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# Faiths from the Archipelago\*

## *Action on the Environment and Climate Change*

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### Abstract

This paper explores the responses of faith-based movements in Indonesia to globalized environmental issues, including climate change. As a plural nation with six official religions, the leaders of the major recognized religions in Indonesia (i.e., Islam, Protestant and Roman Catholic Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism) all offered

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statements in 2007 at COP 13, the international forum in response to the environmental challenge and climate change in Bali. Each called for religious adherents to act in order to contribute to halting the problem of climate change. Faith is seen to be a key factor in motivating people to change their behavior towards the environment. The slogan, “Think globally, act locally,” is at the heart of this commitment, in hopes that environmental challenges including climate change, become a common issue among all the religions in Indonesia, and so that Indonesian responses may be collaborative and cooperative. This paper will document and analyze the development of such faith-based action with respect to environmental challenges in Indonesia, in light of global conditions.

### Keywords

climate change – global warming – pluralism – Indonesia – globalization

## 1 Introduction

Indonesia represents a country replete with diverse cultural riches. In addition, this country is home to many global religions, with minority religions protected by the national constitution under the freedom of religion. The religious pluralism of this country provides a great opportunity for mutual respect, to achieve ideals of tolerance and a sense of shared humanity. This includes the nation’s great efforts to safeguard the environment. Indonesia has six official religions: Islam, Protestant Christianity, Roman Catholic Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and *Konghucu* Confucianism. In addition to these, indigeneous belief systems and practices not included among the six named “religions” above are numerous.<sup>1</sup>

Grassroot movements to preserve and protect the environment, besides those that are promoted by government programs, have also been enacted both on the part of individuals and social organizations. Many activities receive support from numerous private organizations and associations in Indonesia. The drive and movement to protect the environment has been carried out in accord with religious convictions. In Indonesia, religion is important

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1 In the national constitution, Pasal 28E ayat (2) UUD 1945 states that each individual has the right to freedom of religion. In addition, Pasal 28I ayat (1) UUD 1945 affirms the right to religion to be a fundamental human right. Following this, Pasal 29 ayat (2) UUD 1945 states that the nation of Indonesia guarantees freedom of religion to every one of its citizens.

for infusing a passion for the natural world and maintaining environmental well-being.<sup>2</sup> This is so because religion provides a guide for living, and direct teachings that can readily be grasped, understood and applied by people.

According to the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (2009), religions have seven institutional modes that are beneficial for encouraging initiatives to improve the environment, including pioneering actions addressing climate change, which are as follows: (1) Religion has institutions that possess and utilize assets—such as land, investments, medical facilities, places of worship, transactions and property. The capacity for institutions to manage assets in a more environmental way is enormous, such as in the construction of places of worship according to religious stipulations that promote a healthier environment. (2) The education of children, whether formal or informal, includes: establishing schools and curriculum, camps at schools and teachers' organizations, and initiatives such as recycling and environmental cooperation in local groups. (3) Religion also possesses teachings (scriptural, theological, and doctrinal) for understanding the world. Scriptures and texts may be a powerful basis to assist people in understanding and carrying out mitigation activities to diminish the effects of climate change. (4) Religions have the potential to change lifestyles because religious traditions guide ways of life that can change behavior. (5) Religion is interwoven with means of communication, media and advocates. Various media, including radio, print, and television, all convey religious messages which can and should include care for the environment. (6) Religions have groups of fellowship that can cooperate in activities and fundraising efforts to promote environmental conservation. (7) Religions have frequent celebrations or observances that offer an excellent medium for the "socialization" of environmental ideals.<sup>3</sup>

Institutions for international development, such as the World Bank, have also acknowledged the importance of religion in environmental programs. The

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2 In Indonesia, there are close ties with institutes for religion, such as the Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars, Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), which has issued fatwas beginning 20 years ago, (in 1983; Musyawarah Nasional regarding Kependudukan, Kesehatan dan Pembangunan), that involve many specialists in environmental issues, including policy experts and academics in fields like demography and health. See, for example: Keputusan Musyawarah Nasional Ulama tentang Kependudukan, Kesehatan dan Pembangunan. 13 Muharram 1404/20 Oktober 1983. Kumpulan Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia, pp. 155–173.

3 Colwel, M., Finlay, F., Hilliard, A. and Weldon, S. (Eds). (2009). *Alliance of Religions and Conservation, Many Heavens One Earth: Faith Commitments to Protect the Living Planet*. Bath: Alliance of Religions and Conservation [ARC].

World Bank (2006) underscored the idea that religions represent a basis for contributing to environmental awareness because:

1. Religions may instruct their followers about the earth and environment according to their own distinctive teachings;
2. Religious adherents may initiate conservation projects in practice;
3. Religious preachers may deliver sermons or advice to their followers in order to get support to carry out conservation as a moral duty that is recommended by religion; and,
4. Religion may also provide guidance for environmental care, according to its highest goals, that may then be adopted by followers.

In light of the potential and current contributions of religions in Indonesia offered by their great number of followers,<sup>4</sup> this article will detail some of the contributions religious leaders and organizations, and their followers, are making to the environmental movement. This includes efforts to address climate change, especially in the last five years.

## 2 Faith-Based Activities in Indonesia

In 2007, Indonesia hosted the PBB conference for climate change, UNFCCC COP-13, in Bali. In order to widely represent communities already feeling the direct effects of climate change, many stakeholders were involved. Because of this, and with the cooperation of the Indonesian Ministry of the Environment and the NGO, Conservation International, environmental leaders participated in numerous events, some of which were attended by the President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. At one of these meetings, the President delivered an important address, in which he stated:

The destruction that has occurred on earth has its origins in our own hearts and minds, the hearts and mind of humanity, the hearts and minds of the people. If our own hearts and minds are pure (*bersih*), aspiring to

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4 For a breakdown of the followers of religions in Indonesia, see: Bureau of National Statistics. (2010). *National Census of 2010*. Republic of Indonesia. Available at: <http://sp2010.bps.go.id/index.php/site/tabel?tid=321&wid=0>.

According to the explanation of the BPS, 139,582 persons surveyed did not respond (.06% of the population), and there were another 757,118 persons (.32%) not included in the survey, thereby yielding the totals in the data above.

the well-being of the earth, not to destroy the forests, using only sparingly fuels that cause greenhouse gas emissions, becoming better managers of wasteful effects on the environment and acting with a clarity of thought that is pure, God-willing, then catastrophe may be avoided.<sup>5</sup>

Over the past five years, the trend among religious leaders seeking to address these “problems of the heart” has been to return to religion (*agama*) in order to study and inventory tangible actions that may be conducted according to each religion, in pursuit of environmental conservation. Numerous statements on the environment made by religious leaders have been made that support religious environmental action; however space limitations do not permit exploration of these in this article. These perspectives, however, have guided important actions and trends among religious activists in Indonesia, including efforts to address the national problem of climate change. This article will highlight and explore some of these trends.

### 3 Faith-Based Action on Climate Change

Various religious groups in Indonesia have undertaken activities connected with climate change. Communities have carried out these initiatives collectively in the form of a distinct movement, apart from other activities conducted by individuals independently. Some religious institutions have formed special associations in order to concentrate energy on environmental challenges and climate change. In addition to this general trend, efforts have also been undertaken to raise awareness for general environmental care in an attempt to prevent and reduce the effects of pollution. The latter represents individual actions as well as collective service in support of conservation efforts and raising awareness for environmental issues.

#### 3.1 *Islam and Climate Action in Indonesia*

Islam is the majority religion of Indonesia. Based on the 2010 national census (BPS 2013), the Muslim population of Indonesia is currently 207,176,162, representing the largest Muslim population of any nation on earth, and is pro-

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5 KLH, CI and UIN Jakarta. (2007, December 11). *Religion and Conservation: Opportunities for Working Together to Avoid Deforestation and Address Climate Change*. Bali: UNFCCC-COP 13.

jected to increase to 238,833,000 by the year 2030.<sup>6</sup> The potential of this great population of Muslims for environmental activism is enormous. Through their participation, Islam can become a positive variable in supporting action and awareness with respect to the environment at the grassroots level, drawing on the basis of established Islamic traditions.<sup>7</sup>

Although a formal and normative program has been adopted and implemented by the government of Indonesia, the contribution of the Islamic community is extremely significant, especially in terms of persuading Muslims to support government and private initiatives.<sup>8</sup> In addition, some religious organizations, especially Muslim groups such as Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and Muhammadiyah, have special branches and divisions devoted to environmental activities. For example, NU currently has the Gerakan Nasional Kehutanan dan Lingkungan (GNKL), Pengurus Besar (PB) NU and most recently the LPP (Lembaga Pengembangan Pertanian—NU). PB Muhammadiyah also has the Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Muhammadiyah, which highlights issues of climate change following a curriculum that goes by the name, *Go Green*.<sup>9</sup>

In April 2010, the city of Bogor became the host of the Muslim Conference on Climate Change Action (MACC). This conference represented the continuation of a previous meeting, which included the declaration of the “Seven Year Muslim Action Plan for Climate Change” (M7YAP) in Istanbul.<sup>10</sup> The conference was attended by approximately 250 participants from 14 nations with substantial Muslim populations and other interested parties. Many of the issues discussed became recommendations. Among them, was the declaration of the city of Bogor as a “Green City.” This commitment was intended to make a continued contribution in the form of several stated recommendations. Unfortunately, these recommendations still do not have the support needed on the part of their designers, and there has been no further steps taken to realize the M7YAP.<sup>11</sup> While support remains only partial and incomplete, activities involv-

6 Pew Research Centre. (2011). *Table: Muslim Population by Country*. Retrieved from: <http://features.pewforum.org/muslim-population/>.

7 See, for example: Gade, Anna. (2012). Tradition and Sentiment in Indonesian Environmental Islam. *Worldviews* 16(2012), 263–285.

8 See: Mangunjaya, F.M. (2011). Developing Environmental Awareness and Conservation Through Islamic Teaching. *Journal of Islamic Studies* 22(1), 36–49.

9 Majelis Lingkungan Hidup Muhammadiyah. Retrieved from: <http://lingkungan.muhammadiyah.or.id>.

10 The summary of Muslim Seven Year Plan for Climate Change Action (M7YAP), can be found at: <http://www.arcworld.org/downloads/Muslim-7YP.PDF>.

11 One of the lead initiators of M7YAP came from the Earth Mates Dialogue Centre. Muslim

ing Islam are continuing in other ways. One such effort involves “Greening the Hajj,” supported by Global One and the Alliance of Religions and Conservation (ARC).

In 2011, during a meeting on Green Pilgrimage held in Assisi, Italy, the “Green Hajj Guide” was launched as an important measure for Muslims to carry out environmental protection. The Green Hajj Guide was subsequently translated into the Hausa language of Nigeria, as well as Arabic and Bahasa Indonesia. The launch of the program in Indonesia was at the Universitas Nasional with the publication of “Haji Ramah Lingkungan” (“Environmentally Friendly Hajj”), an event which was attended by the Director of Hajj and Umrah Affairs, Ahmad Kartono, on 7 June 2012. The “socialization” of Hajjis to promote greater respect for the environment is very important because the lifestyle and behavior of polluting is also found in the vicinity of the Holy Land of Mecca. According to figures from 2010, more than 100 million plastic bottles were thrown away by pilgrims.<sup>12</sup> The government of Saudi Arabia has since enacted measures to reduce plastic waste, developed a monorail system for transportation, begun drawing electric power from solar energy, and advocated for every Muslim to follow the example of the Prophet Muhammad to undertake the Hajj no more than once in a lifetime.<sup>13</sup>

For many of the world’s Muslims, observing the Hajj requires traveling great distances, which consumes energy resources and causes substantial emissions of greenhouse gases. Because of this, air travel for Hajj in the context of climate disturbance must utilize a scheme to reduce emissions. One round-trip flight from Jakarta to Jeddah results in carbon emissions of 2.83 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per person. Estimating the total number of Indonesian Hajjis at approximately 230,000 in 2011, annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Indonesia alone is as much as 650,900 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

In theory, these carbon emissions may be neutralized with efforts to offset emissions, such as by planting trees or through conservation programs that subsidize renewable energy. Armi Susandi (2012) estimated that in order to offset CO<sub>2</sub> to absorb 650,900 metric tons of carbon, we must restore 4,340 hectares of forest each year. This is an area about the size of the city of Pekalongan

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scholars facilitated a workshop in Kuwait (2008, October) sponsored by the Kuwait Ministry of Awkaf, and invited scholars and environmentalists from various Muslim countries to participate, as well. (Muslim countries represented, include: Indonesia, Malaysia, Qatar, Tanzania, USA, Egypt, Turkey, etc.).

12 Ahmad, H. (2011). Green Guide for Hajj. *Global One London*.

13 Ahmed, Maher. (2012, October 28). Mecca Seeks ‘green Hajj’. *British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC)*. Retrieved from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-20112400>.

in Central Java or the city of Medan in North Sumatra.<sup>14</sup> Thus, much support and energy is still needed in the dissemination of this program to encourage Hajjis to care for the environment because the initiative is not only replete with bureaucratic challenges, but also challenges the very ritual of Hajj.

Another example of an Indonesian Muslim response to climate change is the activities of the Indonesian Council of Islamic Scholars, Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI), which is an important Muslim institution in Indonesia focused on environmental conservation. The Institute of Honoring Environment and Natural Resources-Majelis Ulama Indonesia (PLHSDA-MUI) was established in the year 2011, and its role centers on efforts to provide a positive response to the call for the Muslim community to address environmental problems and other global public affairs concerns. In addition to this, the MUI following the PLHSDA (2014), has the mission to improve the awareness of Muslim understanding and experience with respect to the management of the environment and the use of natural resources. This is reflected in measures and behaviors affecting everyday life, such as striving for the balance of “*imtaq*” (belief and piety, “*iman dan taqwa*”) with “*ipteks*” (advanced and scientific knowledge, “*ilmu pengetahuan, teknologi dan seni*”).<sup>15</sup>

MUI plays a significant role in the lives of Muslims by issuing *fatwas* (non-binding legal opinions, given in response to a question) with respect to the needs and questions of the Muslim community in conducting their religious lives. MUI’s guide for issuing fatwas states:

It has become clear that to leave questions unanswered, and thus to allow the Muslim community to remain in a state of confusion cannot be validated, whether with respect to *ḥtiqadi* (Muslim religious teaching) or *Syar’i* (Islamic law). For this reason, the scholars need to provide a direct answer without delay, and strive to wipe away questions of the community about the certainty of Islamic thought and teachings with respect to the questions that they encounter. In addition, every condition that can obstruct the process of issuing the answer (*fatwa*) must be overcome right away.<sup>16</sup>

14 Presentation: Susandi, Amri. (2012, June 14). Partisipasi Jemaah Haji dalam Mitigasi Perubahan Iklim. *Seminar Haji Ramah Lingkungan dan Peluncuran Buku Haji Ramah Lingkungan*. Universitas Nasional (UNAS).

15 On agencies of the MUI, see: [http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=9&Itemid=91](http://www.mui.or.id/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=9&Itemid=91).

16 Penerbit Erlangga, Jakarta. (2011). Himpunan Fatwa MUI sejak 1975. *Pedoman dan Prosedur Penetapan Fatwa*. Majelis Ulama Indonesia: Halaman, 3.



In matters of the environment and climate change, MUI has become active not only in the areas of *fatwas*, but also with respect to actions that involve the Muslim community. For example, the PLHSDA has begun to provide examples of a “Green Mosque” in cooperation with *Majlis Ta’lim Azzikra* in Bogor. In addition, it has worked with several agencies, including Universitas Nasional (UNAS) and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) Indonesia. MUI also has an official Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (Kementerian Kelautan dan Perikanan, KKP), the Ministry of Forestry (Kementerian Kehutanan) and the Ministry of the Environment (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup). According to MUI (2014), this was carried out with the aid of the national government in order to develop religious approaches to environmental issues.<sup>17</sup> The article “Islamic Law and the Environment in Indonesia: *Fatwa* and *Da’wa*” in this issue treats in detail the activities of MUI with respect to religious social outreach (*dakwah*) about the environment and related *fatwas*.<sup>18</sup>

*Pondok pesantren* (traditional Islamic schools, or *pesantren*) are also an important part of the Indonesian Muslim community that may become a partner in the “socialization” of environmental awareness in Indonesia. The Ministry of Religious Affairs (2009) records that all across Indonesia, there are 21,521 *pondok pesantren* with great variety in their geographic locations, ranging from rural to urban areas.<sup>19</sup> Even more importantly, many *pesantren* are in agricultural areas, in regions often situated near natural conservation areas and forests that are still undisturbed. The Education Management System (EMIS) of the National Ministry of Religious Affairs (2001) reports that 78% of *pesantren* are located in small village settings. Thus, *pesantren* have the potential to spread awareness of conservation, promoting environmental advocacy in the small, local communities in their vicinities. In light of this potential, since 2008 the Ministry of the Environment (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup, KLH) has promoted a program, “*Ekopesantren*,” to recognize *pesantren* that demonstrate environmental initiatives and innovations.

In all these ways and more, Islamic communities of Indonesia have great potential to effect environmental change from within the worldview of their

17 Majelis Ulama Indonesia [MUI]. (2014). Lembaga Pemuliaan Lingkungan Hidup dan Sumber Daya Alam. Retrieved from: <http://mui.or.id/mui/tentang-mui/lembaga/lplh-sda-mui/latar-belakang-plh-sda.html>.

18 See Anna M. Gade, Islamic Law and the Environment in Indonesia: *Fatwa* and *Da’wa*. (This issue).

19 Retrieved from: <http://pendis.kemenag.go.id/kerangka/pontren.htm>.

own traditions. Christian communities are doing much work focused on “greening” their messages and communities as well, and so we now turn our attention to Indonesian Christian communities.

### 3.2 *Protestant Christianity and Climate Action in Indonesia*

In 2010, the Communion of Churches in Indonesia (CCI) held a 4-day seminar and workshop in Bogor, West Java. Its title, “Getting Closer with Climate Change: The Struggle, Involvement of the Church,” refers to a theme that was emphasized in the 15th Assembly of CCI, (the theme being, “God is Good to Everyone”). Namely, the workshop discussed how churches were being urged to be environmentally self-critical, because they were in a strategic position to make amends for ecological injustice. Humans, in other words, are not the only target of the grace of God. Churches should bridge the ignorance of humans so that humans take responsibility to care for the earth in order that God might be glorified.<sup>20</sup>

Some workshop participants came from CCI member churches, including ordained ministers and elders. They shared some eye-opening, first-hand accounts of how climate change severely impacted their communities. A minister delegated by Gereja Methodist Indonesia (GMI), named Abdi Masa Perangin-angin, relayed that in July 2010 they instituted tree planting which provided seeds of durian and mahogany for participants to plant in church yards and in their own gardens. Their motto was, “One tree planted, two lives saved; one tree cut down, two lives gone.”

In another example, Darson Saragih, a minister delegated by Gereja Kristen Protestan Simalungun (GKPS), reported that people living in the area of Simalungun were mostly members of their churches and were farmers who cultivated their lands with pesticides and non-organic fertilizer. Farmers complained that their fields had been devastated, and illegal mining had worsened the problem. The farmers could no longer predict the seasons, and tried to defeat fungus on their onion crop by using fungicides. Some other farmers used medicine for human skin problems to try and cure the fungus growing on their chili trees. Others used contraceptive pills to halt the reproduction of insects. They thought this treatment would lead to a decline in insect fertility. Obviously, these techniques did not work and consequently, only pesticide producers profited. At the same time, the farmers lost much of their resources as a result of increased pesticide use. Should they choose to engage, what better

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20 Yewangoe, A.A. (2010, November 2–5). *The Church and Climate Change*. Presentation PGI. Gadog, Bogor: Pondok Wisata Anugerah.

place for local people to receive more education about environmental issues than from their church?

Climate awareness has also been raised in urban churches. Gereja Kristen Indonesia Kemang Pratama Bekasi, West Java, initiated a working group on ecology in 2008. They knew that the bad smells coming from Bantar Gebang Bekasi Landfill, the largest land waste site in Indonesia, could not be ecologically healthy. They connected with other groups to work on ecology from a multi-faith perspective and soon realized that ecology had become a moral issue. They organized many workshops in the East Jakarta presbytery at churches, schools, housing communities and workplaces, to discuss and inform on local environmental issues.

In 2012, the CCI, in collaboration with the Ethics Learning Centre of Jakarta Theological Seminary, organized an *eco-menical* exhibition at Jakarta Theological Seminary. The word “eco-menical” stands for the ecumenical movement infused with ecological insights. Their exhibition included a booth sponsored by the National Council of Climate Change, which also distributed some VCDs and booklets for the visitors. They also held a children’s drawing competition and a poster-making competition. There were no disposable cups or plastic bags allowed and the committee provided 400 reusable plastic tumblers to avoid the use of plastic bottles. After the exhibition, CCI began to spread climate awareness to churches all around Indonesia, starting in Sumatra. CCI and some delegations from GPIB Kharisma and GKI Kemang Pratama reached out to the Gereja Methodist church of Indonesia, Medan, North Sumatra to introduce a pilot climate project. Upon their agreement, a seminar took place in their seminary in Bandar Baru, North Sumatra and they also planted trees in the backyard of a local housing complex to support this environmental movement.

In yet another Protestant response on November 1–4, 2012, the Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) organized by Justice, International Affairs, Development and Service presented a consultation with CCI on “Ecology, Economy and Accountability: Asian Churches’ Response.” There were about 50 members participating in the consultation, representing different parts of Asia such as Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, Japan, Philippines, India and Sri Lanka.<sup>21</sup> Taking environmental issues into consideration, action plans were proposed through coordination and networking among member churches, ecumenical bodies, interfaith organizations, NGOs and experts in the field. They suggested that Asian Churches must:

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21 Hisashi, Y. (2013). *Promoting Ecological Justice: Asian Churches’ Response*. Retrieved from: <http://cca.org.hk/home/promoting-ecological-justice-asian-churches-response>.

- Create awareness among the local congregations about the perils of the ecological crisis.
- Take initiative to adopt the ecological concerns in the life and ministry of the Church.
- Emphasize “Green Churches.”
- Initiate “Eco-Reformations” in all the aspects of the Church and Society.
- Stop destructive innovations that are bad for human communities and sustainability such as nuclear power plants, mining, construction of mega dams, deforestation and displacement of the Indigenous communities.
- Say “No!” to the Global Investors who fund the multi-national companies to dominate the Asian economy.
- Develop strategies to revive the local resources in order to encourage self-reliance.
- Foster solidarity among the Asian churches to address and engage these pertinent issues.
- Use the CCA to monitor and network between the member churches, social movements, NGOs, interfaith organizations, ecumenical bodies and so on.
- Affirm Christian commitments towards establishing “Eco-Justice” in preserving God’s entire Creation.

The activities listed above and implemented by the protestant churches demonstrate the need for churches to take part in solutions to the problem of climate change. It is not merely a personal calling or a popular trend, but according to these religious bodies it is actually a moral issue and should be considered a way to glorify God.

### 3.3 *Initiatives within the Roman Catholic Church*

The Roman Catholic Church in Indonesia has also been concerned with all kinds of environmental degradation and destruction in Indonesia, especially since the 1980s. Structurally, the Church can state and elaborate on its environmental concerns through formal documents,<sup>22</sup> as well as through sermons and preaching. There are also efforts underway on the part of individuals, as well as groups. However, collaboration in line with the shared interests of these parties remains somewhat unorganized and unsystematic. Despite this, in their assembly in 2004, Indonesian Bishops acknowledged that there is a personal role

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22 The most recent of these documents is the Pastoral Letter (Nota Pastoral) of the Indonesian Bishops’ Conference 2013 “*Keterlibatan Gereja dalam Melestarikan Keutuhan Ciptaan*” (The Church’s Involvement in Preserving the Integrity of Creation).

to play in preventing environmental destruction. For this reason, the Roman Catholic Church increasingly recognizes that whether directly or indirectly, the Church must accept responsibility for the results of its own actions.<sup>23</sup> Following this line of analysis, the Church has made efforts to inspire concern among its followers for environmental degradation. These efforts take the form of a new kind of social action for individuals, which may be identified as developing a new “habitus,” an expression borrowed from its popularization by Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist.<sup>24</sup>

Efforts to shape a new habitus in order to foster environmental concern in the life of the Catholic Church appear, among other places, in the efforts undertaken by the Archbishop of Jakarta to develop new methods for disposing of and separating garbage. In Jakarta there are three major environmental problems: water pollution, air pollution, and waste. Trash is not yet managed well, and is a contributing cause of these three critical problems of environmental pollution. Thus, it is clear that the Archbishop’s efforts to develop new ways of managing, disposing of and separating waste is a huge improvement. It mirrors a faith that has a core essence of compassion and concern. A new habitus that promotes responsible ways of disposing of and separating waste clearly differs from the habitus that enables throwing out trash indiscriminately and without reflection, guided only by egocentrism and carelessness, and characterized in the acronym “NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard).”

In categorizing such efforts, most actions can be mapped according to three types, which are: awareness, preparation of material, and organizational support. Awareness within the community is raised through sermons, through the declaration of days dedicated to environmental awareness, and during church holidays and celebrations. A couple examples of such activities are the preparation of the e-booklet, *The Rosary for the Earth* (Rosario Bumi), and on the occasion of Earth Hour, which encourages congregations to give up the use of plastic and styrofoam for Lent. In addition, during Christmas and Easter, the

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23 Bdk. Nota Pastoral 2004 titled, “*Keadaban Publik: Menuju Habitus Baru Bangsa. Keadilan Sosial bagi Semua: Pendekatan Sosio-Budaya*”.

24 See the book, *The Logic of Practice* (1990). It states that *habitus* is “*Systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles which generate and organize practices and representations that can be objectively adapted to their outcomes without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary in order to attain them. Objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without being in any way the product of obedience to rules, they can be collectively orchestrated without being the product of the organizing action of a conductor*” (53).

Archdiocese of Jakarta invites parishes to participate in a competition of holiday decorations that use only recycled materials.

The Archdiocese of Jakarta also encourages the establishment of sections dedicated to environmental issues within the administrative structure of parishes. Presently, out of the 63 local parishes, about 40 of them now have an environmental section, although not all are active. Every year participating members meet in order to share information and creative ideas surrounding environmental issues. In addition to this, young people are mobilized and organized as a single community for leadership, called Gropesh (Gerakan Orang Muda Peduli Sampah dan Lingkungan Hidup, or “Youth for Waste Management and the Environment”).

At this time, the Archdiocese of Jakarta has a general director whose function is to organize and coordinate activities within the parishes contained in Gerakan Hidup Bersih dan Sehat Keuskupan Agung Jakarta. This overarching group attempts to facilitate new means to further encourage the realization of a new habitus of environmental concern. One parish that has been very successful at this has been St. Barnabas Pamulang, which has developed an area of empty land as an environmental education area devoted to waste management. It extends an important suggestion to the community, to re-use waste that was formerly considered to be unproductive.

Considering that the effort to construct habitus requires widespread cooperation, Gerakan Hidup Bersih dan Sehat of the Archbishop of Jakarta also works with outside institutions and individuals. For instance, cooperation with the state has occurred through the Dewan Nasional Perubahan Iklim (DNPI), with an annual program called the Youth for Climate Camp, which is a meeting of students across universities, regions and faith communities to raise environmental awareness, especially on the issue of global warming and climate disturbance. A faith perspective is integral to this movement. This group has convened twice, in 2011 and in 2012.

Along with Christian Protestants and Catholics, Indonesian Hindus are also organizing to combat environmental degradation and climate change. We now turn to a discussion of this faith community.

### 3.4 *Balinese Hindus and the Environmental Movement*

In several important respects, Hindu norms and values are integrated into local cultures. In Bali for instance, the faith in Hindu spiritual values is enacted through various cultural and religious ceremonies, called *Yadnya*. Within these *Yadnya* ceremonies, Hindu *Tattwa* (philosophy) and *Susial* (ethics) are integrated; this means that the implementation of every such religious ceremony needs to be grounded in the consciousness and knowledge of ethics and/or

the conventional understanding of what is right and noble (*luhur*). The truth sought after here is a truth based on natural rights or natural law. Consequently, Hindu rituals already contain a balance of the spiritual and the worldly. The concepts of *Yandya* and *Tri Hita Karana* explain that life on the face of the earth, in fact, constitutes a collective responsibility and/or a collective consciousness of the stewardship and veneration of the macrocosm (the universe). After all, it is nature or the cosmos that renders humanity and human life possible. Not honoring the macrocosm is equivalent to not honoring oneself as a part of the microcosm (the human body). This well-balanced relationship between macrocosm and microcosm constitutes the foundation of life for Balinese Hindus. Consequently, all human activities on the face of the earth always need to be performed with the objective in mind that the needs of our bodies should be brought into harmony with the needs of that which is outside of our bodies (i.e. the environment). This harmony needs to be continually maintained in space and time.

For Balinese Hindus, the human body is nature in its miniature form. The human body originates from the elements that exist in this universe. According to the *Panca Maha Butha*, there are five such elements that constitute the basis of the human body. These are a) *Pertiwi*, the element of matter or the earth; b) *Apah*, the element of liquid or water; c) *Teja*, the element of light or fire; d) *Bayu*, the element of wind and air; and, e) *Akasa*, space or ether. Awareness, knowledge, and faith are all aspects of the life of Balinese Hindus, and are firmly believed to be connected with nature (Wiana 2004). As such, nature is the origin of life, nature is the guide of life, nature is the objective of life, and so on. This faith, as described up to this point, has strongly influenced all aspects of life in the Balinese Hindu community.

Studying the life of the inhabitants in the vicinity of irrigation systems (*Subak*) will make it easier to see how the consciousness of and faith in this cosmology constitutes the foundation of all aspects of life for Balinese Hindus. In this sense, the Balinese *Subak* can be considered to be a religion of the earth, as “*Subak*” may be called Bali’s “system of the management of space and territory.” The spirit of *Subak* establishes a spirit of consciousness in life, itself being a form of honoring and maintaining the environment of Balinese Hindus. Citing one “*awig-awig*,”<sup>25</sup> the definition of *Subak* can be given as follows:

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25 *Awig awig* is a traditional regulation that exists in Balinese villages.

Subak is the place that is protected for the members of Subak as one entire family. In agreement with the regulations, Subak is a metaphor of the cosmos (macrocosm) and humans (microcosm). In the sense of the entirety of nature, Subak can symbolize a body, or the entirety of life, including Parahyangan, Pawongan and Palemahan (Tri Hita Karana).<sup>26</sup>

According to this understanding of Subak above, it is clear that Tri Hita Karana as expressed within the noble system of Subak can be a primary guide wherever the daily activities of Subak are carried out substantively. One example of this is with respect to *palemahan (wilayah)*; that is land management or making compatible agricultural practices with respect for the living, allowing every creature and ecosystem to live. With a deep understanding of the word, a natural awareness can arise. The people of Bali are conscious of the fact that in this *palemahan* there are natural boundaries (*batas-batas*) that must become points of reference. These boundaries are mountains, hills, rivers, the sea, the forest, lakes, the sun, moon, stars, and so forth. These natural boundaries are signs that function like indicators or reminders, eventually guiding an awareness of what may and may not be done. This awareness subsequently leads to many customary rules (*hukum adat*) and traditions. In this way, whatever is done on the face of the earth must be enacted through our own lived bodies. If we are afraid of flooding, then we should not destroy forests. If we are scared of going hungry, then we should care for plants. If we fear global warming, then we should respect natural balance, and so forth.

In their daily lives, people must affirm the importance of balance and natural order in the environment. A dynamic and prosperous life develops only in this manner. The existence of prosperity in life as encompassed in the conceptions of *Tri Hita Karana*, *Tri Mandala*, *Tri Angga* and so forth, may be summed up in totality by the expression, "*Sad Kertih*," or the six sources of flourishing in life, which are:

1. *Atman Kertih*: an awareness and certainty that everything that is on the face of the earth and in the greatness of the whole world has a "soul." All things are part of the divine creation and must be respected through the structures of *Yadnya*. *Yadnya* is the structure for the worship of the divine Creator, God Almighty and all of its creation;
2. *Wana Kertih*: plants as a source of prosperity. This may take the form of forests, rice fields, palawija, fruit, flowers, medicinal plants, and so on;

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<sup>26</sup> Awig-awig concerning *Subak* from the village *Payangan Kec Marga Tabanan Bali* (2003).



3. *Danu Kertih*: water and water systems as a source of prosperity. Water for irrigating fields, water for drinking, as hydraulic energy, and so on;
4. *Jana Kertih*: ongoing teaching and learning as a source of prosperity. The natural world is always providing knowledge, instruction, and guidance. The world provides guidance and knowledge for living;
5. *Segara Kertih*: cleanliness as a source of prosperity. Tending rice fields and enhancing the “green” landscape, such as through planting trees, in order to enhance beauty, peace, fresh air, and so forth;
6. *Jagat Kertih*: a realization that whatever we do must provide benefit and respect for the natural world. We must care for the biosphere in a manner so that natural alignment becomes a shared responsibility.

For the Hindu people of Bali, Sad Kertih is sacred, universal and abiding knowledge (*wahyu suci/Weda*). Agricultural activities and water management are only one out of many activities of Subak. In these activities, the practice of respect and nurturing the spirit of Sad Kertih are seen as demonstrating an unbroken unity with nature. Without affirming the spirit of Sad Kertih, then rice fields are no more than just ground cover, water is nothing more than what is needed to plant crops, farming is no more than a mere profession, and rice is only a commodity. The philosophy of Subak as outlined above represents “one body” (*“satu tubuh”*) in the life system of the microcosm and the macrocosm.

The profound truths contained within the teachings of the Hindu religion of Bali are a basis on which to consider the natural order and the environment alongside human lifeworlds, in order to achieve balance and assure prosperity (*Bhuta Hita* and *Jagat Hita*). Within this experience and belief enter climate change and global warming as characteristics of the natural world, in this time and place. An understanding from Balinese Hindu traditions and cultures already contains steps for the adaptation to and mitigation of climate change based upon restoring balance.

### 3.5 *Buddhist Initiatives*

Finally, Buddhist communities have also been leaders in environmental action in Indonesia, such as with the organization, “Yayasan Tzu Chi”<sup>27</sup> in the cities of Medan, Tangerang and Jakarta. The movement undertaken by members of this organization has included street trash removal, recycling, reduction of household waste, and education about the environment. This model was

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<sup>27</sup> We thank Mr Hadi Pranoto from Yayasan Tzu Chi who provided information about the organization, Budha Tzu Chi.

inspired by that of Master Cheng Yen, a spiritual leader and environmental champion, and the founder of Budha Tsu Chi.<sup>28</sup>

The activities of Tsu Chi in the mission for environmental preservation have been in effect for more than 20 years. According to historical records, the activities of Tsu Chi began with the notion that trash was of value. From 1992 until November 2003, the group recycled paper, iron, aluminium, plastic and other resources totaling than 591,000,000 kg, including more than 182,000,000 plastic bottles. Currently, there are seven Tzu Chi recycling centers in Indonesia: in Cengkareng, Muara Karang, Kelapa Gading, Serpong, Medan, Surabaya, and Tangerang. The members of the Tsu Chi organization are the “life” of these recycling centers. It is thus not only an individual practice but an action that is inspired by and inspires others.

On August 2, 2009, 60 Tzu Chi members planted 2,000 mangrove trees in the area of Pantai Indah Kapuk, along with the municipal government of the city of Jakarta and other participants. Among other activities, they provided instructions for how to minimize household waste through composting. Groups of Tzu Chi members demonstrated their conservation methods in several locations across north Jakarta. They argued that household waste may be re-used so that there is nothing ever thrown away. In addition to reducing the volume of waste that is taken to the dump (TPA, Tempat Pembuangan Akhir), this initiative also extends the utility of the TPA, reduces pollution on land, and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. In these ways and many more, Buddhists too are contributing to the greening of religions in Indonesia.

Religions in Indonesia are foundational to greening processes. In other words, it is hard to imagine a green movement in Indonesia without the related support and greening of religions. Although there is a long way to go, the fact that all of the recognized official religions in Indonesia have greening projects underway is indeed a sign that Indonesians of all faiths are leading the way in finding avenues to help adapt to climate change and prevent the worst case scenarios from becoming a reality. Indonesia is a country expected to be deeply affected by the effects of global warming, including rising sea levels and climate disturbance. In a country in which pluralism implies that everyone has a religious identity, then, religious communities continue to address ecological degradation as a moral concern and galvanize religious peoples toward making changes that promote sustainability.

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28 Tzu Chi. (2009, December 01). Tzu Chi Missions. *Tzu Chi Foundation*. Available at: [http://tw.tzuchi.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=293&Itemid=283&lang=en](http://tw.tzuchi.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=293&Itemid=283&lang=en).

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