

## Theo-Anthropocentrism: An Answers to Critiques of the Theory of Anthropocentrism Environmental Ethics

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### Abstract:

This study agrees that the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics has a weakness because it places human interests as a moral standard, but this research disagrees with the view that this weakness is influenced by religion. Conversely, religion is an important factor for the improvement of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics. This study uses a qualitative method where data is obtained through tracking and reading various literature. The collected data were analyzed with hermeneutic and heuristic theories. This study found that the weakness of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics lies in its scope which is only in the interests of humans. This weakness is seen as influenced by religious understanding that places humans as the center of the universe so that it gives rise to exploitative attitudes in humans. This view is wrong because in religion (Islam) humans are indeed given a high position, but with a great responsibility to protect nature. The reconstruction of this view leads to a new form of environmental ethics, namely theo-anthropocentrism in which it is hoped that humans can act wisely on the universe as God's representatives in the world.

[Penelitian ini bersepakat bahwa teori etika lingkungan antroposentrisme memiliki kelemahan karena menempatkan kepentingan manusia sebagai standar moral, namun penelitian ini tidak setuju dengan pandangan bahwa kelemahan ini dipengaruhi oleh agama. Sebaliknya, agama merupakan faktor penting untuk perbaikan teori etika lingkungan antroposentrisme. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif di mana data diperoleh melalui pelacakan dan pembacaan berbagai literatur. Data yang terkumpul dianalisis dengan teori-teori hermeneutika dan heuristika. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa kelemahan teori etika lingkungan antroposentrisme terletak pada lingkungannya yang hanya pada kepentingan manusia. Kelemahan ini dipandang dipengaruhi oleh paham keagamaan yang meletakkan manusia sebagai pusat alam semesta sehingga melahirkan sikap eksploitatif pada manusia. Pandangan ini salah karena dalam agama (Islam) manusia memang diberikan kedudukan yang tinggi, namun dengan tanggung jawab yang juga besar untuk menjaga alam. Rekonstruksi atas pandangan ini bermuara pada satu bentuk etika lingkungan baru, yakni teo-



antroposentrisme yang dengannya diharapkan manusia dapat bertindak secara bijaksana atas alam semesta sebagai wakil Tuhan di dunia].

**Keywords** : Environmental ethics, Anthropocentrism, Theo-Anthropocentrism

## A. Introduction

Theo-anthropocentrism is an answer to criticism of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics. As is well known, theories of environmental ethics have developed along with people's understanding of environmental conditions that have changed or been damaged. Environmental ethics is a thought and effort to prevent and improve these conditions. Call it the theories of anthropocentrism, biocentrism, ecocentrism, human rights and ecofeminism.<sup>1</sup> Each of these theories has a certain emphasis point. For example, the theory of anthropocentrism on human interests, the theory of biocentrism on living things and the theory of ecocentrism on creatures as a whole. In particular, the theory of anthropocentrism is often seen as a shallow theory and there is a view that this theory is motivated by a religious understanding that humans are the center of everything that leads to human exploitation of nature.<sup>2</sup> This last view leaves problems with the ethical theory of anthropocentrism and provides space for researcher to find solutions for improvement.

There are many studies that have discussed the theory of environmental ethics. There are studies that discuss environmental ethics in general, both its understanding and development.<sup>3</sup> There are studies that discuss

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<sup>1</sup> A. Sonny Keraf, *Etika Lingkungan Hidup* (Jakarta: Penerbit Buku Kompas, 2010).

<sup>2</sup> Helen Kopnina, "Anthropocentrism and Post-Humanism," in *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, ed. Hilary Callan, 1st ed. (Wiley, 2019), 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118924396.wbiea2387>.

<sup>3</sup> David O. Kronlid and Johan Öhman, "An Environmental Ethical Conceptual Framework for Research on Sustainability and Environmental Education," *Environmental Education Research*, Vol. 19, no. 1 (February 2013): 21–44, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2012.687043>; Roberta L. Millstein, "Environmental Ethics," in *The Philosophy of Biology*, ed. Kostas Kampourakis, Vol. 1, History, Philosophy and Theory of the Life Sciences (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013), 723–43, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6537-5\\_31](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6537-5_31); Clare Palmer, Katie McShane, and Ronald Sandler, "Environmental Ethics," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 39, no. 1 (October 17, 2014): 419–42, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-121112-094434>; Hikmet Surmeli and Mehpare Saka, "Preservice Teachers' Anthropocentric, Biocentric, and Ecocentric Environmental Ethics Approaches," *International Journal of Academic Research*, no. 5 (October 15, 2013): 159–63, <https://doi.org/10.7813/2075-4124.2013/5-5/B.23>; Zhang Yunfei, "A Preliminary Study of Ecological Ethics," *Capitalism*

environmental ethics related to the theory of anthropocentrism, both its development and all its weaknesses.<sup>4</sup> There are studies that discuss environmental ethics related to the theory of biocentrism, namely the expansion of the moral realm towards all living things.<sup>5</sup> There are studies that discuss environmental ethics related to the theory of ecocentrism where the scope of moral status is extended to all creatures, whether living or not.<sup>6</sup> There are studies that discuss environmental ethics related to the theory of human rights where environmental ethical issues are paralleled with human

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*Nature Socialism*, Vol. 32, no. 1 (January 2, 2021): 27–36, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10455752.2021.1880356>.

<sup>4</sup> Kopnina, “Anthropocentrism and Post-Humanism”; Katie McShane, “Anthropocentrism in Climate Ethics and Policy,” *Midwest Studies In Philosophy*, Vol. 40, no. 1 (September 2016): 189–204, <https://doi.org/10.1111/misp.12055>; Trond Gansmo Jakobsen, “Environmental Ethics: Anthropocentrism and Non-Anthropocentrism Revised in the Light of Critical Realism,” *Journal of Critical Realism*, Vol. 16, no. 2 (March 15, 2017): 184–99, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14767430.2016.1265878>; Eileen Crist and Helen Kopnina, “Unsettling Anthropocentrism,” *Dialectical Anthropology*, Vol. 38, no. 4 (December 2014): 387–96, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10624-014-9362-1>.

<sup>5</sup> Chandler D Rogers, “Being Consistently Biocentric: On the (Im)Possibility of Spinozist Animal Ethics,” n.d.; Johannes M. Waldmüller, “‘Living Well Rather Than Living Better’: Measuring Biocentric Human-Nature Rights and Human–Nature Development in Ecuador,” *The International Journal of Social Quality*, Vol. 5, no. 2 (January 1, 2015), <https://doi.org/10.3167/IJSQ.2015.050202>; Sotonye Big-Alabo, “Paul Taylors Biocentric Ethics: A Survey of Contemporary Environmental Conflicts” *The Philosophical Quest*, Vol. 6, no. 2 (2019).

<sup>6</sup> Davida Fennell, “Ecotourism, Animals and Ecocentrism: A Re-Examination of the Billfish Debate,” *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 38, no. 2 (January 2013): 189–202, <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2013.11081744>; Viorica - Torii Caciuc, “Ecocentric Reflections on the Realization of Environmental Education,” *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, Vol. 137 (July 2014): 93–99, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.05.258>; Helen Kopnina, “Of Big Hegemonies and Little Tigers: Ecocentrism and Environmental Justice,” *The Journal of Environmental Education*, Vol. 47, no. 2 (April 2, 2016): 139–50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00958964.2015.1048502>; Faisal Emetumah, “Modern Perspectives on Environmentalism: Ecocentrism and Technocentrism in the Nigerian Context,” *Asian Research Journal of Arts & Social Sciences*, Vol. 2, no. 4 (January 10, 2017): 1–9, <https://doi.org/10.9734/ARJASS/2017/32821>; William Smith, “The Role of Environment Clubs in Promoting Ecocentrism in Secondary Schools: Student Identity and Relationship to the Earth,” *The Journal of Environmental Education*, Vol. 50, no. 1 (January 2, 2019): 52–71, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00958964.2018.1499603>.

rights issues.<sup>7</sup> There are studies that discuss environmental ethics related to the theory of ecofeminism where environmental issues are viewed with feminist theory.<sup>8</sup> There are studies that discuss environmental ethics with a religious perspective. In these studies, religion is used as an approach in analyzing environmental problems.<sup>9</sup> This article itself is positioned to answer accusations against the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics and refine it with an Islamic perspective, so that it is expected to give birth to a new theory of environmental ethics in the form of the theory of

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<sup>7</sup> Idowu Ajibade and Gordon McBean, "Climate Extremes and Housing Rights: A Political Ecology of Impacts, Early Warning and Adaptation Constraints in Lagos Slum Communities," *Geoforum*, Vol. 55 (August 2014): 76–86, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2014.05.005>; Julie Koppel Maldonado et al., "The Impact of Climate Change on Tribal Communities in the US: Displacement, Relocation, and Human Rights," *Climatic Change*, 2013; Barry S. Levy and Jonathan A. Patz, "Climate Change, Human Rights, and Social Justice," *Annals of Global Health* 81, no. 3 (November 27, 2015): 310, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aogh.2015.08.008>; Mary M Gardiner et al., "Rights-of-way: A Potential Conservation Resource," *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 16, no. 3 (April 2018): 149–58, <https://doi.org/10.1002/fee.1778>; McShane, "Anthropocentrism in Climate Ethics and Policy."

<sup>8</sup> Mohammad Ali Fakur and Ujal Kumar Mookherjee, "An Ecofeminist and Third World Critique of Deep Ecology," n.d.; Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism and Climate Change," *Women's Studies International Forum* 49 (March 2015): 20–33, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2015.02.004>; Andrei L. Israel and Carolyn Sachs, "A Climate for Feminist Intervention: Feminist Science Studies and Climate Change," in *Research, Action and Policy: Addressing the Gendered Impacts of Climate Change*, ed. Margaret Alston and Kerri Whittenbury (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2013), 33–51, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5518-5\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5518-5_3); Rachel A. Stohr, "Transnational Feminism, Global Governance, and the Reimagination of the Organization-Society Relationship: A Case Study of the Women's Environment and Development Organization: Transnational Feminism," *Communication Theory* 25, no. 2 (May 2015): 208–29, <https://doi.org/10.1111/comt.12063>.

<sup>9</sup> Riham R. Rizk, "Islamic Environmental Ethics," *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, Vol. 5, no. 2 (September 2, 2014): 194–204, <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIABR-09-2012-0060>; Mohd Yaseen Gada, "Environmental Ethics in Islam: Principles and Perspectives," 2014; Willis Jenkins, Evan Berry, and Luke Beck Kreider, "Religion and Climate Change," n.d., 28; Whitney Bauman, "Religion, Ecology, and the Planetary Other: Opening Spaces for Difference," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 83, no. 4 (December 2015): 1005–23, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfv043>; Elizabeth Mcleod and Martin Palmer, "Why Conservation Needs Religion," *Coastal Management*, Vol. 43, no. 3 (May 4, 2015): 238–52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/08920753.2015.1030297>; Pak-Hang Wong, "Confucian Environmental Ethics, Climate Engineering, and the 'Playing God' Argument: Zygon," *Zygon*, Vol. 50, no. 1 (March 2015): 28–41, <https://doi.org/10.1111/zygon.12151>.

theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics. For the author, religious understanding which understands humans as the center of the universe is not wrong, but needs to be straightened out. Human position must be viewed in a more positive way that does not give rise to exploitative attitudes.

The purpose of this article is to offer a new theory in a series of existing environmental ethics theories so that the researcher begins this research with a main question, why is the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics needed as a complement to the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics? This main question is broken down into several more practical questions: what is the weakness of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics? What is the position of humans towards the environment in the Islamic view? What is meant by the embodiment of the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics?

The author's argument in this study is that the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics is one of the environmental ethical theories that can be offered to correct the weakness of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics. The weakness in the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics which positions human interests very high and above all that gives birth to human tendencies to act exploitatively can be overcome by efforts to re-translate the human position referred to by referring to Islamic teachings which essentially position humans not as rulers, but as substitutes for God on earth. Humans should act as guardians and protectors and far from being exploitative. This is what researcher mean by the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics, namely the refinement of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics by reinterpreting the position of humans towards nature in the perspective of Islam.

## **B. Theoretical Framework**

Various studies have appeared related to environmental ethics theories. These studies have a variety of focuses. These studies are related to environmental ethical theories of anthropocentrism, biocentrism, ecocentrism, human rights, ecofeminism, and religion. In addition to several studies that focus directly on the development of environmental ethics in general.

The studies that generally discuss the development of environmental ethics theory show that the development of ethical theory is the estuary of the development of environmental problems faced by humans. For example,

the study of Palmer, McShane and Sandler<sup>10</sup> shows how the differences between anthropocentric environmental ethics theory and biocentrism environmental ethics theory in assessing the relationship between humans and other creatures.

The studies related to the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics show that only humans have moral values, so that even though humans have responsibilities towards nature, their responsibilities are indirect. According to McShane,<sup>11</sup> in the ethical view of anthropocentrism only human interests are directly morally important, while the interests of all other things are morally indirect and only insofar as all of these things affect human interests. In this theory, if someone thinks of doing something that might harm other humans then his actions are morally wrong because it will harm other humans. However, if a person thinks of doing something harmful to a chimpanzee, then his actions are morally dependent only on the extent to which the effect of his actions on the chimpanzees affects the interests of some other humans.

The studies related to the theory of biocentrism environmental ethics are of the view that both humans and other living things have inherent values that should be respected and considered. According to Big-Alo,<sup>12</sup> biocentric ethics puts forward the view that all living things have the same value as the teleological center of life. Simply put, every living thing has its own biological importance and with its own purpose.

The studies related to the theory of ecocentrism environmental ethics view nature as a whole as having an intrinsic value that humans must respect. According to Caciuc,<sup>13</sup> deep ecology predicts that the new environmental ethics will change the paradigm of Western philosophical thought, namely anthropocentrism with a new perspective in treating the relationship between humans and nature. Nature has an intrinsic value that must be respected by humans. Deep ecology which is based on the concept of ecocentric nature which includes anthropocentric perspectives, as well as non-humans, extends it to biodiversity, and is concerned with the process of deep problematization of human relations with nature.

The studies related to the theory of ecofeminism show the marginalization of women's role in environmental issues such as in the issue

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<sup>10</sup> Palmer, McShane, and Sandler, "Environmental Ethics."

<sup>11</sup> McShane, "Anthropocentrism in Climate Ethics and Policy."

<sup>12</sup> Big-Alabo, "Paul Taylors Biocentric Ethics: A Survey of Contemporary Environmental Conflicts."

<sup>13</sup> Caciuc, "Ecocentric Reflections on the Realization of Environmental Education."

of climate change. According to Gaard,<sup>14</sup> climate change and the world's first overconsumption are the result of masculinist ideology. This problem cannot be solved by a masculine techno-science approach. Instead, a feminist posthumanist climate justice perspective is needed, both at the local, national, and global levels to change the analysis and solutions to climate change.

The studies related to human rights, for example, look at the relationship between environmental issues and human rights, such as the relationship between climate change and the right to a proper place to live. In Ajibade and McBean's<sup>15</sup> research, for example, a political ecology approach was adopted that brings together the historical, structural and spatial dimensions of marginalization in housing and land use policies to show how vulnerability to extreme climates is generated and sustained over time

The studies related to religion look at the relationship between environmental issues and religious teachings. Bauman's<sup>16</sup> research examining the relationship between religion and ecology with mimetic theory illustrates how human mimetic desires are learned from others. With this theory the scope is extended not only to humans, but throughout nature in several forms that describe the processes and habits through which all life wants to live.

This article intends to complement the various studies above by elaborating the weakness and criticism of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics which is seen as being influenced by religious understanding. The elaboration is then continued by looking at the actual position of humans in relation to nature through an Islamic perspective. This precise positioning of humans is a solution to the criticism of anthropocentrism in the beginning and also the form of ethical theory that the author offers, namely the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics.

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<sup>14</sup> Gaard, "Ecofeminism and Climate Change."

<sup>15</sup> Ajibade and McBean, "Climate Extremes and Housing Rights."

<sup>16</sup> Bauman, "Religion, Ecology, and the Planetary Other."

### C. The Weakness of the Theory of Anthropocentrism Environmental Ethics

Baird Callicott, as quoted by Kopnina,<sup>17</sup> explains that the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics presupposes that only humans deserve ethical consideration and other things are only means to achieve human goals. This ethical theory is seen as a shallow ethical theory and has weakness. The most basic weakness of this ethical theory is because it makes human interests at the center of moral considerations. All actions related to environmental preservation are based solely on human interests. For example, forest preservation and care is only based on human interests for future generations, while consideration of the forest itself is not questioned.

There are also accusations that the above weakness stems from or is influenced by religious views, especially heavenly religions which make humans the leaders of nature thereby opening up space for human exploitation of nature.<sup>18</sup> Divine religions are seen as influencing the development of anthropocentrism ethics. For example, one can trace anthropocentrism to the human-centered attitude of Judaism and Christianity, in which humans were considered the highest form of life on Earth. In the Book of Genesis, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, including their flora and fauna, then created man in God's image. In Christianity, humans are given a divinely mandated right to exercise dominion over nature.<sup>19</sup> In Islam, anthropocentrism is seen as originating from basic Islamic principles related to the concept of human nature as a special being, human as a creature endowed with reason, human being as the most powerful creature over nature and the concept of caliph on earth.<sup>20</sup>

The theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics that is influenced by religion is seen as providing space for the exploitation of the universe by humans which has an impact on the destruction of nature. In Indonesia, for example, the destruction of nature has reached an alarming stage. In 2019 Indonesia experienced a large forest fire disaster. According to a Greenpeace analysis, 3.403.000 hectares of land burned between 2015 and 2018 in

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<sup>17</sup> Kopnina, "Anthropocentrism and Post-Humanism."

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup> Su-Chen Wu, "Anthropocentric Obsession: The Perfuming Effects of *Vāsanā* (Habit-Energy) in *Ālayavijñāna* in the *Lan'kāvatāra Sūtra*," *Contemporary Buddhism* 15, no. 2 (July 3, 2014): 416–31, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14639947.2014.932500>.

<sup>20</sup> Junaidi Abdillah, "Dekonstruksi Tafsir Antroposentrisme: Telaah Ayat-Ayat Berwawasan Lingkungan," *KALAM* 8, no. 1 (July 1, 2014): 65, <https://doi.org/10.24042/klm.v8i1.168>.



Indonesia.<sup>21</sup> The condition of coral reefs in Indonesia is also quite worrying because 35.15% of Indonesia's coral reefs are in the bad category. About 50% of the plastic in the world is single-use plastic which will be thrown away as soon as it is used.<sup>22</sup> 20-30 percent of air pollution in Jakarta is contributed by emissions from coal-fired power plants.<sup>23</sup>

The fundamental weakness of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics which is only focused on human interests above must be immediately found a solution. A solution that at the same time answers the accusation that religion is behind the said weakness. The next part of this paper, before arriving at the solution section, will first explain how humans stand in relation to the environment according to Islamic views.

#### **D. Human Position through Environment in Islam**

In the view of Islam, humans are not in the position of full ruler over the universe who may act arbitrarily and exploitatively, but in the position of servants and protectors whose job is to look after and protect other creatures. In this regard, Islam places humans as caliphs. In the Q.S al-Baqarah: 30 it is stated that God created humans as caliphs on earth. Interpretation of the notion of caliph gave rise to various interpretations. The tendency of some Muslims then to interpret that the caliph is a leader or ruler on earth. This interpretation gives rise to a counterproductive attitude for some people, namely an exploitative attitude towards nature that the existence of the universe is in the leadership and power of humans. This interpretation is in line with the theory of anthropocentrism of environmental ethics which views that the existence and moral position of nature is very dependent on human interests. Islam also sees human exploitative attitudes as reflected in Q.S. al-Ruum: 41 that humans have

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<sup>21</sup> "Briefer – Krisis Kebakaran Hutan Dan Lahan di Indonesia: Perusahaan Kelapa Sawit Dan Bubur Kertas Dengan Area Kebakaran Terbesar Tak Tersentuh Hukum - Greenpeace Indonesia," accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.greenpeace.org/indonesia/publikasi/3795/briefer-krisis-kebakaran-hutan-dan-lahan-di-indonesia-perusahaan-kelapa-sawit-dan-bubur-kertas-dengan-area-kebakaran-terbesar-tak-tersentuh-hukum/>.

<sup>22</sup> "Indonesia Penyumbang Sampah Plastik Terbesar Ke-Dua Dunia," accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/gaya-hidup/20160222182308-277-112685/indonesia-penyumbang-sampah-plastik-terbesar-ke-dua-dunia>.

<sup>23</sup> "Walhi: 10 PLTU Batu Bara Sumbang 30 Persen Polusi Jakarta," accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20190716161616-20-412627/walhi-10-pltu-batu-bara-sumbang-30-persen-polusi-jakarta>.

caused damage on land and at sea. This exploitative attitude has never been encouraged in Islam, and has even been strongly opposed.

Islam actually positions humans as caliphs not in the sense of being a leader or ruler, but as a substitute for God on earth who acts as a guard, protector or protector. According to Quraish Shihab<sup>24</sup> that in the Q.S. al-Baqarah: 30 it has been written since before the creation of humans, God has conveyed to the angels that humans will be assigned to be caliphs on earth who, among other things, function as guardians of the balance of the earth by heeding God's instructions.

There is one important question related to the position of humans as caliphs on earth, namely what is the potential or provision that God has bestowed on humans so that the functions He wants can be realized? According to Shihab,<sup>25</sup> one of the answers can be found in the word of Allah in Q.S. al-Infithar: 5-6 which reads: "O people, what has deceived you against your Most Gracious Lord? Who has created you then perfected your events then made you balanced. In whatever form He wills, He arranges you."

From a physical standpoint, pay attention to the paired limbs, namely the legs, hands, eyes, ears, and so on. Everything is really fit and balanced. All of them are also very amazing. furthermore, all members of the human body are also intertwined in amazing harmony from the smallest to the largest. However, some experts say that the most unique thing about humans is their brain. Not to mention the spirit that accompanies humans whose essence is only known by God perfectly. God has bestowed upon humans various physical and spiritual potentials so that humans are able to apply balance in their lives. This physical and spiritual privilege is further strengthened by the presence of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH who gave an example and explanation of religious guidance and was able to lead people to happiness in the world and the hereafter.<sup>26</sup>

The caliph, continued Shihab, is someone who is given a position by God to manage a certain area. He is obliged to create a society that has a good relationship with God. The harmony of people's lives, religion, reason and culture is maintained. Wahyudi added that the caliph must be able to solve problems, and because of that, he must meet certain requirements for a field

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<sup>24</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Wasathiyyah: Wawasan Islam Tentang Moderasi Beragama*, Kedua (Tangerang: PT. Lentera Hati, 2020).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

or office of his choosing. Furthermore, according to Shihab, caliph consists of the power given by God to the creatures who are given the task, namely the Prophet Adam PBUH and his descendants, and the territory of his assignment, namely the earth.<sup>27</sup>

The explanation above shows that Islam has never been behind the exploitative attitude of humans towards nature. Islam always prohibits humans from destroying nature and instructs humans to be wise by protecting nature as best they can. With this basis, the author is of the view that the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics which has been improved in the form of theo-anthropocentrism's ethical theory can be an alternative solution for efforts to prevent environmental damage and repair the damaged environment.

### **E. Theo-anthropocentrism Theory as A Solution**

The theory of Theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics is a solution to the weakness of the theory of anthropocentrism ethics. In the view of Islam, humans are substitutes for God on earth, however, humans are also creatures that have the same position as other creatures, so humans must act as protectors of other creatures.

Man is a substitute for God on earth. In the Qur'an it is stated that man is the caliph of God. The word caliph etymologically means representative or substitute, so that in simple terms the caliph of God is the representative or substitute for God. As a representative or substitute, humans have heavy and noble authority and duties, namely protecting and managing nature for the benefit of humans.

Q.S. al-Baqarah: 30 becomes one of the environmental theology frameworks that seems anthropocentric. There are visible symptoms that can be found in real life in people's behavior that does not reflect ecological behavior, such as unlimited natural exploration, energy waste, pollution and so on. It is this anthropocentric belief that it is time to reinterpret.<sup>28</sup>

The doctrine of the caliph on earth is often seen as a source of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics in Islam and a legitimacy tool for the process of exploitation and destruction of nature, moreover several verses of the Qur'an state that the universe was created for the benefit of

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<sup>27</sup> M Djidin and Sahiron Syamsuddin, "The Case of Quraish Shihab and Yudian Wahyudi on Qur'an 2: 30-38" 57, no. 1 (2019).

<sup>28</sup> Abdillah, "Dekonstruksi Tafsir Antroposentrisme."

humans as a caliph listed in Q.S. al-Baqarah: 29, Q.S. al-Jatsiah: 13 and Q.S. Luqman: 20. However, this assumption actually does not have a strong theological basis if we pay attention to other Qur'anic verses related to human position and duties. In this context, man is a substitute for God on earth who has several tasks, namely worshiping God, prospering the earth, and upholding justice and not following lust.<sup>29</sup>

The concept of caliph as stated above shows that Islamic teachings have great relevance and attention to environmental problems. For this reason, Islamic teachings regarding the concept of the environment need to be constructed as a system, belief in environmental values and ideals, which can be understood, transformed and internalized by all people to strive for in order to realize these ideals. One of them is in the form of the theory of theanthropocentrism environmental ethics. The role of humans as caliphs on earth is very important in maintaining the balance of nature or the environment. As explained in Q.S. al-An'am: 165, Q.S. al-A'raf: 69 and 74, and in Q.S. al-Isra: 37, and Q.S. al-Anbiya: 31.<sup>30</sup>

According to Shahid,<sup>31</sup> there are two moral aspects of the caliph in relation to nature, namely the aspect of natural prosperity and the aspect of preventing natural damage. *First*, the aspect of natural prosperity. The caliph as the ruler on earth is responsible for the prosperity of nature because he is included in the ecosystem, precisely at the top of the ecosystem chain and thus he is entitled to be the caretaker of nature and the regulator of His will. Because when nature is healthy and awake, the life of the creatures in it will prosper. This aspect is in line with the Q.S. Hud: 61. *Second*, the aspect of preventing damage to nature. The caliph apart from being a prosperous world is of course also responsible for preventing it from destruction and damage to physical forms such as damage to nature and moral forms of that kind. such as division, war and so on. This aspect is in line with the Q.S. al-A'raf: 56.

According to Shihab,<sup>32</sup> the word human or insan is taken from the word *uns* which means harmony. In this case, humans must not only live in

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<sup>29</sup> Ahmad Khoirul Fata, "Teologi Lingkungan Hidup dalam Perspektif Islam" *Ulul Albab: Jurnal Studi Islam*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (2014).

<sup>30</sup> Watsiqotul Mardiyah, S. Sunardi, and Leo Agung, "Peran Manusia Sebagai Khalifah Allah di Muka Bumi: Perspektif Ekologis dalam Ajaran Islam," *Jurnal Penelitian*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (August 1, 2018): 355, <https://doi.org/10.21043/jp.v12i2.3523>.

<sup>31</sup> Ahmad Shahid, "Moral Kekhalifahan Manusia dalam Al-Qur'an" Vol. 4, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>32</sup> M. Quraish Shihab, *Toleransi: Ketuhanan, Kemanusiaan Dan Keberagamaan*, Pertama (Tangerang Selatan: PT. Lentera Hati, 2022).

harmony with fellow human beings, but also with the earth, even nature, so that life is full of things that invite comfort, crowds, joy and benefit.

The creation of humans according to the holy book of the Qur'an starts from the ground and then the spirit of God's creation is blown into it which makes it a unique creature (Q.S. Shad: 71-72). Creation through the blowing of the Divine spirit is what makes humans unique, different from other creatures (Q.S. al-Mu'minin: 14). It is given to all human beings without exception, whether they believe in Allah or not. That is humanity which is priceless so that Islam prohibits buying and selling of humans even though some of their organs and that humans must still be respected even though their souls have left their bodies. thus, it is only natural for him to have the honor to manage this earth by subordinating it to humans by the Lord of all that lies in the heavens and on earth (Q.S. al-Jatsiyah: 12). Indeed, various mistakes were made by this creature, but that was partly because he had initiative, while initiative is needed to succeed in his task of building this earth. Part of the impact of the initiative that gave birth to mistakes.<sup>33</sup>

Despite their high position, humans are also creatures that have the same status as other creatures before God. Even the position of humans can be lower than other creatures if they violate their role as caliph, as stated in Q.S. at-Tin: 5.

The explanation above shows that the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics is the answer to the accusation that religion is behind the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics because religion has never recommended or ordered its people to act exploitatively towards nature. Conversely, the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics can also be a solution to the weakness of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics because it directs humans to act wisely towards the universe. This wisdom will lead to human actions that are no longer exploitative, but become more constructive actions towards nature.

## F. Conclusion

The existence of accusations against religion as a background for the emergence and development of the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics and leads to the exploitative attitude of humans towards nature. This accusation is not very accurate because religion has

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<sup>33</sup> Shihab, *Wasathiyah: Wawasan Islam Tentang Moderasi Beragama*.

never encouraged its adherents to be exploitative. What actually happened was a misunderstanding in understanding religious teachings about the position of humans towards nature. The word caliph etymologically means representative or substitute, so that in simple terms the caliph of God is the representative or substitute for God. As a representative or substitute, humans have heavy and noble authority and duties, namely protecting and managing nature for the benefit of humans. This dialectic between the role of humans as the noblest creatures and humans as representatives of God who has the responsibility to look after other creatures is the initial spirit of the theory of Theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics. This is also the answer to the main research question that requires the theory of theo-anthropocentrism environmental ethics as a complement to the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics.

This article also clearly shows the difference with previous studies which have not touched on the issue of reconstructing the theory of anthropocentrism environmental ethics. Existing studies only see all the weaknesses possessed by this theory and offer other theories as a substitute. These findings have conceptual implications for the enrichment of environmental ethics theory. This enrichment means it is important for the choice of theory in examining environmental issues.[]

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