

Green Economy and the Contribution of Ulama: Building a Model of Sustainable Economic Independence in the Coastal Region of Madura

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Abstract

Religion and religious leaders play a crucial role in promoting sustainable development, particularly in coastal regions like Madura, where environmental and economic challenges are intertwined. This study explores the contributions of religious leaders in fostering environmental awareness, encouraging sustainable economic practices, and mediating between communities and policymakers. Through qualitative research methods, including in-depth interviews and participatory observations, the study highlights how religious values such as justice, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship can drive positive change. Despite increasing awareness of sustainability, economic pressures remain a significant barrier to environmental conservation, particularly in preserving mangrove ecosystems. To address these challenges, integrating the principles of the green economy with religious guidance is essential for achieving sustainable economic independence in Madura's coastal areas. This study emphasizes the importance of regulatory frameworks, strategic planning, and institutional collaboration in implementing sustainable policies. Religious leaders can serve as key agents of change by educating communities, supporting environmentally friendly economic activities, and bridging gaps between stakeholders. The findings suggest that a holistic and faith-based approach to sustainability can enhance environmental preservation while ensuring social and economic well-being for future generations.

BACKGROUND

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sustainable development. This situation highlights the urgent need for a shift towards environmentally friendly economic strategies, such as the green economy and circular economy models, which prioritize sustainable resource management, waste reduction, and environmental conservation. One promising approach to addressing these challenges is the integration of Islamic economic principles, particularly the concept of *Hifz al-Bi'ah* (environmental protection), which aligns with the broader objectives of *Maqasid al-Shariah* (the higher objectives of Islamic law). *Hifz al-Bi'ah* emphasizes responsible stewardship of natural resources, ethical business practices, and socio-economic justice, ensuring that economic activities contribute to both human well-being and ecological sustainability (Acosta, 2022).

In the context of Indonesia, where a significant portion of the population adheres to Islamic values, implementing sustainability policies that align with *Hifz al-Bi'ah* can foster greater public support and engagement. This includes promoting environmentally friendly business models, encouraging corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives, and integrating sustainability education into academic and religious institutions. To achieve meaningful change, collaboration between the government, private sector, and religious institutions is essential. Policies that support green technology adoption, eco-friendly entrepreneurship, and sustainable tourism—such as the economic valuation of ecotourism sites like Purb Mangrove Tourism in East Lombok—can serve as practical examples of integrating economic growth with environmental conservation (Ahmad et al., 2021).

It is essential to recognize that religion and religious leaders play a pivotal role in achieving sustainable development goals. Beyond serving as spiritual guides within society, they can also act as effective agents of change in promoting sustainability, equity, and humanitarian values. In this context, religious scholars, theologians, and faith-based development programs must enhance their efforts to provide dynamic and relevant religious reflections on contemporary development and humanitarian challenges. This includes offering modern, up-to-date, and globally attuned perspectives that accommodate the evolving socio-economic landscape and the pressing global issues facing humanity today (Bamiro et al., 2023).

Religious values such as compassion, justice, peace, and social responsibility must be applied within a contemporary framework to address critical challenges, including poverty, inequality, climate change, and conflict. In this way, religion can serve as both an inspiration and a motivating force, encouraging individuals and communities to take meaningful action toward sustainable development. To effectively respond to development and humanitarian issues, religious principles must be interpreted and implemented dynamically, aligning with ever-changing social, economic, and environmental contexts. This necessitates collaboration between religious leaders, governments, civil society, and the private sector to develop inclusive and sustainable policies and strategies (J. Green, 2022).

Madura, as a developing region, faces similar challenges. The forestry and mining sectors, which are central to the local economy, significantly contribute to environmental degradation. Deforestation caused by illegal tin mining and unregulated logging has led to ecological disasters and social conflicts. Additionally, greenhouse gas emissions from the forestry sector and peatland degradation have escalated, exacerbated by frequent peatland fires.

(Archer et al., 2022) Integrating economic growth with environmental sustainability is crucial in addressing these issues. The concept of the green economy has emerged as a transformative paradigm for sustainable development. A green economy aims to enhance societal well-being while minimizing environmental harm. By adopting this model, economic activities can be measured not only by financial profitability but also by their environmental and social impact. This paradigm shift is essential to ensuring that economic development in Madura—and other regions—remains sustainable, preserving ecological integrity for future generations.



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In this context, this study seeks to explore the potential contributions of religious scholars (ulama) in developing a model for sustainable economic self-reliance in Madura's coastal communities—one that can serve as a blueprint for other regions in Indonesia. Through collaboration between ulama, government institutions, local communities, and the private sector, a development framework can be established that prioritizes both environmental sustainability and societal well-being. Ultimately, this research aspires to provide new insights and concrete solutions to the intertwined challenges of economic growth and environmental conservation in Indonesia (Baldo, 2018).

METHODOLOGY

Using a qualitative research approach, this study will focus on gaining an in-depth understanding of the examined phenomenon. The qualitative research methodology for this topic will involve several key steps, including designing the research framework, collecting data through in-depth interviews and participatory observations, conducting rigorous data analysis using techniques such as content analysis, and interpreting findings by linking them to relevant theories and contexts. To ensure reliability and validity, verification and validation of findings will be conducted through triangulation and peer debriefing. The research findings will be systematically and clearly presented in a comprehensive report. Through this approach, the study aims to provide a profound insight into the role of religion in sustainable development and the contributions of religious leaders in realizing these objectives...

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

CONCLUSION

The role of religion in sustainable development in the coastal regions of Madura is of paramount importance, as it significantly influences public awareness and attitudes toward environmental conservation. Through in-depth interviews with religious figures, community leaders, and local residents engaged in sustainable development efforts, it has been observed that awareness of environmental preservation is steadily increasing among the populace. Religious leaders play a crucial role in guiding their communities toward environmental stewardship, particularly in maintaining the mangrove ecosystem, which is a vital component of Madura's coastal environment (Alsmadi, 2022).

The study also identifies challenges in preserving the mangrove ecosystem in the region. Data indicate that the extent of critically degraded mangrove forests remains substantial, with ongoing destruction occurring annually. Despite the growing awareness of environmental conservation, significant obstacles persist, particularly concerning the economic needs of the local population (A. Green & Crosbie, 2018).

One of the most pressing challenges in maintaining the mangrove ecosystem in coastal Madura is the economic necessity that often conflicts with conservation efforts. Research findings reveal that the exploitation of mangroves for economic activities such as fishing and forest resource extraction is still prevalent. This situation demonstrates that while awareness of sustainable development is increasing, economic factors remain the dominant influence on community decisions regarding environmental management. Therefore, the role of religion in sustainable development in coastal Madura extends beyond raising awareness and shaping attitudes toward environmental preservation; it also plays a pivotal role in addressing economic challenges associated with local resource management. Collaboration between the government, religious institutions, and local communities is essential to overcoming these challenges and ensuring environmental sustainability for collective welfare.

The implementation of the green economy in Madura requires an integrated and sustainable approach. One of the initial steps involves a legal framework. Compliance and responsiveness to policies are crucial for effective implementation. Hence, adequate regulatory instruments are necessary within the green economy context. Although Law No. 32 of 2009 on Environmental Protection and Management provides a foundation for environmental policies, including environmental economics, the definition and characteristics of the green economy remain insufficiently explicit. A broader interpretation of these



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regulations is needed to encompass green economy aspects, including social welfare and equity (Andraos & Matlack, 2022).

At the regional level, the government of Madura has enacted Regional Regulation No. 8 of 2018 on Pollution and Environmental Damage Control. While this regulation does not explicitly address the green economy, it provides a legal basis for environmental control and protection, covering aspects of welfare and sustainability. However, further steps are necessary to integrate green economy principles into local regulations to ensure that sustainable economic development remains a primary focus.

Strategic planning documents play a critical role in directing green economic development in Madura. Documents such as the Regional Leader's Vision and Mission, the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, and the Regional Government Work Plan serve as strategic foundations for guiding sustainable development in the region. Additionally, the creation of a green economy roadmap is essential for structuring development planning, ensuring that environmental and sustainability aspects are optimally integrated.

Institutional approaches are also crucial for green economy implementation. Although the green economy concept has not yet become a central focus of regional development, its management and advancement can be carried out through various specialized institutions, such as regional development planning, public works and spatial planning, food security, forestry, marine, and fisheries. However, it is vital to designate a lead agency responsible for harmonizing the planning, management, and development of the green economy to achieve sustainable development goals effectively and efficiently (ANGELOV, 2023).

The model of sustainable economic independence in the coastal regions of Madura must not only encompass environmental, social, and economic dimensions but also be considered within the green economy framework, incorporating the role of religious scholars as integral contributors to the development process. The green economy concept emphasizes the sustainable utilization of natural resources while accounting for the environmental impact of economic activities. In this context, religious scholars, as spiritual and social leaders, have significant potential to support the implementation of the green economy in coastal Madura.

Firstly, religious scholars can play a crucial role in raising environmental awareness among the community. By using religious teachings as a foundation, they can provide guidance and education on the importance of environmental preservation and the adoption of green economy principles in daily life. In this regard, religious scholars can act as effective agents of change in transforming public perceptions and behaviors related to natural resource and environmental management (Al-Roubaie & Sarea, 2019).

Secondly, religious scholars can contribute to empowering local communities to actively participate in sustainable economic development. By mobilizing the community to engage in environmental conservation initiatives and green economic activities, religious leaders can foster collective awareness and a spirit of cooperation in maintaining environmental sustainability. Additionally, they can provide moral guidance and support to entrepreneurs and investors in developing environmentally friendly and sustainable businesses (Alsmadi, 2022).

Thirdly, religious scholars can serve as mediators between the government and the community in the decision-making process regarding economic development in coastal Madura. With their moral authority and the trust of the community, religious scholars can help mediate conflicts and build consensus in policy formulation and development programs focused on the green economy. Their involvement ensures that policies consider all stakeholders' interests and maintain long-term sustainability (Alexander, 2022).

Through the synergy between the green economy concept and the role of religious scholars, the model of sustainable economic independence in coastal Madura can become more holistic and integrated. By involving religious scholars as change agents and moral guides, sustainable economic development can be implemented more effectively, gaining broader support from society.



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