

# The Role of Indonesian Women Ulama in the Quranic Ecogender: From Analysis to Environmental Conservation Action

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nur Arfiyah Febriani, MA.

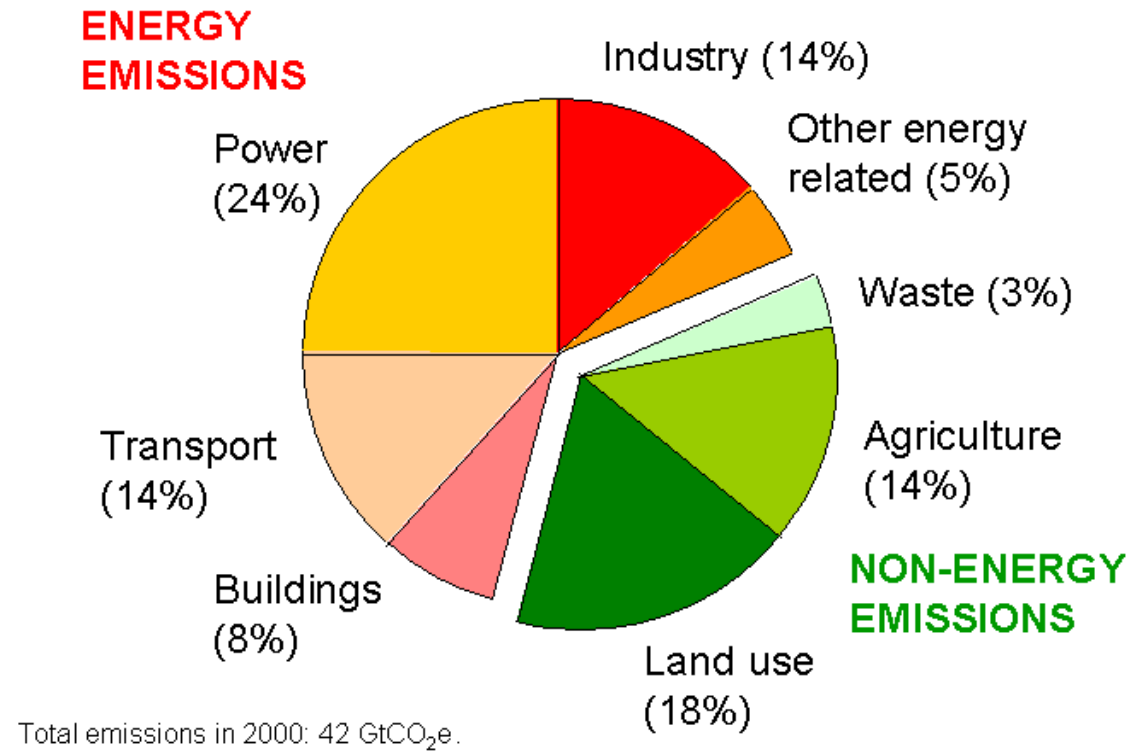
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# Research Background:

- Nawal Amar (2009), Carolyn Merchant (1992) and Robyn Eckersley (2001) explained that environmental damage **has a correlation with men's domineering attitude towards women**. The domineering attitude of men towards women affects the domineering attitude of men in exploiting the earth's resources. **This is because both the earth and women have the same character, namely: receptive, submissive and surrender.**
- Interestingly, in the research results of IPPC (2019), the words of these ecofeminist figures are not fully justified, this is because environmental damage is caused by modern human lifestyles that are not friendly to the environment.
- Likewise with the verse of the al-Quran which states that environmental damage is caused by **“al-nās”, namely humans who have matured socially, this editorial is mentioned for humans in general, both for men and women** (Q.S. al-Rūm [30]: 41). Febriani (2014) also stated that character stereotypes for men and women are not found in the al-Qur'an.



# Global Warming Causal Factors According to IPCC Data:



# Theoretical Studies on Human Character:

- In the al-Quran, Febriani (2014) found that both male and female humans have feminine and masculine characters, feminine and masculine human characters have positive and negative sides (Q.S al-Syams [91]: 7-8), This negative side/value becomes a negative stereotype for men and women.
- Ironically, like Unger (1979) and Lips (1993), still categorize that feminine characters are characters for women only and masculine characters are characters for men only.
- Some examples of stereotypes for male characters (arrogance, exploitative, domineering) and female characters (receptive, submissive and surrender) as mentioned at the beginning of this discussion have become entrenched and have made the relationship less harmonious between men and women which also affects the pattern of relations between humans and nature.



# Ecogender Definition

- **Ecology** etymologically according to Koesnadi comes from the Greek "oikos" (household) and "logos" (science), which was first introduced in biology by a German biologist named Ernst Haeckel (1869). Therefore developed what is called "ecology", namely **the science that studies the relationship between one organism to another, and between these organisms and their environment.**
- **Gender** in the *Woman Studies Encyclopedia* is interpreted in the meaning: a cultural concept that seeks to make distinctions in terms of roles, behavior, mentality and emotional characteristics between men and women that develop in society (Helen Tieny, 153).



- The basic difference between the words sex and gender, namely: *sex* is a biological determination. *Gender* is not static or innate but acquires socially and culturally constructed meaning over time.” Valerie Oosterveld.
- Donna R Runnals (2002, 95) explained that: “Sex refers to biological identity whereas *gender* refers to culturally ascribed identity.



Istibsyarah (2004: 60), has made a classification table of differences between sex and gender:

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Gender</b>
Sex is a natural (given)	Gender is a socio-cultural construction and developed by humans.
sex is a biologically. It refers to marked differences in genitalia and related differences in reproductive function	Gender is a socio-cultural, and refers to responsibilities, roles, patterns of behavior, qualities, etc. that are masculine and feminine.
Sex is a fixed, it will be the same everywhere	Gender is not fixed, it changes from time to time, from one culture to another, even from one family to another.
Gender is something that cannot be changed	Gender is something that can be changed

# Ecogender in the Western Scientific Tradition:

- Ecogender is a social scientific research on the gendered and relational quality of embodied environmental experience.
- ecogender studies enters the dialogue of social difference at a gendered moment, it immediately seeks to make connections with other moments of social difference, such as class, caste, and race, and investigates the forms and processes of these intersections.
- it is also draws on feminist political ecology's understanding of gender as a critical variabel in exploring ecological change.

(Damayanti Banarjee and Michael M Bell, "Ecogender, Locating Gender in Environmental Social Science," *Society and Natural Resources*, Jan 2007, 6-7).

- **Ecogender:** as a way of thinking about gender and environment (Chammah J Kaunda, “Towards an African ecogender theology: A decolonial Theological Perspective”, Stellenbosch Theological Journal, 2016, Vol 2, No 1, 180).
- African ecogender theology will function within this indivisible “*human intellect-environment paradigm*” of creating knowledge and experiencing life. The biblical tradition is replete with the interpretation of wisdom entrenched in the environment. For example, there are passages that show how the environment demonstrates the loving and caring heart of God others reveal that God’s wisdom is entrenched in the environment and still others show that the environment is embodied with principles of life and conduct (Chammah J Kaunda: 2016, 193-194).
- African ecogender theology has the potential for contributing to the transformation of the present relational reality by deliberately creating a balanced community of human beings and the environment “that would integrate intuitive, spiritual, and rational forms of knowledge, embracing both science and [faith] insofar as they enable us to transform the nature-culture distinction and to envision and create a free, ecological society. (Chammah J Kaunda: 2016, 195).

- Kaunda utilized an African theological ecogender lens to develop three fundamental African philosophical as follows:
  - 1. the conviction of the harmony of being.**
  - 2. the union of environment and human intellect.**
  - 3. A clear consciousness that God is a member of the community of life.** The community is called a community of life because God is believed to be an ultimate source of its origin, its life, and the very life that is present in the intricacies of the community (Kaunda: 2016: 194-195).

# Theoretical Finding:

## Basic Argument of Quranic Ecogender (QE)

Keywords related to Ecogender in the al-Quran:

1. The word *zauj*/زوج (pairing of all God's creatures)
2. Feminine and masculine characters related to environmental preservation
3. Quranic Ecogender concept



# 1. Zauj (*Pairing/Keberpasangan*)

- The verses that explain pairing and describe gender relations in ecology, namely in Q.S. al-Dhāriyāt [51]: 49 which reads:
  - **ومن كل شيء خلقنا زوجين لعلكم تذكرون**
- According to Muhammad Quraish Shihab (2005), the word (أزواج) *azwāj*/pair in this verse in the view of linguists such as al-Raghīb al-Aṣḫānī (1997), is used for each of two things that are side by side (simultaneously), **both male and female, animals, humans and is also used to designate the two pairs**. It is also used to designate the same thing for other than animals, such as **footwear**. Furthermore, al-Raghib explained that the pairing could be due to **similarities** and **could also be due to the opposite**.
- In the verse of the Qur'an, the word (أزواج) *azwāj* / partner in a general sense (Q.S. Yasin/36: 36), **not only for living things. From here there is night and day, joy and difficulty, up and down, and so on.**
- Everything in the universe is a creature that created by God, so they have their respective partners. Only the Creator, Allah has no partner, nor is there anyone with Him.
- From a scientific point of view, it is proven that **electricity is in pairs**, there are positive and negative currents, as well as **atoms**, which were thought to be the smallest and indivisible form in fact they are in pairs **Atoms consist of electrons and protons**

## 2. Positive and Negative Character of Human in The al-Quran:

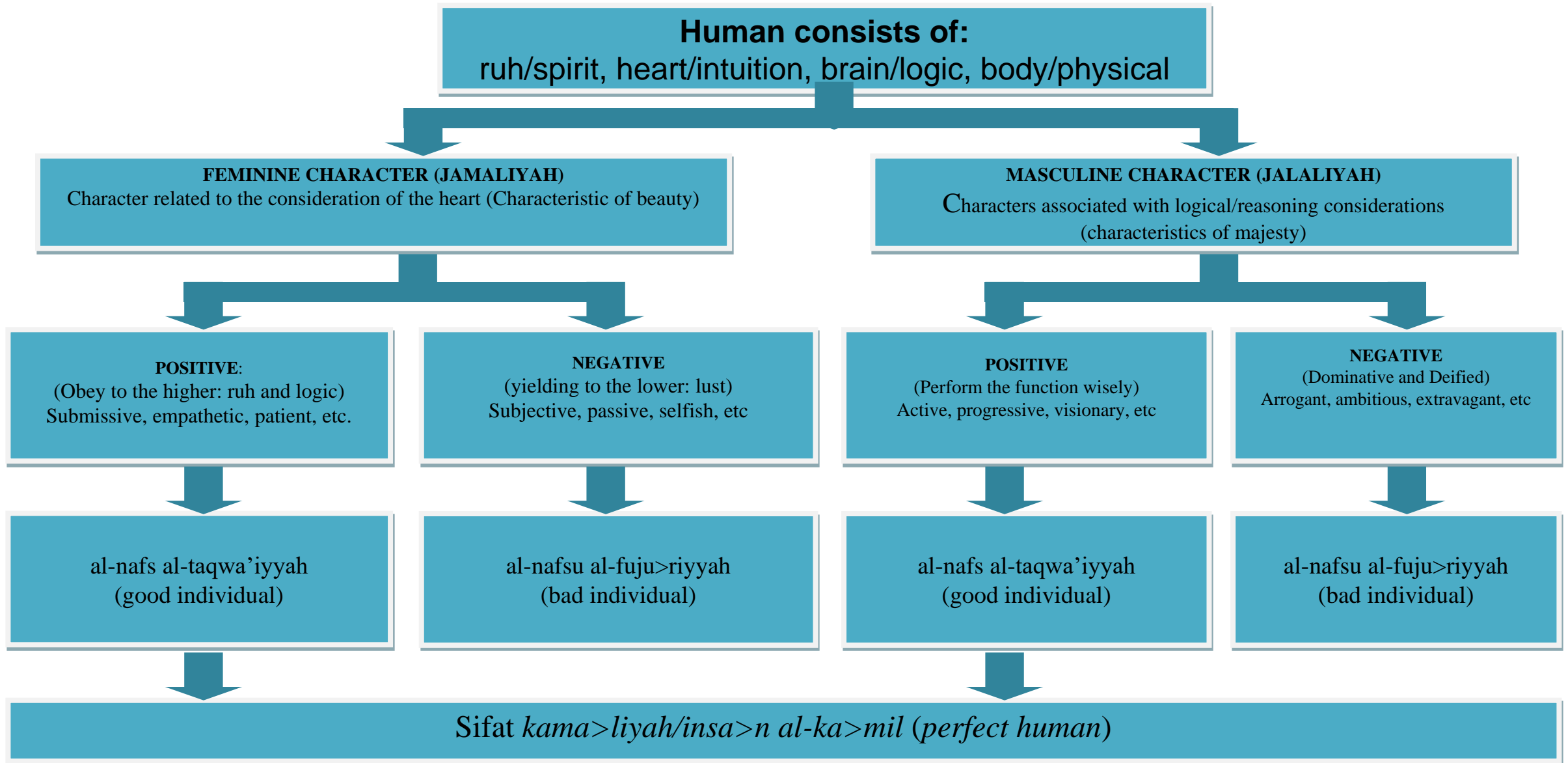
- Febriani (2014: 175) explains that in the Qur'an there are two types of human characters in Q.S. al-Shams [91]: 7-8 which uses the sentence "*fujūrahā wa taqwāhā*" or bad and good characters, thus the character is divided into 2, namely: "*al-nafsu al-fujūriyyah*" or bad character and "*al-nafs al-taqwā'iyyah*" or good character. This gesture is taken from the verse which reads:

□ فُجُورًا ۖ وَتَقْوًا ۚ وَآخِرُ

- Hamka (2000), in his commentary, interprets the word "*fujūrahā wa taqwāhā*" in the verse above, with **bad and good human personality/character**.
- From Hamka's explanation, it can be understood that humans **have good and bad character that have positive and negative values**.
- If the editorial of the above verse is expressed in **a general form**, it can also be understood that good and bad character can be possessed by **men and women** in general.



# Feminine and Masculine Character in the al-Quran



**Tabel I**

**Feminine and Masculine Positive Character for Human Related to Environment Conservation**

No	Masculine character	Q.S	Feminine character	Q.S
1	Consistent	8/45.	Submissive	8/46, 2/21, 1/5.
2	Worldwide	17/70, 49/13.	Patience	8/66.
3	Competitive	18/30.	Empathy	33/29.
4	Active ( <i>mujāhidīn</i> )	4/95, 47/31.	Generous	57/18.
5	Logical ( <i>ya'qilūn</i> )	2/164, 13/4, 16/12, 29/35.	Trusting (tawakal)	12/67, 14/12, 39/38, 3/159.
6	Independent	8/53.	Pious (taqwa)	2/177, 8/34, 13/35, 25/15, 39/33, 47/15.
7	Adventurous ( <i>intasyara</i> )	62/9.	used to share	2/3.
8	Communicative	3/159.	Sincere (ikhlas)	12/24, 15/40, 37/40, 37/74.
9	Balance between rational and and emotional	49/9-10.	Asking forgiveness for mistakes	51/18.
10	Communicative	55/3-4.	Grateful	86/3.
11	Visionary	3/104.	Accept advice and wisdom	2/206.
12	Responsive	3/114.	Forgiving	3/159.
13	Progressive	17/36.	Egalitarian	49/13.
14	Productive	16/97.	Creative	13/11.
15	Curiosity	2/189, 8/1	Peacefull	33/35, 66/5, 89/27.
16	Fair	49/9	Cooperative	3/103.
17	Communicate wisely	86/13	Caliph/ earth protector/nurturing	2/30

# Quranic Ecogender (QE)

- Ecogender in the al-Qu'ran which is read through the link between ecology and various other branches of knowledge (religious science, rational science and practical science), is described in the meaning: "Interconnection and harmonious interaction between humans and themselves (*habl ma'a nafsih*) , humans and fellow humans (*habl ma'a ikhwanih*), humans and nature (*habl ma'a bi'atih*) and humans and God (*habl ma'a Khāliqih*).
- Ecogender in the al-Quran carries the ***ecohumanist theocentric*** theory.
- This harmonious interaction is described in the al-Qur'an without distinguishing between men and women. This universal teaching of the al-Quran can be applied by all human beings from any background.
- Islam embraces all kinds of differences from differences in sex and gender, culture, country, etc., every individual has the potential to be a achievers, do good and be a pious person (taqwa).

# KUPI Network in Environmental Conservation Action:

## 1. Academics (Campus Ecosystem):

- Introducing the “Quranic Ecogender” in the curriculum (Institut PTIQ Jakarta), seminars and Forum Group Discussion.
- Embracing togetherness in preserving the environment for every individual in the campus ecosystem



Image 1

The Takhasus IIQ Islamic Boarding School environment which is dominated by Green Open Space/GOS



Figure 2

Class design that supports green building



Figure 3

Waste Management Training at BLK IIQ Jakarta Building



Figure 4  
Provision of trash cans that support 3R management



Figure 5  
Implementation of learning with paperless and plasticless systems.

\* Avoiding a Consumptive Lifestyle and Overstocking:

7 pairs of clothes or 7 pieces of robes

## 2. Practitioners from the Community (Social Ecosystem)



1. Household: making compost and planting trees around the house)



2. Farmers: Use of Eco enzyme in the process of growing rice



### 3. Community Group (BSD: Waste bank in Serang-Banten

# Conclusion:

- Stereotypes against men and women based on character specifications are not found in the al-Quran. With each of them being awarded 4 (four) potentials: ruh/spiritual, brain/logic, heart/intuition, and physical, each individual human being can choose a character that can describe their own personality.
- The concept of *zauj* in the al-Quran is to show the function of each of God's creatures that are mutually cooperative and complementary to show the existence of each other. Likewise for men and women in carrying out their public and domestic roles, including in environmental conservation efforts.
- QE is defined in terms of: "Interconnection and harmonious interaction between humans and themselves (ḥabl ma'a nafsih), humans and fellow humans (ḥabl ma'a ikhwānih), humans and nature (ḥabl ma'a bīatih) and humans and God (ḥabl ma'a Khāliqih).
- With this definition QE is expected to be able to embrace men and women in the environmental conservation movement, because both are needed to strengthen cooperation in rebuilding a beautiful and comfortable world to live in. The existence of both is like *yin* and *yang*, that will not exist without the presence of each other.
- KUPI and their network of academics and practitioners are active in innovating and creating concrete actions for environmental conservation.