and institutional architecture, rather than merely the addition of moral appeals, because without these, policies tend to perpetuate short-termism and shift ecological burdens to future generations.

By linking *maqasid* as a grammar of justification, the Qur'anic ontology (*mizan*, *amanah*, and prohibitions of *fasad*) as normative vocabulary, and classical institutional conservation memory (such as *hima* and the principle of *hisbah*) as an inspiration for accountability design, this article clarifies the conceptual pathway from ethics to a more operational jurisprudence. At the same time, mainstreaming intergenerational equity as a normative horizon informed by *maqasid* enriches the *fiqh al-bi'ah* agenda with a cross-temporal dimension that not only preserves the environment but also ensures that current policies do not damage ecological baselines, which are prerequisites for a dignified life for future generations.

The main limitation of this study is its reliance on normative-conceptual analysis; thus, it has not yet empirically tested how institutional actors, conflicts of interest, and variations in local contexts influence the transformation from ethics to truly binding legal reasoning. Additionally, the reading of classical conservation institutions in this article remains reconstructive, without comparative cross-regional or sectoral testing that could demonstrate the conditions of success and failure in modern governance. Therefore, further research is needed to expand the range of cases, such as water management, waste, mining, or forestry, incorporating more granular social dimensions, for example class, region, as well as gender and youth vulnerabilities, and integrating empirical methods to obtain a more comprehensive picture of compliance mechanisms, future interest representation, and the most effective institutional designs to support intergenerational environmental justice within an Islamic governance framework.

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