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Theocentric Ecology in Ibn Kathīr's Interpretation of the Taskhīr Term in QS. 16:14 Toward an Ethical Foundation for Marine Conservation

Billy Muhammad Alif¹; Muhammad Irfan Zain²

Abstract

Global and national marine ecological crises, particularly coastal degradation and water pollution in areas such as the southern coast of West Java, demand a comprehensive approach rooted not only in technical regulations but also in strong theological foundations. Contemporary environmental policies often experience a **gap** in integrating orthodox spiritual values, resulting in a lack of sociological resonance among Muslim communities. Modern ecotheology studies tend to use liberal hermeneutic approaches that often reduce the authenticity of classical exegesis. Therefore, this study aims to actualize the concept of *taskhir* (the subjugation of nature) in Ibn Kathir's exegesis of Surah An-Nahl verse 14 as a marine conservation ethical framework aligned with the pure understanding of the salaf generation. This research seeks to answer three main **questions**: (1) What is the textual analysis of QS. An-Nahl: 14 in Ibn Kathir's Tafsir? (2) What is the philosophical essence of the *Taskhir* concept according to the salaf understanding? and (3) How is the practical actualization of this concept within the marine conservation framework in Indonesia? Using a **qualitative** library research method with a *tahlili* exegesis approach, this study analyzes the linguistic structure and theological meaning of the verse through primary literature and a systematic review of reputable journals. The main **findings** indicate that theologically, the sea is subjugated by Allah, not absolutely conquered by humans (deconstructing anthropocentrism). The utilization of marine resources for both food (*lahman tariyyah*) and aesthetics (*hilyah*) is strictly bound by moral prerequisites in the form of gratitude and the prohibition of *fasad* (destruction). The **Result** affirms that the salaf's understanding of ecology is theocentric, where marine conservation is not merely a secular ecological demand, but a manifestation of monotheism and worship. Actualizing these values provides an essential philosophical and ethical foundation for marine spatial planning policies (RZWP3K) and sustainable coastal management.

Keywords: Conservation; Marine; Ibn Kathir's Tafsir; Taskhir; Ecological Theology.

¹ Institut Agama Islam Persis, Garut, Indonesia, Corresponding Email:

Bilymualif54@gmail.com

² Universitas Ibn Khaldun, Bogor, Indonesia, Email: Irfanzain2022@gmail.com

Introduction

The global coastal and marine ecosystems are currently facing massive, multidimensional degradation at a level unprecedented in human history. Phenomena ranging from macro to micro-scale plastic pollution, overfishing, coral reef destruction due to destructive fishing practices, to coastal abrasion and ocean acidification have exceeded the natural resilience limits of marine ecosystems [1],[2],[3]. Recent reports indicate that the rate of plastic waste discharge from land flowing through rivers to Indonesia's coasts remains at a critical level [4]. This waste not only ruins maritime aesthetics but also destroys the habitats of vulnerable marine megafauna such as various cetacean species (whales and dolphins) and sea turtles, ultimately threatening the food security of coastal communities systemically [5]. This region confronts shrinking mangrove areas, severe land subsidence, and fisheries and tourism exploitation activities that have not fully adopted a holistically integrated ecosystem conservation approach [6]. These marine environmental problems are further exacerbated by the dynamics of coastal spatial planning in various regions that have not been well integrated [7]. As an empirical example, the southern coastal area of Cianjur Regency and several other coastal areas in West Java continue to face significant ecological vulnerabilities. This degradation not only impacts the loss of biodiversity but also increases the socio-economic vulnerability of coastal communities to natural disaster threats, such as extreme tidal waves and potential tsunamis in the megathrust zone south of Java.

Various structural and legislative efforts have essentially been promoted by policymakers at both national and regional levels. These efforts are realized through spatial legal instruments such as the Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands (RZWP3K), institutional integration through the Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM) approach, and the establishment of Regional Marine Conservation Areas (KKPD) [8]. However, the effectiveness of these regulatory frameworks is often hampered at the grassroots implementation level [9]. The main obstacle identified by various social ecology studies is the weak moral awareness of the community and industrial players towards the environment, rooted in the dominance of the anthropocentric paradigm [10]. The secular anthropocentric paradigm views the universe purely as an object of material commodification detached from sacred values, thereby breeding unethical exploitative behavior [11].

To respond to this crisis of awareness, academic discourse on Islamic ecotheology and religion-based environmental ethics has begun to grow rapidly. Experts realize that for a majority Muslim society like Indonesia, technocratic and scientific approaches alone are insufficient [12]. Cultural and spiritual

interventions that touch the theological realm are needed to shape environmentally conscious behavior [13]. Concepts such as *khalifah* (Allah's vicegerent on earth), *mizan* (balance), and *amanah* (responsibility) have begun to be integrated into global sustainability discourse, including within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) [14].

Nevertheless, an in-depth systematic literature review of publications in global and national reputable journals reveals a fundamental research gap. By comparison, recent ecotheology studies such as those conducted by Amin et al. (2025) and Rozaqi & Nurrohim (2025) focus on the ecological hermeneutics of the Qur'an on a macro level and tend to use neo-modernism or theosophical sufism approaches that often attempt to "revise" orthodox classical exegesis (*turath*) for the sake of contextualization. The limitation of this approach is its potential to move away from the understanding of the *salaf al-shalih*, which serves as the anchor of belief for the majority of Muslims. On the other extreme, maritime policy research such as those by Darmawan et al. (2025) and Aspan et al. (2025) are very strong in technocratic and legalistic governance but have limitations because they lack spiritual and theological foundations. Herein lies the academic position, differentiation, significance, and novelty of this research article. This paper intends to sharply fill the void in contemporary ecological exegesis studies by revitalizing and specifically actualizing the concept of *Taskhir* from the analytical lens of Ibn Kathir on QS. An-Nahl: 14[15]. Unlike the mainstream Islamic ecological studies today, which tend to seek legitimacy through Western rationalistic or metaphorical interpretations, this research stands on the hypothesis that an understanding aligned with the *salaf* generation—which strictly integrates the principles of monotheism, pure worship, and the definition of *fasad* (destruction) as a result of disobedience—is capable of providing the most robust and comprehensive marine conservation ethical foundation, possessing the highest sociological binding power, and avoiding creedal deviations [16].

Based on the phenomenological background and literature mapping above, the formulation of the problem in this research focuses on three main dimensions: (1) What are the results of the linguistic and theological analysis (*tafsir tahlili*) of the textual construction of QS. An-Nahl: 14 in Ibn Kathir's Tafsir?; (2) What is the philosophical essence of the *Taskhir* concept according to the *salaf* generation's understanding in positioning humans within dynamic marine ecosystems?; and (3) How is the practical actualization of this exegetical concept in supporting and evaluating contemporary marine governance and conservation frameworks in Indonesia, with specific reference to the case of the southern coastal area of West Java? The main objective of this writing is to construct an epistemological building of aquatic conservation ethics based on

authentic Qur'anic studies, as well as to contribute a normative framework for the formation of sustainable marine spatial planning and fisheries resource management policies within the framework of *maqashid syariah*.

This study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged to encourage better academic rigor in the future. First, this study methodologically relies on qualitative library research and philosophical textual analysis. Therefore, this research is not yet supported by quantitative empirical data that statistically measures the concrete impact of the actualization of the *taskhir* exegetical concept on the actual behavioral changes of coastal communities. Second, the focus of the interpretation is specifically limited to Ibn Kathir's view on Surah An-Nahl verse 14. This makes the scope of the study lack a comprehensive cross-comparison with other prominent *bil ma'tsur* exegetes (such as At-Tabari or Al-Baghawi), which might provide a deeper richness of linguistic nuances related to aquatic environmental jurisprudence.

Method

Research Design: This research employs a qualitative library-based design, focusing on the textual analysis of Qur'anic corpora and classical exegesis literature, as well as ecological phenomena recorded in various policy documents and scientific literature [17]. Qualitative methods in this study involve an in-depth assessment of textual and socio-theological problems not designed using statistical parameters or numerical quantification, but rather emphasizing the depth of interpretation (*verstehen*) and logical-philosophical reasoning.

Research Approach: Within the scientific cluster of Quranic studies, the specific approach applied is the *Tafsir Tahlili* (comprehensive analytical) approach. The *tahlili* approach is an interpretation method that dissects Quranic verses from all aspects sequentially according to the *mushaf* arrangement [18]. This analytical scalpel includes excavating vocabulary meanings (*mufradat*), analyzing Arabic morphological and syntactic structures (*nahwu and sharaf*), reviewing *asbab al-nuzul* (if there are authentic narrations), inter-verse correlations (*munasabah*), to tracing the theological and jurisprudential foundations of the respective *mufassir* [19]. Thus, the resulting understanding is not piecemeal, but wholly represents the intent of the text.

Data Sources: The primary data source intensively investigated in this research is the most authoritative classical exegesis masterpiece representing the tafsir *bil ma'tsur* school (narration-based exegesis), namely Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim by Al-Hafizh 'Imaduddin Abul Fida' Isma'il bin 'Umar bin Kathir al-Qurasyi ad-Dimasyqi, famously known as Ibn Kathir [20]. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are compiled from recent academic literature, government regulation

documents, and environmental monitoring agency reports. The secondary literature review is strictly limited to the last five years (2021-2026) to ensure the recency of ecological data and contemporary exegesis study trends.

Data Collection Techniques: This study also utilizes non-participatory observation techniques and digital literature collection. Library literature observation techniques are used to trace the distribution of discourse, selecting the most relevant articles through leading academic databases using a combination of specific keywords: *Taskhir*, Marine Conservation, Islamic Environmental Ethics, Tafsir Ibn Kathir, and Eco-Theology.

Data Analysis: The qualitative data analysis process is conducted in three interactive stages: (1) Data reduction (filtering relevant information from exegesis books and ecological journals), (2) descriptive-analytical data presentation (mapping *tahlili* results in linguistic and theological concept matrices), (3) drawing conclusions. Specifically, in constructing the understanding to avoid deviating from the *manhaj salaf*, every interpretation is strictly calibrated against the principles of *tawhid uluhiyah* and *rububiyah*, ensuring that the formulated ecological actualization does not fall into the secularization of sacred texts or excessive *irfani* mystification.

Result and Discussion

The discourse in this section will hierarchically dissect the research findings starting from the epistemological foundations of ecology according to the *salaf* understanding, the linguistic-theological analysis of the QS. An-Nahl: 14 corpus through the lens of Ibn Kathir, the mapping of the modern marine crisis as a form of *fasad*, to the synthesis of the actualization of the *Taskhir* concept into the mechanism of marine ecosystem protection policies in Indonesia [21]. Through a critical dialogue between seventh-century AD revelation texts and twenty-first-century environmental science, this research weaves a solid ethical framework without compromising creedal steadfastness.

Ontological and Epistemological Review of Salaf Ecology

Before dissecting the verse microscopically, it is essential to establish the ontological framework of the *salaf* generation's ecological understanding, which was consistently inherited and applied by Ibn Kathir in his exegesis [22]. In the arena of global environmental philosophy, dialectics are often trapped in the dichotomy between anthropocentrism (humans as the center point and absolute rulers over nature) and ecocentrism or biocentrism (nature has absolute intrinsic value, and human standing is reduced to moral equivalence with animals or plants) [23]. Turath-based Islamic ecotheology radically deconstructs these two extreme poles and establishes the paradigm of Theocentrism (*Tawhid*) [24].

In the *salaf* mindset, the concept of *Taskhir* (subjection) plays a vital role [25]. *Taskhir* implies that the universe—including the vast, deep, and turbulent oceans—does not submit to humans because humans have superior nature, unparalleled technological intelligence, or inherent ownership rights over the earth [26]. Instead, the subjection of nature is purely a manifestation of Allah's active mercy and *iradah* (will) [27]. This orthodox understanding carries extraordinary axiological consequences. Wardani & Mulyani, as cited in ecological exegesis studies, assert that the *Taskhir* paradigm does not consequently degrade the value of nature into merely a meaningless object [28]. Quite the opposite, nature becomes highly noble, valuable, and functionally sanctified because it consists of Ayat (signs of greatness) and creations of Allah that continuously glorify Him.

Unlike some modernist exegetes, liberal hermeneuts, or Sufistic groups adhering to the *irfani* method who prefer to dismantle real linguistic structures towards mere metaphors and esoteric allegories, Ibn Kathir maintains the literal meaning aligned with Sharia [29]. For Ibn Kathir and other *salaf* scholars, the concept of nature exploitation is tightly bound to the concept of *Fasad* (destruction). If secular environmental experts define environmental destruction only in physical terms (toxic substance pollution, deforestation) [30], Ibn Kathir draws the line of causality far upstream: the destruction of nature is essentially the manifestation and accumulation of polytheism (*shirk*), murder, social injustice, and various disediences to Allah [31].

Thus, greedily exploiting the sea beyond its ecosystem's carrying capacity is not merely a violation of the Environmental Impact Assessment (AMDAL) document, but a form of disobedience, denial of blessings (*kufur nikmat*), and a theological crime that incurs divine wrath [32]. It is this integration between communal sin and ecological degradation that makes environmental ethics in the *salaf* view possess a psychological binding power unattainable by any secular positive law.

Tahlili Exegesis Analysis of Surah An-Nahl Verse 14

Surah *An-Nahl* (The Bee) is widely dubbed by scholars as *Surah An-Ni'am* (The Chapter of Blessings) because within it, Allah elaborately and repetitively unfolds the catalog of His blessings for the continuity of human civilization. One of the most fundamental *theo*-ecological statements is articulated in verse 14.

In QS. An-Nahl: 14 Allah *ta'ala* says:

وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً تَلْبَسُونَهَا وَتَرَى
الْفُلُكَ مَوَاجِرَ فِيهِ وَلِتَبْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِهِ - وَلِعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ١٤

"And it is He who subjected the sea for you to eat from it tender meat and to extract from it ornaments which you wear. And you see the ships plowing through it, and [He subjected it] that you may seek of His bounty; and perhaps you will be grateful." [33]

1. Assertion of the Absolute Subject: وَهُوَ الَّذِي سَخَّرَ الْبَحْرَ (And it is He who

subjected the sea): This verse opens with a nominal phrase (*jumlah ismiyyah*) beginning with the Independent Pronoun (*Dhamir Munfashil*)

"وَهُوَ" (*Wa Huwa* - And He). In Arabic syntactic structure, an introduction

using this pronoun functions as *takhshish* (specification), emphasizing that only Allah alone has the power to tame the ocean [34]. The use of the verb

Sakhkhara (سَخَّرَ), a past tense verb (*fi'il madhi*) from the root *sa-kha-ra*,

indicates that the subjugation of the ocean ecosystem is a process whose design has been established, structured, and bound by stable *sunnatullah*

(laws of water physics, gravity, salinity, and hydrology). Ibn Kathir

explains how terrifying the ocean is with its roaring waves; were it not for Allah's will to quell its wildness, it would be impossible for humans to

settle on the coasts or sail safely [35]. From a conservation perspective, this

verse shatters the illusion of arrogant techno-optimism, demands submission (*ubudiyah*) upon the oceans, and reminds us that the sea can

revert to becoming an agent of destruction (like a tsunami) if Allah withdraws that subjugation as a form of punishment [36].

2. Food Security and Water Hygiene: لِتَأْكُلُوا مِنْهُ لَحْمًا طَرِيًّا (That you may

eat from it tender meat): The particle Lam (ل) at the beginning of the

phrase functions as lam *ta'lil*, showing the purpose of the creation of these natural laws [37]. The first mercy of the sea is the provision of food sources. The Qur'an specifically uses the diction *lahman tariyyan* (tender/fresh meat). The adjective *tariyyah* is highly significant. In jurisprudential and exegetical terminology, this refers to fish and various marine life. Ibn Kathir sharply notes the uniqueness of maritime Islamic law: Allah makes marine animals lawful for His servants, whether caught alive or already carrion (died naturally in the water), and permitted both while in a state of *ihram* and not [38]. However, from a modern maritime ecology standpoint, the word *tariyyah* (fresh, healthy, free from toxic decomposition defects) contains environmental preconditions (*syarthiyyah*). Healthy fish meat can only be born and harvested from hygienic marine waters, free from toxic waste, crude oil spills, heavy metal pollution, and microplastic exposure. If the sea is polluted, the resulting fish is no longer fit to be categorized as *lahman tariyyan* that is *halalan thayyiban* (lawful and good), but rather a disease agent. Therefore, the exegesis of this verse mandates the responsibility of maintaining marine cleanliness as a precondition for consuming its sustenance [39].

3. Aesthetics and Seabed Ecosystem Conservation: **وَتَسْتَخْرِجُوا مِنْهُ حِلْيَةً**

تَلْبَسُونَهَا (And that you may extract from it ornaments which you wear):

The extraction of ornaments (*hilyah*) such as pearls (which are yellowish-white) and coral (*marjan* - red coral) is a manifestation of marine aesthetics and economy affirmed by Ibn Kathir. The selection of the word *tastakhriju* (to extract/mine) in the form of a present/continuous tense verb (*fi'il mudhari'*) implies an ongoing activity across eras [40]. However, coral and pearl-producing oysters are highly sensitive biological indicators of

environmental change . They require healthy coral reef ecosystems, stable temperatures, and optimal salinity. The separate mention of *hilyah* from *lahman* affirms that the sea has recreational functions, aesthetic value, and mineral deposit wealth that goes beyond mere biological nutritional needs. Massive dredging activities, the use of fish bombs, and cyanide poison will directly incinerate the home of these *hilyah* [41].

4. Navigation and Marine Spatial Planning: **وَتَرَى الْفُلْكَ مَوَاحِرَ فِيهِ** (And you

see the ships cleaving through it): The diction *al-fulk* refers to all types of marine transportation modes, from small fishermen's sailboats to giant motorized cargo ships. The word *mawakhir* (plural form of *makhirah*) is derived from the root word *ma-kha-ra* which literally means cleaving the water with the roaring sound of bow waves. Ibn Kathir details that the movement of ships going back and forth connecting one land (country) to another is the lifeblood of global trade and economic circulation. This exegesis confirms the importance of utilizing the sea for commercial maritime interests (li *tabtaghu min fadhlih* - that you may seek of His bounty). However, this maritime mobility must not operate anarchically. Intensive *mawakhir* movements in contemporary conservation logic potentially generate maritime carbon emissions, underwater acoustic pollution that kills marine mammal sonar systems, and fuel spill pollution [42]. This verse sparks the obligation of regulating well-organized shipping lanes to minimize negative ecological excesses.

5. The Ethical Culmination Point: **وَلَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ** (And perhaps you will be

grateful): The verse, heavily laden with marine governance information, concludes with a moral-winged closing (*Khatimah*): *Wa la'allakum tasykurun*. In the salaf methodology, being grateful (*syukur*) is not just

mechanically uttering words of praise (*Alhamdulillah*). Ibn Kathir emphasizes that true gratitude involves three dimensions: acknowledgment of obedience in the heart, praise verbally, and – most crucially – utilizing the blessings of the universe absolutely to obey Allah's commands and not to facilitate disobedience. Thus, preserving the sustainability of marine ecosystems, halting the rate of degradation, and restoring damaged mangroves is not merely a worldly obligation, but the essence of the realization of a servant's gratitude.

Table 1. *Tahlili Synthesis of QS. An-Nahl: 14 Vocabulary and Marine Conservation Concept Projection*

Qur'anic Vocabulary	Morphological/Syntactic Characteristics	Salaf Exegesis (Ibn Kathir)	Contemporary Marine Conservation Ethics Implications
سَخَّرَ (Sakhkhara)	<i>Fi'il Madhi</i> , Singular subject (Allah), transitive.	Subjecting the wild sea through stable <i>sunnatullah</i> and will for humans.	Rejection of exploitative anthropocentrism; application of the precautionary approach in managing the sea, which is essentially a Divine prerogative right.
حَمًا طَرِيًّا (Lahman Tariyyan)	Nominal Phrase, <i>Sifah</i> and <i>Mawsuf</i> , emphasizing the quality of "freshness".	Lawful marine fish caught alive or dead without <i>dhabihah</i> , symbolizing ease of sustenance.	Mandating the protection of seawater quality from pollution (plastics, hazardous waste) to ensure seafood food security.
حَلِيَّةٌ (Hilyatan)	<i>Isim Nakirah</i> , indicating diversity of types and specialness.	The wealth of maritime ornaments like pearls and coral growing on the seabed.	Conservation of calcium carbonate-producing coral reef ecosystems; strict prohibition against destructive fishing methods.
مَوَاقِرَ (Mawakhir)	Plural <i>Isim Fa'il</i> , continuous action (ships cleaving waves).	Mobility of ships for trade from one country to another, connecting civilizations.	Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) engineering, determination of specific sea lanes that do not intersect with migrating

Qur'anic Vocabulary	Morphological/Syntactic Characteristics	Salaf Exegesis (Ibn Kathir)	Contemporary Marine Conservation Ethics Implications
			marine megafauna conservation zones.
تَشْكُرُونَ (Tasykurun)	<i>Fi'il Mudhari'</i> , expected condition as the peak of submission.	Directing all marine utilities for obedience, avoiding disobedience and <i>fasad</i> .	Gratitude is translated into Integrated Coastal Zone Management policies and legal compliance based on environmental piety.

Table 1 demonstrates that the lexical and syntactic structure of QS. An-Nahl 16:14 carries not only semantic meaning but also ethical significance. Through a tahlili reading supported by Ibn Kathīr's Salaf exegesis, the verse presents the sea as a divinely regulated domain of sustenance, beauty, mobility, and moral responsibility. The table further shows that these Qur'anic meanings can be projected into contemporary marine conservation ethics, particularly in relation to ecological restraint, pollution prevention, sustainable resource use, and responsible maritime governance. In this sense, the verse does not merely describe marine utility, but also provides a normative foundation for environmental stewardship within an Islamic ethical framework.

Manifestations of Fasad in Contemporary Marine Ecology

Living Qur'anic exegesis (*living tafsir*) requires a confrontation between ideal textual ideas and material realities on the ground. The failure of the majority of modern humans, including in Muslim-majority countries, to realize the *tasykurun* (gratitude) clause has led to the phenomenon of global-scale *fasad*. The sea is no longer treated as an arena showcasing Allah's mercy, but is reduced to the cheapest waste disposal facility and a field for blind commodity extraction.

In Indonesia, the disparity between the *Taskhir* principle and empirical reality is clearly captured by the rate of synthetic polymer discharge. The volume of plastic waste produced by urban populations and industrial agglomerations flows freely across watersheds (DAS). As noted by World Bank reports and environmental researchers, the Java Sea coast bears an unimaginable pollution burden. The *Citarum* watershed, for example, contributes a significant percentage of the total 7.8 million tons of plastic waste generation in Indonesia [43], spreading contaminants from upstream agglomeration areas to downstream points affecting the coasts of Karawang, Bekasi, and resonating to the northern and southern parts of Cianjur Regency through current circulation. This waste

slowly degrades into microplastics ingested by zooplankton up to giant mammals (whales), contaminating the food chain [44] which directly violates the mandate to protect *lahman tariyyan*.

The symptom of land subsidence due to excessive groundwater exploitation is now also detected affecting areas along the Java coast, including Cianjur, further exposing communities to acute structural vulnerability [45]. From Ibn Kathir's perspective, this entire series of crises is not coincidental disasters or natural phenomena detached from the theological realm [46]. This string of ecological disasters is explicitly understood as nature's response to the loss of monotheism in interacting with the environment [46]. The economic exploitation of the coast that sidelines ecosystem safety is considered an usurpation of the *Taskhir* order, transforming the sea from a source of *fadhilah* (bounty) into an epicenter of ecological.

Actualizing *Taskhīr* in Modern Marine Conservation Policy

Transforming classical theological concepts into the language of modern marine governance policy and praxis is the pinnacle of the actualization of ecological exegesis. The integration of orthodox epistemology into public policy has undeniable significance, especially in Indonesia where coastal communities are closely tied to a communal-religious identity [47]. Awareness of *Taskhir* has extremely strong social mobilization potential; marine preservation transforms from mere compliance with secular state legal regulations (which are often weakly monitored) into a manifestation of transcendental obedience monitored by inner conviction (*muraqabatullah*).

The following outlines several dimensions of actualization from the *Tafsir Tahlili* of QS. An-Nahl: 14 into coastal and marine preservation policy formulations, aligning with marine regulatory instruments in Indonesia.

1. Transformation of the Concept of Gratitude into Integrated Coastal Zone Management (ICZM): The obligation of gratitude (*Tasykurun*) demands fair treatment of the ocean's bounty. In the discourse of integrated coastal zone management (ICZM), the actualization of gratitude means not viewing the sea sectorally (only as a source of fish, or only as a shipping lane), but as an integrated ecosystem unit. The implementation of the Zoning Plan Document for Coastal Areas and Small Islands (RZWP3K) at the provincial level, such as in West Java, serves as an embodiment of spatial planning that strives to maintain *mizan* (balance) [48]. In this zoning, general utilization areas (ports, aquaculture ponds) are definitively separated from regional conservation areas (such as Green Turtle nesting sites in Ciemas, Sukabumi, and the southern coast of

- Cianjur) to minimize marine space utilization conflicts and prevent destructive sectoral ego dominance [49]. Violating protected zoning (marine spatial planning) must be perceived not merely as an administrative permitting violation (KKPRL), but as a violation of theological gratitude ethics.
2. Measured Fishing Policy and Defense of Lahman Tariyyan: The bounty of fresh food (*lahman tariyyan*) is not a blank check to drain marine biomass without scientific calculation. The actualization of the mandate to maintain marine protein sources is harmoniously realized in the quota-based Measured Fishing (PIT) policy formulated by the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP) [50]. The understanding of *salaf* exegesis, which opposes *israf* (wastefulness) and demands the maintenance of nature's carrying capacity sustainability (*al-intifa' dun al-fasad*), can be injected as a moral foundation for closed season policies for certain fish species during spawning seasons. Furthermore, resistance against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing practices that endanger future fishery resource stock reserves is a manifestation of ecological jihad (*hifz al-bi'ah*).
 3. Seabed Ecosystem Restoration as Implementation of Hilyah Protection: The aesthetics of the seabed that produce *hilyah* (coral, reefs, and pearl oysters) are highly vulnerable to external shocks. In regional marine conservation areas, the actualization of *hilyah* protection demands an absolute prohibition on fishing gear that destructively contacts the bottom substrate, such as trawl nets, the use of potassium cyanide, and homemade bombs. Local governments (such as the Marine and Fisheries Service of Cianjur Regency) can forge strategic partnerships with local religious institutions and coastal Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) [48]. The goal is to declare environmental fatwas and preaching campaigns that rationalize that destroying coral reefs is equivalent to defiling the home of marine ornaments created by God, making such acts religiously forbidden (*haram lighairihi*) because the resulting harm kills the aquatic life regeneration chain.
 4. Sustainable Navigation and Sea Lane Decarbonization (*Mawakhir*): Marine transportation mobility captured by the Qur'an (*mawakhir*) must be aligned with the global trend towards green shipping and the blue economy. Marine commercial shipping operations contribute a significant level of sulfur dioxide and carbon dioxide emissions [51]. To manifest this verse, the state is demanded to accelerate the shipping industry's

transition towards the utilization of renewable energy or low-carbon fuels, to mitigate the effects of ocean acidification that dissolve marine animal shells and destroy coral calcium structures (*hilyah*). Besides air pollution, unregulated *Mawakhir* can crash into marine megafauna migration routes. Sophisticated Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) engineering is needed to limit commercial ship speeds at specific times when cetacean pods cross the Indonesian archipelagic sea lanes, to respect the existence of Allah's other creations [44].

5. Empowerment of Coastal Local Wisdom with Orthodox Creed: In Indonesia, local conservation practices often manifest in traditional customary wisdom, such as *sasi*, *panglima laot*, or traditions of prohibition in certain areas. The *salaf* exegesis approach provides strict evaluative guideposts: such local traditions are highly recommended and maintained to control marine exploitation, provided they are detached from animistic residues, sea spirit worship (like mystical offering rituals), or polytheistic practices that precisely form the root definition of *fasad* according to Ibn Kathir [52]. Modifying local wisdom (cultural framework) to be purely based on the intention of guarding the entrusted *Taskhir* from Allah and practicing the ethics of gratitude will produce a marine conservation synergy with dual power: ecologically effective and theologically rewarding.

Table 2. Mapping the Actualization of *Taskhir* in Aquatic Conservation and Spatial Policies

Analytical Domain of QS. An-Nahl 14	Ethical Paradigm (Ibn Kathir's Tafsir)	Policy & Marine Regulation Actualization (National Ecology Case Study)
Ontology of <i>Sakhkhara</i> (Subjection of Nature)	The sea submits purely by Allah's mercy, nullifying absolute/unlimited exploitation rights for humans.	Integration of Eco-Theology studies in Coastal Management Law academic drafts; inculcation of ecological awareness in maritime education curricula.
Defense of <i>Lahman Tariyyan</i> (Food Systems)	Fresh meat implies the lawfulness of marine nutritional sources as long as their supporting environment remains sustainable.	Execution of the Measured Fishing (PIT) Policy, enforcement of fishing quotas, Closed Season management, eradication of Citarum microplastic waste crisis.
Conservation of <i>Hilyatan</i> (Minerals & Aesthetics)	Pearls and coral have unique aesthetic values grown underwater and are worthy of utilization.	Expansion of Regional Marine Conservation Areas (KKPD) coverage, coral reef core zoning in RZWP3K, red-

Analytical Domain of QS. An-Nahl 14	Ethical Paradigm (Ibn Kathir's Tafsir)	Policy & Marine Regulation Actualization (National Ecology Case Study)
		handed operations against destructive fishing perpetrators.
Regulation of <i>Mawakhir</i> (Geospatial Navigation)	Ships cleave water for economic circulation and seeking <i>fadhilah</i> , demanding orderliness in trans-oceanic activities.	Implementation of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP), determination of Indonesian Archipelagic Sea Lanes (ALKI) free from sensitive megafauna routes; commitment to shipping decarbonization (blue economy).
Principle of Tasykurun (Evaluative Morality)	The peak of a servant's obedience is thanking for blessings by not misusing the sea to commit <i>fasad</i> (destroying ecosystems).	Involvement of religious actors in mangrove rehabilitation program socialization (e.g., in southern coastal Cianjur); ulama-government collaboration in preventing marine pollution as a moral and material crime.

Table 2 extends the exegetical findings of QS. An-Nahl 16:14 from the semantic and theological level into the domain of ethical actualization and policy relevance. It shows that the Qur'anic notion of *taskhīr* should not be understood as unrestricted human dominion over marine resources, but rather as a divinely conditioned form of utilization bounded by responsibility, sustainability, and gratitude. Through Ibn Kathīr's tafsīr, the verse provides an ethical paradigm in which marine food systems, coral ecosystems, maritime mobility, and ecological obedience are all situated within a framework of accountable stewardship. The table therefore illustrates how classical Qur'anic exegesis can inform contemporary marine conservation and spatial governance without reducing the Qur'anic text to a merely instrumental policy source.

The realization of the actualization of this *Taskhir* concept actually sharply intersects with the national development agenda within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically serving the achievement of SDG-14 regarding marine ecosystem preservation (Life Below Water) and SDG-13 related to climate action (Climate Action). The *tahlili* approach rooted in the *salaf* understanding described in this article successfully eliminates the stigma that classical exegesis interpretations are static, anachronistic, or disconnected from the dynamics of regional spatial science. In reality, beneath the layer of Ibn Kathīr's textuality resides a comprehensive ecological rationality, prioritizing a preventive and protective approach that goes far beyond the secular pragmatic legal paradigm. This theological superiority materializes because it frames environmental sustainability not as a regulation imposed by external institutions

(the state), but as an inherent call of faith from within the community's conscience, realizing ocean governance that is just, proportional, and blessed.

Conclusion

This qualitative library research demonstrates that the classical interpretation framework, particularly Ibn Kathir's perspective, specifically Ibn Kathir's Tafsir on Surah An-Nahl verse 14, holds limitless theoretical and ethical potential for articulating contemporary marine conservation ethics. The concept of *Taskhir* (subjugation of the ocean ecosystem) successfully deconstructs the fallacy of the secular anthropocentric paradigm. The *salaf* generation's understanding affirms that the sea is ontologically submitted absolutely to the Will (*Iradah*) of Allah and stable *sunnatullah*, where humans are merely positioned as khalifah bearing trust-based management authority, not exploitative mastery. Every bounty from the sea – whether in the form of biological food security utility (*lahman tariyyah*), mineral deposit wealth and ecosystem aesthetics (*hilyah*), or the water's capacity as a navigation medium for global economic connectivity (*mawakhir*) – is validly extracted according to Islamic law. However, this utilization permit is reciprocally bound by the imperative of gratitude, which obliges absolute prevention of any destructive practices and overexploitation exceeding nature's carrying capacity (*fasad*).

The actualization of this ethical-theological conception transforms the blueprint for protecting coastal ecosystems. Amidst the swirling threats of plastic waste crises from land contaminating the food chain, coastal mangrove deforestation, and biodiversity decline (as seen empirically in the southern waters of West Java such as the *Cianjur* area and its surroundings), the *Taskhir* paradigm necessitates an approach uniting the dimensions of heaven and earth. Technocratic policy frameworks such as the establishment of Regional Marine Conservation Areas (KKPD), implementation of the Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands (RZWP3K), and the Measured Fishing Policy (PIT) now receive a powerful moral justification and spiritual injection. Through an exegesis that does not deviate from creed, preserving the maritime ecosystem shifts its meaning from merely an obligation of state positive law to a fundamental essence of worship practices and the manifestation of pure monotheism. This *tahlili* exegesis-based conservation ethic convincingly proves that the scholarship of the *salaf al-shalih* is highly dynamic and holds the role of the strongest cultural instrument for achieving sustainable marine ecosystem balance.

Departing from the obtained academic findings, this research recommends an axiological synergy between technical policymakers (such as the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries and relevant provincial/regency

agencies) with religious institutions, Islamic university academicians, and caretakers of Islamic boarding schools. There is a need for mainstreaming classical exegesis-based marine theology literacy into extension programs, coastal community literacy, and maritime education curriculum design. Awareness campaigns for mangrove preservation, coral reef restoration, and mitigation of plastic waste pollution from river mouths must be strongly framed with the theological narrative of prohibiting *fasad* to accelerate the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviors among the religious coastal communities of the archipelago. Further studies and interdisciplinary research combining Quranic exegesis expertise and environmental oceanography are recommended to sharpen the operationalization of environmental jurisprudence (*fiqh al-bi'ah*) in formulating the adaptation of archipelagic coastal communities in facing future global climate change pressures.

Author Contributions

Billy Muhammad Alif: Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. **Muhammad Irfan Zain:** Methodology, Writing – review & editing.

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Conflict of Interest

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