

Religion and Environmental Conservation: A Scoping Review with Emphasis on Islam

Muhammad Hannan Sayuti, Lim Kar Keng*, Aminudin Basir @ Ahmad, Mashitoh Yaacob, Maharam Mamat, Nor Afian Yusof, Normazidah Che Musa, Muhammad Hazim Aflah Abdullah
Pusat Pengajian Citra Universiti, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor Darul Ehsan

*Corresponding Author Email: kk@ukm.edu.my

DOI Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v15-i8/26167>

Published Date: 15 August 2025

Abstract

Despite numerous efforts by the government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to promote environmental awareness and conservation activities, these initiatives have yet to receive sufficient attention from the Malaysian community. This highlights the need for more effective engagement strategies to increase public awareness and foster stronger community involvement. This study aims to explore the relationship between religion and environmental conservation, with a particular emphasis on Islam. Following the PRISMA scoping review protocol, a comprehensive literature search was conducted using the Google Scholar database, selected institutional websites, and the university's online portal, *Gemilang*. The keywords used included "environment", "nature conservation", "Islam", and "religion". A total of 26 pertinent articles, published between 2002 and 2025, were selected and analysed according to two overarching themes: religion and the environment. While existing studies have examined the intersection of religious beliefs and environmental concerns, there remains a significant gap in research specifically focused on Islamic perspectives and environmental stewardship. This study is motivated by the pressing need to integrate religious perspectives into contemporary environmental strategies, particularly in Muslim-majority countries where faith-based values strongly influence community behavior. By systematically mapping existing scholarship and synthesising Islamic environmental principles, this review provides an accessible knowledge base for policymakers, educators, and religious leaders aiming to strengthen sustainability initiatives through culturally resonant approaches.

Keywords: Religion, Islamic Teachings, Environment, Nature Conservation, Conservation Activities

Introduction

Religious beliefs play a significant role in shaping attitudes toward environmental conservation by instilling moral values that encourage respect and care for nature. Many religious traditions advocate for a harmonious relationship between humanity and the environment, suggesting that adherence to these beliefs can help mitigate environmental degradation. Over the past two centuries, environmental challenges have intensified, marked by phenomena such as mass extinctions, global warming, and biodiversity loss, largely as a result of human activity. This underscores a critical gap in understanding the intersection between religious teachings and environmental stewardship and highlights the potential for religion to be integrated into broader sustainability frameworks.

The relationship between religion and the environment varies across different faiths. Some traditions view environmental responsibility as an act of worship and a means of maintaining ecological balance, while others emphasize nature as a divine creation, making its care a spiritual obligation. These perspectives can significantly influence environmental behavior and ethical choices within religious communities. While many religions actively promote conservation, others may place less emphasis on environmental concerns.

While this scoping review includes perspectives from multiple religious traditions, the majority of the selected studies focus on Islam and its teachings on environmental care. Among the 26 reviewed articles, most emphasize Islamic principles such as *maqasid al-shariah*, *fiqh al-biah*, and *khilafah* (stewardship), while only two explore general or Christian perspectives. This reflects both the prominence of Islamic discourse in the literature and its relevance in Muslim-majority societies such as Malaysia. Therefore, although the review includes diverse perspectives, it places particular emphasis on the Islamic worldview and its implications for environmental sustainability.

This review is driven by the recognition that environmental challenges cannot be addressed solely through technological or policy measures; they also require moral and cultural engagement. In Muslim-majority contexts such as Malaysia, Islamic teachings on stewardship and ecological balance represent a largely untapped resource for inspiring sustainable practices. By consolidating and thematically analysing 26 studies published between 2002 and 2025, this paper offers a structured synthesis that not only maps the scope of existing scholarship but also identifies pathways for applying religious ethics to environmental policy, education, and community engagement.

In Islam, the relationship between human beings and the environment is regarded as both an ethical and spiritual responsibility. Central to this worldview is the concept of *tawhid* (monotheism), which affirms the oneness of God (Allah) and underlines humanity's duty to care for His creation. The Qur'an and hadith emphasize that nature is a sign (*ayah*) of God's greatness, and that humans are appointed as *khalifah* (representatives/stewards/vicegerents on earth), entrusted with its preservation (Hutagalung, 2024). Islamic teachings prohibit wastefulness, cruelty to animals, and pollution, and prioritize justice (*'adl*) and balance (*mizan*) in the treatment of the natural world. Accordingly, environmental conservation is viewed not merely as a social or ecological concern, but as a form of worship (*ibadah*) integral to a Muslim's faith.

The Qur'an encourages believers to protect and use the natural resources provided by Allah in a sustainable manner. For example, in Surah Taha (20:53-54), God reminds humankind: "[It is He] who has made for you the earth as a bed [spread out] and inserted therein for you roadways and sent down from the sky rain and produced thereby categories of various plants. Eat [therefrom] and pasture your livestock. Indeed, in that are signs for those of reason." (*Surah Taha, 20:53-54, n.d.*)

Islam consistently encourages Muslims to care for nature and utilize it in their daily lives, emphasizing a harmonious relationship between humans and the environment. This perspective is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, which advocate for the protection and sustainable use of natural resources. The religion views humans as stewards of the earth, responsible for maintaining the balance and beauty of nature. This stewardship is not only a spiritual duty but also a practical guideline for living sustainably and ethically (Basri et al., 2024).

Several studies on environmental ethics in Islam have explored how religious values influence ecological behavior. Petera (2016), for example, found that participation in ethical environmental practices was significantly higher among members of Islamic organisations compared to the general public. The study also noted that economic and social factors remain dominant influences, but religious teachings play an important complementary role in promoting ethical environmental behavior.

While humanitarian concerns remain central in many development agendas, environmental protection must likewise be viewed as a priority for communities today. Issues such as water and air pollution, exemplified by the Sungai Kim-Kim incident in 2023, underscore the urgency of fostering public awareness and proactive engagement in environmental governance (New Straits Times, 2023). Civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have taken increasingly active roles in promoting environmental responsibility and sustainability at the grassroots level.

A wide range of initiatives can be undertaken to promote environmental conservation, including 5R programmes (Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose, Recycle), tree planting campaigns, and community clean-up efforts along beaches and rivers. These activities contribute not only to ecological protection but also to national well-being. In addition to physical initiatives, environmental education should be embedded throughout the formal education system, from early childhood to tertiary levels, to cultivate long-term commitment to sustainability. Furthermore, environmental volunteerism should be actively encouraged among students to foster civic engagement. As environmental issues become increasingly complex, efforts to mobilise youth participation are more critical than ever (Rahman, 2024).

Problem Statement

Growing concerns about environmental degradation and the global push for sustainable development have influenced the formulation of policies and programs across sectors. Today, governments, private institutions, and NGOs are incorporating environmental thinking and sustainability-oriented practices into their operations. One of the most prominent frameworks guiding these efforts is the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

(SDGs), which emphasize environmental protection as a pillar of global development (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, n.d.).

Recent research has revealed a complex interplay between religious beliefs and environmental awareness, with outcomes varying across cultural and doctrinal contexts. In Malaysia, Aung (2016) found that Islamic environmental awareness positively influences environmental protection efforts, with higher levels of religious knowledge correlating with stronger environmental commitment among Muslims. Similarly, Nasir & Yaacob (2022) examined Muslim perspectives on waste management and discovered a significant relationship between religious teachings and environmentally ethical behavior (EEB). Studies in Turkey and Jordan (Ayten, Farhan & Hussain, 2024) further support these findings, showing that religiosity is positively associated with waste management practices and active participation in environmental initiatives, while also reflecting cultural variations.

In light of these findings, the primary objective of this scoping review is to identify and analyse existing studies conducted between 2002 and 2025, sourced primarily from the Google Scholar database, selected institutional websites, and the university's online repository to explore the role of religion in environmental conservation and its broader impact on community engagement. Religion and environmental stewardship are deeply intertwined, and greater awareness of this relationship can strengthen efforts to protect nature and promote sustainability. Specifically, this review examines the extent to which religious values and beliefs influence pro-environmental behaviors, sustainable development practices, and collective responsibility toward environmental preservation.

Addressing today's environmental crisis requires the active participation of diverse stakeholders, including religious communities. Research has shown that religion can serve as a powerful tool for shaping ethical norms and inspiring environmentally responsible behavior through its emphasis on moral teachings, accountability, and community cohesion (Nainggolan et al., 2024). Accordingly, this study highlights the intersection between religion and environmental sustainability and examines its potential to foster an ethically grounded and ecologically aware society.

Methodology

Scoping reviews are valuable methodological tools for mapping key concepts within a research area, clarifying definitions, and identifying the boundaries of existing knowledge (Mak & Thomas, 2022; Munn et al., 2018). The primary objective of a scoping review is to provide a comprehensive overview of the scope, nature, and distribution of research within a given field. It also aims to identify gaps in the literature, offer direction for future studies, and help contextualize existing findings (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Thomas et al., 2017).

The depth and focus of a scoping review are guided by its research objectives. As outlined by Munn et al. (2018), scoping reviews are typically conducted to:

- Identify the types of available evidence within a field
- Clarify key concepts and definitions used in the literature
- Examine how research is conducted on a particular topic
- Identify core characteristics or influencing factors related to a concept
- Serve as a precursor to a systematic review

- Map and analyse knowledge gaps in the literature

This scoping review seeks to identify and analyse the relationship between religion and environmental conservation practices, particularly within Muslim communities. It explores the significance of religious teachings, especially Islamic principles, in promoting environmental stewardship. In doing so, the review also highlights gaps in the current body of knowledge and outlines areas for further scholarly investigation.

The methodological framework adopted for this study follows the structured stages proposed by Mak & Thomas (2022), as illustrated in Figure 1.

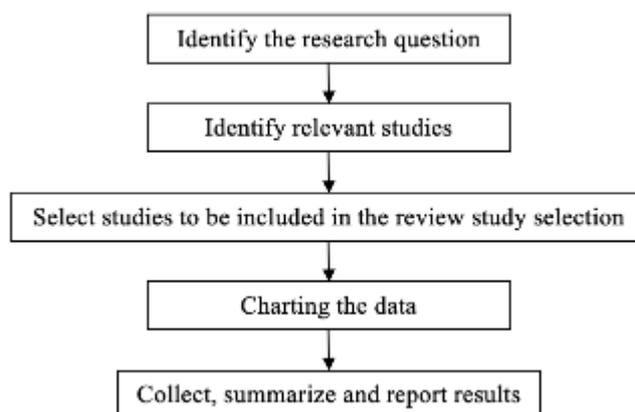


Figure 1 Overview of scoping study stages

This study employed the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework to guide the scoping review process. Originally published in 2009, the PRISMA guidelines comprise a 27-item checklist designed to promote methodological rigor, transparency, and comprehensiveness in both systematic and scoping reviews. The process involves four primary stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Page et al., 2021).

In the identification phase, relevant studies were retrieved through systematic searches conducted via the Google Scholar database, selected institutional websites, and the university's online repository known as *Gemilang*. The search terms used were "environment", "nature conservation", "Islam", and "religion". These keywords were chosen to reflect both the thematic and disciplinary focus of the review.

During the screening phase, duplicate results were removed and remaining articles were assessed for relevance based on their titles and abstracts. In the eligibility phase, full-text articles were evaluated against predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria required that articles: (1) were published between 2002 and 2025; and (2) explicitly addressed both religion and environmental issues. Studies that did not meet these two basic conditions were excluded.

Articles were also excluded if they lacked sufficient information or failed to meet the conceptual requirements of the review. Only those studies that substantively engaged with

the intersection of religion and environmental conservation were retained for final analysis. The criteria used to determine inclusion and exclusion are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Inclusion and exclusion criteria for journal article selection

Criteria	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Study focus	Explicitly examines the relationship between religion and environmental issues	Focuses solely on environmental issues without reference to religious perspectives
Participants	Inclusive of all demographic or social groups	No participants or participant-related data provided
Religious framework	Specifically discusses religious principles	General discussion not related to religious principles
Study context	Investigates environmental issues from a religious or faith-based perspective	Presents environmental issues without religious contextualisation
Study outcomes	Explores the link between religion and environmental sustainability	Does not specify or address the relationship between religion and environmental issues

The initial search yielded 90 studies. These were then subjected to a rigorous screening process based on their relevance to the research objectives and adherence to the predefined inclusion criteria. Following this evaluation, a total of 26 studies were selected for final inclusion in the review.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this scoping review are as follows:

1. How does the spiritual dimension of Islamic teachings relate to environmental conservation?
2. In what ways do religious beliefs influence environmental sustainability practices?

Results and Discussion

A total of 26 articles were included in this scoping review. These studies span from 2002 to 2025 and encompass a range of perspectives on the relationship between religion and environmental conservation, with a predominant focus on Islamic frameworks.

The findings were organized thematically and revealed four dominant areas of focus:

1. **Maqasid Shariah and environmental protection** - Studies in this theme highlight how principles such as *maslahah*, *tawhid*, and *hifz al-biah* (protection of the environment) can guide urban development, policy-making, and disaster risk management.
2. **Islamic environmental ethics** - Several articles emphasize the moral obligations of Muslims to act as stewards (*khalifah*) of the earth, rooted in scriptural sources and ethical teachings.
3. **Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh al-biah)** - These studies discuss foundational legal principles and historical models (e.g., *hima*, public reserve land) used in early Islamic environmental governance.
4. **Religious stewardship and community engagement** - This includes works exploring how religious organisations, education systems, and volunteer programmes contribute to ecological awareness and behavioral change.

Geographically, the majority of the studies (16 out of 26) were conducted in Malaysia, with additional contributions from Indonesia, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Uganda and also Nigeria & Jordan. The dominance of Malaysian studies reflects the growing academic attention to Islamic environmentalism in Southeast Asia.

The full list of reviewed articles, including authorship, objectives, theoretical orientation, and key findings, is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Overview of reviewed articles on religion and environmental conservation

No.	Author(s)	Research Objective	Theme/Theory	Methodology	Key Findings
1	Mohamad (2018)	To study the concept of <i>hima</i> (public reserve land) in Islam and its relevance to environmental preservation	Environment and the concept of <i>hima</i>	Qualitative: Literature review	Environmental preservation efforts have existed since the Prophet's time, including the <i>hima</i> system.
2	Thohari (2013)	To understand the epistemology of environmental jurisprudence based on <i>maqasid shariah</i>	Epistemology and Environmental Jurisprudence	Qualitative: Literature review	Environmental preservation is part of <i>maqasid shariah</i> , though not explicitly among the five essential <i>al-kulliyat al-khams</i> .
3	Maulana & Rosmayati (2021)	To explore the strategy and impact of <i>maqasid shariah</i> in environmental preservation	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and the environment	Qualitative: Interviews and literature review	The strategy reduced river pollution and improved water quality, in line with Islamic principles.
4	Sarkawi et al. (2017)	To assimilate the philosophy of <i>maqasid al-shari'ah</i> with the built environment profession	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and the environment	Qualitative: Literature review	The essence of <i>maslahah</i> links <i>maqasid</i> with environmental knowledge in construction fields.
5	Mat Rashid et al. (2021)	To propose environmentally friendly community service as an alternative punishment for shariah offenders	Shariah and Environment	Qualitative: Literature review	Environmental preservation activities can serve as low-cost alternative punishments.

6	Berebon (2025)	To investigate ethical frameworks for environmental stewardship	Environmental Ethics	Qualitative: Literature review	Proposes an integrated ethical and legal approach to address degradation and ensure justice for all beings.
7	Juwita (2017)	To understand environmental jurisprudence from an Islamic perspective	Environmental Jurisprudence in Islam	Qualitative: Literature review	Environmental sustainability is rooted in Islamic principles aimed at ensuring benefit and avoiding harm.
8	Sungit, Mokhtar & Mohamad Som (2021)	To explore environmental sustainability through <i>maqasid shariah</i> using Qur'anic and Prophetic texts	Environment and <i>maqasid shariah</i>	Qualitative: Literature review and text analysis	Environmental preservation is seen as a religious obligation, not merely an ethical one.
9	Khalid (2002)	To explore Islam and environmental ethics	Islam and the Environment	Qualitative: Literature review	The Islamic worldview emphasizes the sacredness of nature; traditional Islamic law enforced environmental protection.
10	Jusoff & Abu Samah (2011)	To show Islam's holistic view on environmental sustainability	Environmental Sustainability and Islam	Qualitative: Literature review	Islam promotes harmony between humans and creation, emphasizing both internal and external cleanliness.
11	Ubaidillah (2010)	To study environmental jurisprudence in conservation efforts based on <i>maqasid shariah</i>	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and Environmental Jurisprudence	Qualitative: Literature review	Preservation is linked to nature as a divine sign and the shariah's call for balance.
12	Hamid & Hasan (2021)	To explore <i>maqasid</i> thinking as a basis for human-nature relationships	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and Nature	Qualitative: Literature review	Introduces principles such as <i>tawhid</i> , <i>caliphate</i> , <i>umran</i> , and <i>islahas</i> foundations for environmental ethics.

13	Yaacob (2009)	To examine contextual influences on Muslim men's environmental ethics in New Zealand	Theory of Islamic Environmental Ethics	Quantitative: Survey and interviews	Economic factors were most influential; education and religion showed no significant impact.
14	Mohd Dani & Sharifah Fadylawaty (2021)	To explore civil society's role in environmental sustainability through <i>fiqh umran</i>	Community and Environmental Sustainability	Qualitative: Literature review	Muslims are encouraged to lead NGOs promoting Islamic approaches to environmental management.
15	Gada (2014)	To elaborate Islamic environmental ethics	Environmental Ethics in Islam	Qualitative: Literature review	Islam presents humans as both beneficiaries and custodians of the environment.
16	Muhammad Hilmi et al. (2021)	To review natural disaster risk management through <i>maqasid shariah</i>	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and Natural Disasters	Qualitative: Literature review and bibliography	<i>Hifz al-biah</i> is underemphasized in disaster response; a <i>maqasid</i> -based model is proposed.
17	Anas, Karim & Adam (2022)	To identify Green and Safe City (GSC) issues through <i>maqasid shariah</i>	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and Environmental Construction	Qualitative: Literature review	Suggests Islamic finance, management, and ethics as strategies in sustainable construction.
18	Hasan (2022)	To assess environmental performance of US-listed firms through a <i>maqasid shariah</i> lens	Environment and <i>maqasid shariah</i>	Qualitative: Literature review	Shariah-compliant firms show better environmental performance.
19	Rugyendo (2022)	To examine Christian stewardship for environmental sustainability	Christian Environmental Ethics	Qualitative: Literature review	Stewardship supported by Biblical sources; eschatological views can hinder environmental action.
20	Muhtadi et al. (2019)	To understand <i>maqasid shariah</i> and <i>fiqh biah</i> in the green economy	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and Environmental Jurisprudence	Qualitative: Literature review and bibliography	Links green economy with <i>maqasid shariah</i> , emphasizing environmental

					care in economic development.
21	Yaakub & Nik Abdullah (2020)	To identify a port's environmental strategy under <i>maqasid shariah</i>	<i>Maqasid shariah</i> and Environmental Strategy	Qualitative: Literature review	The strategy improved air quality and reduced emissions, aligned with Islamic principles.
22	Ayob & Abdullah Chik (2016)	To explore the significance of recycling from an Islamic perspective	Islam and Recycling	Qualitative: Literature review	Islamic values can promote recycling and environmental sustainability.
23	Mahad Musa (2010)	To explore shariah principles in human-nature relationships	Environmental Jurisprudence	Qualitative: Literature review	Identifies seven principles of <i>fiqh biah</i> , including stewardship, balance, and environmental rights.
24	Shompa & Mohd Mohadis (2022)	To propose a behavior change framework for MSW disposal using <i>maqasid al-shariah</i>	Environment and <i>maqasid shariah</i>	Qualitative: Literature review	Framework increases awareness and reduces health risks in waste disposal.
25	Yaakob & Moris (2012)	To critique human rights philosophy in relation to nature	Fundamental Rights and the Environment in Islam	Qualitative: Literature review	Argues that secular human rights views conflict with divine order and may harm ecological balance.
26	Abdul Halim (2020)	To analyse expert views on environmental issues aligned with <i>Tafsir al-Misbah</i>	Environment and <i>Tafsir al-Misbah</i>	Qualitative: Literature review	Expert interpretations align with <i>Tafsir al-Misbah's</i> Quranic perspective on environmental ethics.

Frequency and Trend Analysis

The 26 articles selected for this review span over two decades, from 2002 to 2025. As shown in Figure 2, the most productive year in terms of publication was 2021, with five articles, followed by 2022 with four articles and 2020 with three articles. Other years, such as 2010 and 2017, produced two articles each, while the remaining years accounted for one article each.

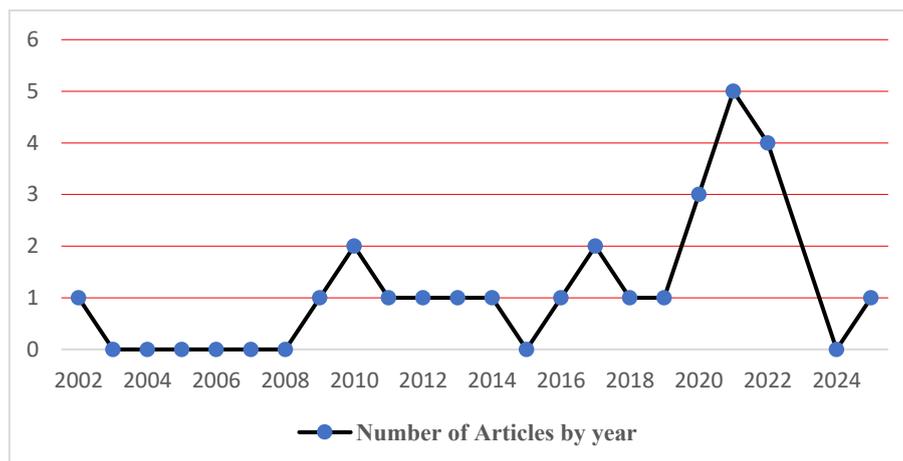


Figure 2 Number of Articles published yearly from 2002 to 2025

In terms of geographic distribution, the majority of the studies (16 out of 26) were conducted in Malaysia. The rest originated from Indonesia (5 articles), the United Kingdom (2), and one article each from New Zealand, Uganda, and Nigeria & Jordan. This pattern suggests that Malaysia is emerging as a leading contributor to academic literature at the intersection of Islam and environmental conservation, likely due to its Muslim-majority population and growing scholarly interest in Islamic environmentalism.

In addition to geographical categorization, the selected articles were also classified according to their thematic focus. Of the 26 studies, 11 explored the relationship between *maqasid al-shariah* and environmental issues, while 10 examined the broader connection between Islam and the environment. One article addressed environmental ethics from a Christian perspective, another focused on general environmental ethics, and the remaining three discussed themes related to environmental jurisprudence.

These findings suggest that scholarly discourse on religion and the environment, particularly within the Islamic tradition, is more prominently represented than general or non-religious environmental discussions in the reviewed literature.

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis of the 26 reviewed articles identified four dominant themes:

- Maqasid Shariah and Environmental Sustainability:** These studies focus on the integration of Islamic legal principles, particularly *maslahah*, *tawhid*, *umran*, and *hifz al-biah*, into areas such as disaster management, urban planning, green economy, and environmental strategy.
- Environmental Ethics from Islamic and Christian Perspectives:** Articles under this theme explore how religious ethics, rooted in divine accountability and stewardship, influence environmental behavior. While most works emphasize Islamic ethics, one article also highlights Christian stewardship and eschatological challenges.
- Islamic Environmental Jurisprudence (*Fiqh al-Biah*):** This theme includes studies that examine the jurisprudential foundation of environmental preservation in Islam. Concepts such as *hima* (protected lands), ecological balance, and religious prohibitions against harm are central to these works.

4. **Religious Stewardship and Community Engagement:** This theme captures the role of religious communities, NGOs, and educational programmes in promoting environmental awareness and action. It includes proposals for using environmental service as a form of alternative punishment, promoting recycling, and enhancing student involvement in ecological causes.

These themes are summarized in Table 3, which outlines the authorship, focus, and key findings of each study. The recurring emphasis on Islamic teachings across all four themes underscores the rich potential of faith-based approaches to support environmental sustainability.

Table 3

Thematic Overview of Studies on Religion and Environmental Sustainability

Theme	Authors	Research Findings
Maqasid Shariah Studies	Anas, Karim & Adam (2022)	Proposed a model for Green and Safe Cities (GSC) based on Islamic principles, emphasizing Islamic finance, management, and ethical guidelines.
	Yaakub & Nik Abdullah (2020)	Found that port strategies aligned with <i>maqasid shariah</i> successfully reduced emissions and improved air quality.
	Muhtadi et al. (2019)	Linked the green economy to <i>maqasid shariah</i> , emphasizing environmental care in economic development.
	Muhammad Hilmi et al. (2021)	Highlighted the underemphasis of environmental care (<i>hifz al-biah</i>) in disaster management and called for a <i>maqasid</i> -based model.
	Hamid & Hasan (2021)	Introduced principles such as <i>tauhid</i> , <i>caliphate</i> , and <i>umran</i> to frame human-nature relationships in Islamic thought.
	Maulana & Rosmayati (2021)	Reported successful reduction of river pollution through strategies aligned with <i>maqasid shariah</i> .
	Ubaidillah (2010)	Emphasized nature as a divine sign and stressed the importance of environmental balance in Islamic jurisprudence.
	Sarkawi et al. (2017)	Connected <i>maqasid</i> philosophy with the built environment profession, emphasizing <i>maslahah</i> (public interest).
	Sungit, Mokhtar & Mohamad Som (2021)	Found that environmental sustainability is not just ethically encouraged but religiously mandated in Islam, based on the framework of <i>maqasid al-shariah</i> .
Environmental Ethics Studies	Yaacob (2009)	Found that economic factors had the strongest influence on environmental ethics among New Zealand Muslims; religion and education had less impact.
	Gada (2014)	Described Islam's comprehensive model of environmental ethics, portraying humans as both beneficiaries and stewards of nature.

	Berebon (2025)	Advocated for an integrated ethical and legal framework to ensure environmental justice for both humans and non-human entities.
	Rugyendo (2022)	Emphasized Christian stewardship, warning against eschatological apathy and promoting active care for God's creation.
Environmental Jurisprudence Studies	Mahad Musa (2010)	Outlined seven principles of <i>fiqh biah</i> (Islamic environmental jurisprudence), emphasizing stewardship, balance, and respect for nature.
	Thohari (2013)	Argued that environmental preservation, while not one of the five core <i>maqasid</i> (<i>kulliyat al-khamsah</i>), supports and upholds all five.
	Juwita (2017)	Defined environmental jurisprudence as Islamic legal rules aimed at ensuring sustainable environmental benefit.
	Mohamad (2018)	Highlighted the <i>hima</i> (public reserve land) system from the Prophet's time as an early Islamic model of environmental protection.
Religious Stewardship and Community Engagement	Ayob & Abdullah Chik (2016)	Promoted recycling as an Islamic duty guided by Islamic ethical and life principles.
	Jusoff & Abu Samah (2011)	Described Islam's emphasis on both external and internal cleanliness and harmony with creation.
	Khalid (2002)	Critiqued the decline of Islamic jurisprudence's influence in environmental ethics due to secular governance.
	Mohd Dani & Sharifah Fadylawaty (2021)	Called for greater Muslim leadership in environmental NGOs and a transformation in community attitudes.
	Mat Rashid et al. (2021)	Proposed environmental work as an alternative form of punishment for shariah offenders.
	Abdul Halim (2020)	Found alignment between expert views and Qur'anic interpretations in <i>Tafsir al-Misbah</i> regarding environmental ethics.
	Shompa & Mohd Mohadis (2022)	Developed a behavior change framework based on <i>maqasid shariah</i> to improve municipal solid waste (MSW) disposal practices.
	Yaakob & Moris (2012)	Criticized secular human rights philosophy for undermining the divine order of environmental stewardship.
	Hasan (2022)	Found that shariah-compliant firms tend to exhibit better environmental performance.

To summarize, the reviewed studies suggest that faith-based approaches, particularly within the Islamic tradition, are not only compatible with, but essential to, achieving long-term environmental sustainability and justice. Nevertheless, scholarly engagement with the intersection of religion and environmental issues remains relatively limited, as evidenced by the comparatively small number of studies focusing on this area.

Malaysia has emerged as a leading contributor to literature on the relationship between religion and environmental issues, ahead of several other countries such as Indonesia, the

United Kingdom, Uganda, Nigeria, and New Zealand. This prominence is likely influenced by Malaysia's status as a Muslim-majority country, where religious values are increasingly integrated into environmental discourse. Such integration is regarded as a meaningful contribution to the development of a progressive and civilised society. Moreover, this approach aligns with national administrative strategies that promote economic and cultural empowerment within an ethical and values-based framework.

Conclusion

This scoping review set out to identify and analyse scholarly studies that examine the intersection between religion and environmental sustainability. Specifically, it explored the role of religious values, particularly Islamic teachings, in shaping environmental ethics, practices, and community engagement. The findings point to an emerging consensus that religious worldviews, when thoughtfully integrated, can serve as powerful frameworks for promoting sustainability and ecological responsibility.

Islamic principles such as *maqasid al-shariah*, *fiqh al-biah*, and *khilafah* offer a spiritually grounded approach to environmental stewardship. Many of the studies reviewed advocate for incorporating these values into policy development, education, and community-based initiatives. However, the literature also highlights key implementation gaps, suggesting that the integration of religious principles into environmental governance remains uneven and underutilized.

This review contributes to a growing yet still underexplored body of literature on faith-based environmentalism. By foregrounding Islamic perspectives, it emphasizes the moral and spiritual imperatives of environmental protection and offers a valuable foundation for future comparative studies. Researchers, policymakers, and religious leaders may find the insights presented here useful for advancing more holistic and ethically grounded approaches to sustainability.

Acknowledgment

We gratefully acknowledge the funding support from the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia under Grant No. FRGS/1/2023/SSI03/UKM/02/2, which made this study possible.

References

- Abdul Halim, I. (2020). Isu-isu alam sekitar di Malaysia menurut pandangan pakar: Satu analisis perbandingan berdasarkan tafsir *Al-Misbah*. *Borneo Akademika*, 4(2), 30-40.
- Al-Qur'an. (n.d.). Surah Taha, verses 53-54.
- Anas, N., Karim, R.A., & Adam, M.H.M. (2022). Green and safe cities (GSC) from *maqasid shariah*: A proposed model in Malaysia. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(10), 808-817. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i10/14661>
- Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616>
- Aung, T. S. (2016). Islam and environmental protection: The awareness of the Malaysian Muslim community. *Al-Shajarah: Journal of the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation (ISTAC)*, 21(2), 225-229. <https://doi.org/10.31436/shajarah.v21i2.409>
- Ayob, W., & Abdullah Chik, N. (2016). *Kepentingan aktiviti kitar semula dari perspektif Islam*. In *Seminar Islam dan Sains Peringkat Kebangsaan 2016* (pp. 880-101), Dewan Seminar Kompleks Pusat Islam, Universiti Utara Malaysia.
- Ayten, A., Farhan, H., & Hussain, A.M. (2024). Exploring the nexus between religiosity and environmental behaviors including waste management and active environmentalism: Empirical findings from Turkish and Jordanian Muslim samples. *Journal of Academic Research in Religious Sciences*, 24(2), 485-503. <https://doi.org/10.33415/daad.1483106>
- Basri, S., Adnan, Y., Widiastuty, L., Asrul Syamsul, M., & Indar, I. (2024). Islamic environmental ethics: A cultural framework for sustainable resource management and global ecological stewardship. *Diversity: Disease Preventive of Research Integrity*, 5(2), 86-93. <https://doi.org/10.24252/diversity.v5i2.52342>
- Berebon, C. B. (2025). Integrating ethical, legal, and cultural paradigms: Advancing environmental stewardship. *GNOSI: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Human Theory and Praxis*, 8(1), 1-15.
- Gada, M. Y. (2014). Environmental ethics in Islam: Principles and perspectives. *World Journal of Islamic History and Civilization*, 4(4), 130-138. <https://doi.org/10.5829/idosi.wjihc.2014.4.4.443>
- Hasan, R. (2022). Shari'ah compliance and environmental performance - Evidence from the USA. *Borsa Istanbul Review*, 22 (Suppl. 1), S1-S9. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bir.2022.11.009>
- Hamid, M. B. A., & Hasan, Z. (2021). *Maqasid* thought as a basis for the relationship between man and nature: *Pemikiran maqasid sebagai dasar hubungan antara manusia dan alam*. *Al-Qanatir: International Journal of Islamic Studies*, 23(2), 20-36.
- Hutagalung, N.N. (2024). Islam and the environment: A conceptual analysis based on the Qur'an and Hadith. *Muqaddimah: Jurnal Studi Islam*, 15(5), 18-31. <https://doi.org/10.71247/r0jk0s98>
- Jusoff, K., & Abu Samah, S.A. (2011). Environmental sustainability: What Islam propagates. *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 12, 46-53.
- Juwita, D. R. (2017). *Fiqh* lingkungan hidup dalam perspektif Islam. *El-Wasathiya: Jurnal Studi Agama*, 5(1), 27-42. <https://doi.org/10.35888/el-wasathiya.v5i1.3025>

- Khalid, F. M. (2002). Islam and the environment. In P. Timmerman & T. Munn (Eds.), *Encyclopaedia of global environmental change: Volume 5 - Social and economic dimensions of global environmental change* (pp. 332-339). John Wiley & Sons.
- Mahad Musa, Z. (2010). *Fiqh al-Bi'ah: Prinsip interaksi manusia dengan alam persekitaran. Jurnal Syariah*, 18(1), 1-24.
- Mak, S., & Thomas, A. (2022). Steps for conducting a scoping review. *Journal of Graduate Medical Education*, 14(5), 565-567. <https://doi.org/10.4300/JGME-D-22-00621.1>
- Mat Rashid, A., Yahya, M.A., Bahori, A., Saifuddin, S., & Mohamad Zam Zam, M.Y. (2021). Santuni alam sekitar: Ke arah pemerkasaan pelaksanaan hukuman alternatif. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Syariah and Law (ICONSYAL 2021)*, 575-583.
- Maulana, A., & Rosmayati, S. (2021). Strategi dan dampak *maqasid syariah* dalam pemeliharaan lingkungan sekitar kecamatan. *Eco-Iqtishodi: Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi dan Keuangan Syariah*, 3(1), 63-71. <https://doi.org/10.32670/ecoiqtishodi.v3i1.674>
- Mohamad, A. B. (2018). Konsep *hima* dalam Islam dan hubungannya dengan pemeliharaan alam sekitar. *Asian Journal of Environment, History and Heritage*, 2(1), 59-65.
- Muhammad Hilmi, M. J., Khairul Azhar, M., Farhat Nazirul, M. B., & Aizul, M. I. (2021). Pengurusan risiko bencana alam berteraskan *maqasid syariah*: Satu sorotan literatur. *Jurnal Syariah dan Undang-undang*, 6(1), 191-201.
- Muhtadi, R., Utama, R.W.A., Arifin, N.R., & Mawardi, I. (2019). Tinjauan *Maqashid Syariah* dan *Fiqh al-Bi'ah* dalam green economy. *Ekonomi Islam*, 10(2), 242-259.
- Munn, Z., Peters, M. D. J., Stern, C., Tufanaru, C., McArthur, A., & Aromataris, E. (2018). Systematic review or scoping review? Guidance for authors when choosing between a systematic or scoping review approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology*, 18, 143. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12874-018-0611-x>
- Nainggolan, M., Sitanggang, B., Sitohang, D., Siahaan, E., Sinaga, E., Siahaan, F., Hutasoit, K., Malau, S., & Tamba, W. (2024). Analisis pengaruh pendidikan agama terhadap pembentukan sikap peduli lingkungan. *Journal on Education*, 6(4), 20962-20977. <https://doi.org/10.31004/joe.v6i4.6237>
- Nasir, Z., & Yaacob, M. (2022). Social and religious influences on environmentally ethical behavior of Muslim community in Malaysia. *Creative Education*, 13(12), 3996-4016. <https://doi.org/10.4236/ce.2022.1312255>
- New Straits Times. (2023). *Sungai Kim Kim Pollution: Concerns arise about side effects and emotional toll on victims*. <https://www.nst.com.my/news/nation/2023/12/986677/sungai-kim-kim-pollution-concerns-arise-about-side-effects-and-emotional>
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J. M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., McGuinness, L. A., Stewart, L. A., Thomas, J., Tricco, A. C., Welch, V. A., Whiting, O., & Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, 372, n71. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>
- Rahman, N. A. (2024). Motivations and intention to sustain in environmental volunteering among Muslim youth. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 14(12), 2892-2903. <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i12/24244>

- Rugyendo, M. (2022). Practicing a Christian environmental ethic through stewardship. *Journal of African Interdisciplinary Studies*, 6(4), 37-46.
- Sarkawi, A. A., Abdullah, A., Dali, N. M., & Khazani, N. A. M. (2017). The philosophy of *maqasid al-shari'ah* and its application in built environment. *Journal of Built Environment, Technology and Engineering*, 2 (March), 215-222.
- Shompa, Z. A., & Mohd Mohadis, H. (2022). A conceptual integrated persuasive behavioral change framework based on *Maqasid al-Shariah* to encourage green practices of municipal solid waste (MSW) disposal. *Malaysian Journal of Information and Communication Technology (MyJICT)*, 7(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.53840/myjict7-1-5>
- Sungit, F., Mokhtar, R., & Mohamad Som, H. (2021). *Kelestarian alam sekitar dan pemeliharannya menurut maqasid syariah*. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Syariah and Law (ICONSAL 2021)*, 678-692.
- Thohari, A. (2013). Epistemologi fikih lingkungan: Revitalisasi konsep *masalah*. *Az-Zarqa': Jurnal Hukum Bisnis Islam*, 5(2), 145-161. <https://doi.org/10.14421/azzarqa.v5i2.1317>
- Thomas, A., Lubarsky, S., Durning, S.J., & Young, M.E. (2017). Knowledge syntheses in medical education: Demystifying scoping reviews. *Academic Medicine*, 92(2), 161-166. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000001452>
- Ubaidillah, M. H. (2010). *Fiqh al-Bī'ah* (Formulasi konsep *al-Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* dalam konservasi dan restorasi lingkungan). *Al-Qanun: Jurnal Pemikiran dan Pembaharuan Hukum Islam*, 13(1), 26-52. <https://doi.org/10.15642/alqanun.2010.13.1.26-52>
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (n.d.). *The 17 goals*. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>
- Petera, W. S. H. (2016). *Pengaruh karakter akhlak Islam terhadap tingkah laku beretika alam sekitar: Kajian ke atas ahli-ahli pertubuhan Islam di Malaysia* (Master's thesis, Institute for Environment and Developmet, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia). UKM Learning and Research Repository. <https://ptsdigital.ukm.my/jspui/handle/123456789/475751>
- Yaacob, M. (2009). *The influence of contextual aspects on New Zealand Muslim males' environmentally ethical behavior* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Waikato, New Zealand). <https://researchcommons.waikato.ac.nz/handle/10289/2794>
- Yaakob, Z. A., & Moris, Z. (2012). Hak asasi manusia (human rights) dalam menangani krisis alam sekitar: Perspektif Seyyed Hossein Nasr. *International Journal of Islamic Thought (IJIT)*, 2, 80-90. <https://doi.org/10.24035/ijit.02.2012.008>
- Yaakub, S., & Nik Abdullah, N. A. H. (2020). Towards Maqasid Shariah in sustaining the environment through impactful strategies. *International Journal of Islamic Business*, 5(1), 36-45. <https://doi.org/10.32890/ijib2020.5.1.2>