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Research Article

Bridging Ethics and Ecology: Fiqh as a Framework for Sustainable Environmental Management

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Abstract. In recent years, the global discourse on environmental crises has intensified, driven by frequent natural disasters and ecological changes exacerbated by human actions. Islamic teachings, encapsulated in the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasize stewardship of the environment and prohibit actions that cause harm or corruption on Earth. This article explores the concept of environmental fiqh, known as fiqh al-bi'ah, which integrates Islamic jurisprudence with ecological principles to guide sustainable environmental management. It highlights the normative basis of environmental conservation rooted in Qur'anic verses and Prophetic traditions that underscore the interconnectedness of creation and humanity's role as stewards (khalifah). Fiqh al-bi'ah addresses issues such as cleanliness (thaharah), land reclamation (ihya al-mawat), and ecosystem protection

(hima), aligning with the broader objectives (maqasid) of Islamic law. By elucidating these principles, this study underscores the ethical imperative of environmental preservation in Islam, offering a holistic framework to address contemporary environmental challenges and promote harmony between human activities and ecological integrity.

Keywords: Environmental Fiqh, Fiqh Al-Bi'ah, Islamic Environmental Ethics, Qur'an, Hadith

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, environmental crisis issues have become a hot topic that has been widely discussed by various groups. Natural disasters such as floods, landslides, droughts, and tsunamis are often the news in various media. Globally, the world has also experienced environmental changes, ranging from damage to the ozone layer, global warming (global warming) due to the greenhouse effect, ecological changes and so on.

In the Qur'an, Allah explicitly forbids humans to do damage in any form on the face of this earth, "And do not make corruption on earth after it has been reformed (by Allah) and pray to Him with fear (not to be accepted) and hope (will be granted). Indeed, the mercy of Allah is very close to the people who do good." (QS. Al-A'raf: 56).

However, explicitly, in the verse it is explained that all kinds of damage that occurs on the surface of this earth is the result of the actions of humans in interacting with their environment. "Damage has appeared on land and sea due to the actions of human hands, so that Allah may make them taste some of (the consequences) of their deeds, so that they may return (to the right path)" (QS. Ar-Rum: 41). This verse should be a material for reflection or introspection for humans as creatures who manage this earth by managing the environment as well as possible so that damage does not occur to the universe.

Currently, the environmental ethics held by traditional societies are being displaced by modern lifestyles that tend to be exploitative to obtain as much profit as possible. All parties are still fixated on short-term economic interests by continuing to drain natural resources, without considering the safety of humans themselves and the environment.

In this context, the formulation of environmental fiqh is important in order to provide enlightenment and a new paradigm that fiqh is not only centered on worship and ritual issues, but fiqh discussions actually also include rules that are in accordance with religious principles for various social realities of life that are developing.

Efforts to handle environmental damage have been carried out technically, but morally spiritually have not received enough attention and development. Therefore, understanding environmental problems and their handling needs to be placed on a moral foundation by collecting and compiling a number of principles, values, norms and legal provisions that are sourced from religious teachings.

Thus, efforts to overcome the environmental crisis that is now hitting the world are not merely technical, economic, political, and socio-cultural issues, but efforts to

resolve from various perspectives are needed, including one of which is the perspective of fiqh. Considering that fiqh is basically a "bridge" between ethics (human behavior) and legal norms for the safety of the universe (cosmos) this.

This article tries to highlight some environmental problems so that human survival can be maintained without causing damage. In addition, it will also explain the excavation of the formulation of fiqh on environmental management. What behaviors should be done and avoided according to the concept of fiqh in order to create the utilization and preservation of the environment in accordance with Islamic teachings.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Given the nature of my study, which primarily explores and elucidates Islamic principles related to environmental conservation, a qualitative research methodology is most appropriate. Specifically, a literature review approach would be the primary method for data collection and analysis.

The research will involve a systematic review of relevant literature to identify, analyze, and synthesize information on Islamic environmental ethics, fiqh principles, and their application to environmental management.

Data Collection

1. Primary Sources:
 - a. The Qur'an: A thorough examination of relevant verses that discuss environmental concepts, human responsibility, and stewardship.
 - b. Hadith (Prophetic traditions): Careful analysis of authentic Hadith that offer guidance on environmental protection, conservation, and ethical treatment of nature.
2. Secondary Sources:
 - a. Classical Fiqh Literature: Investigation of established fiqh texts and commentaries that address environmental issues such as cleanliness (thaharah), land reclamation (ihya al-mawat), and ecosystem protection (hima).
 - b. Contemporary Fiqh Literature: Review of modern works on environmental fiqh (fiqh al-bi'ah) to understand evolving interpretations and applications of Islamic principles to current environmental challenges.
 - c. Academic Publications: Exploration of scholarly articles, books, and dissertations that examine Islamic environmental ethics, sustainability, and the intersection of religion and ecology.

Data Analysis

1. **Thematic Analysis:** Identifying recurring themes and patterns in the literature to understand the key principles of Islamic environmental ethics and their implications for sustainable management.
2. **Comparative Analysis:** Comparing and contrasting different interpretations and applications of fiqh principles to environmental issues.

3. **Content Analysis:** Examining the specific language and terminology used in the Qur'an, Hadith, and fiqh literature to extract relevant environmental concepts and principles.
4. **Hermeneutic Analysis:** Interpreting the meaning and significance of Islamic texts in the context of contemporary environmental challenges.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Understanding Fiqh al-Bi'ah (Environmental Jurisprudence)

In Arabic, environmental jurisprudence is known as fiqh al-bi'ah, which consists of two words (compound sentence; mudhaf and mudhaf ilaih), namely fiqh and al-bi'ah. Linguistically, "fiqh" comes from the word faqiha-yafqihu-fiqhan which means al-fahmu (understanding). While in terms of terminology, fiqh is the science of practical sharia law derived from its detailed (tafshili) dalils.

The term "environment" in Arabic is identical to the word bi'ah, which comes from the word ba'a-yaba'u, meaning to return to a quiet place in the Arabic dictionary.⁶ While the meaning of the environment is the unity of space with all objects, forces, conditions and living creatures, including humans and their behavior, which affects the environment itself, the continuity of life and the welfare of humans and other living things.

From the above understanding, it can be concluded that fiqh al-bi'ah is Islamic rules that are sourced from detailed dalils regarding human behavior towards their environment in order to realize maslahah (benefit) and avoid damage.

Normative Basis of Environmental Conservation

Normative basis refers to the sources of Islamic teachings encapsulated in the Qur'an and Hadith. The companions unanimously agree on the authenticity of these sources as the normative foundation of Islamic teachings. Environmental fiqh within the perspective of Islamic teachings is imperative because both the Qur'an and Hadith implicitly and explicitly discuss environmental issues.

1. Environment in the Qur'an

The Qur'an contains numerous verses that address the environment, which are generally open to further development through ijihad towards more applicable fiqh laws.

a. Universe as evidence of Allah's existence and mercy

Several Qur'anic verses affirm that Allah created the universe as a manifestation of His mercy towards humanity. Allah created and maintains nature for the benefit of humans, making it a sign of His presence and power. Preserving the environment and ensuring its sustainability are therefore integral to the belief in tawhid. Conversely, any destructive behavior towards the environment is considered ingratitude (kufr) towards Allah.

The Qur'an extensively discusses the creation of nature as a means of sustenance, allowing humans to utilize it and thereby express gratitude to Allah. In Surah Al-Hijr (15:19-20), Allah states: "And We have spread out the earth and placed therein firmly set mountains and caused to grow therein [something] of every well-balanced thing. And We have made for you therein means of living

and [for] those for whom you are not providers." This highlights Allah's balanced provision for life's necessities according to the needs of living beings.

In Surah Al-A'raf (7:10), Allah affirms: "And We have certainly established you upon the earth and made for you therein ways of livelihood. Little are you grateful." At-Tabari explains that this verse underscores Allah's blessing upon humanity by providing a habitable planet.

b. Creation of water as the foundation of life

In Surah Al-Anbiya' (21:30), Allah declares: "And We made from water every living thing. Then will they not believe?" This verse emphasizes the vital role of clean water as essential for life. Any action jeopardizing clean water availability equates to endangering life itself. Quraish Shihab confirms that water is crucial in the formation of cells, essential for all living organisms, including plants and animals. Biologically, water serves as a critical component in metabolic processes and physiological functions, crucial for life's sustenance.

In Surah Ibrahim (14:32), Allah states: "He sends down from the sky rain and the valleys flow according to their capacity, and the torrent carries a rising foam. And from what they heat [of the metals] in the fire, desiring to make ornaments or utensils, [they go the substance of what they used to heat] with a molten water. Thus does Allah [he explained] the truth and guide them to the correct path." This verse underscores the significance of water as a key element in the earth, as an integral part of life and societal.

c. Creation of the sun and moon

In Surah Ibrahim (14:33), Allah mentions: "And He subjected for you the sun and the moon, continuous [in orbit], and subjected for you the night and the day." According to al-Biq'a'i, this verse illustrates how the regular cycles of the sun, moon, night, and day are essential for life on Earth. These cycles facilitate the growth of plants, fruits, and the sustenance of various life forms, demonstrating Allah's providence in sustaining life.¹⁴

d. Environmental Conservation as a Manifestation of Faith

Allah commands in Surah Al-A'raf (7:56): "And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. And invoke Him in fear and aspiration. Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good." This verse stresses the prohibition of causing harm or corruption to the earth after its balance has been established by Allah. It highlights the ethical obligation to preserve the environment as an act of worship and gratitude towards Allah.

e. Humanity as Stewards of Environmental Prosperity

Surah Al-An'am (6:165) states: "And it is He who has made you successors [khalifahs] upon the earth and has raised some of you above others in degrees [of rank] that He may test you through what He has given you. Indeed, your Lord is swift in penalty; but indeed, He is Forgiving and Merciful." This verse underscores human responsibility as stewards (khalifahs) entrusted with maintaining the

earth's balance and resources. It emphasizes accountability for utilizing natural resources responsibly and sustainably.

f. Human-caused Destruction on Earth

Surah Ash-Shura (42:30) warns: "And whatever strikes you of disaster - it is for what your hands have earned; but He pardons much." This verse reminds humans that calamities and disasters are often consequences of their own actions. It urges reflection on environmental degradation caused by human negligence or exploitation of natural resources.

In conclusion, the Qur'an provides a comprehensive framework for environmental ethics and conservation principles. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of all creation, the responsibilities of stewardship, and the consequences of environmental degradation. These teachings urge believers to act responsibly, maintain harmony with nature, and uphold justice and sustainability in all interactions with the environment.

2. Environment in the Hadith of the Prophet SAW

The Hadith of the Prophet also contains many values that instill the implementation of environmental preservation and maintenance, including:

a. Planting trees and plants is a form of charity

The Prophet SAW said:

"There is no Muslim who plants a tree or plants a plant, then it is eaten by birds, humans or animals, but he will receive a reward for charity."

b. Avoid defecating in water sources, roads and shaded areas

The Prophet SAW said:

"Beware of three things that cause curses; defecating in water sources (sources of water), in the middle of the road and in shady places."

These are just a few examples of the many Hadith that emphasize the importance of environmental protection. The Prophet SAW taught his followers to respect nature and to use it wisely. He also encouraged them to take care of the environment for the benefit of themselves and future generations.

Here are some additional examples of Hadith related to the environment:

"The world is a garden for believers, and a marketplace for the non-believers."
(Sahih Bukhari)

"Whoever plants a tree has planted Paradise." (Tirmidhi)

"There is no sin that is greater than the destruction of the Kaaba, except for shirk (associating partners with Allah)." (Sunan Abu Dawud)

These Hadith show that the Prophet SAW considered environmental protection to be a very important issue. He believed that it was the duty of Muslims to take care of the Earth and to use its resources wisely.

Environmental Conservation in the Perspective of Fiqh

Fiqh, one of the Islamic sciences (al-ulumul al-syar'iyah), plays a dominant role in the lives of Muslims. Fiqh broadly encompasses four sectors of regulation:

1. Rub'ul 'Ibadat: Governing the relationship between humans as creatures and Allah SWT as their Creator.
2. Rub'ul Muamalat: Regulating human interactions in society to fulfill daily life needs.
3. Rub'ul Munakahat: Managing human relationships within the family.
4. Rub'ul Jinayat: Establishing societal order to ensure safety and security in life.

According to Ali Yafie, these sectors manifest Allah's encompassing mercy (Q.S 7:156) and mark the mission of Prophet Muhammad (Q.S. 21:107), encapsulating the essence of Islam. Collectively, they regulate fundamental aspects of life to ensure cleanliness, health, prosperity, peace, and happiness in both the worldly and spiritual realms, often referred to as sa'adatuddarain.

In his book "Ri'ayatul Bi'ah fi Syari'atil Islam," Dr. Yusuf Qardhawi explains that fiqh shows significant concern for environmental issues. This concern is evident in classical fiqh literature, such as discussions on thaharah (cleanliness), ihya al-mawat (reclamation of abandoned land), al-musaqat and al-muzara'ah (utilization of others' land), laws pertaining to trade, ownership of water, fire, and salt, rights of domestic animals, and other related environmental matters around human life.

Thaharah (cleanliness) always receives primary attention in fiqh discussions, highlighting its critical importance. Thaharah in fiqh involves cleanliness from impurities (najis) and ritual impurities (hadats). There are two types of impurities: concrete and abstract. The means to purify these impurities are through clean water and pure soil. The ecological consequence of thaharah teachings is the obligation to safeguard clean water sources and land.

Ihya al-mawat involves procedures for reclaiming dormant land, and iqta' refers to granting land or mines by the ruler to individuals or groups deemed capable of managing them. These concepts were implemented during the lifetime of Prophet Muhammad, emphasizing the importance of managing abandoned lands for environmental conservation.

Hima refers to protecting a designated area to preserve its natural habitat, often used as free grazing lands to support livestock husbandry. During the time of Prophet Muhammad, areas like naqi' were designated as hima, and during the era of Umar ibn al-Khattab, syaraf and rabazah regions were also designated as hima. The practice of hima clearly relates to environmental conservation efforts.

Harim denotes forbidden (green) areas surrounding wells (harim al-bi'r), water sources (harim al-'ain), or along rivers (harim al-nahr). Islam is considered the most complete and perfect religion, regulating every aspect of life. Therefore, fiqh law, being derived from these comprehensive teachings, covers a wide range of issues. However, the completeness of Islamic law seems verbalistic because many contemporary issues, such as environmental concerns, were not specifically formulated by earlier scholars. Thus, the completeness of Islamic law should be understood contextually, according to its inherent nature.

Qardhawi emphasizes that environmental preservation aims to create benefit and prevent harm, aligning with maqasid al-Syari'ah (objectives of Islamic law) articulated in kulliyat al-khams: hifzu nafs (preserving life), hifzu aql (preserving

intellect), hifzu al-maal (preserving wealth), hifzu al-nasab (preserving lineage), and hifzu al-din (preserving religion). Protecting the environment is thus essential to safeguarding these five objectives of the Shariah. Any actions that harm the environment equate to endangering life, intellect, wealth, lineage, and religion.

Acts of environmental destruction and harm to others contradict fiqhi principles (al-Qawaid al-Fiqhiyyah), such as:

- a. La darar wa la dirar (no harm shall be inflicted or reciprocated).
- b. Al-dharar yuzal bi al-dharar (harm shall not be removed by a similar harm).
- c. Yuzal al-dharar al-adna li daf' al-dharar al-a'la (lesser harm may be tolerated to prevent greater harm).
- d. Yuzal al-dharar al-khas li daf' al-dharar al-'am (specific harm may be tolerated to prevent general harm).
- e. Al-dharar bara'atun min al-rukhas (avoiding harm takes precedence over seeking benefits).
- f. Dar' al-mafsadah muqaddam 'ala jalb al-masalih (preventing harm takes precedence over realizing benefits).

In the context of the environment, Qardhawi also affirms the application of discretionary punishments (al-ta'zir) for those who commit environmental destruction, as decreed by the government, in accordance with the hadith of Prophet Muhammad, which compares society to passengers on a ship. Those above should not hinder those below from accessing water, nor should those below bore holes to avoid inconvenience, as it risks the destruction of the entire ship and its passengers.

According to Sukarni, there are several fundamental concepts of environmental fiqh:

1. The concept of ri'ayah al-bi'ah as an integral concept of Islamic teachings. This implies that any action aimed at preserving and improving the environment is part of religious duty in Islam. Conversely, any destructive action against the environment constitutes a violation of Islamic teachings and is prohibited in fiqh.
2. The concept of collective obligation (fardhu kifayah) in preserving and improving the environment. This obligation requires collaborative efforts involving multiple stakeholders. Handling environmental issues necessitates the collective effort of scholars, governments, and communities. Implementing collective obligations requires sustained and systematic efforts from education on environmental issues to short, medium, and long-term program formulation, operationalization, monitoring, and enforcement of sanctions for violations.
3. Ecological obligations encompass all components, including maintaining ecosystem balance and sustainable utilization of natural and environmental resources. Ecosystem balance refers to the dynamic condition supported by ecological functions, ensuring optimum environmental sustainability in both physical and social realms.

In conclusion, the responsibility to protect the environment is a duty for all humanity, particularly Muslims. This duty is abundantly clarified in both the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and conversely, exploiting natural resources excessively and without limits will eventually harm humanity itself.

CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, I can conclude that firstly, the concept of environmental fiqh fundamentally represents a set of rules formulated by Islam to regulate utilization that is oriented towards environmental sustainability in accordance with the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. Secondly, the preservation of the environment must be understood based on the maqasid al-Syari'ah, which entails utilizing resources responsibly and preventing harm.

The principles of fiqh provide a structured approach to addressing environmental issues, emphasizing the ethical and moral responsibilities of individuals and communities towards the environment. By integrating these principles into contemporary environmental policies and practices, societies can strive towards achieving sustainable development while upholding Islamic values of stewardship and conservation.

In essence, environmental fiqh not only offers guidance for personal conduct but also serves as a comprehensive framework for fostering ecological balance, ensuring the well-being of current and future generations, and fulfilling the broader objectives of Islamic law. Embracing these principles can contribute significantly to global efforts aimed at protecting the planet and promoting harmonious coexistence between humans and the natural world.

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