

Preserving the Earth: Perspectives on Prophetic Hadiths

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ABSTRACT

Islam is a religion that specialises in environmental issues and natural preservation. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has given many examples to humankind about the importance of preserving the environment and prospering the earth, so it remains sustainable. For this reason, it is essential to look further into the guidance and example of the Prophet (PBUH) in preserving the environment and prospering the earth through his hadiths so that every Muslim can imitate and use them as a guide in everyday life. This study was conducted to describe the traditions of the Prophet related to efforts to preserve the environment and prosper the earth as part of the obligations of a Muslim. This study used a descriptive-qualitative research approach through a literature review. The results of the study show that in an effort to preserve the environment and prosper the earth, through his hadiths, the Prophet gave several instructions and guidelines, namely: (1) prohibiting his people from exploiting and monopolising energy sources; (2) keeping the environment clean by reforestation and planting trees, and not polluting the environment; (3) not cutting down trees and clearing forests indiscriminately; and (4) making use of abandoned land.

Kata kunci:

lingkungan, bumi, hadis, energi

ABSTRAK

Islam adalah agama yang mengambil berat isu alam sekitar dan pemeliharaan alam. Nabi Muhammad SAW telah memberi banyak contoh kepada manusia tentang kepentingan memelihara alam sekitar dan memakmurkan bumi, supaya ia kekal lestari. Oleh sebab itu, adalah penting untuk melihat lebih jauh tentang tuntunan dan teladan Rasulullah SAW dalam memelihara alam sekitar dan memakmurkan bumi melalui hadis-hadis Baginda SAW agar setiap Muslim dapat meneladani dan menggunakannya sebagai panduan dalam kehidupan seharian. Kajian ini dijalankan untuk menghuraikan hadis berkaitan usaha memelihara alam sekitar dan memakmurkan bumi sebagai sebahagian daripada kewajipan seorang muslim. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kajian deskriptif-kualitatif melalui tinjauan literatur. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa dalam usaha memelihara alam sekitar dan memakmurkan bumi, menerusi hadis, Rasulullah SAW telah memberikan beberapa petunjuk dan panduan, iaitu: (1) melarang umatnya mengeksploitasi dan memonopoli sumber tenaga; (2) menjaga kebersihan alam sekitar dengan menghutan semula dan menanam pokok, serta tidak mencemarkan alam sekitar; (3) tidak menebang pokok dan membersihkan hutan secara sembarangan; dan (4) mengusahakan tanah terbiar.



1. Introduction

Environmental problems are still getting serious attention from countries in the world. Environmental damage, such as forests for example, certainly cannot be separated from human actions in exploiting natural resources. Forests store various potential resources to support the survival of living things. One of them is non-renewable fossil energy, such as oil, coal, and natural gas. However, due to human greed, the function of the forest as a guardian and support for living things is getting lost, due to greedy human activities and continues to exploit the forest (Ghazali, 2017).

This problem is getting more complex from year to year. The population continues to increase, natural resource reserves are dwindling, and the overdose of modern technology has resulted in the declining quality of the environment. Erosion, exploitation of natural resources, the damaged ozone layer and the destruction of nature have an impact on ecological imbalances that will endanger the survival of mankind. If left unchecked, the destruction of nature will destroy ecosystems and life in the world (Miladi, 2022). Fossil energy reserves will also be depleted and soon run out (Ulina et al., 2022). This is clearly contrary to the teachings of Islam which recommends to its adherents to preserve the earth and give a mandate to humans as *khalīfah fī al-ard* (Lazuady et al., 2022). Allah says, "He has created you from the earth (earth) and made you its manager (Surah Hūd: 61)." Therefore, humans have an obligation to protect and preserve the universe. That's what humans have to do.

However, the facts show something different. Humans actually trigger environmental damage and invite disaster. Over the past decade, Indonesia has always been hit by natural disasters, such as floods, landslides, forest fires, and droughts due to the long dry season (Sabry, 2022; Tista, 2021; Yunus & Umar, 2021). The number of natural disasters that hit Indonesia raises many assumptions about their causes, including the lack of water absorption and green open space, the indiscriminate exploitation of natural resources, the deforestation of forest areas that serve as regional buffer zones, and the large number of forest areas that have been converted to plantation land (Armus et al., 2021; Juwono & Subagiyo, 2019; Lourrinx et al., 2022; Sutrisno, 2018). These things are considered by many parties as the cause of natural disasters everywhere. This should not have happened in a country where the majority of people are Muslim.

Islam has special attention to environmental problems. This is because the environment has a major influence on human physical and mental. The Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* strongly recommended clean living. A person's faith is not only measured by the number of rituals in places of worship, but also protecting and preserving the environment is a very fundamental thing in the perfection of one's faith. In one hadith, Prophet Muhammad *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, informed his companions and thus all of us, about the importance of cleanliness when he said (al-Naisabūrī, 1334 H),

الطُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ

"Cleanliness is half of faith." (*Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, 1/140: 223)

The Quran is more specific and says,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

"Truly, God loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves."
(Surah al-Baqarah: 222)

Therefore, a person's faith is not perfect if he does not care about the environment. In the hadith above, there is a very close relationship between environmental preservation and faith. Every Muslim must realize that multidimensional crises and disasters that come repeatedly such as landslides, floods, droughts, forest fires, and others are due to human activities. Allah *subḥānahu wa ta'ālā* says,

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

“And when he turns back, he runs along in the land that he may cause mischief in it and destroy the tilth and the stock, and Allah does not love mischief-making.” (Surah al-Baraqaḥ: 205)

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا ذَلِكُمْ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ إِن كُنتُمْ مُؤْمِنِينَ

“Do not make mischief in the land after its reform; this is better for you if you are believers.” (Surah al-A’rāf: 85)

وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

“Do not seek to make mischief in the land, surely Allah does not love the mischief-makers.” (Surah al-Qaṣaṣ: 77)

ظَهَرَ الْفَسَادُ فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ بِمَا كَسَبَتْ أَيْدِي النَّاسِ لِيُذِيقَهُمْ بَعْضَ الَّذِي عَمِلُوا لَعَلَّهُمْ يَرْجِعُونَ

“Corruption has been seen on land and at sea due to the actions of human hands. (Through it) Allah makes them feel some of the (results of) their actions so that they return (to the right path).” (Surah al-Rūm: 41).

The verse above explains that Allah prohibit to make mischief in the land and the damage that occurs on land and sea is the result of human actions that do not care about the continuity of life. The destruction of nature will also have an impact on the energy crisis. Therefore, the destruction of nature is certainly not justified in Islamic teachings. Humans and nature have a very close relationship in Islam (Mukhlis, 2019; Rambe & Rambe, 2021). Allah created this world (including humans and the environment) in balance and harmony. This balance and harmony must be maintained so as not to be damaged. Survival in nature is also interrelated. If one component of nature is disturbed, then the other components of nature are affected by its balance. So, the dominant factor that causes environmental change and energy crisis is human. Because, it is he who is mandated by Allah as the caliph on earth. In another verse, Allah reminds people not to do damage (*fasad*) on earth,

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا وَادْعُوهُ خَوْفًا وَطَمَعًا إِنَّ رَحْمَتَ اللَّهِ قَرِيبٌ مِّنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

“And do not make mischief on the face of the earth after Allah has repaired it and pray to Him with fear of not being accepted and hope (it will be granted). Verily, the mercy of Allah is near to those who do good.” (Surah al-A’rāf: 56)

Every Muslim should realize that Allah's blessings are so great created for humans. Natural resources that are available in abundance must be utilized as well as possible, not exploited greedily. Excavation of natural resources may be carried out without damaging the environment and human life. Every human being, especially for a Muslim, is obliged to maintain and preserve the earth and its environment so that it can still be used sustainably for the benefit and life. Rasulullah *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* has given many examples to mankind about the importance of preserving the environment and prospering the earth so that nature remains sustainable. The destruction of nature causes various problems on earth. For this reason, Islam forbids any action that destroys nature. The destruction of nature in the view of Islam will result in social destruction which causes the deprivation of the rights of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Therefore, it is important to look further into the guidance and example of the Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* in preserving the environment and prospering the earth through his hadiths so that every Muslim can imitate and make it a guide in everyday life. Several previous studies have examined efforts to preserve the environment from the perspective of the hadith and sunnah of the Prophet. In his study, Masruri (2016) stated that Islamic teachings not only teach to take advantage of natural resources, but also teach the rules of the game in their utilization. One of the *sunnahs* of Prophet explains that everyone has the right to benefit from natural resources as common property to fulfill their life needs as long as they do not violate, violate, and hinder the same rights in others. The



use of scarce natural resources must still receive good supervision and protection. Preserving the environment is part of the noble character that must be applied in the midst of human life.

Istianah (2015) stated that harmony in Islamic teachings includes four things, namely: harmony with God, harmony with society, harmony with the natural environment and harmony with oneself. Efforts to preserve the environment received serious attention from the Prophet. through the hadiths. The spiritual messages of the Prophet saw. This made people aware to always increase their concern for the environment.

Ali (2015), using the sanad criticism method, found that hadiths related to the environment, be it maintenance by planting trees, utilization through optimal use of idle land, and prevention of damage through the prohibition of disposing of sewage/waste, are of valid quality. . In addition to its valid sanad, hadiths regarding the environment also have valid matan. The content of each hadith regarding the environment has a positive correlation with the spirit of the Qur'an.

Although some of the previous studies mentioned above have attempted to examine the preservation and protection of the environment based on the perspective of the Prophet's traditions, these studies have not explained much about these hadiths in more depth, which are associated with the description of the interpretation of verses al-Qur'an in summary. Therefore, this study was conducted with the aim of describing the traditions of the Prophet *shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam* related to efforts to preserve the environment and prosper the earth as part of the obligations of a Muslim.

This study used a descriptive-qualitative research approach through a literature review (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Data collection is done through search methods based on keywords in database systems such as Google Scholar, Mendeley, and so on. Various keywords are used in order to obtain maximum results. Content analysis techniques are used to identify trends and themes of hadith studies related to the environment and efforts to prosper the earth. The results of the analysis are focused on the background, discussion, methods and findings of previous research regarding the study of hadith related to the environment and the earth.

2. Prophetic Hadiths regarding Prospering the Earth and Preserving the Environment

2.1. Prohibition of Exploiting and Monopolizing Energy Resources

Natural resources as a source of available life energy should be used properly and should not be used excessively. Rasulullah *shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam* taught us about the importance of using natural resources efficiently, such as water. Even though water is abundant, the Prophet *shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam* taught his people to save water use. Because, it could be that in one place there is abundant water while in another place there is a drought, animals die and humans fight over clean water.

Water is mentioned many times throughout the Quran and in the sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad *shallallahu 'alaihi wa sallam*. Water is essential to life, and thus should be treated with respect and used wisely. Allah mentions in the Quran that He sends down rains from the sky in due measures and has created every living thing from water. There are a plethora of Quranic verses that mention water as a symbol of resurrection and purity. The following hadith highlight the principles of water conservation in our everyday lives and remind us that sharing this sacred gift is a form of charity. Allah says,

وَاللَّهُ خَلَقَ كُلَّ دَابَّةٍ مِّن مَّاءٍ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى بَطْنِهِ ۗ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى رِجْلَيْنِ وَمِنْهُمْ مَّن يَمْشِي عَلَى أَرْبَعٍ يَخْلُقُ اللَّهُ مَا يَشَاءُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ

“Allah has created every [living] creature from water. And of them are those that move on their bellies, and of them are those that walk on two legs, and of them are those that walk on four. Allah creates what He wills. Indeed, Allah is over all things competent.” (Surah al-Nur: 45)

In one narration from 'Abdullāh bin 'Amr bin 'Aṣ, that (al-Quzwainī, 1431 H),

رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَرَّ بِسَعْدٍ، وَهُوَ يَتَوَضَّأُ، فَقَالَ: «مَا هَذَا السَّرْفُ» فَقَالَ: أَيْ الْوَضُوءِ
 إِسْرَافٍ، قَالَ: «نَعَمْ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ عَلَى نَهْرٍ جَارٍ»

The Messenger of Allah *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* passed by Sa'd while he was performing ablution. The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "What is this extravagance?" Sa'd said, "Is there extravagance with water in ablution?" The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, "Yes, even if you were on the banks of a fowing river." (*Sunan Ibnu Mājah*, 1/147: 425)

Even in ablution, the Messenger of Allah gave an example of using water sparingly, as mentioned in one narration from Anas bin Malik that (al-Bukhārī, 1993),

كَانَ النَّبِيُّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ يَغْسِلُ، أَوْ كَانَ يَغْتَسِلُ، بِالصَّاعِ إِلَى خَمْسَةِ أَفْدَادٍ، وَيَتَوَضَّأُ بِالْمَدِّ

"The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) would perform ablution with one mudd and would perform a ritual bath with one sa' to five mudd." (*Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1/84:198)

Rasulullah *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* also recommended the use of energy sources on earth for the common good and managed communally, not to be monopolized and privatized. The Messenger of Allah *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* said (al-Sijistānī, 1431 H),

الْمُسْلِمُونَ شُرَكَاءُ فِي ثَلَاثٍ: فِي الْكَلْبِ، وَالْمَاءِ، وَالنَّارِ

"Muslims are allied in three things: water, grass and fire." (*Sunan Abī Dāwud*, 3/278: 3477)

This hadith states that Muslims (humans) are united in water, pasture and fire. They cannot be owned by individuals. The scholars agree that the water of rivers, lakes, seas, irrigation canals, meadows is a common property and should not be owned/controlled by someone (Sari, 2020). Thus, the association of humans in the three matters in the hadith above is not because of the substance, but because of its nature as something that is needed by the people (community) and if it is not there then they will have disagreements or have problems in finding it. That is, the association of humans is due to the position of water, grass and fire as public facilities that are jointly needed by a community.

2.2. Keep the Environment Clean and Not Polluting the Environment

The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* advocated the importance of living clean. Cleanliness is positioned by the Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* as part of faith and affects the quality of one's faith. A dirty environment can cause various damages (health, flooding, and air pollution). The Messenger of Allah *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* said (al-Tirmizī, 1975),

إِنَّ اللَّهَ طَيِّبٌ يُحِبُّ الطَّيِّبَ ، نَظِيفٌ يُحِبُّ النَّظَافَةَ ، كَرِيمٌ يُحِبُّ الْكِرْمَ ، جَوَادٌ يُحِبُّ الْجُودَ ، فَتَنَظَّفُوا
 أَفْنِيَتَكُمْ ، وَلَا تَشَبَّهُوا بِالْيَهُودِ

"Verily Allah is good and loves goodness, clean likes cleanliness, noble likes glory, generous (good) likes goodness, so clean your home environment and do not be like the Jews." (*Sunan al-Tirmizī*, 5/111:2799)

The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* advised his people to build a mosque accompanied by efforts to clean it and give it a fragrance. 'Ā'isyah *raḍiyallāhu 'anhā* said (al-Sirāj, 1431 H),

أَمَرَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِنِيَانِ الْمَسَاجِدِ فِي الدُّوْرِ ، وَأَمَرَ أَنْ تُنْظَفَ وَتُطِيبَ

“The Messenger of Allah *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* ordered to build a mosque in the village, and ordered to clean it and give it perfume.” (*Hadīṣu al-Sirāj*, 2/226: 951)

The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* also advised his people to clean the yard, as he said (al-Ṭabrānī, 1431 H),

طَهَّرُوا أَفْنِيَّتِكُمْ ، فَإِنَّ الْيَهُودَ لَا تُطَهِّرُ أَفْنِيَّتَهَا

“Clean your pages because the Jews don't clean their pages.” (*al-Mu'jam al-Ausat*, 4/231: 4057)

Hygiene or clean matters are not just personal, mosque and house cleaning, but also road hygiene matters. It became a common practice known by the companions of *raḍiyallāhu 'anhum* and they quoted it. Muhammad bin Sirin said (al-Kūfī, 1433 H),

لَمَّا قَدِمَ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ الْبَصْرَةَ، قَالَ لَهُمْ: «إِنَّ أَمِيرَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ بَعَثَنِي إِلَيْكُمْ لِأَعْلِمَكُمْ سُنَّتَكُمْ، وَإِنْظَافَكُمْ طَرِيقَكُمْ»

“When Abu Musa al-Ash'arī came to Baṣrah, he said to them, ‘Verily the Amir al-mu'minin has sent me to all of you, to teach you the sunnah and to clear your paths’.” (*al-Muṣannaḥ, Ibnu Abī Syaibah*, 5/264: 25923)

The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* forbade his companions to urinate in stagnant water. The Prophet also forbade urinating and defecating under a fruitful tree. The Prophet understood that this behavior was dangerous because it could pollute the environment and damage nature. This dirt can leave a bad smell and impression on anyone who takes shelter under a tree with shady leaves. The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* said (al-Bukhārī, 1433 H),

لَا يُبُولَنَّ أَحَدُكُمْ فِي الْمَاءِ الدَّائِمِ؛ الَّذِي لَا يَجْرِي، ثُمَّ يَغْتَسِلُ فِيهِ

“No one of you should urinate in stagnant water then take a ritual bath with it.” (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, 1/57: 239)

The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* prohibited Muslims from urinating in stagnant water, which is not running, because doing that would cause it to be polluted with impurities and microbes that the urine might be carrying. This, in turn, will harm those who use such water. In addition to that, the one who urinates in stagnant water may use it himself in taking a ritual bath. So, it is not logical to urinate in the water that he will, later on, use in purifying himself. Moreover, the Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* prohibited the one in the state of major ritual impurity from taking a ritual bath in stagnant water, because that causes the water to be polluted with the filth and impurities of the ritual state.

2.3. Doing Reforestation, Tree Planting and No Cutting Trees (Indiscriminate Deforestation)

Plants play a vital role in the environmental well-being of all communities. They absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen from within their leaves, provide habitats for a plethora of organisms, and are a source of both food and medicines. The Quran includes passages that describe lush gardens and trees in the heavens, highlighting their significance in both this life and the afterlife. Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) warns us about harming plants unnecessarily and encourages us to plant trees as a form of charity. Allah says,

وَهُوَ الَّذِي أَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً فَأَخْرَجْنَا بِهِ نَبَاتَ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ فَأَخْرَجْنَا مِنْهُ خَضِرًا نُخْرِجُ مِنْهُ حَبًّا مُتَرَاكِبًا
 وَمِنَ النَّخْلِ مِنْ طَلْعِهَا قِنْوَانٌ دَانِيَةٌ وَجَنَّاتٍ مِنْ أَعْنَابٍ وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مُشْتَبِهًا وَغَيْرَ مُتَشَابِهٍ انظُرُوا إِلَى
 ثَمَرِهِ إِذَا أَثْمَرَ وَيَنْعِهِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَُمْ لَآيَاتٍ لِقَوْمٍ يُؤْمِنُونَ

“And it is He who sends down rain from the sky, and We produce thereby the growth of all things. We produce from it greenery from which We produce grains arranged in layers. And from the palm trees — of its emerging fruit are clusters hanging low. And [We produce] gardens of grapevines and olives and pomegranates, similar yet varied. Look at [each of] its fruit when it yields and [at] its ripening. Indeed in that are signs for a people who believe.” (Surah al-An’ām:99)

Since fourteen centuries ago, the Messenger of Allah *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam* has set an example of greening. Reforestation has a vital ecological function. Reforestation can restore the function of the land as a water catchment (Wardani & Putra, 2020). Maintaining water catchment areas is a real action of the reforestation movement. The benefit of reforestation in this area is to reduce water discharge or runoff during the rainy season (Tamelan et al., 2021). Regarding the importance of reforestation and tree planting, the Prophet *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam* said (al-Bukhārī, 1431 H),

إِنْ قَامَتِ السَّاعَةُ وَفِي يَدِ أَحَدِكُمْ فَسِيلَةٌ فَإِنْ اسْتَطَاعَ أَنْ لَا تَقُومَ حَتَّىٰ يَغْرِسَهَا فَلْيَغْرِسَهَا

“If the Day of Judgment occurs while in the hand of one of you there is a shoot, then if he is able before the Day of Judgment to plant it, then plant it.” (*Ṣaḥīḥ al-Adab al-Mufrad*, 181)

The Messenger of Allah forbade anyone to break tree trunks or cut down their trunks and carry out deforestation even in conditions of war. Cutting down trees without following the correct procedures certainly threatens the sustainability of the ecosystem. This prophetic message was also followed by Caliph Abu Bakr when he reminded his troops that they were going to jihad in Syria. The message of Caliph Abu Bakr was stated by Imam Malik bin Anas in the book *al-Muwatta’a* as follows,

“I will testify to you (the armies who want to fight) about ten things, namely: [1] do not kill women; [2] do not kill children; [3] do not kill old people; [4] do not cut a tree that is bearing fruit; [5] do not tear down buildings; [6] do not slaughter the lamb; [7] do not slaughter the camel, except when the sheep and camels are for food; [8] do not burn the date palms nor destroy them; [9] do not be treacherous; and [10] do not frighten (the people).”

Two of the ten wills of Caliph Abu Bakr are not to cut trees that are bearing fruit and do not burn date palms and do not destroy them. It can be understood from this will that even in a state of war Islam forbids the cutting of trees, especially those that are fruiting, because these trees are very beneficial for humans and other creatures. Unripe fruit is forbidden to be picked, because this in addition to damage also eliminates the benefits of the fruit.

There is a hadith which shows that the Prophet *ṣallallāhu ‘alaihi wa sallam* never forbade cutting the Sidr tree, as in his hadith (al-Sijistānī, 1323 H),

مَنْ قَطَعَ سِدْرَةَ صَوَّبَ اللَّهُ رَأْسَهُ فِي النَّارِ

“Whoever cuts the Sidr tree, Allah will pour water on his head in hell.” (*Sunan Abī Dāwud*, 4/530: 5239)

Regarding this hadith, al-Baihaqī *raḥimahullāh* said (al-Lajnah al-Fatwa bi al-Syabkah al-Islamiyah, 1431 H),

والأولى حملة على ما حملة عليه أبو داود. وهو أن النهي والوعيد في من اعتدى على شجرة سدر أو نحوها مما ينتفع به الناس والدواب بظله أو ثمرته فلا يجوز قطعه ظلماً وعدواناً بغير حق. فإن كان عروة يقطعه من أرض فيشبهه أن يكون النهي خاصاً

“Abu Dawud's opinion is the best in this matter. Namely, these prohibitions and threats apply to people who cut down Sidr trees or other trees that are used by humans and animals as shade and eat their fruit. It is not allowed to cut trees like this without a justifiable reason. If it is true that 'Urwah had cut down a Sidr tree somewhere, then it is as if the prohibition contained in the hadith is special (does not apply to all Sidr trees).” (*Fatāwā al-Syabkah al-Islāmiyah*, 9/393: 63086)

Allah forbids us to do mischief on earth. Allah Ta'ala says,

وَلَا تُفْسِدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ بَعْدَ إِصْلَاحِهَا

“And do not do mischief on the earth after (created) well.” (Surah al-A'rāf: 56)

Allah Ta'ala also says,

وَإِذَا تَوَلَّى سَعَى فِي الْأَرْضِ لِيُفْسِدَ فِيهَا وَيُهْلِكَ الْحَرْثَ وَالنَّسْلَ وَاللَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْفُسَادَ

“And when he turns away (from You), he seeks to do mischief in the earth, and destroys crops and livestock, while Allah does not like corruption.” (Surah al-Baqarah: 205)

The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* once made a will to a warlord (al-Lajnah al-Fatwa bi al-Syabkah al-Islamiyah, 1431 H),

اغزوا بسم الله في سبيل الله من كفر بالله ولا تغدروا.. ولا تقطعوا نخلا ولا شجرة ولا تهدموا بناء

“Fight you in the name of Allah and in the way of Allah, fight those who disbelieve in Allah and do not be treacherous... and do not cut down date palms and other trees, and do not tear down buildings!” (*Fatāwā al-Syabkah al-Islāmiyah*, 9/393: 63086)

Based on the hadiths and verses above, it is concluded that it is legal to cut down the Sidr tree if it is necessary and contains benefits. Likewise, other fruiting trees may be cut down if they provide benefits and prevent harm if they are not cut down, except for trees on haram land (other than grass) because of the prohibition on cutting them down. Likewise, other people's trees must not be cut down without their permission because we are prohibited from damaging other people's property even a little. As for cutting fruit trees and Sidr solely for fun or not for a justified purpose, then this is forbidden because it is a form of destruction on earth that is contrary to human mission as *khalīfah* on earth and managing the earth well.

2.4. Utilizing Abandoned Land

In Islamic teachings, land must be used for useful and productive purposes. In the study of fiqh, this is discussed in the Chapter of “*Iḥyā' al-Mawāt*” (reviving dead land), namely clearing dead land or land that has never been planted so that the land can provide benefits for housing, farming, and so on. The Prophet also strongly recommended this action. If land is managed productively, it will certainly have a positive impact on improving the welfare and prosperity of the community, especially those who manage it. Therefore, the dead and abandoned land must be managed and productive as soon as possible. The Prophet said (al-Tamīmī, 1442 H),



مَنْ أَحْيَى أَرْضًا مَيِّتَةً فَهِيَ لَهُ

“Whoever cultivates land that is dead (barren), then it becomes his.” (*Ṣaḥīḥ Ibnu Ḥibbān*, 5/98: 4069)

This hadith explains that the Shari'a encourages to revive idle land, because humans really need it. It can be used for agriculture, industry, or other economic fields. Another hadith also mentions the permissibility of reviving dead land that has no owner, and is not being used by others. Thus, anyone may bring it to life by watering, cultivating, and planting it, or building a building on it, or making a fence around the land. The Messenger of Allah said (al-Sijistānī, 1323 H),

مَنْ سَبَقَ إِلَى مَا لَمْ يَسْبِقْهُ إِلَيْهِ مُسْلِمٌ فَهُوَ لَهُ قَالَ: فَحَرَجَ النَّاسُ يَتَعَادُونَ يَتَحَاطُونَ

“Whoever is the first to do something that no other Muslim has done before, the land belongs to him.” Asmar (narrator) said, “So some people raced towards the vacant land to make stakes marking that the land was his.” (*Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, 3/142: 3071)

3. Conclusion

Highlighting the eco-teachings of Islam, especially through the teachings and beautiful life example (*uswatun ḥasanah*) of the Prophet Muhammed *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam*, who is called by Allah in the Quran a “mercy to all the worlds” (*raḥmatan lil 'ālamīn*), is of great benefit to both Muslims and peoples of other faiths as we seek to find ways to work together and seek to modify and “green” our attitudes, behaviors, and lifestyle choices that are integral to tackling climate change and securing a just, viable and sustainable future for our coming generations and all life on our planet Earth. Islam is a religion that has special attention to environmental issues and natural preservation. The Prophet *ṣallallāhu 'alaihi wa sallam* has given many examples to mankind about the importance of preserving the environment and prospering the earth so that it remains sustainable. For this reason, it is important to look further into the guidance and example of the Prophet in preserving the environment and prospering the earth through his hadiths so that every Muslim can imitate and use it as a guide in everyday life. Based on the results of the study, can be concluded that there are several verses in the Qur'an that mention commands and prohibitions related to environmental preservation, among others: surah al-Baraqaḥ: 205, al-A'rāf: 85, al-Qaṣaṣ: 77, al-Rūm: 41, al-A'rāf: 56, and al-Nur: 45. In an effort to preserve the environment and prosper the earth, through his hadiths, the Prophet gave several instructions and guidelines, namely: (1) prohibiting his people from exploiting and monopolizing energy sources; (2) keep the environment clean by reforestation and planting trees, and not polluting the environment (3) not cutting down trees and clearing forests indiscriminately; and (4) make use of abandoned land.

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