

From Anthropocentrism to Hydrocentric Ethics: A Qur'anic Reading of QS. Al-Anbiya' [21]:30 and the Global Water Crisis

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Abstract

The global water crisis raises fundamental questions about how human relationships with water should be understood beyond its treatment as an economic resource. This study examines QS. Al-Anbiya' [21]:30 and related Qur'anic passages to develop a water-centered ethical perspective in response to contemporary ecological challenges. Employing qualitative library research and *tafsir mawdu'i* (thematic exegesis), the study analyzes classical and contemporary interpretations by al-Qurtubī, Tantāwī Jawharī, Ibn 'Ashūr, and M. Quraish Shihab, supplemented by literature on environmental ethics and water governance. The analysis focuses on the Qur'anic representation of water, its relationship to the origin and continuity of life, and the ethical implications of human dependence on water. The findings indicate that QS. Al-Anbiya' [21]:30 provides a theological basis for understanding water as a fundamental condition of life and as a resource that entails human responsibility rather than unrestricted exploitation. On this basis, the study proposes hydrocentric ethics as a conceptual framework that shifts environmental reasoning from exclusive human-centered utility toward the protection of water-dependent life and ecological relationships. Rather than claiming that the Qur'an explicitly formulates hydrocentrism, this study presents it as a contemporary ethical construction derived from Qur'anic principles. The framework contributes to Qur'anic environmental ethics by connecting revelation, ecological responsibility, and contemporary debates on sustainable water governance.

Environmental Ethics; Hydrocentric Ethics; Water Crisis; Water Governance

Abstrak

Krisis air global memunculkan pertanyaan mendasar mengenai bagaimana relasi manusia dengan air perlu dipahami di luar kecenderungan menempatkannya semata-mata sebagai sumber daya ekonomi. Penelitian ini mengkaji QS. Al-Anbiya' [21]:30 dan ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an terkait untuk mengembangkan perspektif etis yang berorientasi pada air sebagai respons terhadap tantangan ekologis kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan dan metode *tafsir mawdu'i* (tafsir tematik). Analisis dilakukan terhadap penafsiran klasik dan kontemporer al-Qurtubī, Tantāwī Jawharī, Ibn 'Ashūr, dan M. Quraish Shihab, serta dilengkapi dengan literatur mengenai etika lingkungan dan tata kelola air. Analisis difokuskan pada representasi air dalam Al-Qur'an, keterkaitannya dengan asal-usul dan keberlangsungan kehidupan, serta implikasi etis dari ketergantungan manusia terhadap air. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa QS. Al-Anbiya' [21]:30 memberikan landasan teologis untuk memahami air sebagai salah satu prasyarat fundamental kehidupan sekaligus sumber daya yang menuntut tanggung jawab manusia, bukan pemanfaatan tanpa batas. Berdasarkan temuan tersebut, penelitian ini menawarkan etika hidrosentris sebagai kerangka konseptual yang menggeser orientasi etika lingkungan dari utilitas yang semata-mata berpusat pada manusia menuju perlindungan kehidupan yang bergantung pada air dan keberlangsungan relasi ekologis. Hidrosentrisme tidak diposisikan sebagai konsep yang secara eksplisit dirumuskan Al-Qur'an, melainkan sebagai konstruksi etis kontemporer yang dikembangkan dari prinsip-prinsip Al-Qur'an. Kerangka ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan etika lingkungan berbasis Al-Qur'an dengan menghubungkan wahyu, tanggung jawab ekologis, dan diskursus kontemporer mengenai tata kelola air yang berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Etika Lingkungan; Etika Hidrosentris; Krisis Air; Tata Kelola Air.

INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an through Surah Al-Anbiyā' [21]:30, radically deconstructs the claim of human existential supremacy by establishing water (*al-mā'*) as the origin and the absolute prerequisite for *kulla shay'in hayy* (all living things). This ontological affirmation shows that water is far more fundamental than man's self-interest, since it is the heart of the entire system of life that precedes human authority on earth. However, this sacred vision clashes violently with 21st-century realities, where the ecological crisis of clean water has become the greatest international obstacle in the history of civilization. WHO and UNICEF data report that 2.2 billion people still lack access to safe drinking water (Karam et al., 2026; Mehta et al., 2026).

Water-based geopolitical conflicts have soared dramatically, exceeding 150 cases and increasing by 18% through 2024 (Shimabuku, 2025). In Indonesia, although the number of drinking water customers grew to 17.49 million people in 2024, the supply sector is experiencing a decline in business-unit dynamics that highlights the structural inequality between surging demand and management capacity. The roots of this multidimensional crisis are rooted in the dominance of Radical Anthropocentrism since the 17th century, pioneered by Francis Bacon and René Descartes. Through a mechanistic-reductionist methodology, this paradigm radically separates the thinking subject (*res cogitans*) from the passive material world (*res extensa*), reducing water to a standing reserve mechanism to be exploited for economic commodification (Descartes, 1986; Leopold, 1949).

This extractive logic uprooted the dimension of the sacredness of water which Ibn 'Āsyūr interpreted as *universal rahmah* (Ibn 'Āsyūr, 1420) and turned it into an object of capitalistic monopoly that fueled massive pollution and marginalization of people's right to water (Fadilah, 2025; Prakoso & Supriyanto, 2026). When freshwater ecosystems face unchecked commodification, river basins and groundwater reservoirs rapidly deteriorate, turning life-giving resources into contested economic assets. Consequently, local communities lose equitable access to vital water supplies, while non-human ecological habitats suffer severe degradation. This systematic deprivation undermines fundamental ecological balance, demonstrating that treating water merely as an industrial input creates widespread socio-ecological injustice across global watersheds.

Discourse on ecology and water resource management from an Islamic perspective has attracted wide attention from academics over the past five years. Haning et al. (2025) describe the relationship between the availability of clean water and the dynamics of climate change in vulnerable areas. In environmental theology, Andini (2022) formulated a conservation framework based on the integral ecology of the Qur'an to respond to ecosystem crises, while (Hakim, 2026) contextualized the concept of *fasād* in water conservation through local interpretation. From a sociological-community perspective, Hairunisa (2025) maps how gender roles and the institution of pesantren harmonize to mitigate water pollution in domestic spaces. In addition, Büscher (2020) advances the idea of a conservation revolution to challenge the capitalist view of nature. This literature review shows that religious studies have strong potential to respond to contemporary environmental issues.

Although previous research has made valuable contributions, a fundamental epistemological gap remains in environmental theology studies. Most previous research remains trapped in

fragmentary, utilitarian-functional thinking, where water is positioned as a passive object of conservation to ensure human survival (anthropocentric bias). On the other hand, conventional religious interpretations often limit the discussion of the verses of *al-mā'* to the realm of *fiqh* of outward worship (*thabârah*) or evidence of passive divine power. The fundamental difference between this article and previous studies lies in the offer of a new paradigm called hydrocentrism.

This article shifts water from a managerial object to an ontological axis and moral subject with an existential right to protection. The state of the art of this article is built through a synthesis of authoritative multi interpretations integrating the scientific-ecological approach of Thanthawi Jawhari in *Al-Jawâbir*, the *maqâsidî* dimension of Ibn 'Āsyūr in *At-Tabrîr wa At-Tanwîr*, the juridical-communal analysis of Al-Qurthubi in *Al-Jâmi'*, and the contextual reading of M. Quraish Shihab to systematically establish a multidimensional theological foundation for the Techno-Sharia framework rather than merely listing comparative views (Hasibuan, 2026). This holistic synthesis establishes an innovative eco-theological blueprint for sustainable global water governance.

The main objective of this research is to deconstruct the anthropocentric paradigm driving the global water ethics crisis and formulate a theo-ecological blueprint of Hydrocentrism grounded in the reinterpretation of QS. Al-Anbiyâ' [21]:30. This study makes a significant theoretical contribution to contemporary Qur'anic exegesis by addressing the secular limitations of Western biocentrism, which overlooks the transcendental dimensions of conservation. By affirming that water destruction constitutes *al-ifsād fî al-ard* transforming public welfare (*al-asyyā' al-ṣālihah*) into a harmful substance (*mudirrah*) (Ibn 'Āshūr, 1984) this research repositions humanity from exploiters to accountable cosmic trustees (*khalīfah*). Practically, it bridges the ethics of revelation with Internet of Things (IoT) monitoring technology to realize long-term cross-species hydrological justice.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative library research design and employs Abdul Hayy al-Farmawi's thematic exegesis (*al-tafsîr al-mawdû'î*) method, framed within an eco-theological perspective (Sholihat & Shintia, 2024). The material object focuses on water-related verses (*āyât al-mā'*), centrally examining Surah Al-Anbiyâ' [21]:30 alongside complementary cosmological and distribution texts, including Surah Hūd [11]:7, Az-Zumar [39]:21, Al-Mulk [67]:30, and Al-Qamar [54]:28. The formal object is the philosophical formulation of the Hydrocentrism paradigm. Primary data were extracted from four authoritative exegeses representing distinct interpretive genres: *Al-Jâmi' li-Abkām al-Qur'ân* by Al-Qurtubî (juridical), *Al-Jawâbir fî Tafsîr al-Qur'ân al-Karîm* by Tantâwî Jawharî (scientific), *At-Tabrîr wa al-Tanwîr* by Ibn 'Āshūr (*maqâsidî*), and *Tafsîr Al-Mishbah* by M. Quraish Shihab (contextual). Secondary data encompass classical Arabic lexicons (*Lisân al-'Arab*) and contemporary peer-reviewed environmental literature.

The research execution followed five operational stages of thematic exegesis (Assarroudi et al., 2018). *First*, water verses were inventoried and categorized thematically using standard digital concordance tools (*al-Mu'jam al-Mufabras*). *Second*, we mapped macro-textual coherence (*munāsabât*) and socio-historical contexts (*asbâb al-nuzûl*) to trace thematic continuity across Makkiyyah and Madaniyyah passages. *Third*, textual exegesis was conducted by cross-referencing linguistic nuances, classical juristic rulings, and cosmological commentaries across the selected *mufasssîr*

traditions. *Fourth*, content analysis was applied through philosophical triangulation to confront anthropocentric assumptions with Qur’anic eco-ethics. *Fifth*, the findings were synthesized reconstructively into practical governance frameworks, formulating the socio-spiritual dimensions of “Hydrological Jihad” and the socio-technical architecture of “Techno-Sharia” to address global water security.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Deconstructing Anthropocentrism into Qur’anic Hydrocentrism

Hydrology is the comprehensive study of water’s existence, movement, and dynamics across atmospheric, surface, and subsurface environments, governed by mass and momentum conservation (Hasibuan, 2026; Salsabila, 2020). Although the hydrosphere covers nearly three-quarters of Earth’s surface, freshwater accounts for only 3% of global volume, with accessible surface water representing just 0.3% trapped in lakes, wetlands, and rivers (Matatuia, 2024). Classified by salinity and ecological characteristics into freshwater, marine, and estuarine brackish systems, these environments require advanced technological solutions such as electrocoagulation, to address severe global freshwater limitations and safeguard vulnerable ecological communities from catastrophic planetary resource depletion (Kumar et al., 2026; Matatuia, 2024).

Historically, human comprehension of the hydrological cycle transitioned from ancient mythological speculations such as subterranean sea channels (*Oceanus*) and medieval analogies to internal blood circulation toward empirical rationalism (Angelakis et al., 2021; Sabjan & Mohd Ghazali, 2024). The renaissance initiated a major paradigm shift as Liu et al. (2025) demonstrated that atmospheric precipitation is the primary source of rivers and groundwater infiltration by systematically observing natural precipitation patterns, thereby establishing an indispensable empirical foundation that profoundly reshaped subsequent scientific investigations into terrestrial water dynamics across the globe (Holt, 2017).

This conceptual breakthrough culminated during the Enlightenment through the quantitative experiments of Pierre Perrault, Edme Mariotte, and Antonio Vallisnieri, who proved that rainfall volume exceeds river discharges, establishing the hydrological cycle as a solar-driven closed system (McDonnell et al., 2025; van Jaarsveld et al., 2026). Ultimately, this evolution from speculative myth to quantitative empiricism reinforces the ontological reality that water is the foundational element regulating planetary survival, unveiling the intricate ecological balance of natural ecosystems and providing a firm scientific basis for positioning water as a moral subject within the Hydrocentrism paradigm.

Terminologically, water (*al-mā’*) is the foundational pillar supporting life on Earth physically defined as a molecule freezing at 0°C and boiling at 100°C, while holding a broad cosmic and biogenetic status in the Qur’an that precedes and enables existence (Gunarti & Ahmadi, 2023). The Islamic framework for the origin of life centers on QS. Al-Anbiyā’ [21]: 30, which affirms the creation of all living things from water.

وَجَعَلْنَا مِنَ الْمَاءِ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ حَيٍّ أَفَلَا يُؤْمِنُونَ

“And We made out of water all living things. So why don’t they believe?”

Al-Qurthubi delineates this verse into three dimensions: water as the fundamental material of biogenesis (*kehalq*), a metabolic medium sustaining biological life (*hifẓ al-hayāh*) (Al-Qurthubi, 1964), and a reproductive fluid. Modern cosmology complements these exegetical insights through the “cosmos soup” model, demonstrating that the early universe existed in a fluid state where water vapor catalyzed early life (Ibn Katsir, 1999). Furthermore, the statement in QS. Hūd [11]: 7 regarding the ‘Arsh being upon the water signifies a divine cosmic design intrinsically reliant on water by illustrating the primordial ontological priority of hydrological elements before earthly creation, as systematically classified in the subsequent thematic table (Al-Qurthubi, 1964).

A systematic examination of the Qur’anic text demonstrates that water (*al-mā’*) possesses a primordial ontological position that precedes and sustains biological creation. Rather than treating natural elements as passive objects for human exploitation, the Qur’an establishes water as the primary physical constituent of biogenesis and the foundational medium for terrestrial vitality. This divine principle is fundamentally anchored in Surah Al-Anbiyā’ [21]:30, which declares the water-based origin of all living entities. To provide a structured thematic map of this biogenetic framework, Table 1 categorizes the primary Qur’anic verses that delineate the origin and sustenance of life through water.

Table 1. Thematic Classification of Qur’anic Verses on the Origin of Life from Water

Surah and Verses	Category	Context
QA. Al-Anbiyā’[21]: 30	Makkiyah	Everything that lives comes from water (<i>Mā’</i>).
QS. Al-Furqān [25]: 54	Makkiyah	The creation of man (<i>basyar</i>) from water (<i>Mā’</i>).
QS. As-Sajdah [32]: 8 QS. Al-Mursalāt [77]: 20	Makkiyah	The creation of man from the essence of the soil (ماء مهيّن)

The main pillar of Islamic understanding of the origin of life is based on QS. Al-Anbiyā’ [21]: 30, which states that all living things are created from water. Al-Qurthubi dissects this verse into three theoretical dimensions: *first*, water as the basic material of biogenesis (*kehalq*); *second*, water as a medium of metabolism that maintains biological sustainability (*hifẓ al-hayāh*); and *third*, water as a reproductive fluid that is the biological forerunner of humans and animals (Al-Qurthubi, 1964). Interestingly, modern science, through the concept of the “cosmic soup,” explains that in the early phases of creation, the universe was in a liquid state before finally forming a precise design of the earth, in which water vapor played a crucial role in the formation of early organisms (Ibn Katsir, 1999).

The integration of exegetical data and scientific insights demonstrates that the Divine Throne (‘*Arsh*) being upon water in QS. Hūd [11]:7 symbolizes a cosmic design intrinsically reliant on hydrological elements (Al-Qurthubi, 1964). Specifically, the creation of man is also explained through the terminology *sulālah* (essence) from *mā’in mahin* (despicable water) which, according to Ibn ‘Āsyūr (1420), identifies as a scientific cue that embryonic formation relies strictly on selected *nutfah* particles. This affirms that water’s biological role is indispensable; without it, metabolic functions cease, and ecosystems face total collapse (Imamudin, 2021). This absolute dependence

of living things on water is reaffirmed in verses that describe rain as the “breath of life” for the barren earth.

Beyond its role as the primordial origin of biological life, the Qur’an repeatedly highlights water as the active, dynamic agent that revitalizes dry terrestrial ecosystems. The descent of atmospheric precipitation is presented not merely as a meteorological phenomenon, but as a continuous manifestation of divine grace (*rahmah*) that restores barren landscapes (*al-ard al-maytah*) into fertile, productive soil. Through this ecological revitalization, water directly sustains planetary food chains, agricultural yields, and freshwater availability for all living organisms across biomes. To map these environmental dynamics systematically across the revelation, Table 2 inventories key Qur’anic verses illustrating the revival of dead land, the stimulation of vegetation growth, and the provision of essential hydration.

Table 2. Water Verses (*Al-Mā’*) Referring to Life and Giving Life to the Earth

No.	Surah and Verses	Context
1.	QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 164	Allah sent down water (<i>Mā’</i>) to give life to the dead earth.
2.	QS. Al-A’rāf [7]: 57	Allah sent down water to grow plants (<i>nabāt</i>) in the barren land.
3.	QS. Al-Ḥajj [22]: 5	Water is lowered to the earth to grow plants (as a metaphor for the resurrection).
4.	QS. As-Sajdah [32]: 27	Water is lowered into the barren earth (<i>ard juruz</i>) for crops.
5.	QS. Fush-shilāt [41]: 39	Water is lowered into the barren earth, and the earth moves alive.
6.	QS. ‘Abasa [80]: 25	Water (<i>Mā’</i>) is poured for drinking and growing grains (<i>ḥabb</i>).
7.	QS. Ar-Palace [30]: 24	The rainwater (<i>Mā’</i>) that gives life to the earth after its death.
8.	QS. Luqmān [31]: 10	God sent down water to grow all kinds of beautiful plants.
9.	QS. Az-Zukhrūf [43]: 11	Water is sent down to revive the dead state (<i>baldataṇ mayyitān</i>).
10.	QS. Qāf [50]: 9	Water is endowed that grows gardens and seeds.
11.	QS. An-Nabā’[78]: 14	Water is poured heavily (<i>Mā’an tsajjājā</i>) to grow the grain.
12.	QS. An-Nazī’āt [79]: 31	Water is removed from the earth to grow grasses (<i>mar’ābā</i>).
13.	QS. Al-An’ām [6]: 99	Water grows grains, dates, and vineyards (food).
14.	QS. An-Naḥl [16]: 65	Rainwater (<i>Mā’</i>) produces a drink (<i>syarāb</i>) for humans.
15.	QS. Al-Mu’minūn [23]: 18	Water is lowered, stored in the earth, and grows fruit orchards.
16.	QS. Al-Wāqī’ah [56]: 68	Water for drinking (<i>Mā’</i>) that humans drink.
17.	QS. Al-An’ām [6]: 99	Water grows grains, dates, and vineyards (food).

18.	QS. An-Nahl [16]: 65	Rainwater (<i>Mā'</i>) produces a drink (<i>syarāb</i>) for humans.
19.	QS. Al-Mu'minūn [23]: 18	Water is lowered, stored in the earth, and grows fruit orchards.
20.	QS. Al-Wāqī'ah [56]: 68	Water for drinking (<i>Mā'</i>) that humans drink.

The Table 2 above, Qur'anic argument radically deconstructs the paradigm of anthropocentrism, which tends to view nature as an object to be manipulated for the sake of the human ego. By showing that a dead earth can only rise through the mediation of water, the Qur'an positions water as an autonomous subject that holds the key to the sustainability of civilization. Without water's intervention, all of humanity's technological achievements would lose their meaning because the web of life would be completely severed. Ultimately, this ethical transition demands adopting the paradigm of hydrocentrism, a view that places water at the center of life's order on the planet.

Water is understood as a sacred energy that connects the various dimensions of nature, from the atmosphere to the deepest layers of the earth through an organized hydrological cycle. In this framework, maintaining the integrity of water is no longer just a technical act of conservation, but a form of submission to God's law, in which human beings serve as guardians of the trust (*khalīfah*) whose survival depends entirely on the generosity of the hydrological system. To comprehend the multifaceted theological, scientific, and socio-ecological dimensions embedded in Surah Al-Anbiyā' [21]:30, a cross-era comparative analysis among authoritative exegetical traditions is essential.

Classical and contemporary scholars approach this foundational verse from distinct yet complementary methodological paradigms. While classical jurisprudence highlights the legal and communal rights of living entities to water, scientific commentaries elucidate its cosmological biogenesis and primordial functions. At the same time, *maqāṣidī*-oriented interpretations uncover the universal mercy and public welfare embedded in hydrological preservation, complemented by modern contextual readings on sustainable resource stewardship. To systematically synthesize these diverse interpretive nuances and construct the theological foundation of Hydrocentrism, Table 3 presents a comparative breakdown of the multi perspectives regarding this pivotal biogenetic verse.

Table 3. Comparison of the Interpretation of Surah Al-Anbiya [21] Verse 30

Mufassir	Approach Focus	Key Finding
Al-Qurṭubī	Juridical-Communal (<i>Fiqh</i>)	Emphasizes water as a legal and social instrument, particularly regarding ownership rights and collective usage to ensure social justice.
Ṭanṭāwī bin Jawharī	Scientific-Ecological	Interprets this verse as evidence of Allah's power through natural phenomena, connecting the origin of life from water with scientific insights to foster ecological awareness.
Ibn 'Āsyūr	<i>Maqāṣidī</i> Dimension	Views water within the framework of the higher objectives of Islamic law (<i>maqāṣid</i>); water is not merely an object, but a vital entity that preserves the

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stability of life systems and the sustainability of all creation.

Draws the relevance of this verse to modern crises, emphasizing that water is a central subject requiring human responsibility (*khalifah*) to prevent *israf* (wastefulness) and *fasad* (corruption/environmental damage).

Based on Table 3, it is evident that the interpretation of Surah Al-Anbiyā' [21]: 30 has developed from a normative-juridical (*fiqh*) and scientific understanding toward an ecological-*maqāṣidī* awareness that positions water as a vital moral subject for the sustainability of all creation. Therefore, it is essential to establish a solid conceptual foundation regarding hydrocentric principles as a new ethical framework governing the relationship between humanity, water, and the Creator. The principle of Hydrocentrism radically rejects the hegemony of anthropocentrism by asserting that humanity is neither the center nor the absolute master of the ecosphere, but rather an entity entirely dependent on the generosity of the hydrological cycle. This aligns directly with the divine inquiry in Surah Al-Mulk [67]: 30:

قُلْ أَرَأَيْتُمْ إِنْ أَصْبَحَ مَاؤُكُمْ غَوْرًا فَمَنْ يَأْتِيكُمْ بِمَاءٍ مَّعِينٍ

“Say (O Muhammad), “Have you considered: if your water source were to sink down deep (recedes into the ground), who then could bring you flowing water?”

Through exegetical analysis of Surah Al-Mulk [67]: 30, the concept of *al-ghawr* demonstrates the existential limits of human civilization when water sources vanish into subterranean depths beyond the reach of any technology, affirming that water availability remains fundamentally under transcendental authority and natural law (Al-Baghawi, 1997). In this perspective, water is recognized as a subject possessing intrinsic value and an existential right to flourish, resonating with the principles of Deep Ecology, which emphasize that the non-human world cannot be evaluated solely by its instrumental utility for human ambition (Saputra, 2022). Consequently, water governance policies must evolve beyond mere “environmental friendliness” toward total compliance with sacred hydrological rhythms.

In line with dismantling anthropocentric monopoly, the second principle demands an inclusive and non-discriminatory distribution of water for the entire ecological community. This imperative is enshrined in Surah Al-Qamar [54]: 28, which explicitly mandates that water resources must be partitioned equitably between human populations and non-human beings, as illustrated through the historical covenant with the She-Camel of Thamud. By legally establishing that every organism possesses an inherent entitlement to hydration (*qismah*), the Qur'an categorically prohibits human hoarding and institutionalizes cross-species water democracy. Consequently, access to clean water ceases to be an exclusive anthropocentric privilege, transforming into an inviolable communal ecological right:

وَبَيِّنْهُمْ أَنَّ الْمَاءَ قِسْمَةٌ بَيْنَهُمْ كُلُّ شِرْبٍ مُحْتَضَرٌ

“And inform them that the water is to be shared between them; each drinking share being witnessed and attended”

According to QS. Al-Qamar [54]: 28, water is established as a collective commons (*qismah baynabum*) wherein non-human entities hold legitimate rights with equal ontological standing to human needs (Al-Razi, 1981). The human status as *kehalifah fi al-ard* represents an ethical trusteeship (*taklif*) to preserve cosmic balance (*mizān*) not a license for capitalistic exploitation (Al-Ashfahani, 2009; Ahmad, 2023). Accordingly, the theological doctrine of *taskhīr* must be reinterpreted as a “Managerial Mandate” obligating humanity to steward water for universal welfare, rendering profit-driven privatization an aberration of true ecological responsibility (Hasibuan, 2026).

The ethics of Hydrocentrism further encompass the principle of self-realization, expanding identity from an individualistic ego to an “ecological self” that acknowledges interconnectedness with nature (Naess, 1988). This realization demands non-harm (*lā ḍarar*), halting groundwater depletion to safeguard geological integrity for future generations (Devall, 2023). Grounded in these values, Vandana Shiva’s ecofeminist framework for “Water Democracy” dismantles corporate commodification, and restores water as a sacred trust for all life forms (Shiva, 2002).

Theologically, the Qur’an deconstructs mechanistic views of the hydrological cycle by depicting the percolation and storage of water within the earth, as stated in Surah Az-Zumar [39]: 21:

أَلَمْ تَرَ أَنَّ اللَّهَ أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَسَلَكَهُ يَنَابِيعٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ ثُمَّ يُخْرِجُ بِهِ زَرْعًا مُخْتَلِفًا أَلْوَانُهُ

“Do you not see that Allah sends down rain from the sky and guides it into springs in the earth, and then brings forth crops of varying colors?”

Surah Az-Zumar [39]: 21 characterizes aquifers and groundwater veins (*yanābir*) as a planetary circulatory system analogous to biological bloodlines, where natural hydrological cycles sustain biodiversity and systemic equilibrium (Jawhari, 1932). From this viewpoint, water wastage (*israf*) and pollution (*fasād*) represent forms of ecological tyranny (*zulm*), reinforcing prophetic mandates that regard water preservation as an act of transcendental obedience (Rosyidah et al., 2025).

Operationalizing Hydrocentrism through Hydrological Jihad and Techno-Sharia

The global water crisis necessitates operationalizing Hydrocentrism through “Hydrological Jihad” an enduring intellectual, spiritual, legal, and socio-political struggle (*al-jihād al-akbar*) to protect hydrological systems from contamination and predatory privatization (Qardhawi, 2010). Rooted in QS. Al-Anbiyā’ [21]: 30, this paradigm treats the living world as an “unfolding revelation” (*āyāt kawwīyyah*) alongside scripture (Naess, 2000; Tsabita et al., 2024). By harmonizing Islamic theology with Deep Ecology, it establishes ecospheric egalitarianism and forbids disruptive practices that disrupt natural water cycles, respecting the intrinsic value of every living organism (Rosyidah et al., 2025).

Translating this theological blueprint into governance aligns with Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and international environmental law, reflecting Qur’anic values of equitable allocation and stewardship (*kehalafāh*) (BPS TIM, 2025; Dewan Sumber Daya Air Nasional, 2024). This framework synthesizes indigenous ecological wisdom (Sena, 2025), modern technological solutions (Tim ADB, 2025), institutional coordination (Hasibuan, 2026), and adaptive legal reasoning (*ijtihad*) for arid regions (Ali & Chatti, 2023). Furthermore, it integrates

consultative decision-making (*shūrā*) and gender inclusivity to cultivate household conservation standards.

In response to regional water stress across the MENA region and Indonesia, contemporary *ijtihad* validates pragmatic policy mechanisms, including recycled wastewater utilization and equitable tariff structures. Implementing participatory governance (*shūrā*) ensures water allocations protect marginalized communities from commercial exploitation (Ali & Chatti, 2023). Grassroots engagement across educational and religious hubs further eliminates wasteful habits (*isrāf*) and environmental degradation (*fasād*) (Atallah, 2001). Crucially, the “Techno-Sharia” framework operationalizes these theological imperatives through cutting-edge solutions, incorporating Internet of Things (IoT) monitoring, flow-restricting ablution fixtures, and Rainwater Harvesting installations (Agnes & Naqash, 2025). This integration bridges sacred revelation with technological innovation, establishing an enduring socio-technical paradigm for global hydrological sustainability and cross-generational water security.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the global water crisis is fundamentally rooted in the philosophical crisis of Radical Anthropocentrism, which reduces water from a sacred, life-giving entity into an extractive economic commodity. Reinterpreting Surah Al-Anbiyā’ [21]:30 alongside supporting cosmological verses through a multi-exegetical synthesis (Al-Qurṭubī, Tantāwī Jawharī, Ibn ‘Āshūr, and M. Quraish Shihab) establishes the Hydrocentrism paradigm. This paradigm ontologically repositions water as the primordial axis of biogenesis and a moral subject with an inherent right to protection, while redefining role of humanit’s role from exploitative dominators to accountable stewards (*khalīfah*) bound to cross-species hydrological justice (*qismah*).

Practically, this study bridges normative Qur’anic ethics and contemporary environmental governance through the unified formulation of “Hydrological Jihad” and “Techno-Sharia”. While Hydrological Jihad mobilizes collective socio-spiritual resistance against water commodification and institutionalizes community-based water rights, Techno-Sharia translates divine prohibitions against wastefulness (*isrāf*) and corruption (*fasād*) into IoT-based monitoring technologies, smart water grids, and decentralized conservation systems. This dual framework provides an innovative, actionable theo-ecological blueprint that harmonizes Islamic theological ethics with cutting-edge technological infrastructure to realize sustainable water security and intergenerational hydrological justice globally.

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DECLARATION USE OF AI

The authors used ChatGPT to improve the language quality and readability the manuscripts. The authors have reviewed and re-edited the outputs produced and are solely responsible for the entire content and substance of the content presented in this article.

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