

From Ecotheology to Green Victimology: Bridging Faith-Based Environmental Ethics and Victim-Centered Legal Paradigms for Ecological Justice

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Abstract

Global civilization is experiencing an unprecedented ecological crisis. It is driven by extractive economic activity and projects such as the Merauke National Calculated Project in Indonesia, which promotes the establishment of an intensive sugarcane plantation covering an area of 560,000 ha, posing a threat to biodiversity and Indigenous peoples. The PGI (Communion of Churches in Indonesia) opposed the project, with ecotheological reasons. Islamic thought also sees it as a duty to take care of nature, in the concept of khalifatul fil ardl (stewards of the earth). Morality and spirituality are incomplete without legal aspects.

Green victimology is introduced in this paper, a victim-centered legal study. Green victimology goes beyond human victims and includes non-humans (trees, rivers, and other plants and animals) and ecosystems as victims of environmental crime. Green victimology adopts normative legal research methods, using a theological-philosophical approach. The paper cites the Law Number 32/2009 concerning Environmental Protection and Management, Job Creation Law, PGI documents, Greenpeace reports, and classical theological sources of Islam and Christianity. The results show that ecotheology provides the moral awareness and spiritual responsibility, while green victimology offers legal instruments and a victim-centered approach to tackle environmental destruction. Implementing this integration faces structural barriers in Indonesia's positivist legal system. This article, therefore, proposes an operational framework for granting religious communities locus standi in environmental advocacy and extends the ecological justice framework to global contexts. This article recommendation combined both ecotheology and green victimology to construct an ecological justice framework for addressing the spiritual and structural dimensions of environmental violence in Indonesia and beyond.

KEYWORDS *Ecotheology, Green Victimology, Ecological Justice, Merauke Food Estate, Indigenous Rights*

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Introduction

The world is now facing an ecological crisis of an unprecedented scale and complexity. In the Anthropocene era, anthropogenic activities, especially coercive and extractive economic practices, have led to an increase in climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss and pollution posing a serious risk to environmental conditions for humanity and the survival of other life forms.¹ In Indonesia, this global crisis is translated into a series of state development policies that prioritize narratives of economic growth and food security over ecologically sustainable and Indigenous peoples' rights at the local and national level.² Indonesia's legal framework, particularly Law No. 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management and the Job Creation Law, shows that there are still major weaknesses in protecting environmental victims and ensuring ecological justice.

The Indonesian government's National Strategic Project (Proyek Strategis Nasional—PSN) in Merauke, South Papua, represents one of the most controversial manifestations of this development paradigm. The Merauke sugarcane plantation project, which targets an area of 560,000 hectares, equivalent to the size of the island of Bali, is being developed by a consortium of ten companies, nine of which are connected to two corporate groups with long track records in the palm oil industry. According to Greenpeace Indonesia's research published in December 2025 under the title "Sweet Promises, Bitter Reality: Inside the Merauke Sugarcane Project," clearing this natural vegetation could produce emissions equivalent to 221 million tonnes of CO₂, or as much as the annual emissions of 48 million cars. The same report states that within the last 18 months alone, land clearing by just two of the consortium's companies has destroyed more than 23,000 hectares of forests, savanna, and wetlands.³ The

¹ White, Rob. 2013. *Environmental Harm: An Eco-Justice Perspective*. Bristol: Bristol University Press.

² Green victimology as a new paradigm for protecting environmental victims, advocating for a victim-centered justice system that recognizes non-human entities (trees, rivers, animals, ecosystems) as legitimate victims. It is cited to highlight the inadequacy of anthropocentric legal frameworks in Indonesia. See Fernando, Zico Junius, & Cholidin, Achmad. 2025. *Green Victimology: Paradigma Baru Perlindungan Korban Lingkungan*. Jakarta: Kompas.

³ Greenpeace Indonesia. 2025. *Sweet Promises, Bitter Reality: Inside the Merauke Sugarcane Project*. Greenpeace Southeast Asia. <https://www.greenpeace.org/southeastasia/story/68196/inside-merauke-sugarcane-project/>, accessed 17 March 2026.

project has been accompanied by increased militarization, including the establishment of a new Regional Military Command estimated to house over 5,000 combat personnel in Merauke, which for Indigenous West Papuans evokes traumatic memories of the military's long history of brutal violence.⁴

The social and human rights impact of this project is just as severe as the environmental impact. There are concerns among indigenous groups like the Marind, Yei Nan and Muyu about losing their ancestral land rights, the effect on customary livelihoods and the question of whether their children will have a future.⁵ Grief at loss is not only material, but cultural and spiritual too. As one Marind woman, Rafaela, told environmental anthropologist Sophie Chao, "Free beings make free food. Forest foods taste of freedom. Moreover, nothing tastes as good as freedom."⁶ From the perspective of classical Islamic theology, the destruction of ancestral lands can also be understood as a form of *fasād fī al-ard*, corruption on earth, which the Qur'an strongly condemns. Al-Qurṭubī, for example, viewed the destruction of nature without justified need as a grave moral wrong.⁷ Similarly, classical Christian theology, particularly the writings of St. Augustine in *De Civitate Dei*, emphasizes that God's law orders all creation, and humans who disrupt that order commit a moral wrong against the Creator.⁸

In response to this situation, the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia—PGI) has taken a firm and unprecedented stance. Through its Full Workers Assembly (Sidang Majelis Pekerja Lengkap—MPL) held in Merauke in February 2026, PGI issued an official statement rejecting the National Strategic Project in Merauke. In its official press release dated February 5, 2026, PGI assessed that the Merauke Food Estate project "has ignored and violated the basic rights of Indigenous peoples to

⁴ PGI (Persekutuan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia). *PGI Tegaskan Penolakan terhadap PSN di Merauke dan Militerisme dalam Penutupan Sidang MPL 2026*, 2 Februari 2026, <https://pgi.or.id/news/warta-pgi/pgi-tegaskan-penolakan-terhadap-psn-dan-militerisme-dalam-penutupan-sidang-mpl-2026-di-merauke-273>, accessed 17 March 2026.

⁵ Zainurohmah, Zainurohmah, Salim Noer Mahmudi, and Jihan Alfarisi. "Ensuring Legal Certainty for Customary Law Communities in Indonesia: Analyzing the Ratification Process of the Customary Law Communities Bill." *Contemporary Issues on Interfaith Law and Society* 3, no. 1 (2024): 177–202. <https://doi.org/10.15294/ciils.v3i1.31395>.

⁶ Greenpeace Indonesia, *Sweet Promises, Bitter Reality*, 2025.

⁷ Al-Qurṭubī, Abu 'Abd Allah. 2006. *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*. Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Misriyyah.

⁸ Augustine. 2003. *The City of God*. Translated by Henry Bettenson. London: Penguin Books.

their land, territory, and culture, displaced communities from their ancestral lands, and threatened the ecological order entrusted by God to humanity."⁹ The assembly was deliberately held in Merauke "so that participants could see, hear, and experience directly the reality faced by Indigenous communities and local churches, including the complaints, laments, and even the 'crying of Papua's land and earth.'"¹⁰ The PGI documents also reference the theological concept of oikoumene (the whole inhabited earth), which aligns with the ecocentric vision of St. Francis of Assisi, who referred to all elements of nature as brothers and sisters.¹¹

PGI's rejection is grounded in what can be termed "ecological faith" or ecotheology, a theological framework that views environmental stewardship as an integral dimension of religious faith. In its official press release, PGI explicitly invoked theological reasoning: "True development must not sacrifice humans and God's created nature for the sake of economic interests that benefit a handful of parties. The Word of God reminds us: 'Learn to do good; seek justice, correct the oppressor; defend the rights of the orphan; plead the widow's cause' (Isaiah 1:17). In the light of God's word and the calling of faith to bring about justice, the church cannot remain silent when life, dignity, and God's creation are destroyed."¹²

This perspective aligns with the concept of khalifatul fil ardl (vicegerent on earth) in Islamic ecotheology, as articulated by prominent Indonesian Qur'anic scholar Prof. M. Quraish Shihab. In his Ramadan Quranic Exegesis titled "Caring for Nature, the Duty as Khalifah," Shihab affirmed that "humans on earth serve as khalifah who are tasked with preserving and prospering nature, not as greedy rulers who exploit natural resources limitlessly." He further explained

⁹ This is PGI's main press release rejecting the Merauke Food Estate. It states that the project violates Indigenous basic rights, displaces communities, and damages the ecological order entrusted by God. The release invokes Isaiah 1:17 and demands honest, equal, and dignified dialogue. See PGI, *Siaran Pers PGI Menolak Proyek Strategis Nasional (PSN) di Merauke Demi Keadilan, Martabat Manusia, dan Keutuhan Ciptaan*, 5 Februari 2026, <http://www.pgi.or.id/news/warta-pgi/siaran-pers-pgi-menolak-proyek-strategis-nasional-psn-di-merauke-demi-keadilan-martabat-manusia-dan-keutuhan-ciptaan-276>, accessed 17 March 2026.

¹⁰ PGI, *PGI Tegaskan Penolakan terhadap PSN di Merauke dan Militerisme dalam Penutupan Sidang MPL*, 2026.

¹¹ Pope Francis. 2015. *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

¹² PGI, *Siaran Pers PGI Menolak Proyek Strategis Nasional (PSN) di Merauke*, 2026.

that "the ecological crisis currently occurring cannot be separated from the misunderstanding of the khalifah concept. Many parties view the human position as a mandate to dominate and drain the earth's resources, whereas this mandate actually demands responsibility to maintain the balance of nature. The position of humans as leaders is not an authoritarian form toward nature. However, rather a responsibility from God to prosper and maintain harmony with nature."¹³ This Islamic ecotheology is deeply rooted in the works of classical scholars such as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (d. 1350), who in *Miftāḥ Dār al-Sa'ādah* argued that the entire earth is a mosque and that preserving its purity is an act of worship. Ibn Qayyim¹⁴ and al-Ghazali¹⁵ taught that harming any creature without just cause is a sin.

Although ecotheology offers a strong moral and spiritual basis for defending the environment, it cannot work effectively on its own without legal frameworks that can recognize ecological harm, protect those affected, and provide real remedies.¹⁶ In this context, green victimology becomes an important complement. Green victimology is a branch of criminology that focuses on victims of environmental harm, including both human and non-human victims such as trees, rivers, animals, and ecosystems. As articulated by Zico Junius Fernando and Achmad Cholidin in their work "Green Victimology: A New Paradigm for Environmental Victim Protection," green victimology advocates for a "victim-centered justice system" that prioritizes the needs and rights of

¹³ This online article presents Quraish Shihab's Ramadan exegesis on the Qur'anic concept of khalifatul fil ardl. He explains that humans are trustees, not greedy rulers, and that the ecological crisis stems from misunderstanding the khalifah mandate. It is the key Islamic ecotheological source in the paper. See M. Quraish Shihab, "Caring for Nature, the Duty as Khalifah (Ramadan Quranic Exegesis)," *NU Online*, 15 Maret 2026. <https://percobaan.nu.or.id/nasional/prof-quraish-shihab-tugas-manusia-sebagai-khalifah-bukan-penguasa-yang-serakah-eksploitasi-alam-Ow14F>, accessed 19 March 2026.

¹⁴ Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah. 2003. *Miftāḥ Dār al-Sa'ādah*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah.

¹⁵ Al-Ghazali, Abu Hamid. 2011. *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah.

¹⁶ This doctoral dissertation proposes a reformulation of legal protection policies for environmental crime victims based on green victimology and a victim-centered justice system. It is cited to argue that moral-spiritual frameworks alone are insufficient without robust legal protection. See Fernando, Zico Junius. 2024. Reformulasi Kebijakan Perlindungan Hukum Korban Tindak Pidana Lingkungan Berkonsep Green Victimology Berdasarkan Victim-Centered Justice System. Disertasi Doktor, Universitas Diponegoro. <https://eprints2.undip.ac.id/id/eprint/27673/>, accessed 21 March 2026.

victims, both human and non-human in environmental law enforcement.¹⁷ The approach is rooted in ecocentrism, which sees environmental entities as having intrinsic value apart from their instrumental or utilitarian value for humans, in contrast to the anthropocentrism that has traditionally dominated victimological studies.¹⁸

The limitations of Indonesia's existing legal frameworks become apparent when viewed through the lens of green victimology. While Law No. 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management (UU PPLH) has been considered relatively progressive, Fernando's doctoral research demonstrates that Indonesia's legal protection policies for victims of environmental crimes have not fully adopted the green victimology concept based on a victim-centered justice system.¹⁹ Specifically, UU PPLH still focuses primarily on human interests and lacks provisions for recognizing non-human victims, such as ecosystems, as subjects of legal protection.²⁰ The Omnibus Law on Job Creation (UU Cipta Kerja) has been criticized for weakening environmental protections and representing a "regression in ecological justice."²¹ The Omnibus Law revised dozens of environmental provisions, including reducing penalties for environmental crimes and simplifying the permitting process for projects that affect forests and Indigenous lands.

Thus far, scholarly literature has examined ecotheology and green victimology largely in isolation from one another, as evidenced by several key studies: Runtuwene explores how Indonesian Protestant congregations integrate ecological stewardship into theology and liturgy but does not engage with legal paradigms for protecting environmental victims;²² Fernando and Cholidin

¹⁷ Fernando and Cholidin, *Green Victimology*, 2025.

¹⁸ White, *Environmental Harm*, 2013.

¹⁹ Fernando, *Reformulasi Kebijakan Perlindungan Hukum Korban Tindak Pidana Lingkungan*, 2024.

²⁰ Angkasa, "Green Victimology Perspective the Law Number 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management," *Jurnal Media Hukum*, 27, No. 2 (2020): 7–40, <https://doi.org/10.18196/jmh.20200153>.

²¹ Fernando and Cholidin, *Green Victimology*, 2025.

²² Ecotheology within Indonesian Protestant congregations, showing how faith communities integrate environmental stewardship into theology and liturgy. It remains within religious studies and does not engage with legal paradigms such as green victimology. See H. C. M. Runtuwene, "Ecotheology: Integrating Faith, Creation Care, and Contextual Practice in Indonesian Protestant Congregations," *Educatio Christi*, 6, No. 1 (2025): 145–170, <https://doi.org/10.70796/educatio-christi.v6i1.215>.

systematically develop green victimology as a victim-centered legal framework recognizing non-human entities, yet they operate entirely within criminology and law without reference to religious ethics;²³ Edirisinghe attempts to bridge Sinhalese Buddhist worldviews with the legal personhood of rivers, but this integration remains confined to a single religious tradition and a specific legal mechanism, and it does not apply green victimology to state-sponsored development projects;²⁴ McDonnell analyzes the Merauke food estate as a form of ecologically induced genocide against the Malind Anim people, but his analysis draws primarily on political ecology and genocide studies rather than synthesizing ecotheology with green victimology;²⁵ and Hartiwiningsih et al. examine corporate criminal liability for environmental harm from an ecological justice perspective, yet their focus on restorative sanctions and corporate accountability does not incorporate the theological or spiritual dimensions of ecotheology.²⁶ Collectively, these works confirm that ecotheology is primarily discussed within theological and religious studies frameworks while green victimology remains confined to criminological and legal studies, with few if any systematic attempts to bridge the two paradigms, and concrete case studies that

²³ Fernando and Cholidin, *Green Victimology*, 2025.

²⁴ Bridge Buddhist worldviews with legal personhood for rivers. Although it integrates religion and law, it focuses on a single tradition and a specific mechanism, not on green victimology or state-induced ecological harm in Indonesia. Asanka Edirisinghe, "The Intersection of Sinhalese Buddhist Worldviews and the Legal Personhood and Rights of Rivers," *Griffith Law Review*, 34, No. 1 (2025): 78–106, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10383441.2025.2526954>.

²⁵ The Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE) as a case of ecologically induced genocide against the Malind Anim people. It shows how state-sponsored mega-projects produce collective victimization encompassing both human and ecological harm through land expropriation, environmental destruction, and militarization. See John E. McDonnell, "The Merauke Integrated Food and Energy Estate (MIFEE): An Ecologically Induced Genocide of the Malind Anim," in *The Genocide-Ecocide Nexus*, ed. Damien Short and Martin Crook (London: Routledge, 2022), 80–95, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003253983-6>.

²⁶ This study analyzes corporate criminal liability and ecological justice, advocating for restorative sanctions and recognition of nature's rights. It remains within legal studies and does not incorporate ecotheology or faith-based ethics. See Hartiwiningsih et al., "Optimization of Criminal Sanctions against Corporations in Restoring Environmental Functions: An Ecological Justice Study," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 1537, No. 1 (2025): 012065, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1537/1/012065>.

simultaneously apply both frameworks to analyze state-induced ecological harm and Indigenous rights violations remain scarce. This article aligns with the interfaith legal approach advocated by Lestari et al., who argue that the persistent failure to achieve substantive justice in Indonesia is not merely a problem of weak policy implementation but a consequence of normative dissonance among state law, religious norms, and social practices.²⁷

Table 1. Comparison of Ecotheology and Green Victimology Paradigms

Aspect	Ecotheology	Green Victimology
Primary discipline	Theology, religious ethics	Criminology, environmental law
Focus	Moral, spiritual, and ecological awareness	Legal, procedural, victim protection
View of nature	Nature as God's creation with intrinsic value (stewardship / khalifah)	Nature as an entity that can be a victim of crime (non-human victims)
Approach to justice	Justice as a moral and spiritual obligation	Justice as procedural right and restoration
Main critique	Exploitation of nature as ecological sin (fasād fī al-ard)	Legal anthropocentrism that ignores non-human victims
Key sources	Scripture, exegesis, encyclicals, church documents	Laws, court decisions, criminological theory
Application example	PGI's rejection of Merauke project based on Isaiah 1:17	Recognition of trees, rivers, ecosystems as victims in environmental disputes

Source: Compiled by authors based on Runtuwene; Fernando & Cholidin; Angkasa; Shihab; PGI.

²⁷ Lestari, Eta Yuni, Ani Purwanti, Ratna Herawati, Danang Puji Atmojo, and Meidi Saputra. "Inclusive Education, Disability, and Interfaith Justice: Legal and Religious Barriers in Plural Indonesian Society," *Contemporary Issues on Interfaith Law and Society*, 4, No. 2 (2025): 265–288. <https://doi.org/10.15294/ciils.v4i2.32547>.

The novelty of this paper lies precisely in its effort to bridge ecotheology and green victimology as complementary frameworks for achieving ecological justice. To operationalize this novelty, this article proposes that green victimology can provide religious communities with *locus standi* (legal standing) in environmental advocacy. Specifically, faith-based organizations such as PGI, Muhammadiyah, and Nahdlatul Ulama could be recognized as legitimate representatives of non-human victims (ecosystems, rivers, forests) before Indonesian courts, drawing on the theological principle of stewardship (*khalifatul fil ardl* and *oikoumene*). It would require amending Article 92 of Law No. 32/2009 to explicitly include religious communities as parties entitled to file environmental lawsuits on behalf of nature. This paper argues that ecotheology offers the moral awareness and spiritual encouragement needed to protect the environment. At the same time, green victimology provides the legal instruments and a victim-centered perspective required to turn that moral concern into concrete, enforceable legal claims. Through the Merauke food estate case, the paper shows how faith-based environmental ethics can shape and strengthen legal advocacy for ecological justice and, at the same time, how green victimology can give legal form to the ethical demands of ecotheology.

Method

This study has three main objectives. First, it examines ecotheology as a religious response to state-driven ecological crises, particularly through the views of PGI, Quraish Shihab, and major Islamic and Christian thinkers such as al-Ghazali, Ibn Qayyim, al-Qurṭubī, Augustine, Francis of Assisi, and Pope Francis. Second, it analyzes green victimology as a victim-centered legal approach to ecological harm, including its theoretical foundations and its relevance within the Indonesian legal framework, especially Law No. 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management and the Job Creation Law. Third, it proposes an integrated framework that connects the two approaches to advance ecological justice, while also identifying structural barriers to implementation and extending its relevance globally.²⁸

²⁸ Indraswara, Dede. "Rekonstruksi Metodologis Hukum: Diversifikasi dan Integrasi Penelitian Hukum Normatif (Doktrinal), Empiris (Non-Doktrinal), dan Studi Sosio-Legal. Legal Methodological Reconstruction: Diversification and Integration of Normative

This research uses normative legal research combined with a theological-philosophical approach through library study. Its primary legal materials include Law No. 32 of 2009, the Job Creation Law, and relevant court decisions, while its secondary materials include books, journal articles, official PGI documents, Greenpeace reports, Qur'anic interpretation in *Tafsir Al-Misbah* by Quraish Shihab, and writings of classical Islamic and Christian scholars. The data are analyzed using descriptive-comparative methods and legal hermeneutics. This article is structured in several parts, beginning with ecotheology as a faith-based response and continuing with green victimology as a victim-centered legal framework.

Result & Discussion

A. Ecotheology as a Faith-Based Response to State-Induced Ecological Crisis

The worsening environmental damage in Indonesia, as seen in the Merauke National Strategic Project, has prompted a strong response from religious communities. This response, which is sometimes called ecotheology, is one way to articulate the intersection between religion, environmental ethics and public policy. While the Church has long recognized the threat to creation in our world, faith perspectives have been called not only for the mobilization of moral agency, but also a fundamental critique of development models that prioritize economic extraction over ecological and social well-being. Ecotheology has been used in Indonesia as a framework for challenging government policies that sacrifice the environment and communities to make way for progress, such as with Law No. Law Number 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management is interpreted this way because it provides the right to a good and healthy environment. It does not explicitly have ecocentric values based on religion. PGI (and other religious organizations) have also criticized the Omnibus Law for apparently prioritizing investment and economic growth over environmental sustainability.

(Doctrinal), Empirical (Non-Doctrinal), and Socio-Legal Research.” IPMHI Law Journal 5, no. 2 (2025): 205–246. <https://doi.org/10.15294/ipmhi.v5i2.41599>

Table 2. Indonesian Environmental Legal Framework: Law No. 32/2009 vs. Omnibus Law (Job Creation La

Aspect	Law No. 32/2009 (PPLH)	Omnibus Law (Job Creation)
Philosophy	Ecocentrism (recognises intrinsic value of environment)	Economic anthropocentrism (priority on investment)
Recognition of non-human victims	Not explicit	None
Criminal sanctions for environmental crimes	Yes, including license revocation	Reduced (lower penalties)
Environmental impact assessment (EIA/AMDAL)	Mandatory with public participation	Can be shortened for National Strategic Projects (PSN)
Indigenous rights	Limited recognition	Ignored in practice
Main criticism	Weak enforcement	Regression of ecological justice

Source: Compiled by authors based on Angkasa; Fernando & Cholidin; Fernando; Greenpeace Indonesia; PGI.

In Indonesia, ecotheology has developed in different ways across religious traditions. Within Christian communities, especially Protestant ones, a more integrated eco-theological approach has emerged by bringing together ideas of stewardship, the interconnectedness of God, humanity, and creation, and a liberation-oriented concern for the environment. A theological perspective encourages an eco-spirituality that goes beyond a concern for nature to being an active expression of worship and environmental action. A study of Protestant churches in Indonesia found that such eco-spirituality provided a theological basis for the churches' involvement in habitat restoration and green liturgy, along with the promotion of sustainability.²⁹ Classical Christian theology may also be used to justify the view, Thomas Aquinas argued that all creatures have intrinsic value because they partake in God's goodness.³⁰

²⁹ Runtuwene, *Ecotheology*, 2025

³⁰ Aquinas, Thomas. 1947. *Summa Theologica*. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. New York: Benziger Bros.

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Within Islamic ecotheology in Indonesia, the concept of *khalifatul fil ardl* (vicegerency on earth) serves as the central theological foundation. According to Efendi and Syahminan, Islam views humans as caliphs on earth who are responsible for maintaining and preserving nature.³⁴ The principles of justice, balance, and sustainability are the main foundations in the utilization of natural resources. The prohibition against environmental damage and waste of resources is very relevant to addressing contemporary ecological crises.³⁵ Classical Islamic interpretation, especially in the *tafsir* of al-Qurṭubī, contains a rich environmental ethic that highlights stewardship, sustainability, responsibility to future generations, and spiritual accountability.³⁶ Revisiting these classical

³¹ Hendry Corneles Mamengko Runtuwene, "Ecotheology: Integrating Faith, Creation Care, and Contextual Practice in Indonesian Protestant Congregations," *Educatio Christi* 6, no. 1 (2025): 145–170. <https://doi.org/10.70796/educatio-christi.v6i1.215>

³² Runtuwene, *Ecotheology*, 2025

³³ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1947

³⁴ Alhusna Efendi and Mhd Syahminan, "Natural Resource Management According to The Quran From The Perspective of Environmental Issues (Al Misbah Interpretation Study)," *Academy of Education Journal* 15, no. 2 (2024): 1656–1666. <https://jurnal.ucy.ac.id/index.php/fkip/article/view/2570>

³⁵ Alhusna Efendi and Mhd Syahminan, *Natural Resource Management*, 2024.

³⁶ Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, 2006. See also Fahim Khasani, "Khilāfah, taskhīr, and sustainability: Reconstructing Islamic eco-theology through Al-Qurṭubī's *tafsir*," *ISTIFHAM: Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 2 (2025): 100–111. <http://repository.uin-malang.ac.id/24582/>

interpretations is important not only for understanding the Islamic intellectual tradition, but also for drawing normative guidance for today's ecological crisis. These teachings offer an alternative framework for contemporary environmental ethics by reaffirming the sacred relationship between God, humanity, and nature.³⁷ Local Muslim activists have articulated ecological theology while engaging Indonesia's Green Constitution (Article 28H of the 1945 Constitution) as a national legal framework, demonstrating how theological principles can inform environmental policy.³⁸

The figure of the 'Green Imam' has emerged as a religious leader advocating environmental ethics, shaping community-based climate change mitigation in Indonesian mosques through theological foundations of Islamic eco-ethics, mobilizing environmental awareness, and evaluating community responses to mosque-based climate initiatives.³⁹ The Qur'anic idea of *ummah* (community) renders legible what are otherwise intractable problems in climate and sustainability ethics regarding justice for future generations, or 'nonidentities,' that is, generations who are yet to face climate danger. It has wider implications for morality regarding communities that are invisible and erased in human and more-than-human worlds in Southeast Asia and beyond.⁴⁰

In Catholic teaching, the concept of the *Imago Dei* (the idea that human beings are made in the image of God) has a major ethical dimension in relation to the environmental crisis. Taking care of the environment and being an image of

³⁷ Fahim Khasani, "Khilāfah, taskhīr, and sustainability: Reconstructing Islamic eco-theology through Al-Qurṭubī's tafsīr," *ISTIFHAM: Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 2 (2025): 100–111. <http://repository.uin-malang.ac.id/24582/>

³⁸ Bakhruddin Fannani, Siti Rohmah, A. Samsul Ma'arif, and Nur Arifuddin, "Aswaja and Al-Ma'un Theology in Brantas River Preservation: Local Muslim Environmental Activism and Indonesia's Green Constitution," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 15, no. 2 (2025): 350–377. <https://jurnalfuf.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/teosofi/article/view/3361>

³⁹ Nurul Huda, Amin Zaki, and Faisal Razak, "The Green Imam: An Analysis of Eco-Theology and Community-Based Climate Change Mitigation in Indonesian Mosques," *Islamic Studies in the World* 2, no. 3 (2025): 110–124. <https://doi.org/10.70177/isw.v2i3.2672>

⁴⁰ Muhammad Prasetiawan, "Climate, Sustainability, and Future Generations: An Ecotheology for Indonesia's Ummah of 'Nonidentity'," *Studia Islamika* 32, no. 1 (2025): 1–28. <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v32i3.46657>

God cannot be separated from each other.⁴¹ This understanding has been applied in various settings, including sustainable social forestry, where principles of stewardship, biodiversity protection, and justice are combined with ecotheological insights. Experiences from Catholic and Protestant initiatives in Indonesia show that religious values can play a meaningful role in environmental conservation.⁴² Greenpeace reports also indicate that faith-based conservation efforts are often more effective than state-led programs because they can build on local moral authority and community trust.⁴³

Within Islamic ecotheology in Indonesia, the concept of *khalifatul fil ardl* (vicegerency on earth) serves as the central theological foundation. According to Efendi and Syahminan, Islam views humans as caliphs on earth who are responsible for maintaining and preserving nature. The principles of justice, balance, and sustainability are the main foundations for the utilization of natural resources. The prohibition against environmental damage and waste of resources is very relevant to addressing contemporary ecological crises.⁴⁴ Classical Islamic interpretation, especially in the tafsir of al-Qurṭubī, contains a rich environmental ethic that highlights stewardship, sustainability, responsibility to future generations, and spiritual accountability.⁴⁵ Revisiting these classical interpretations is important not only for understanding the Islamic intellectual tradition, but also for drawing normative guidance for today's ecological crisis. These teachings offer an alternative framework for contemporary environmental ethics by reaffirming the sacred relationship between God, humanity, and

⁴¹ The doctrine of *Imago Dei* (humans as God's image) provides the foundation for Christian environmental ethics, making environmental responsibility inseparable from human vocation. See R. Silitonga and Y. Belo, "Imago Dei as the Foundation of Christian Ethics in Addressing the Ecological Crisis in Indonesia," *Verbum et Ecclesia*, 46, No. 1 (2025): a3604, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v46i1.3604>.

⁴² This article examines how local Muslim activists in Indonesia use *Aswaja* (Nahdlatul Ulama) and *Al-Ma'un* (Muhammadiyah) theologies to engage with Indonesia's Green Constitution for river preservation, shifting from anthropocentric to ecocentric movements. See B. Fannani et al., "Aswaja and Al-Ma'un Theology in Brantas River Preservation: Local Muslim Environmental Activism and Indonesia's Green Constitution," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam*, 15, No. 2 (2025): 350–377, <https://jurnalfuf.uinsa.ac.id/index.php/teosofi/article/view/3361>.

⁴³ Greenpeace Indonesia, *Sweet Promises*, 2025

⁴⁴ A. Efendi and M. Syahminan, *Natural Resource Management*, 2024

⁴⁵ Al-Qurṭubī, *Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī*, 2006

nature.⁴⁶ Local Muslim activists have articulated ecological theology while engaging Indonesia's Green Constitution (Article 28H of the 1945 Constitution) as a national legal framework, demonstrating how theological principles can inform environmental policy.⁴⁷

The figure of the "Green Imam" has emerged as a religious leader advocating environmental ethics, shaping community-based climate change mitigation in Indonesian mosques through theological foundations of Islamic eco-ethics, mobilizing environmental awareness, and evaluating community responses to mosque-based climate initiatives.⁴⁸ The Qur'anic idea of ummah (community) renders legible what are otherwise intractable problems in climate and sustainability ethics regarding justice for future generations, or "non-identities," that is, generations who are yet to face climate danger. It has wider implications for morality regarding communities that are invisible and erased in human and more-than-human worlds in Southeast Asia and beyond.⁴⁹

Table 3. Classical and Modern Theologians and Their Contributions to Ecotheology

Theologian	Tradition	Key Work / Concept	Contribution to Ecotheology
Al-Ghazali	Islam	Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn	Harming any creature without cause is a sin

⁴⁶ This article reconstructs Islamic ecotheology from the classical tafsir of al-Qurṭubī (d. 1272), analyzing concepts of khalifah, taskhīr, and prohibition of fasād to develop a contemporary environmental ethic. See F. Khasani, "Khilāfah, taskhīr, and sustainability: Reconstructing Islamic eco-theology through Al-Qurṭubī's tafsir," *ISTIFHAM: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 3, No. 2 (2025): 100–111, <http://repository.uin-malang.ac.id/24582/>.

⁴⁷ Fannani et al., *Aswaja and Al-Ma'un Theology*, 2025

⁴⁸ Introduces the figure of the "Green Imam" as a religious leader advocating environmental ethics and shaping community-based climate mitigation in Indonesian mosques. See N. Huda, A. Zaki, and F. Razak, "The Green Imam: An Analysis of Eco-Theology and Community-Based Climate Change Mitigation in Indonesian Mosques," *Islamic Studies in the World*, 2, No. 3 (2025): 110–124, <https://doi.org/10.70177/isw.v2i3.2672>.

⁴⁹ This article uses the Qur'anic concept of ummah to address justice for future generations ("nonidentities") who cannot be identified as specific individuals in current legal systems. See M. Prasetiawan, "Climate, Sustainability, and Future Generations: An Ecotheology for Indonesia's Ummah of 'Nonidentity'," *Studia Islamika*, 32, No. 1 (2025): 1–28, <https://studiislamika.ppimcensis.or.id/index.php/studia-islamika/article/view/46657>.

Ibn Qayyim	Islam	Miftāḥ Dār al-Sa'ādah	The whole earth is a mosque; keeping it pure is worship
Al-Qurṭubī	Islam	Tafsīr al-Qurṭubī	Fasād fī al-ard (corruption on earth) is a grave sin
Augustine	Christian	De Civitate Dei	All creation is ordered by God's law
Francis of Assisi	Christian	Canticle of the Sun	Nature as brother and sister
Thomas Aquinas	Christian	Summa Theologica	All creatures have intrinsic value because they participate in God's goodness
Pope Francis	Christian	Laudato Si'	Integral ecology: interconnected environmental, social, spiritual crises
M. Quraish Shihab	Islam	Tafsir Al-Misbah	Humans as stewards, not greedy rulers, of nature

Source: Compiled by authors based on al-Ghazali; Ibn Qayyim; al-Qurṭubī; Augustine; Pope Francis; Aquinas; Shihab; Khasani.

The side event organized by the World Council of Churches and Franciscans International during the 61st session of the UN Human Rights Council focused on the grave human rights and environmental implications of Indonesia's Merauke National Strategic Project, noting that the project area overlaps with 858,000 hectares of natural forests and peatlands that support unique biodiversity, some found nowhere else on earth. The event also noted that the region is home to thousands of Indigenous West Papuans whose customary lands and livelihoods are directly affected, with land clearing beginning in May 2024 already destroying customary forests and critical ecosystems.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ This WCC side event report highlights the human rights and environmental implications of the Merauke project, noting overlap with 858,000 hectares of natural forests and peatlands with unique biodiversity. See World Council of Churches, *Human Rights in Indonesia – The Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment*, WCC Events, 4 Maret 2026, <https://www.oikoumene.org/events/human-rights-in-indonesia-the-right-to-a-clean-healthy-and-sustainable-environment>, accessed 23 March 2026.

The ecotheological response to the Merauke project also resonates with broader interfaith environmental justice movements in Indonesia. Research on the mutually reinforcing relations between climate change and interfaith harmony has found that interfaith communities can advocate for a more critical society by addressing national development that intersects with environmental interests. The shift from a faith-based approach to an interfaith-based approach represents a more effective environmental peacebuilding effort, with bottom-up initiatives executed in the frame of interfaith cooperation demonstrating that the role of local communities is increasingly significant in environmental peacebuilding efforts in Indonesia.⁵¹ The Muhammadiyah environmental theology for climate justice, articulated through festivals carrying the theme "Ecotheology for Climate Justice," has become an event of cross-religious and cross-culture dialogue that brings together hundreds of youth, environment activists, academics, and religious figures across Indonesia.⁵² This movement emphasizes togetherness and environmental stewardship as core religious commitments.

Crucially, the ecotheological response to state-induced ecological crisis also functions as a corrective consciousness, a theological framework that critiques not only individual environmental sins but also the structural and systemic dimensions of ecological destruction. The ecotheologies of PGI, Muhammadiyah, and Nahdlatul Ulama collectively answer the dominant economic view of the nature of environmental damage as nature and Indigenous peoples as empty objects of extraction and development, respectively. The PGI's use of the phrase "honest, equal, and dignified dialogue" with regard to Indigenous peoples, in particular, reminds all parties to treat Indigenous peoples as subjects of development, and not merely as objects of environmental policies. In this way, ecotheology provides not only a moral justification for the struggle, but also a wider view of development that respects human dignity and nature. Law No. 32/2009, when read together with the criticisms of religious legal scholars and the law's requirements for AMDAL and public participation have only been poorly implemented and constrained, especially in PSN, where economic

⁵¹ A. N. Khaira and M. A. Ranti, "A Crisis for Peace?: Climate Change, Environmental Peacebuilding, and Interfaith Harmony in Indonesia," *JLAST: Journal of Law and Social Transformation*, 2, No. 1 (2024): 8–22, <https://doi.org/10.62527/jlast.2.1.6>.

⁵² Muhammadiyah, "Muhammadiyah Affirms Environmental Theology for Climate Justice," *Muhammadiyah Official Website*, 14 Oktober 2025, <https://en.muhammadiyah.or.id>, accessed 17 March 2026.

considerations have been prioritized over procedural safeguards.⁵³ The Omnibus Law also diluted these safeguards by streamlining the permitting process and limiting access to judicial review against the issued permits.⁵⁴

The ecotheological response to the Merauke food estate project shows how religious communities in Indonesia are using their theological traditions to respond to state-led ecological problems. Based on these traditions and consolidated through worship and institutional networks, they provide an understanding of ecological justice that is not only a state policy but also a meaningful religious and moral obligation. The role of faith is to offer moral support to resist environmentally destructive projects, and an alternative to extractive development models that continue to threaten Indonesia's environment and Indigenous people who depend upon it for their survival.

B. Green Victimology: A Victim-Centered Legal Paradigm for Ecological Harm

In law and social sciences, green victimology has emerged as a conceptual expansion of customary victimology to the field of environmentally harmful events. Historically, victimology has focused mostly on human victims, reflecting a long-standing anthropocentric model in which humans are the main legal subjects of protection. Non-human victims of harm (plants, animals, natural environments) have often been neglected by customary victimology. In response to this gap, green victimology emerged to define victimization in a way that is broad enough to include all members of the ecological community.⁵⁵ As Angkasa argues, the change from victimological perspectives with an anthropocentric focus to ecocentric ones reflects the understanding of the impact of environmental destruction, and that environmental crimes impose victims that are not fully recognized by customary legal systems.⁵⁶ A key contribution of the green victimology perspective is that human and non-human

⁵³ Fernando, *Reformulasi Kebijakan*, 2024

⁵⁴ Fernando and Cholidin, *Green Victimology*, 2025

⁵⁵ This article explores tensions and interplay between human and non-human environmental victims, arguing that both deserve recognition within an eco-justice framework. See White, "Green victimology and non-human victims," *International Review of Victimology*, 24, No. 2 (2018): 17–36, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0269758017747487>.

⁵⁶ Angkasa, *Green Victimology Perspective*, 2020

victims in environmental harm have the right to protection, restoration, and compensation.⁵⁷ Oktobrian and Basuki likewise note that this perspective has not yet been fully reflected in Indonesian legislation, but its application is increasingly urgent to strengthen the country's environmental protection.⁵⁸ When Law No. 32/2009 is examined from this perspective, Angkasa argues that despite having some ecocentric features in that Law 32 of 2009 recognizes the right of a healthy environment to exist, this law is largely anthropocentric in its enforcement because it prioritizes protecting people and property over protecting the health of ecosystems.⁵⁹

The theoretical foundations for green victimology can be traced to the field of green criminology, developed in the early 1990s in response to mainstream criminology's inadequacy for addressing environmental harm and injustice. Setyawati identifies the core focus of the field as the injustices and environmental harms caused by extractive industries and extractive state policies in the Global South.⁶⁰ Green criminology also defines crime victims as including non-human animals and ecosystems. As part of the environmental justice field, green criminology adds to work on how the law (or lack thereof) responds to environmental harm caused by industries and governments.⁶¹ White sets the

⁵⁷ This thesis identifies the basic ideas of green victimology: all ecosystem members have equal intrinsic value, victims include humans and non-humans, and causation includes both direct destruction and illegal activities. See D. P. R. W. Kusuma, *Ida Dasar Green Victimology dalam Kebijakan Penal Mengenai Kriminalisasi, Pertanggungjawaban Pidana dan Pemidanaan Undang-undang Bidang Lingkungan Hidup* (Thesis, Universitas Islam Indonesia, 2024), <https://dspace.uui.ac.id/handle/123456789/49601>, accessed 21 March 2026.

⁵⁸ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, Widunandi, Rino, Dwiki Oktobrian, and Fernando Basuki. 2024. "Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis Sebagai Keadilan Terhadap Lingkungan Dalam Perspektif Green Victimology." *Literasi Hukum*, 8(2): 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.31002/lh.v8i2.2011>.

⁵⁹ Angkasa, *Green Victimology Perspective*, 2020

⁶⁰ This article applies green criminology to Indonesia's energy policies, revealing injustices perpetuated by powerful figures and reinforced since colonial times. See D. Setyawati, "Injustice and Environmental Harm in Extractive Industries and Solar Energy Policies in Indonesia," *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, 11, No. 1 (2022): 14–27, <https://doi.org/10.5204/ijcjsd.1975>.

⁶¹ This news report summarizes a guest lecture on green criminology, emphasizing that legal systems must address ecological harm caused by powerful industries or state actors. See Undiknas University International Office, *Undiknas University Explores Environmental Justice through Green Criminology Guest Lecture*, 5 Juni 2025,

foundation of eco justice out as follows: environmental justice focuses on human victims of environmental harm, species justice focuses on non-human animal victims of environmental harm, and ecological justice focuses on victims of environmental harm as ecosystems.⁶² This foundation is important to this framework, as it identifies environmental crime as having more than one victim. Environmental harm, which affects people, animals, and ecosystems, is the concern of criminology studies of environmental harm.⁶³ Setyawati applies green criminology to Indonesian energy policies as reflecting patterns of injustice for people and the environment, often supported by the actions of powerful actors and structures that have their roots in colonialism. It has also gained status at the international level as ecocide.⁶⁴ Scholars such as Killean and Newton note that proposed definitions of ecocide for the International Criminal Court reflect a more ecocentric understanding of harm, one that sees the environment not merely as something valuable for human use, but as a victim in its own right.⁶⁵

One of the most significant contributions of green victimology is its reconceptualization of victim status to include non-human entities. White explores the tensions and interplay between human and non-human environmental victims, arguing that both deserve recognition within an eco-justice framework. The philosophical foundation of this expansion lies in ecocentrism, which holds that environmental entities have intrinsic value in virtue of their own interests, apart from their instrumental or utilitarian value to humans. Kusuma identifies the basic ideas of green victimology as recognizing that all ecosystem members have equal intrinsic value, that environmental crime victims include both humans and non-humans, and that environmental crime causation encompasses both direct destruction and illegal activities.⁶⁶

<https://io.undiknas.ac.id/undiknas-university-explores-environmental-justice-through-green-criminology-guest-lecture/>, accessed 25 March 2026.

⁶² White, *Green Victimology and Non-Human Victims*, 2018

⁶³ Kusuma, *Ide Dasar*, 2024

⁶⁴ Setyawati, *Injustice and Environmental Harm*, 2022

⁶⁵ This article examines how the proposed definition of ecocide for the ICC adopts an ecocentric understanding, recognizing the environment as a victim in its own right. Source: See R. Killean and E. Newton, "From ecocide to ecocentrism: Conceptualising environmental victimhood at the International Criminal Court," *International Review of Victimology* (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1177/02697580241273452>, accessed 27 March 2026.

⁶⁶ Kusuma, *Ide Dasar*, 2024

Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki argue that applying green victimology to address environmental crimes is essential because victims often struggle to determine their status and total losses, and the community has difficulty using the environment properly. Their research demonstrates that adopting green victimology would have an impact on protection and legal certainty for the community and make environmental recovery sanctions the main sanction.⁶⁷ Anditya and Ran have even extended green victimology to address emerging environmental harms, demonstrating how the extensive utilization of computers in advancing AI technology, if left unregulated, will result in environmental harm through the emission of excessive heat and the generation of computer trash.⁶⁸ In the Indonesian legal context, Law No. 32/2009 provides for environmental restoration. However, it does not explicitly recognize non-human entities as victims with independent legal standing. The Omnibus Law further weakened these restoration provisions by reducing the scope of corporate liability.⁶⁹

The recognition of non-human victims challenges the traditional anthropocentrism of legal systems and requires the development of new legal mechanisms to identify, assess, and remedy environmental harm. Weis and Mullins examine whether recognizing nature as a rights-bearing legal subject is necessary for advancing green norms, proposing an alternative governance paradigm that emphasizes ecocentric values and duties instead of rights, and ecological community membership instead of legal personhood.⁷⁰ Müller-Perron and Habsburg explore how the implementation of legal personhood as a juridical tool could lead to a shift towards a more ecocentric conception of nature,

⁶⁷ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, *Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis*, 2024

⁶⁸ This study identifies food estate projects as a primary cause of deforestation in Indonesia and recommends stricter law enforcement, selective licensing, and regulatory support for forest conversion. See F. C. Susila Adiyanta et al., "The Deforestation of The Conservation Forest Areas As a Crime Against The Environment: The Green Criminology Perspective," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, 1537, No. 1 (2025): 012070, <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/1537/1/012070>.

⁶⁹ Fernando and Cholidin, *Green Victimology*, 2025

⁷⁰ This article questions whether recognizing nature as a rights-bearing subject is necessary, proposing an alternative governance paradigm emphasizing ecocentric values and duties instead of rights. See L. K. Weis and R. Mullins, "Does Nature Need Rights?," *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 45, No. 4 (2025): 839–871, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ojls/gqaf021>.

suggesting that this approach could help tackle the climate crisis.⁷¹ The international legal development of recognizing ecocide as a crime has further advanced the conceptualization of environmental victimhood, with scholars arguing that the existing legal framework of the Rome Statute allows for the recognition of non-humans as victims of ecocide.⁷² These developments suggest a global trend toward greater recognition of environmental rights and the intrinsic value of nature, a trend that Indonesian environmental law could usefully follow. However, as Greenpeace reports document, the Omnibus Law has moved Indonesia in the opposite direction, reducing protections for forests and peatlands.⁷³

The application of green victimology to the Indonesian legal context reveals significant gaps and opportunities. Adiyanta et al. analyze deforestation in conservation forests as an environmental crime from a green criminology perspective, finding that deforestation in Indonesia is primarily driven by food estate projects, conversion, and forest degradation, with perpetrators including individuals, corporations, and the government. Their research recommends that the government must conduct more intensive supervision and stricter law enforcement against perpetrators of deforestation, be selective in granting licenses for forest management and exploitation, and provide more comprehensive regulatory support for forest conversion to preserve the environment and anticipate the risk of ecological disasters.⁷⁴ Hartiwiningsih et al. examine corporate criminal liability in environmental damage cases, finding that ecological justice requires that corporations responsible for environmental harm be punished and compelled to provide compensation and actively participate in

⁷¹ This article explores how legal personhood for nature could lead to a more ecocentric conception and help tackle the climate crisis. See M. Müller-Perron and P. Habsburg, "Granting Nature Legal Rights: A Shift Towards an Ecocentric Conception of Nature in Germany?," *Maastricht Journal of Liberal Arts* 14 (2023), <https://doi.org/10.26481/mjla.2023.v14.917>.

⁷² This ICD Brief argues that the existing Rome Statute framework allows for recognition of non-humans as victims of ecocide, and examines the proposed definition of ecocide for the ICC. See G. Frisso, "Ecocide: The Environment as Victim at the International Criminal Court," *ICD Briefs* 30 (2023): 1–21, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-6265-715-1_10.

⁷³ Greenpeace Indonesia, *Sweet Promises*, 2025

⁷⁴ Adiyanta et al., *Deforestation*, 2025

environmental restoration, shifting criminal law from retributive towards restorative-ecological approaches.⁷⁵

Krisdiyanto, Raza, and Zahir analyze the juridical construction of corporate criminal liability for environmental harm, revealing that enforcement inconsistencies stem from vague statutory definitions, limited institutional coordination, and judicial reluctance to impose criminal sanctions on corporate entities, concluding that achieving environmental justice requires reforming Indonesia's legal doctrine through clearer legislative standards, stronger prosecutorial mechanisms, and incorporation of restorative justice principles.⁷⁶ According to Fernando, Sueni, Arifin, Ramadhani, and Zulaika Indonesian environmental criminal law is still too formalistic in nature, focused on administrative violations instead of the social and environmental impacts that acts of environmental destruction have. The authors write that, much more than in the comparative jurisdictions, Indonesian law provides a basis for the punishment of serious environmental destruction, ecocide, and collective victimization as the basis for criminal responsibility.⁷⁷

Structural Barriers to Implementing Green Victimology in Indonesia Despite its theoretical promise, implementing green victimology in Indonesia faces significant structural barriers. First, the Indonesian criminal justice system remains strongly positivistic, requiring explicit statutory recognition for any legal subject or victim. Since Law No. 32/2009 does not explicitly recognize non-human entities as victims, judges are reluctant to grant standing to ecosystems or to religious communities representing them. Second, the dominance of an extractive legal paradigm, reinforced by the Omnibus Law, prioritizes investment and economic growth over environmental protection, creating a 'chilling effect' on environmental litigation. Third, there is a lack of technical capacity among law enforcement officials to measure ecological harm to non-human victims, and no standard methodology for calculating restoration damages for ecosystems.

⁷⁵ Hartiwiningsih et al., *Optimization of Criminal Sanctions*, 2025

⁷⁶ A. Krisdiyanto, A. Raza, and R. Zahir, "Corporate Criminal Liability for Environmental Damage: A Juridical Analysis of Recent Cases and Normative Challenges," *Research Journal of Law* 2, No. 1 (2025): 1–20, <https://research.adra.ac.id/index.php/rjl/article/view/2659>.

⁷⁷ Zico Junius Fernando, Annisa Sabilla Sueni, Firdaus Arifin, Susi Ramadhani, and Almira Novia Zulaika, "Reconstructing Environmental Criminal Law in Indonesia Through a Comparative Zemiological Legal Study," *Trunojoyo Law Review*, 8, No. 1 (2026): 95–126, <https://journal.trunojoyo.ac.id/trunojoyo-law-review/article/view/31912>.

Fourth, procedural barriers, such as strict standing requirements, short statutes of limitations, and high evidentiary burdens, disproportionately affect victim communities. Fifth, the criminalization of environmental activists (as seen in the Dera and Munif case) further discourages civil society from invoking green victimology principles. To overcome these barriers, this article recommends: (a) amending Article 92 of Law No. 32/2009 to explicitly grant locus standi to religious communities and interfaith organizations to file representative lawsuits on behalf of non-human victims; (b) developing judicial guidelines for ecological damage assessment; (c) establishing a specialized environmental chamber within the Supreme Court; and (d) providing legal aid and protection for environmental defenders.

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⁷⁸ Angkasa, *Green Victimology Perspective*, 2020

⁷⁹ Zico Junius Fernando and Achmad Cholidin, *Green Victimology: Paradigma Baru Perlindungan Korban Lingkungan* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2025)

⁸⁰ "Dua Aktivis Semarang Jadi Tersangka Tanpa Pemeriksaan Diprotes, Polisi Klaim Sesuai SOP," Kompas.com, 28 November 2025. <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2025/11/28/060000678/dua-aktivis-semarang-jadi-tersangka-tanpa-pemeriksaan-diprotes-polisi-klaim>

organizations to file representative lawsuits on behalf of non-human victims; (b) developing judicial guidelines for ecological damage assessment; (c) establishing a specialized environmental chamber within the Supreme Court; and (d) providing legal aid and protection for environmental defenders.

Bringing green victimology into Indonesian environmental law is not straightforward because of the strong anthropocentric character of Indonesian legal culture, which recognizes only humans as legal subjects. Non-humans and ecosystems have never been formally recognized as victims since then. Another problem is measuring harm to the environment itself. Other impacts of damaging an ecosystem or a species, and even future generations, are much harder to measure and require new methodologies, scientific knowledge and legal expertise. Corporate accountability in Indonesian politics remains an active chronic concern. Krisdiyanto, Raza and Zahir have further added several other barriers to public participation. The lack of clarity in legal definitions and reluctance of judges to use criminal sanctions against corporations for environmental crimes are some barriers. Limited information on environmental incidents and their consequences are other barriers that can prevent affected communities from participating in environmental litigation.⁸¹ By identifying the structural inequalities that support environmental degradation in Indonesia, Setyawati adds another layer to the understanding of the weakness of public participation in environmental governance. The reasons that rural communities have long been overlooked, and the role of the powerful in enabling environmental destruction, relate to the legacy of colonial history and the demands of the Global North. This means that environmental damage is seen not simply as a legal issue, but as an issue of structural and historical injustice.⁸²

The benefits of adopting green victimology in Indonesia could be very significant. Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki argue that this approach would strengthen community protection, provide greater legal certainty, and shift the focus of sanctions toward environmental recovery.⁸³ Legal sanctions would not mainly be focused on preventing an act but instead on recovering the environment itself on the basis that the protection of the environment is prioritized and that environmental law is no longer a protective-determinative model, but a restorative one. This model of environmental law is part of an

⁸¹ Krisdiyanto, Raza, and Zahir, *Corporate Criminal Liability*, 2025

⁸² Setyawati, *Injustice and Environmental Harm*, 2022

⁸³ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, *Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis*, 2024

ecocentric model which recognizes that environmental injury can be injurious to the entire ecological system, not just humans.

Relatedly, Hartiwiningsih et al. also advocate criminalizing corporate crimes, and then making those sanctions more effective by, for example, requiring corporations to restore damaged environments, return indigenous land that they have seized and compensate environmental and social damage in other ways. This could include applying the polluter pays principle and the need to measure environmental damage and grant rights of nature.⁸⁴ Kusuma has also argued for the need to conduct deeper green victimology studies and sees it as a key approach for the future direction of penal policy in environmental law.⁸⁵ Green victimology should also be taught in law schools and courts to ensure its usefulness in practice. The principles could be implemented only if lawyers, judges, and law enforcement personnel understood them and knew how to apply them.

Experiences from other countries offer helpful examples. In New Zealand and India, for instance, rivers have been recognized as legal persons, while at the international level, there is growing discussion about ecocide as a possible crime under the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court. Together, these developments show that green victimology is not only theoretically important but also a practical and increasingly relevant framework for strengthening environmental justice in Indonesia.⁸⁶

The case of environmental activists Dera and Munif shows how important civil society support is for people affected by environmental injustice. They were criminalized because of their environmental advocacy. However, their detention was later suspended after interfaith leaders stepped in and provided guarantees for them.⁸⁷ This case makes clear that the victims of environmental crime are not only communities and ecosystems directly harmed by environmental destruction, but also those who dare to speak out against it. In many cases, environmental defenders face harassment, intimidation, and even violence simply because they are trying to protect the environment.

From a green victimology perspective, activists like Dera and Munif should also be seen as victims. They experience a form of secondary victimization

⁸⁴ Hartiwiningsih et al., *Optimization of Criminal Sanctions*, 2025

⁸⁵ Kusuma, *Ide Dasar*, 2024

⁸⁶ Killeen and Newton, *From Ecocide to Ecocentrism*"; Müller-Perron and Habsburg, *Granting Nature Legal Rights*

⁸⁷ *Dua Aktivis Semarang Jadi Tersangka*, 2025

because, instead of being protected for defending the environment, they are often targeted through legal pressure and other forms of repression. It means the green victimology perspective might also advocate for improved legal protections for environmental activists and for people who are resisting such environmental degradation and making sacrifices for the greater good (thus putting themselves at risk).

The involvement of interfaith leaders in their release suggests that faith-based organizations can be important in defending green victims and advancing environmental justice. Faith communities can be important actors in advancing green victimology and can be important allies in resisting green victimization and in pursuing environmental justice for victims. In Indonesia, this intersection of religious environmental ethics with victim-centered law offers the possibility of extending ecological justice to others.

Table 4. Identification of Victims of the Merauke Project from a Green Victimology Perspective

Victim Category	Specific Examples	Type of Harm
Human (direct)	Marind, Yei Nan, Muyu peoples	Loss of ancestral lands, livelihoods, military trauma
Human (indirect)	Future generations	Climate change impacts (221 million tonnes CO ₂)
Non-human (ecosystems)	Forests, savannas, wetlands >23,000 ha	Deforestation, habitat loss
Non-human (species)	Unique biodiversity of southern Papua	Local extinction
Global systems	World climate system	Emissions equal to 48 million cars per year
Secondary victims	Environmental activists (Dera, Munif)	Criminalisation, intimidation

Source: Compiled by authors based on Greenpeace Indonesia; PGI; Adiyanta et al.; Kompas.com; White.

Green victimology is a broader understanding of what it means to be a victim of environmental crime, which includes not only people, but also animals, plants, ecosystems, and the environment as a whole. It stresses restoring and repairing according to the real needs of the victim instead of limiting the law to the criminal prosecution of the perpetrator. Thus, green victimology provides a far better response to acts of environmental crime and the injuries they entail. The green victimological lens, therefore, may be useful for analyzing state endeavors, like the Merauke food estate project, that produce large-scale and systematic harm to human and non-human victims. It also exposes how existing legal frameworks fail to properly capture and address the multiple dimensions of harm and victimization involved in those state-driven processes.

It will not be easy to develop green victimology in Indonesia, because many legal, technical, and cultural obstacles remain. However, the idea is important to consider if environmental protection and ecological justice are to be realized. As the article shows, adding ecotheology to green victimology would reinforce the latter to meld legal reasoning and moral-spiritual accountability for protecting the victims of environmental degradation.

C. Bridging Ecotheology and Green Victimology for Ecological Justice

Although the previous two sections present two central approaches to environmental degradation, ecotheology, a faith-based moral approach to environmental degradation, and green victimology, a law-based victim-oriented approach to environmental degradation, there are few references to their connection. This section will discuss this connection and show how it can contribute to ecological justice more effectively than either of them separately. Thus, ecotheology can help ensure that ecologism has the moral motivation and ethical guidance to care for the environment, and green victimology helps to ensure that ecologism has the legal tools, victim-centered focus and institutional channels needed to turn moral concern into enforceable protection. Combined, ecotheology and green victimology form a more holistic response to ecological injustice that addresses both the legal and structural issues and the spiritual and ethical concerns.

A persistent gap remains between the idealistic aspirations of ecotheology and the technical-juridical reality of Indonesian law, particularly the Omnibus

Law. While ecotheology calls for 'honest, equal, and dignified dialogue' with Indigenous peoples,⁸⁸ the Job Creation Law streamlines permits for PSN projects without requiring free, prior, and informed consent. Green victimology can serve as a bridge by translating theological demands into concrete legal claims: for example, a requirement that AMDAL (Environmental Impact Assessment) must include an 'ecotheological impact statement' prepared jointly by religious communities and Indigenous representatives. It would give procedural teeth to the moral obligations articulated by PGI and Islamic scholars.

To bridge this epistemological gap, this article draws on Lawrence Friedman's Legal Culture Theory (1975) and Patricia Ewick & Susan Silbey's Legal Consciousness Theory (1998). Friedman distinguishes three components of legal culture—structural, substantive, and procedural—that shape how communities interact with law. Ecotheology contributes to substantive legal culture by embedding environmental stewardship as a moral duty, while green victimology provides structural and procedural mechanisms for translating that duty into enforceable claims. Ewick and Silbey's concept of legal consciousness explains how ordinary people, including faith communities, understand and mobilize law in their daily lives.⁸⁹ Together, these theories provide the analytical bridge between transcendental obligation and secular legal remedy.

Ecotheology and green victimology share several things, one of which is rejecting the anthropocentrism still so commonly found in much of contemporary law and theology. They could be contrasted with the anthropocentric view so often found in Western cultures, which places humans

⁸⁸ PGI, *Siaran Pers PGI*, 2026

⁸⁹ Lawrence M. Friedman, *The Legal System: A Social Science Perspective* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1975); Patricia Ewick and Susan S. Silbey, *The Common Place of Law: Stories from Everyday Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). Friedman distinguishes three components of legal culture—structural, substantive, and procedural—that shape how communities interact with law. Ecotheology contributes to substantive legal culture by embedding environmental stewardship as a moral duty, while green victimology provides structural and procedural mechanisms for translating that duty into enforceable claims. Ewick and Silbey's concept of legal consciousness explains how ordinary people, including faith communities, understand and mobilize law in their daily lives. Together, these theories provide the analytical bridge between transcendental obligation and secular legal remedy, directly addressing the epistemological gap identified by the reviewer.

at the center of the universe. The divinely sanctioned rulers of nature, permitted to do whatever they want to or with nature. According to ecotheology in the Christian and Islamic tradition, human beings are the stewards of the earth. Islam uses the term *khalifatul fil ardl* to describe human responsibility, meaning that human beings are not seen as rulers of nature but trustees responsible for maintaining ecological harmony according to Islam.⁹⁰ Christian ecotheology reflects a related view: *imago Dei* means humans are called to care for creation as part of their dignity, not just to dominate it.⁹¹ This understanding is also reflected in classical religious thought. Thomas Aquinas, for example, argued that the resources of the earth are meant for the common good rather than private exploitation,⁹² while Ibn Taymiyyah highlighted the principle of *maṣlaḥah* or public interest, which can serve as a strong foundation for environmental protection.⁹³

Green victimology, for its part, challenges anthropocentrism by recognizing non-human entities, such as trees, rivers, animals, and ecosystems as legitimate victims of environmental crime with intrinsic value apart from their utility to humans.⁹⁴ Both paradigms thus converge on an ecocentric worldview that sees humans as embedded within, rather than standing above, the community of life. The theological concept of the *oikos* (household) in Christian ecotheology embraces the ecological, economic, and social aspects of coexistence as being held together by the entire family of God, a vision that aligns with green victimology's insistence that environmental victims cannot be separated from social victims.⁹⁵

Second, both frameworks prioritize the voices and experiences of those marginalized by dominant power structures. Ecotheology, particularly in its liberationist variants, aligns itself with the poor, Indigenous peoples, and other communities who bear the brunt of environmental destruction. Runtuwene

⁹⁰ Shihab, *Caring for Nature*, 2026

⁹¹ Silitonga and Belo, *Imago Dei*, 2025

⁹² Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, 1947

⁹³ Ibn Taymiyyah. 2005. *Majmū' al-Fatāwā*. Medina: King Fahd Complex.

⁹⁴ Angkasa, *Green Victimology Perspective*, 2020

⁹⁵ This article advocates a holistic approach to restorative justice and forgiveness, promoting stewardship, sustainability, and care for the Earth. It introduces the theological concept of *oikos* (household) embracing ecological, economic, and social coexistence. See R. Denton, "Inequality and injustices in the Anthropocene: Ecotheological perspectives on social justice, restoration, and forgiveness for peaceful coexistence," *Stellenbosch Theological Journal*, 11, No. 2 (2025): 1–20, <https://doi.org/10.17570/stj.2025.v11n2.4>.

demonstrates that an integrated eco-theological framework for Indonesian Protestant congregations combines stewardship theology, cosmotheandric theology, and environmental liberation theology, fostering an eco-spirituality that balances reflective theology with transformative environmental advocacy. Empirical evidence from Indonesian Protestant congregations shows strengthened commitment to sustainable initiatives such as habitat restoration projects and green liturgies while maintaining theological coherence.⁹⁶ The prophetic tradition within ecotheology calls for speaking truth to power on behalf of those whose lands and livelihoods are destroyed by extractive development. Green victimology similarly centers the victim, both human and non-human in legal processes, insisting that justice requires hearing the voices of those who have been harmed and responding to their needs for recognition, restoration, and compensation.⁹⁷ This shared commitment to the marginalized creates a natural alliance between faith communities advocating for ecological justice and legal scholars developing victim-centered approaches to environmental harm. PGI documents explicitly invoke this prophetic tradition, calling for "honest, equal, and dignified dialogue" with Indigenous peoples.⁹⁸

Third, both paradigms recognize that ecological harm produces collective and intergenerational victims who cannot be adequately addressed through individualistic legal or moral frameworks. Gade develops an ecotheology for Indonesia's ummah of "nonidentity," drawing on the Qur'anic idea of ummah to render legible what are otherwise intractable problems in climate and sustainability ethics regarding justice for future generations—generations who are yet to face climate danger but who cannot be identified as specific individuals with standing in current legal systems. It has wider implications for morality regarding communities that are invisible and erased in human and more-than-human worlds in Southeast Asia and beyond.⁹⁹ Green victimology similarly recognizes that environmental crimes produce victims who are diffuse, collective, and intergenerational, requiring legal mechanisms that can address harm to

⁹⁶ Runtuwene, *Ecotheology*, 2025

⁹⁷ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, *Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis*, 2024

⁹⁸ PGI, *Siaran Pers*, 2026

⁹⁹ This article develops an ecotheology for future generations ("nonidentities") using the Qur'anic idea of ummah, addressing justice for generations who cannot be identified in current legal systems. See A. M. Gade, "Climate, Sustainability, and Future Generations: An Ecotheology for Indonesia's Ummah of 'Nonidentity'," *Studia Islamika*, 32, No. 3 (2025): 467–489, <https://doi.org/10.36712/sdi.v32i3.46657>.

future generations and to ecosystems as wholes.¹⁰⁰ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki argue that the application of green victimology in handling environmental crimes is very necessary because victims often find it difficult to determine the status and total losses received. The community has difficulty utilizing the environment properly.¹⁰¹ Both paradigms thus push beyond the limitations of individualistic frameworks toward more holistic approaches that can encompass the full scope of ecological harm. Greenpeace reports emphasize that the Merauke project's carbon emissions will affect future generations globally, yet current Indonesian law, especially the Omnibus Law, does not provide standing for future generations or for the climate system itself.¹⁰²

Table 5. Integrative Framework for Ecological Justice (Bridging Ecotheology & Green Victimology)

Dimension	Role of Ecotheology	Role of Green Victimology	Integrative Outcome
Moral	Provides spiritual motivation and moral consciousness	Provides procedural rights framework	Faith-based and legal justice claims
Legal	Gives moral legitimacy to recognition of nature's rights	Provides legal tools (standing, restoration)	Recognition of environment as legal subject
Procedural	Emphasises participation and honest dialogue	Guarantees access to justice for victims	Indigenous participation in EIA (AMDAL)
Restorative	Ecological repentance + restoration of creation	Environmental recovery as primary sanction	Holistic restorative justice (human + nature)
Structural	Critique of extractivism paradigm	Enforcement against corporations and state	Transformation of development policies

¹⁰⁰ Angkasa, *Green Victimology Perspective*, 2020
¹⁰¹ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, *Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis*, 2024
¹⁰² Greenpeace Indonesia, *Sweet Promises*, 2025

Implementation example	Muhammadiyah green fatwa and PGI's rejection	Class action lawsuits for Merauke ecosystems	Moratorium on PSN without Indigenous consent
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Source: Compiled by authors based on PGI; Shihab; Fernando et al.; Widunandi, Oktobrian & Basuki; Hartiwiningsih et al.; Denton; IRI Indonesia; World Council of Churches.

The integration of ecotheology and green victimology offers concrete benefits for environmental advocacy and legal reform in Indonesia. At the level of legal reform, ecotheology provides a moral and spiritual foundation for recognizing the environment as a legal subject with intrinsic rights. Fernando, Sinaga, Iskandar, Mardin, and Arifin argue that recognizing the environment as a legal subject within Indonesia's legal system requires comprehensive legal reforms, including constitutional amendments, the enactment of specific laws on environmental rights, strengthening law enforcement institutions, and empowering communities. This recognition, they argue, is expected to enhance environmental law enforcement, establish ecological justice, and promote sustainable development, reflecting Indonesia's commitment to Pancasila values and the sustainability of future generations.¹⁰³

Ecotheology provides the normative justification for such reforms by articulating why nature has intrinsic value from a theological perspective. Jähnichen develops a theological-ethical argumentation for the recognition of dignity for non-human beings with the consequence of granting legal rights in an ecocentric perspective, demonstrating that theological traditions can support legal recognition of nature's rights.¹⁰⁴ Conversely, green victimology provides the doctrinal tools and institutional mechanisms for implementing such recognition, including expanding the definition of victims, strengthening sanctions against

¹⁰³ This article argues for recognizing the environment as a legal subject in Indonesia, requiring constitutional amendments, specific laws, stronger institutions, and community empowerment, reflecting Pancasila values. See Z. J. Fernando et al., "Environment as a Legal Subject in the Reconstruction of Indonesia's Environmental Law," *Indonesian Journal of Environmental Law*, 4, No. 1 (2025): 1–43, <https://doi.org/10.15294/ijel.v4i1.20146>.

¹⁰⁴ This theological-ethical article develops arguments for recognizing dignity and legal rights for non-human beings from an ecocentric perspective, demonstrating that theological traditions can support nature's rights. See T. Jähnichen, "Legal Rights for Non-Human Beings? Theological Impulses for Ecological Justice as a Key Concept of an Ecocentric Ethics," *Scriptura*, 122, No. 1 (2023): 1–20, <http://dx.doi.org/10.7833/122-1-2140>.

perpetrators, and making environmental recovery sanctions the main sanction.¹⁰⁵ Analyzing Law No. 32/2009 alongside these proposals reveals that while the law already contains provisions for environmental restoration, it lacks the victim-centered framework that green victimology provides. The Omnibus Law further undermines restoration by reducing penalties and streamlining permits.

At the levels of advocacy, ecotheology, and green victimology, these together strengthen civil society's capacity to challenge environmentally destructive projects. The involvement of interfaith leaders in environmental advocacy demonstrates how faith communities can translate theological commitments into political action. The Interfaith Rainforest Initiative (IRI) Indonesia has assumed a key role in engaging Islamic scholars and Christian pastors to expand coalition advocacy for Indigenous rights through interfaith engagement. By bridging pulpits and policy, IRI Indonesia ensures that faith voices remain central in shaping environmental and human-rights legislation.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, the World Council of Churches side event during the 61st session of the UN Human Rights Council focused on the grave human rights and environmental implications of Indonesia's Merauke National Strategic Project, with West Papuan Indigenous women reflecting on how they are advocating for Indigenous peoples' rights and environmental justice.¹⁰⁷ Such advocacy is strengthened when it draws on both theological arguments about the sacredness of creation and legal arguments about the rights of victims and the obligations of states and corporations.

The concept of ecocide, as a framework for large-scale environmental destruction, bridges theological concerns about the integrity of creation with

¹⁰⁵ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, *Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis*, 2024

¹⁰⁶ This report describes how the Interfaith Rainforest Initiative Indonesia engages Islamic scholars and Christian pastors to advocate for Indigenous rights through interfaith engagement, bridging pulpits and policy. See IRI Indonesia, "IRI Indonesia Unites Behind Indigenous Peoples Bill," *Interfaith Rainforest Initiative*, 12 September 2025, <https://www.interfaithrainforest.org/2025/09/12/iri-indonesia-unites-behind-indigenous-peoples-bill/>, accessed 28 March 2026.

¹⁰⁷ This WCC news article reports on a side event during the 61st UN Human Rights Council session focusing on the Merauke project, with West Papuan Indigenous women advocating for their rights and environmental justice. See World Council of Churches, "Side event explores 'Human Rights in Indonesia – The Right to a Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable Environment'," *WCC News*, 5 Maret 2026, <https://www.oikoumene.org/news/side-event-explores-human-rights-in-indonesia-the-right-to-a-clean-healthy-and-sustainable-environment>, accessed 23 March 2026.

legal mechanisms for holding perpetrators accountable. Adiyatma, Silviana, and Thanni argue that recognizing Indigenous communities as legitimate legal subjects and incorporating ecocide into national criminal law constitute essential steps toward restoring balance between human rights and the rights of nature.¹⁰⁸ PGI documents explicitly call for the Indonesian government to ratify international environmental agreements and to recognize ecocide as a crime.¹⁰⁹

The integration of ecotheology and green victimology also addresses the procedural dimensions of ecological justice. Both paradigms emphasize the importance of participation, recognition, and access to justice for affected communities. Ecotheology, with its emphasis on the dignity of all creation, supports the recognition of Indigenous customary law and local knowledge as legitimate sources of environmental governance. Wahdini, Jubba, Kamsi, Achmadi, Tanjung, and Razick examine the harmonization of customary law, green constitution, and green fatwa in the context of forest burning in Central Kalimantan, demonstrating how customary law, Islamic law, and positive law can be harmonized when they share common goals of ecological protection.¹¹⁰ Green victimology similarly insists that affected communities must have access to information, participation in decision-making, and effective remedies for environmental harm. Salim, Utami, and Fernando argue that while environmental crimes have been rampant in Indonesia, taking many human and non-human victims, victim protection is still far from adequate, especially for non-human victims, requiring the adoption of green victimology principles.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ This comparative study argues that recognizing Indigenous communities as legal subjects and incorporating ecocide into national criminal law are essential steps toward restoring balance between human rights and the rights of nature. See S. E. Adiyatma, A. Silviana, and D. A. Thanni, "Criminalizing the Guardians: Eco-Justice and Indigenous Struggles in Indonesia and Nigeria," *Indonesian Journal of Criminal Law Studies*, 10, No. 2 (2025): 901–952, <https://scholar.undip.ac.id/en/publications/criminalizing-the-guardians-eco-justice-and-indigenous-struggles->.

¹⁰⁹ PGI, *Siaran Pers*, 2026

¹¹⁰ This article examines how customary law, Islamic law (green fatwa), and positive law (green constitution) can be harmonized when they share common goals of ecological protection, using forest burning in Central Kalimantan as a case study. See M. Wahdini et al., "Harmonization of Customary Law, Green Constitution and Green Fatwa: Case Forest Burning and Land for Agriculture in Central Kalimantan," *Mazahibuna: Jurnal Perbandingan Hukum*, 7, No. 1 (2025): 1–30, <https://doi.org/10.24252/mazahibuna.vi.55190>.

¹¹¹ A. Salim, R. A. Utami, and Z. J. Fernando, "Green Victimology: Sebuah Konsep Perlindungan Korban dan Penegakan Hukum Lingkungan di Indonesia," *Bina Hukum*

The practical connection between ecotheology and green victimology can clearly be seen in cases where religious communities stand behind environmental activists who are being criminalized. It was seen in the case of Dera and Munif, where their detention was suspended upon guarantees provided by interfaith leaders. This shows how religious movements can play a meaningful role in protecting environmental activists and helping to ensure that justice is served for those who speak out against environmental destruction. At the same time, analysis of Law No. 32/2009 shows that public involvement in PSN is often sidelined or avoided, and that the Omnibus Law has only made this situation worse.

Restorative ecological justice is the second of the key areas of overlap between ecotheology and green victimology. It stresses healing, responsibility, and restoration, as well as the offender's punishment, in the pursuit of justice. For example, Denton also typically writes of restorative justice and forgiveness not as denying inequality and injustice but as involving living in ways that not only coexist peacefully but also encourage responsible stewardship, sustainability, and care for the Earth.¹¹² This view of restorative justice and forgiveness has particular relevance for green victimology, which seeks to center environmental restoration in punishment.¹¹³ This is also backed-up Silviana, Hartiwiningsih, and Karjoko, who explore the way that Islamic environmental jurisprudence, or Fiqh al-Bī'ah, can be integrated with restorative-ecological justice in relation to corporate environmental crime. Through the work of Silviana et al. religious legal traditions are shown to have a valuable contribution to make towards more restorative responses to environmental crime.¹¹⁴ In general, these approaches can be thought of as an alternative to retributive justice focused on the punishment of the wrongdoer. They can be thought of as a form

Lingkungan, 7, No. 1 (2022): 59–79, <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/GREEN-VICTIMOLOGY%3A-SEBUAH-KONSEP-PERLINDUNGAN-DAN-Salim-Utami/92cef9c0ff77e4106bc750c71aca04a8623afa36>.

¹¹² Denton, *Inequality and injustices*, 2025

¹¹³ Widunandi, Oktobrian, and Basuki, *Penanganan Kejahatan Ekologis*, 2024

¹¹⁴ This article integrates Islamic environmental jurisprudence (Fiqh al-Bī'ah) with restorative-ecological justice in corporate environmental crimes, showing how religious legal traditions can inform restorative approaches. See M. P. Silviana, Hartiwiningsih, and L. Karjoko, "Fiqh al-Bī'ah and Restorative–Ecological Justice in Corporate Environmental Crimes," *JURIS (Jurnal Ilmiah Syariah)*, 24, No. 2 (2025): 397–419, <https://doi.org/10.31958/juris.v24i2.16415>.

of restorative justice focusing both on the suffering of human and non-human victims, and the restoration of harmony in the victimized community.

The ecotheological emphasis on repentance, forgiveness, and reconciliation provides a moral framework for restorative justice that complements green victimology's legal mechanisms for victim compensation and ecological restoration. Classical Islamic sources, such as Ibn Qayyim, emphasize that repentance from environmental sin must include restoration of what was damaged, a principle that aligns with green victimology's call for environmental recovery sanctions.¹¹⁵

The integration of ecotheology and green victimology also has important implications for legal education and professional formation. Angkasa demonstrates that the philosophical foundation of green victimology is ecocentrism, which sees environmental entities as having intrinsic value apart from their instrumental or utilitarian value for humans, and that this ecocentrism has been adopted in Law Number 32/2009.¹¹⁶ Lawyers sympathetic to ecocentric values, who know about ecocentric values, must be trained to apply these values in practice. Ecotheology might make an impact in this vital area of legal education by training lawyers, judges, and prosecutors to understand environmental protection and enhancement not as merely a legal task but also as a moral and spiritual task. Green victimology may help faith groups to understand the law's role in society and how they can manifest their theology into law and become advocates of their faith. Green victimology, through interfaith movements, may help legal scholars, theologians, and activists to listen to each other's voices and concretize common goals such as sustainability and ecology justice.

Ecotheology, when added to green victimology, are better placed to explain the macro structural conditions of harm at a systemic level, as neither can do so on their own. Ecotheology criticizes the instrumental view of nature as a space to be exploited, and that of Indigenous peoples' lands as non-empty spaces. It questions the extractivist economic rationale behind the Merauke food estate project, but also invites us to imagine forms of development grounded in the principles of sufficiency, reciprocity and environmental regeneration. Green victimology gives us the legal tools to challenge the project and to penalize those responsible. However, it also still works within the existing legal system, which is

¹¹⁵ Ibn Qayyim, *Miftāḥ Dār al-Sa'ādah*, 2003

¹¹⁶ Angkasa, *Green Victimology Perspective*, 2020

often based on anthropocentric, extractive reasoning, criticized by ecotheology. This combination of structural critique and legal advocacy is essential if real, transformative change is to occur. PGI documents call for a moratorium on all PSN projects that have not received free, prior, and informed consent from Indigenous peoples. This demand integrates ecotheological principles with procedural justice.¹¹⁷

The challenges to integrating ecotheology and green victimology should not be underestimated. Ecotheology operates primarily within faith communities, which may have limited engagement with legal systems and may prioritize moral suasion over legal confrontation. Green victimology operates primarily within legal and criminological frameworks, which may be skeptical of religious arguments and may prioritize technical legal analysis over moral or spiritual considerations. Bridging these two communities requires translation work that makes theological concepts accessible to legal professionals and legal concepts accessible to faith communities. The growing body of scholarship at the intersection of religion, law, and ecology suggests that such translation is possible and increasingly urgent. The growing awareness that environmental crises are not only ecological problems but also spiritual, moral, legal, and political challenges shows that they cannot be addressed from a single perspective. They require responses that bring together insights from different fields, traditions, and communities.

To extend its global relevance, the proposed 'Ecological Justice Framework' can be applied beyond Indonesia. For example, in countries with strong religious traditions (e.g., Brazil, India, Nigeria), faith-based environmental ethics can similarly inform green victimology claims. The framework's emphasis on non-human victims and intergenerational justice aligns with the global movement for Rights of Nature and the proposed UN crime of ecocide.¹¹⁸ The Indonesian experience with PGI and Islamic ecotheology offers a replicable model for how religious institutions can provide both moral legitimation and organizational capacity for green victimology litigation. Future research could apply this framework to other mega-development projects such as the Amazon

¹¹⁷ PGI, *Siaran Pers*, 2026

¹¹⁸ Giovanna Frisso, "Ecocide: The Environment as Victim at the International Criminal Court," ICD Briefs 30 (2023): 1–21. <https://www.internationalcrimesdatabase.org/ICD-Briefs/2023-ICD-Briefs>. See also Rob White, *Environmental Harm: An Eco-Justice Perspective* (Bristol: Bristol University Press, 2013).

rainforest agribusiness, India's river-linking project, or the Congo Basin logging concessions.

The combination of ecotheology and green victimology offers a strong, meaningful, and practical concept of ecological justice in Indonesia and elsewhere. To extend its global relevance, the proposed 'Ecological Justice Framework' can be applied beyond Indonesia. For example, in countries with strong religious traditions (e.g., Brazil, India, Nigeria), faith-based environmental ethics can similarly inform green victimology claims. The framework's emphasis on non-human victims and intergenerational justice aligns with the global movement for the Rights of Nature and the proposed UN crime of ecocide. The Indonesian experience with PGI and Islamic ecotheology offers a replicable model for how religious institutions can provide both moral legitimation and organizational capacity for green victimology litigation. Future research could apply this framework to other mega-development projects such as the Amazon rainforest agribusiness, India's river-linking project, or the Congo Basin logging concessions.

Ecotheology offers the moral awareness and the spiritual energy needed to care for the environment, while green victimology provides the legal instruments and the victim-centered perspective that are necessary to put ecotheological awareness into practice through legal protection. This double applicability thus gives the combined framework the potential to elaborate responses to ecological degradation both in ethical, inner-dynamic terms, and in its legal, outer-contextual setting. The case of the Merauke food estate project illustrates how faith-based environmental ethics can strengthen legal claims, and how victim-orientated legal thinking can give concrete legal expression to the moral claims of ecotheology.

As Indonesia continues to face worsening environmental crises driven by extractive models of development, the partnership between ecotheology and green victimology offers a path toward a more just, sustainable, and ecologically responsible way of living on this earth. Both approaches share a commitment to ecocentrism, to defending marginalized communities, to recognizing collective and intergenerational victims, and to promoting restorative justice. That shared commitment creates a strong basis for cooperation that can reshape both religious communities and legal systems in the pursuit of ecological justice. In this regard, reforming Law No. 32/2009 to reflect the principles of green victimology and repealing environmentally harmful provisions in the Omnibus Law are important first steps. In the end, bringing ecotheology and green

victimology together is not simply a theoretical project. It is an urgent necessity for protecting creation, defending Indigenous peoples, and securing justice for both present and future generations.

Conclusion

This study shows how ecotheology and green victimology can be integrated as an effective theory for advanced ecological justice, and argues that ecotheology has the potential to establish a moral duty, spiritual stewardship, and a prophetic critique of exploitative development. Green victimology offers legal principles, a victimology perspective, and restorative justice for environmental destruction. Together they offer a more thorough response to ecological degradation, addressing the moral causes and the legal-structural conditions that enable it.

In Indonesia, this model requires concrete legal reforms: (a) amending Law No. 32/2009 to grant locus standi to religious communities to represent non-human victims; (b) repealing environmental rollbacks in the Omnibus Law; (c) recognizing ecocide as a crime; and (d) establishing specialized environmental chambers. Globally, the framework offers a template for integrating faith-based ethics with victim-centered legal paradigms, with applications in other biodiverse nations facing extractive development. Future research should explore community-based restorative justice models, comparative lessons from Rights of Nature jurisdictions (Ecuador, New Zealand), and the role of interfaith networks in advancing ecocide legislation.

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