

Negotiating Faith, Ritual, and Ecology: Islamic–Hindu Acculturation and Interreligious Cohesion in the *Petik Laut* Ritual of Pengambengan, Bali

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines how *Petik Laut*, a coastal sea thanksgiving ritual in Pengambengan, Jembrana, Bali, functions as a negotiated arena of Islamic–Hindu acculturation, interreligious cohesion, and coastal environmental ethics. It addresses the need to move beyond viewing coastal rituals merely as cultural heritage, syncretic practice, or one-way Islamization by analyzing how religious boundaries, shared participation, and ecological responsibility are produced within a multi-religious fishing community. **Methodology:** This study employed a qualitative ethnography of religion. Data were collected during the 2025 *Petik Laut* ritual cycle through participant observation, semi-structured interviews with 15 key informants, and visual documentation. Informants included religious leaders, civic leaders, committee members, senior fishermen, youth participants, and community members. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis and Geertzian thick description to interpret symbolic transformation, boundary-making, interreligious cooperation, and ecological meaning. **Findings:** The study reveals three main findings. First, Islamic-Hindu acculturation occurs through symbolic relabeling, Islamic liturgical adaptation, and committee-based theological boundary-making. Ritual elements such as offerings, *larung* (the ritual release of offerings into the sea), decorated boats, and prayers are not erased but reinterpreted to remain culturally meaningful while reducing theological ambiguity. Second, interreligious cohesion is produced through *gotong royong* (communal mutual assistance), joint committee work, shared ritual space, differentiated participation, and collective maritime narratives such as the idea that “the sea belongs to everyone.” Third, ecological ethics are embedded through the understanding of the sea as *rezeki* (divinely granted sustenance or blessing), the use of biodegradable materials, plastic reduction, beach cleaning, youth monitoring, and informal social control. However, the ritual’s sustainability is challenged by declining youth involvement, tourism commodification, and debates over religious orthodoxy. **Implications:** The findings suggest that sustaining *Petik Laut* requires community-based ritual governance, stronger youth participation, ethical tourism management, and clearer environmental rules. The ritual should not be treated merely as a cultural festival, but as a local institution linking pluralism, maritime identity, and ecological responsibility. **Originality:** This study contributes to ritual studies by showing that a coastal ritual can simultaneously function as a mechanism of religious negotiation, an infrastructure of interreligious cohesion, and a medium of religious ecology. It challenges one-way narratives of Islamization by demonstrating that Muslim and Hindu actors jointly negotiate ritual authority, symbolic meaning, and environmental ethics within a shared ritual cycle.

Keywords: Boundary-making; coastal ritual; interreligious cohesion; Islamic-Hindu acculturation; *Petik Laut*; religious ecology.

Introduction

Indonesia's religious landscape is shaped by a long history of cultural encounters among Hindu-Buddhist traditions, Islamic trade networks, Christian missionary legacies, and diverse local belief systems, producing a plural society in which religion is lived not only through formal institutions but also through everyday cultural practices (Ginting, Peranginangin, & Rambe, 2026; Hefner, 2018). Although this plurality is supported by legal recognition and public narratives of tolerance, Indonesian interreligious life continues to face tensions related to intolerance, conservative religious interpretations, contested minority status, and limited interfaith dialogue (Burhani, 2014; Sakai & Isbah, 2014; Setiabudi, Wibowo, & Paskarina, 2021). For this reason, religious diversity in Indonesia needs to be examined not merely at the level of doctrine, state policy, or formal interfaith discourse, but also through daily practices where communities negotiate difference in concrete social spaces. Coastal communities are especially important in this regard because shared dependence on marine resources, inherited ritual traditions, and collective ecological concerns create practical arenas where religious boundaries are continuously interpreted, adjusted, and reproduced. Coastal rituals such as sea alms, sea harvest ceremonies, and other maritime traditions show how gratitude, social solidarity, environmental ethics, and interreligious coexistence are embedded in lived practice rather than abstract pluralist ideals (Susanto, 2025; Wulandari, Ernawati, Asikin, & Pratiwi, 2024). Thus, studying coastal rituals offers a grounded way to understand how Indonesia's religious diversity is sustained, contested, and transformed through everyday cooperation, symbolic negotiation, and shared responsibility toward the natural environment.

The Petik Laut (a coastal sea thanksgiving ritual) in Pengambangan, Jembrana, Bali, exemplifies this complexity. Practiced by Muslim and Hindu fishing communities, the ritual involves sea offerings, collective prayers, processions, and communal activities intended to express gratitude for marine sustenance and seek safety at sea (Himmah, Humaidah, & Syam, 2023; Sariyani, 2020). Rather than treating Petik Laut as a static form of syncretism or a simple case of Islamic assimilation, this study approaches it as a negotiated ritual field. In this field, religious leaders, village authorities, fishermen, youth, and ordinary participants debate, adjust, and legitimize ritual elements in relation to Islamic norms, Hindu participation, local tradition, and ecological concerns.

Existing scholarship on Indonesian coastal and maritime rituals generally positions Petik Laut, sea alms, sea harvest ceremonies, *Semah Laut*, and related *larung* traditions as dynamic expressions of local wisdom, cultural heritage, ritual space, gratitude, ecological stewardship, and maritime community identity. Studies of indigenous ecological knowledge among the Madurese community in Gili Ketapang and broader ritual-ecology practices in East Java show that ritual traditions are not merely symbolic performances, but also encode norms of environmental preservation, sustainable resource use, and community adaptation to ecological change (Danugroho et al., 2025; Sejati et al., 2026). Research on sea alms ceremonies in Banyutowo and Tegalsari further demonstrates that maritime rituals function as expressions of gratitude to God, requests for fishermen's safety, preservation of local tradition, and mechanisms of communal resilience, including during disruptive situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic (Martini & Rahma Wulan, 2020; Nur Rimawan & Asmarani, 2021). Spatial and symbolic studies of Indonesian coastal rituals and *Semah Laut* in the Riau Islands also reveal that ritual spaces are imbued with meanings that connect coastal communities to ancestral memory, sacred marine environments, and collective spirituality (Swastiwi, Arman,

Wibisono, & Zulha, 2024; Wulandari et al., 2024). Related work on *Larung Sesaji* as an indigenous resilience practice further confirms that collective ritual participation can strengthen social bonding, intergenerational knowledge transmission, environmental awareness, and disaster preparedness (Utomo, Sumarmi, & Bachri, 2026). These studies show that Indonesian maritime rituals are socially, spiritually, and ecologically significant; however, they still tend to emphasize local wisdom, symbolic meaning, cultural preservation, or environmental adaptation, while paying less attention to how ritual meanings are negotiated among actors with different religious affiliations.

A second strand of scholarship examines religious acculturation, syncretism, Islamization, and boundary-making in Indonesian local rituals involving Muslim and Hindu communities. Studies on ritual activities at Keraton Yogyakarta show that Islamic values have historically been fused with Hindu-Javanese and Buddhist cultural inheritances through ceremonies such as Garebeg and Sekaten, where Islamic commemorations are expressed through localized ritual forms (Sulaeman, 2019). Similar patterns appear in Pegayaman Village, Bali, where Islamic law is negotiated within a Hindu-dominated cultural environment through syncretic practices that are interpreted as compatible with Islamic principles as long as they do not undermine core theological commitments (Irawan, Zayadi, Saihu, Darwis Hude, & Nasaruddin Umar, 2025). Research on Sasi Laut in Misool, Raja Ampat, further demonstrates how Islamic teachings can reshape indigenous marine rituals by removing elements considered incompatible with monotheism while preserving the ritual's cultural identity and ecological function (Wekke, Aghsari, Evizariza, Junaidi, & Harun, 2018). Other studies on the Jalawastu community and Javanese Islamic literature show that Islamization often occurs through localization, harmonization, and vernacularization rather than cultural erasure, allowing Islamic concepts to be embedded in indigenous customs, language, and social practices (Asrawijaya, 2022; Zuhri, 2022). Meanwhile, studies of Bugis Tolotang and pilgrimage practices in the Nusantara reveal that boundary-making remains an important issue: local rituals can foster cross-religious identity, kinship, and harmony, but they may also generate theological debates over the limits between permissible cultural expression and syncretistic distortion (Hadawiah, Sulaeman, Nurdin, Sulastrri, & Fitriyani, 2025; Nurhanifah, Hati, Indra, Sikumbang, & Sitompul, 2025). These studies show that Indonesian local rituals are shaped by continuous negotiation between religious norms and local traditions; however, they still rarely examine how Muslim and Hindu actors jointly negotiate ritual authority, symbolic meaning, and theological boundaries within the same coastal ritual cycle.

A third strand of scholarship examines how rituals contribute to interreligious cohesion, social solidarity, civic pluralism, and environmental ethics in coastal or multi-religious communities. Studies on interrituality and shared sacred practices show that rituals can create relational infrastructures through which different religious groups encounter one another, imitate, adapt, and negotiate shared symbolic spaces without necessarily erasing doctrinal differences (Kreinath, 2016, 2021). Research on civic religious rituals, such as Diwali celebrations in New Zealand, further demonstrates that public ritual participation can strengthen perceived social connection across religious and non-religious participants (Piven et al., 2022), while studies of ritual solidarity show that collective effervescence, synchrony, shared prayer, and crisis rituals can generate trust, belonging, cooperation, and social resilience within diverse communities (Draper, 2014; Johnson, 2022; Liu & Tao, 2019). In the Indonesian coastal context, the *Nyalamaq Dilauq* tradition in Tanjung Luar illustrates how maritime rituals may function as cultural policy for social integration, community cohesion, economic interdependence, and mutual

respect among diverse coastal groups (Suyasa & Azizurrohman, 2024). At the same time, scholarship on ritual and civic pluralism argues that ritual can sustain pluralistic life not by eliminating disagreement, but by creating shared spaces where ambiguity, difference, and civic belonging can be managed symbolically (Gillin, 2023; Roberts, 2017). A related body of literature on environmental ethics shows that coastal rituals and indigenous practices, including Bajau environmental wisdom, Vietnamese whale worship, *sasi*-based marine conservation, *Eco-Muamalat*, and *Kabata Belang* songs, embed ecological values into sacred narratives, ritual prohibitions, marine stewardship, and community-based conservation practices (Amiruddin et al., 2025; Latuapo & Farid, 2024; Rots & Lu Rots, 2023; Zamzami, Fatah, Nuryadin, & Hafizianor, 2025). These studies demonstrate that rituals can serve as infrastructures of cohesion, solidarity, civic pluralism, and environmental ethics; however, they rarely analyze how these dimensions are integrated within a single Islamic-Hindu coastal ritual cycle through everyday negotiation, shared ritual labor, and ecological boundary-making.

Despite these important contributions, three gaps remain insufficiently addressed in the existing literature. First, studies on *Petik Laut* and related coastal rituals have rarely examined the micro-processes of theological boundary-making through which ritual elements are debated, corrected, relabeled, and legitimized by religious leaders, committees, and local practitioners. Second, Hindu participants are often treated as peripheral or passive actors in Islamized ritual settings, whereas their agency in shaping ritual cooperation, spatial arrangements, symbolic meanings, and interreligious cohesion requires closer attention. Third, although coastal rituals are frequently associated with gratitude to nature and local ecological wisdom, their role in institutionalizing religious ecology, environmental ethics, and everyday maritime responsibility has not been sufficiently analyzed. These gaps indicate the need to study *Petik Laut* not merely as a cultural heritage performance or an example of syncretism, but as a negotiated ritual arena where religious boundaries, interfaith cooperation, and ecological commitments are produced simultaneously.

Based on these gaps, this study addresses three interrelated research questions. First, how do Muslim and Hindu actors negotiate ritual symbols, theological boundaries, and religious authority in the *Petik Laut* ritual of *Pengambangan*? Second, how does the ritual produce and maintain interreligious cohesion through shared labor, spatial co-presence, committee-based cooperation, and collective narratives? Third, how are ecological ethics embedded in ritual materials, environmental rules, and everyday maritime behavior among coastal communities? In line with these questions, this study aims to analyze the forms of Islamic-Hindu acculturation in *Petik Laut*, explain the mechanisms through which interreligious cohesion is constructed and sustained, and reveal how coastal environmental ethics are institutionalized through ritual practice.

To answer these questions, this study draws on a concise interdisciplinary framework that combines symbolic anthropology, discursive tradition, civic pluralism, ritual theory, and religious ecology. Geertz's concept of religion as a symbolic system helps explain how ritual objects, offerings, prayers, and processions acquire negotiated meanings within local cultural contexts (Geertz, 1973). Asad's notion of discursive tradition clarifies how religious authority defines the boundaries between permissible and impermissible ritual practices (Asad, 1993, 2009), while Hefner's work on civic pluralism illuminates how Muslim-Hindu coexistence is sustained through negotiated accommodation rather than unilateral religious domination (Hefner, 2000, 2021). Durkheim's theory of ritual solidarity and Turner's concept of *communitas* explain how collective participation generates social cohesion through shared emotional experience,

mutual obligation, and temporary ritual togetherness (Durkheim, 1995; Turner, 1969). Finally, Jenkins, Tucker, and Grim's religious ecology framework provides a basis for understanding how inherited ecological knowledge is reinterpreted into practical ethics for marine conservation and environmental responsibility (Jenkins, Tucker, & Grim, 2016). This study argues that Petik Laut functions simultaneously as a mechanism of Islamic-Hindu acculturation, an infrastructure of interreligious cohesion, and a medium for institutionalizing coastal environmental ethics.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative ethnographic approach to religion, focusing on symbolic practices, ritual meanings, and interreligious negotiations in their everyday social context (Spickard, Landres, & McGuire, 2002). The unit of analysis was the 2025 Petik Laut ritual cycle in Pengambangan Village, Negara District, Jembrana Regency, Bali, Indonesia. Pengambangan was selected purposively because the ritual is practiced jointly by Muslim and Hindu fishing communities, making it a relevant site for examining religious acculturation, theological boundary-making, interreligious cohesion, and coastal environmental ethics. The study focused not only on the ritual performance itself but also on the preparation, committee discussions, spatial arrangements, material objects, prayers, processions, and post-ritual activities through which ritual meanings were negotiated.

The primary data were obtained from ritual actors directly involved in the 2025 Petik Laut cycle. Informants were selected through purposive and snowball sampling, prioritizing individuals who participated in ritual preparation, decision-making, performance, or interpretation. A total of 15 key informants were interviewed, consisting of two religious leaders, three community leaders and committee members, three senior fishermen, five youth participants, and three community members. To maintain confidentiality, informants were anonymized using coded identifiers: RL1–RL2 for religious leaders, CL1–CL3 for civic leaders and committee members, SF1–SF3 for senior fishermen, Y1–Y5 for youth participants, and CM1–CM3 for community members. Where relevant, the religious affiliation and ritual role of informants were considered in the analysis to capture Muslim and Hindu perspectives on shared ritual practice.

Data were collected over six days, from January 28 to February 2, 2025, covering the late preparation phase, the peak ritual day, and the post-ritual phase. Three data collection techniques were used: participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and visual documentation. Participant observation involved attending committee meetings, observing ritual preparation, documenting processions and prayers, and participating in post-ritual cleaning activities. Field notes recorded ritual sequences, spatial arrangements, actor interactions, material objects, and symbolic elements, and were coded chronologically as Obs-01 to Obs-23. Semi-structured interviews explored ritual transformation, theological boundary negotiation, interfaith cooperation, and ecological understandings. Interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. Visual documentation was used to record ritual materials, offering preparation, spatial configurations, processions, prayer gatherings, and cleaning activities as supporting evidence for the analysis of material practices and spatial dynamics.

Data were analyzed through a combination of thematic analysis and interpretive analysis. Thematic analysis was conducted through an iterative coding process. First, transcripts, field notes, and visual records were read repeatedly to identify recurring

patterns. Second, initial codes were grouped into four major themes: religious acculturation, boundary negotiation, interreligious cohesion, and environmental ethics. Third, these themes were connected to the theoretical framework to interpret how ritual practices produced symbolic, social, and ecological meanings. NVivo was used to organize codes, themes, interview excerpts, and observational notes. Interpretive analysis employed Geertzian thick description to move beyond observable ritual behavior and examine how actors themselves understood ritual transformation, religious authority, shared space, and ecological responsibility within broader Islamic, Hindu, and local symbolic systems.

Trustworthiness was strengthened through source triangulation, method triangulation, and temporal triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing perspectives from religious leaders, committee members, fishermen, youth participants, and community members. Method triangulation was conducted by comparing interview data with observation notes and visual documentation. Temporal triangulation was achieved by observing different phases of the ritual cycle, including preparation, peak ritual performance, and post-ritual activities. Informal member checking was conducted through follow-up conversations with selected key informants to confirm whether the researcher's interpretations were consistent with local understandings. Informed consent was obtained from all interview participants, and anonymity was maintained through coded identifiers. Consent for visual documentation was also sought, and photographs used in the manuscript were selected to avoid exposing sensitive personal identities. The researcher's position as an outsider to both Muslim and Hindu communities was reflexively acknowledged to minimize interpretive bias and remain attentive to power relations in interreligious settings.

Results

1. Ritual Acculturation and Boundary-Making in Petik Laut

Ritual acculturation in the Petik Laut ritual of Pengambangan is visible through three interconnected processes: the transformation of ritual offerings, the adaptation of Islamic liturgical elements, and the negotiation of theological boundaries through committee-based deliberation. Rather than replacing the older coastal ritual structure, Muslim and Hindu actors reinterpret selected ritual elements so that they remain culturally recognizable while being framed within acceptable religious and communal meanings. Five ritual components were repeatedly mentioned by informants as sites of adjustment: offerings, miniature boats, procession routes, timing and location, and ritual leadership.

Transformation of offerings and larung materials

The most visible form of acculturation appears in the preparation of offerings for the *larung* procession. The offerings consisted of fruits, yellow rice cones, flower arrangements, *janur* decorations (young coconut leaves used for ritual decoration), and a decorated miniature boat prepared collectively by community members. Committee members emphasized that the materials used in the ritual should be organic, locally available, and religiously acceptable. One committee member explained, "*The offerings should be organic and halal. We verify them with the kiai [Muslim religious scholar or cleric] to make sure that nothing is forbidden, so that the ritual brings blessings to all*" (CL1, interview, January 30, 2025). This statement shows that the material composition of the offerings was not treated as a neutral cultural matter, but as an object of religious

review.

The transformation of offerings also involved symbolic relabeling. Religious leaders and committee members sought to shift the meaning of *sesaji* from an offering directed to sea spirits or non-divine entities into *sedekah laut*, or sea alms, understood as gratitude to God for marine sustenance. A Muslim religious leader stated, “*We reject offerings that resemble worship to other beings. We replace that meaning with gratitude for sustenance. This is a newer and more Islamic meaning*” (RL1, interview, January 30, 2025). In this sense, ritual objects were not eliminated but reinterpreted. The miniature boat, fruits, flowers, and decorative materials continued to appear in the ritual, but their meaning was reframed as an expression of gratitude, communal blessing, and maritime safety.

Visual documentation supports this finding. Figure 1 shows a decorated miniature boat containing ritual offerings being carried by community members before the *larung* procession at the Pengambangan pier. The presence of fishing boats in the background situates the ritual within the everyday maritime environment of the community. The figure illustrates how ritual materiality, coastal livelihood, and communal labor converge in a single ritual moment.



Figure 1. Decorated miniature boat containing ritual offerings prepared for the *larung* procession during the *Petik Laut* ritual in Pengambangan, Jembrana, Bali. Source: Author’s field documentation, February 1, 2025.

Field observations also showed that the offerings were transported to the dock before being released at sea. The procession was conducted after the collective recitation of *Yasin* (Surah Yasin, a chapter of the Qur’an commonly read in communal prayers) and *tahlil* (a collective Islamic litany consisting of phrases of remembrance and supplication for divine mercy and blessing) at the pier. During this stage, community members participated in arranging the procession, managing the movement of people, and preparing boats for the release of offerings (Obs-03, February 1, 2025). Some unused materials were distributed to residents as blessings, reinforcing the social significance of the ritual beyond the act of *larung* itself.

Liturgical adaptation and Islamic framing

The second form of acculturation was the adaptation of Islamic liturgical elements into the ritual sequence. The ritual included the recitation of Surah Yasin, collective *tahlil*, *dhikr* (Islamic remembrance of God), and prayers for maritime safety, abundant catch, and protection from disasters. These prayers were conducted at the pier before the *larung* procession, making Islamic liturgy a central component of the ritual sequence rather than an additional element placed outside the ceremony.

Religious leaders played an important role in determining the prayer format. A Muslim religious leader explained, “*The essence of the prayer is to ask for safety from Allah. We chose Yasin because it is related to blessing and sustenance*” (RL1, interview, January 31, 2025). A committee member similarly stated, “*We adjusted the ritual format so that Islamic prayer becomes central. The committee invites the kiai every year to lead it*” (CL2, interview, January 31, 2025). These statements indicate that liturgical adaptation functions as a mechanism of religious legitimation.

Observation during the peak ritual day showed that the ustadz led the recitation from the event tent facing the sea. Muslim participants sat near the main prayer area, while Hindu participants remained respectfully present in the surrounding area. Some Hindu participants helped maintain order and distribute drinking water during the prayer sequence (Obs-05, February 1, 2025). A Hindu youth participant explained, “*We remained silent during the prayer, but we felt the atmosphere. This is our shared tradition*” (Y2, interview, February 2, 2025). This pattern shows that Hindu participation did not require liturgical assimilation. Instead, it took the form of respectful co-presence and supportive participation within a ritual structure framed by Islamic prayer.

Committee negotiation and theological boundaries

Boundary-making was most clearly visible in committee discussions and informal negotiations over which ritual elements were considered acceptable, ambiguous, or impermissible. Informants repeatedly mentioned several boundaries: the ritual intention must be directed to God alone; prayers must not address sea spirits or other non-divine entities; ritual materials must not include objects considered forbidden; and symbolic decorations should not resemble objects of worship. These boundaries were reviewed through committee meetings involving village leaders, religious figures, fishermen, and Hindu representatives.

A Muslim religious leader emphasized, “*The intention must be sincere to Allah. There are no other gods. That is the safe boundary, and we remind people if they forget it*” (RL1, interview, January 31, 2025). A committee member added, “*We meet every year. If there are doubts, such as offerings that look too similar to older customs, we simplify them. This is for harmony*” (CL3, interview, January 31, 2025). These comments suggest that acculturation did not occur automatically; it required continuous review, correction, and negotiation.

Attitudes toward the ritual varied among participants. Most informants accepted *Petik Laut* after its Islamic framing through prayer, halal materials, and revised intention. However, some younger participants expressed doubts after being exposed to online religious lectures that associated offerings with *shirk* (associating partners with God/polytheism) or *bid'ah* (religious innovation). One young Muslim participant stated, “*Sometimes people say offerings resemble polytheism, but after the meeting we understood that the intention was gratitude*” (Y3, interview, February 2, 2025). This finding shows that boundary-making is not only a matter of ritual design but also a response to wider religious discourse circulating through media and youth networks.

The *Petik Laut* ritual contains ecological meaning through the local reinterpretation of *sedekah laut* (sea alms), the use of environmentally friendly materials, and the enforcement of cleanliness norms. Ritual elements are neither simply preserved as local tradition nor completely replaced by Islamic forms. Instead, they are reviewed, relabeled, and reorganized through material selection, liturgical adaptation, and committee-based boundary-making. This process allows the ritual to remain meaningful for coastal communities while reducing theological ambiguity and sustaining interreligious participation.

The patterns described above indicate that ritual acculturation in Petik Laut does not occur through the total replacement of older coastal traditions, but through selective transformation, symbolic relabeling, and negotiated religious supervision. Ritual elements such as offerings, miniature boats, liturgical sequences, timing, location, and leadership roles are retained because they remain meaningful for the fishing community, yet they are adjusted to reduce theological ambiguity and align with accepted religious norms. These adjustments are not made individually, but through committee discussions, religious advice, and communal agreement involving Muslim and Hindu actors. Table 1 summarizes the main ritual elements, their observed forms, the adaptations made, and the rationale behind these transformations.

Table 1. Transformation of Ritual Elements in the Petik Laut Ritual

Ritual element	Observed practice	Adaptation or adjustment	Stated rationale
Offerings / sedekah laut	Fruits, yellow rice cones, flowers, janur, and other organic materials prepared for the larung procession	Materials reviewed to ensure they are halal, organic, and not associated with worship directed to non-divine entities	To frame the ritual as gratitude to God and avoid theological ambiguity
Miniature boat	Decorated wooden boat containing ritual offerings and symbolizing maritime safety	Decorations simplified when considered too close to sacred symbols outside the agreed ritual frame	To preserve the coastal symbol while keeping it within acceptable religious boundaries
Liturgical sequence	Yasin, tahlil, dhikr, and prayers for safety and sustenance conducted before larung	Islamic prayer placed at the center of the ritual sequence	To provide religious legitimacy and reframe the ritual as communal gratitude
Timing and location	Ritual held at the pier and coastal area during the peak day	Timing adjusted to avoid conflict with daily Islamic prayer schedules	To align communal tradition with regular religious obligations
Ritual leadership	Committee, village leaders, religious leaders, fishermen, and community members involved	Religious leaders advise on theological limits while committee members manage technical arrangements	To balance religious authority, local tradition, and interreligious participation

2. Interreligious Cohesion through *Gotong Royong* and Shared Ritual Space

Field observations and interview data indicate that interreligious cohesion in the Petik Laut ritual was built through repeated cooperation before, during, and after the ritual. Cohesion did not appear only as an abstract value of tolerance, but was produced through practical arrangements: collective preparation, joint committee work, shared spatial organization, and repeated narratives about the sea as a common source of life. These mechanisms allowed Muslim and Hindu participants to take part in the same ritual cycle while maintaining their respective religious boundaries.

Collaborative preparation and division of ritual labor

Collaborative preparation was the most visible mechanism through which interreligious cohesion was built in the Petik Laut ritual. Field observations showed that Muslim and Hindu residents interacted repeatedly through practical tasks such as committee meetings, tent construction, boat decoration, food preparation, beach cleaning, procession management, security arrangements, and parking coordination. According to informants, preparations usually began about one week before the peak ritual, while the researcher directly observed the late preparation phase from January 28 to February 2, 2025. The collective work required residents to coordinate ritual materials, spatial arrangements, food logistics, and procession routes so that the event could be carried out smoothly.

Informants described a practical division of labor based on ritual needs, expertise, and committee agreement rather than rigid religious separation. Muslim committee members were more directly involved in prayer preparation and halal food logistics, while several Hindu participants contributed to boat decoration, spatial arrangement, security, and cleaning activities. A senior fisherman explained, “*We have been doing gotong royong since about one week before the ritual. Muslims and Hindus build the tents together, and this brings us closer*” (SF1, interview, January 29, 2025). A committee member similarly stated, “*The division of tasks is arranged fairly. Hindu participants help with decoration and preparation, while Muslim committee members handle halal food logistics and prayer arrangements. This is done for harmony*” (CL1, interview, January 30, 2025).

The collaborative character of preparation was also visible in informal committee meetings. As shown in Figure 2, residents gathered in a communal setting to discuss technical arrangements, task distribution, and ritual needs before the peak event. This meeting illustrates that ritual preparation was not confined to formal village administration, but also took place in everyday social spaces where residents coordinated tasks, exchanged information, and reinforced interpersonal trust before the public ritual.

Figure 2 illustrates the informal and communal character of the preparatory process. The meeting was held in a relaxed neighborhood setting, with participants sitting together on mats, sharing light refreshments, and discussing the technical needs of the ritual. This setting shows that coordination for Petik Laut was not carried out only through formal village meetings, but also through everyday social gatherings where trust, familiarity, and shared responsibility were reinforced. The presence of participants from different age groups also indicates that ritual preparation functioned as an intergenerational space for transferring knowledge about tasks, ritual order, and communal obligations.



Figure 2. Informal preparatory meeting for the 2025 Petik Laut ritual involving community members and committee participants in Pengambangan, Jembrana, Bali. Source: Author's field documentation, January 2025.

Field observation during the late preparation phase showed residents working together at the pier, installing bamboo poles, arranging tents, preparing ritual materials, and coordinating the procession route in a busy but informal atmosphere (Obs-08, January 31, 2025). These patterns show that *gotong royong* functioned as more than logistical support. Repeated preparation created everyday contact, practical dependence, and mutual trust among Muslim and Hindu participants. Interreligious cohesion was therefore produced through shared labor before it became visible in the public ritual performance.

Joint committee and rules of cooperation

The joint committee functioned as an organizational mechanism that transformed interreligious participation into structured cooperation. Rather than relying only on spontaneous communal goodwill, the Petik Laut ritual was managed through committee meetings, task distribution, religious consultation, and collective agreements involving village leaders, religious figures, fishermen, youth, and Hindu representatives. The committee consisted of approximately 10–15 members, including the village head as general coordinator, the committee chair as technical organizer, Muslim religious leaders as advisors for prayer and ritual permissibility, senior fishermen as maritime coordinators, youth participants as security and crowd-management volunteers, and Hindu representatives who contributed to decoration, boat preparation, spatial arrangement, and procession support.

The rules of cooperation were organized through pre-ritual meetings, collective task distribution, and consultation with religious leaders when decisions involved sensitive ritual elements such as prayer format, offering materials, and the sequence of the larung procession. Technical decisions, such as tent construction, food logistics, boat preparation, parking, and crowd movement, were coordinated by the committee, while religiously sensitive decisions were discussed with religious leaders and community representatives. This arrangement allowed Islamic liturgical requirements to be accommodated while still maintaining Hindu participation in non-liturgical and communal aspects of the ritual.

A committee member explained, *“Our committee is mixed. Hindu participants usually help with decoration and preparation, while decisions are made collectively so that everyone feels fairly represented”* (CL2, interview, January 30, 2025). A young Hindu participant similarly stated, *“As a Hindu, I joined the informal committee. We discussed shared tasks, and this made the village feel united”* (Y2, interview, February 2,

2025). These statements show that Hindu participants were not merely spectators, but were involved in the practical organization of the ritual, especially in areas that supported collective participation without requiring liturgical assimilation.

Overall, the joint committee provided a practical space where religious difference could be managed through task allocation, mutual respect, and collective decision-making. Interreligious cohesion was therefore sustained not only through shared ritual performance, but also through organizational routines before and after the event. The committee transformed Petik Laut into a shared civic-ritual project in which Muslim and Hindu actors could cooperate while maintaining distinct religious boundaries.

Shared ritual space, symbols, and collective narratives

During the peak ritual, the Pengambangan pier and coastal area became a shared ritual space where Muslim and Hindu participants could be present in the same ceremonial environment while maintaining different modes of participation. The ritual space was divided into several functional zones: the central prayer area for Islamic liturgy, the preparation area for sea alms and ritual materials, the public gathering area for residents and visitors, and the pier as the point of transition from land-based prayer to the sea procession. This spatial arrangement allowed religious difference to be managed practically, since participants could occupy the same ritual environment without being required to perform identical religious roles.

During the Islamic liturgical sequence, Muslim religious leaders led Yasin, *tahlil*, and prayers for safety, while Hindu participants remained respectfully present in the surrounding area or assisted with logistical tasks such as maintaining order, distributing water, and preparing the procession. A senior fisherman explained, “*The pier belongs to everyone. Hindus respect our prayers, and we respect their help*” (SF1, interview, January 29, 2025). A young Hindu participant similarly stated, “*We Hindus remain silent during Yasin. The rule is not to disturb each other*” (Y2, interview, February 1, 2025). These statements show that shared space did not require liturgical assimilation; rather, it enabled respectful co-presence and differentiated participation.

Figure 3 shows how the pier and surrounding coastal area functioned as a shared public space during the ritual. Residents, participants, and visitors gathered in the same coastal setting, while ritual activities, logistical coordination, and public observation took place simultaneously. This spatial arrangement allowed different groups to remain present in the same ritual environment without requiring identical religious participation.

Figure 3 illustrates how the Pengambangan pier functioned as a shared public and ritual space during the Petik Laut celebration. Residents, ritual participants, visitors, and committee members gathered in the same coastal area while different activities took place simultaneously, including public observation, logistical coordination, movement toward the procession area, and preparation for the sea ritual. The presence of decorated boats in the background situates the gathering within the maritime setting of the fishing community, while the open pier area allows people from different social and religious backgrounds to occupy the same space without requiring identical forms of ritual participation. This visual evidence supports the finding that interreligious cohesion in Petik Laut was produced not only through formal ritual acts, but also through everyday co-presence, spatial accommodation, and shared participation in the coastal environment.



Figure 3. Public gathering around the Pengambangan pier during the Petik Laut ritual, showing the coastal area as a shared social and ritual space. Source: Author's field documentation, February 1, 2025.

The *larung* procession further strengthened collective symbolism. Decorated fishing boats, ritual offerings, and movement toward the open sea represented maritime safety, gratitude for sustenance, and village unity. Figure 4 illustrates the symbolic importance of decorated fishing boats in the Petik Laut procession. The boats do not merely function as transportation for the *larung* procession, or the ritual release of offerings into the sea, but also represent maritime livelihood, collective safety, village identity, and shared dependence on the sea.



Figure 4. Decorated fishing boats participating in the Petik Laut sea procession, illustrating maritime symbolism and collective identity among the Pengambangan fishing community.

Source: Author's field documentation, February 1, 2025.

Figure 4 shows decorated fishing boats moving across the coastal waters during the Petik Laut sea procession. The boats are not merely transportation for the larung ritual, but also function as visual symbols of maritime livelihood, fishermen's safety, village pride, and collective dependence on the sea. Their colorful decorations mark the procession as a communal celebration, while their movement together toward the open sea represents shared gratitude and shared hope for protection and abundant sustenance. This visual evidence strengthens the finding that Petik Laut produces collective identity through maritime symbolism: the sea becomes a common reference point that connects participants beyond religious difference, while the decorated boats embody the fishing community's shared memory, labor, and responsibility toward the coastal environment.

Collective narratives repeated throughout the ritual cycle reinforced this symbolic unity. Informants frequently used expressions such as "this is our village tradition," "for the safety of all fishermen," and "the sea belongs to everyone" (Obs-14, January 28–31, 2025). A senior fisherman stated, "*The sea is our source of life. This ritual is an expression of shared gratitude, regardless of religion*" (SF1, interview, January 31, 2025). A village leader also noted, "*We repeat the message that the sea belongs to everyone, especially so that young people understand it*" (CL1, interview, February 1, 2025). These narratives show that interreligious cohesion was sustained not only through physical cooperation and committee structure, but also through shared maritime symbols that made cross-faith participation meaningful for different groups.

3. Religious Ecology and Sustainability Challenges in Coastal Ritual

Petik Laut ritual contains ecological meaning through the concept of sea alms, the practice of using environmentally friendly materials, and the enforcement of hygiene norms. Community members understand the sea not merely as an economic resource, but as a morally significant source of life within a reciprocal relationship that requires care and responsibility.

Ecological Meaning of Petik Laut

The ecological meaning of *Petik Laut* was most clearly expressed in the way informants described the sea as a source of life, sustenance, safety, and moral responsibility. For the Pengambangan fishing community, the sea was not understood merely as an economic resource, but as the foundation of family livelihood, village identity, and communal survival. Informants repeatedly associated the sea with *rezeki*, daily work, and the continuity of coastal life. In this context, *Petik Laut* was interpreted not as worship directed to the sea or non-divine beings, but as an expression of gratitude to God for marine sustenance and protection.

A senior fisherman explained, "*The sea is our source of life. Through Petik Laut, we express gratitude for the fish and ask for safety when we go to sea*" (SF1, interview, January 30, 2025). A religious leader similarly stated, "*This ritual is gratitude to Allah for the sustenance given through the sea. It teaches people not only to receive blessings, but also to take care of what God has entrusted to them*" (RL1, interview, January 30, 2025). These statements show that ecological meaning is embedded in religious gratitude. The sea is valued not only because it provides fish and income, but also because it mediates the relationship between divine blessing, human labor, and communal responsibility.

Several informants connected ecological damage with moral consequences. Pollution, overfishing, fish bombing, poison use, and careless waste disposal were

described not only as technical problems, but as violations of the reciprocal relationship between humans and the sea. Some participants used expressions such as “the sea becomes angry,” “sustenance decreases when the sea is damaged,” and *pamali* (customary taboo) to describe actions that disturb the moral and ecological balance of coastal life. Such expressions should not be read as scientific claims about marine ecology, but as local moral language through which ecological responsibility is communicated and remembered across generations.

This meaning was also transmitted to younger participants through ritual participation, family stories, and everyday fishing experience. A young fisherman stated, “*From Petik Laut, we learn that the sea must be protected. If we damage it, we will also lose our own sustenance*” (Y1, interview, February 2, 2025). The ritual therefore functioned as an annual moral reminder that gratitude for marine sustenance should be followed by responsible maritime behavior. In this sense, *Petik Laut* operates as a form of religious ecology: it links gratitude to God with responsibility toward the marine environment and turns ecological care into a shared moral obligation within the fishing community.

Environmental Practices, Rules, and Social Control

Environmental ethics in the *Petik Laut* ritual were also visible in the material and organizational practices surrounding the ritual cycle. Field observations showed that the committee encouraged the use of natural and biodegradable materials in ritual preparation, including banana leaves, *janur*, flowers, fruits, bamboo, wood, and other organic materials used for offerings and decorations. These materials were preferred because they were considered compatible with both ritual tradition and environmental responsibility. A committee member explained,

We emphasized that the materials used should come from nature, such as banana leaves and coconut leaves, so that the sea is not polluted. We prepare them together so that everything remains environmentally friendly (CL1, interview, January 30, 2025).

This statement indicates that ecological concern was not treated as separate from ritual preparation, but as part of the ritual’s moral order. The choice of banana leaves, coconut leaves, flowers, fruits, bamboo, and wood shows that ritual materials were evaluated not only in terms of symbolic meaning, but also in terms of their impact on the sea. In this context, preparing the offerings became a moment where cultural continuity, religious gratitude, and environmental responsibility were combined. The committee’s emphasis on natural materials also shows that ecological awareness was translated into practical rules that guided how the ritual should be prepared and performed.

The environmental dimension was also expressed through cleaning activities before and after the ritual. During the preparation phase, residents and volunteers cleaned the beach area, collected scattered waste, and arranged the ritual space so that the procession could take place in a clean environment. After the ritual, committee members and youth participants continued the cleaning process by collecting remaining materials and separating organic from non-organic waste where possible (Obs-17, January 28–31, 2025). A young Hindu fisherman stated, “*Before the event, we cleaned the beach together. Hindus and Muslims worked together to collect garbage so that the beach would be clean again*” (Y2, interview, February 2, 2025). This shows that environmental care was practiced through collective labor and became another arena of interreligious cooperation.

Rules regarding cleanliness and waste management were communicated through committee meetings and informal reminders during the ritual. The committee discouraged the use of plastic and styrofoam in ritual materials and reminded participants not to throw garbage into the sea during the event. Although some plastic use still appeared around food stalls and visitor areas, the committee attempted to reduce it by encouraging participants to use organic materials and by assigning youth volunteers to monitor the ritual area. One informant explained,

We announced the rule about reducing plastic in the meeting. Everyone agreed because this is part of protecting the sea, although some traders still use plastic and we try to reduce it every year (CL2, interview, February 1, 2025).

This finding suggests that ecological rules were not yet fully formalized, but they were already embedded in collective expectations and committee-based supervision. The prohibition of plastic and styrofoam did not operate as a strict written regulation with formal sanctions, but as a shared moral agreement repeatedly communicated before and during the ritual. The committee's effort to reduce plastic use, despite the continued presence of plastic around food stalls and visitor areas, shows that environmental discipline was still negotiated in practice. In this sense, ecological responsibility in *Petik Laut* emerged through gradual social regulation, where reminders, collective agreement, and youth monitoring became practical mechanisms for maintaining the cleanliness and moral integrity of the ritual space.

Social control operated through direct reminders, youth monitoring, and communal evaluation. During the peak ritual, youth volunteers moved around the coastal area to help maintain order, remind visitors not to litter, and ensure that ritual materials were placed properly (Obs-19, February 1, 2025). A young participant explained,

Young people like us helped monitor the area. If there was plastic waste or someone threw garbage carelessly, we reminded them because the ritual should remain clean and blessed (Y1, interview, February 1, 2025).

These reminders were generally delivered informally rather than through strict punishment. However, participants understood that littering or using inappropriate materials could damage not only the physical environment but also the moral dignity of the ritual.

These practices show that environmental ethics in *Petik Laut* were institutionalized through a combination of material choices, ritual rules, collective cleaning, and social control. The community did not frame environmental care only as a technical issue of waste management, but also as part of maintaining ritual purity, gratitude, and respect for the sea. In this sense, ecological responsibility was practiced through everyday communal discipline: choosing biodegradable materials, cleaning the ritual space, reducing plastic use, and reminding one another to protect the coastal environment. The environmental meaning of *Petik Laut* therefore became visible not only in symbolic narratives about the sea, but also in practical rules and collective actions surrounding the ritual.

Sustainability Challenges: Youth, Tourism, and Orthodoxy

Despite its role in sustaining ecological ethics and interreligious cohesion, the *Petik Laut* ritual faces three major sustainability challenges: declining youth involvement, increasing tourism commodification, and continuing debates over religious orthodoxy. Field observations and interview data show that these challenges do not eliminate the

ritual's social and ecological significance, but they complicate its continuity across generations. Youth participation appears to be shifting from active preparation to more occasional or documentation-oriented involvement, tourism increases public visibility while risking the erosion of sacred meaning, and orthodox critiques require the community to continuously clarify the ritual's intention and theological boundaries. Together, these challenges indicate that the sustainability of *Petik Laut* depends not only on preserving ritual form, but also on maintaining regeneration, managing public visibility, and sustaining religious legitimacy through ongoing negotiation.

The first challenge concerns declining youth involvement in the preparation and organizational stages of *Petik Laut*. Several committee members stated that young people were less active in preparation than in previous years, especially in core tasks such as attending committee meetings, constructing temporary tents, preparing decorated boats, arranging ritual materials, and coordinating logistics. Field observations during the late preparation phase showed that these tasks were still largely handled by senior residents, senior fishermen, and long-standing committee members, while many younger participants appeared mainly during the peak event as spectators, helpers, or social media documenters (Obs-20, January 31–February 1, 2025). A committee member explained,

In the past, many young people helped build tents and decorate boats. Now, most committee meetings are attended by older people because the youth say they are busy working (CL1, interview, January 30, 2025).

This pattern was also visible in the composition of ritual responsibility. Key committee positions, including coordination of logistics, ritual materials, food preparation, boat arrangements, and communication with religious leaders, continued to be held by the same senior figures who had managed the event for many years. Youth involvement was present, but it tended to be concentrated in supporting roles such as helping with parking, carrying materials, taking photographs, recording videos, or assisting during the crowd movement on the peak ritual day. One youth participant stated,

I still come to the event, but I do not always join the preparation because I work from morning to evening. Also, not many of my friends are involved in the committee, so I usually just help when needed (Y4, interview, February 2, 2025).

This indicates that youth disengagement does not mean total absence, but rather a shift from sustained ritual responsibility to occasional and event-based participation. Young people still recognized *Petik Laut* as an important village tradition and continued to appear during the peak ritual, but their involvement was less consistent in the preparatory and decision-making stages where ritual knowledge is usually transmitted. As a result, the practical skills of organizing the ritual, the symbolic understanding of its meaning, and the ecological values attached to it remained concentrated among senior committee members and older fishermen. This pattern suggests that the main sustainability concern is not immediate ritual abandonment, but the gradual weakening of intergenerational transfer within the ritual cycle.

The reasons for this declining involvement were linked to work schedules, school commitments, lack of peer participation, and the perception that ritual organization belongs mainly to older generations. Some young participants described *Petik Laut* as important for village identity, but they also admitted that they did not fully understand the details of ritual preparation, symbolic meanings, or committee decision-making. Field

observations showed that during several preparation moments, young people were more likely to document the event with mobile phones than to take part in physically demanding tasks such as lifting bamboo poles, arranging tents, or preparing ritual objects (Obs-21, January 31, 2025). This finding suggests that the main sustainability issue is not the disappearance of youth interest, but the weakening of intergenerational transmission. If young people remain peripheral to planning and preparation, the practical knowledge, symbolic meanings, and ecological values embedded in *Petik Laut* may become increasingly dependent on the senior generation.

The second challenge is tourism commodification. Field observations during the peak ritual showed that *Petik Laut* had developed not only as a communal ritual, but also as a public cultural event attracting visitors, traders, and visual documentation activities. The ritual space included an entertainment stage, spectator zones, food and souvenir stalls, cultural banners, and boats or canoes used by visitors to watch the *larung* procession from the sea (Obs-22, February 1, 2025). Many visitors recorded the procession with mobile phones, especially during the movement of decorated boats and the release of offerings. These developments created additional economic opportunities for local residents and traders, while also increasing the public visibility of Pengambangan as a maritime cultural village. A youth participant viewed this positively, stating,

When tourists come and record the event, our village becomes more known. It is good for young people because *Petik Laut* can be promoted through social media (Y5, interview, February 1, 2025).

However, several senior figures expressed concern that tourism could shift the ritual from a sacred communal obligation into a cultural spectacle. A village leader explained, “*Tourism is good for the economy, but sometimes people are busy recording with their phones when prayers are being recited. The meaning can become like a show*” (CL2, interview, February 1, 2025). A religious leader also noted that visitors needed to understand which moments required silence and respect, especially during prayer, *tahlil*, and the preparation for *larung* (RL1, interview, January 31, 2025). This indicates that commodification does not necessarily remove the ritual’s meaning, but it changes the conditions under which sacredness must be maintained. The community therefore faces an ambivalent situation: tourism brings income, promotion, and wider recognition, but it also requires stronger spatial regulation, visitor etiquette, and ritual education so that economic visibility does not weaken the spiritual and communal meaning of *Petik Laut*.

The third challenge concerns debates over religious orthodoxy. Although many participants accepted *Petik Laut* after its Islamic framing through prayer, halal materials, and revised intention, some informants expressed concern that visual elements such as *sesaji* and *larung* could still be interpreted as resembling pre-Islamic or non-Islamic worship. The term *sesaji* was considered especially sensitive because it could be associated with offerings to spirits or non-divine beings, while the act of releasing ritual materials into the sea was sometimes viewed as visually close to older forms of ritual offering. A religious leader explained,

This ritual is already framed with Islamic prayer and intention to Allah, but we still have to make sure that it does not look too close to old customs. Ambiguous symbols should be reduced (RL1, interview, January 31, 2025).

This statement shows that theological legitimacy depended not only on intention, but also on how ritual symbols appeared and were interpreted by the community. Even

when religious leaders emphasized that *Petik Laut* was directed toward gratitude to Allah, visual elements such as *sesaji*, decorated boats, and the *larung* procession still required careful explanation because they could be read differently by different audiences. In this sense, orthodoxy was negotiated not only through doctrine, but also through the management of ritual appearance, terminology, and public perception. The community therefore had to ensure that the ritual remained culturally recognizable while also reducing symbolic ambiguity that might trigger accusations of *bid'ah* or *shirk*.

The influence of online religious lectures also shaped the doubts of some younger participants. Several youth informants stated that they encountered sermons on social media that described offerings, sea rituals, or *larung* practices as *bid'ah* or *shirk*. One young participant stated, “*In some online lectures, people say offerings are bid'ah or shirk. I was doubtful, but in our village the elders explained that the intention is gratitude to God*” (Y3, interview, February 2, 2025). Field observations also showed that these concerns were discussed informally during preparation, especially when participants talked about which decorations, terms, or ritual materials should be retained or simplified (Obs-23, January 31, 2025). This indicates that orthodoxy debates were not external to the ritual, but became part of the community’s internal process of evaluating and adjusting ritual practice.

The committee responded to these debates through several strategies: replacing or softening the term *sesaji* with *sedekah laut*, simplifying decorative elements considered too ambiguous, inviting a *kiai* to lead prayers, and repeatedly explaining that the ritual intention was gratitude to God rather than worship of the sea. A committee member explained, “*If there are doubts, we discuss them in the meeting. We use the term sedekah laut more often, invite the kiai, and explain that the purpose is gratitude, not worshipping the sea*” (CL3, interview, January 31, 2025). These responses show that boundary-making remains an ongoing process rather than a settled achievement. The sustainability of *Petik Laut* therefore depends on the community’s ability to preserve cultural form while continuously clarifying theological intention, reducing symbolic ambiguity, and responding to changing religious discourse.

The three challenges described above show that the sustainability of *Petik Laut* is shaped by overlapping generational, economic, and theological pressures. Youth disengagement affects the transmission of ritual knowledge, tourism commodification changes the way sacred practices are publicly displayed, and orthodoxy debates require continuous clarification of ritual intention and symbolic boundaries. These challenges do not necessarily weaken *Petik Laut* immediately, but they indicate that the ritual’s continuity depends on the community’s ability to manage participation, visibility, and religious legitimacy. Table 2 summarizes the main sustainability challenges, their empirical indicators, primary data sources, community responses, and implications for the future of the ritual.

These findings show that the sustainability of *Petik Laut* depends on the community’s ability to negotiate change without losing the ritual’s core meanings. Youth disengagement requires stronger intergenerational transmission so that ritual knowledge, ecological values, and organizational skills are not concentrated only among senior actors. Tourism commodification requires clearer spatial regulation and visitor education so that public visibility and economic benefit do not weaken sacredness and communal discipline. Orthodoxy debates require continuous explanation of ritual intention, symbolic simplification, and religious guidance so that *Petik Laut* remains both culturally meaningful and theologically acceptable for its participants. Thus, the future of *Petik Laut*

lies not in preserving the ritual as a fixed tradition, but in sustaining its capacity to adapt, clarify, and reproduce shared moral commitments across generations.

Discussion

This study shows that *Petik Laut* in Pengambangan is not simply a preserved coastal tradition, a static form of syncretism, or a one-way process of Islamization. Rather, it functions as a negotiated ritual arena in which Muslim and Hindu actors reinterpret ritual materials, regulate theological boundaries, organize shared participation, and embed ecological ethics into communal practice. Three findings are central. First, ritual acculturation occurs through symbolic relabeling, Islamic liturgical adaptation, and committee-based boundary-making that allow older coastal symbols to remain meaningful while reducing theological ambiguity. Second, interreligious cohesion is produced through *gotong royong*, joint committee work, shared ritual space, differentiated participation, and collective maritime narratives such as the idea that the sea belongs to everyone. Third, ecological ethics are institutionalized through local meanings of the sea, biodegradable ritual materials, cleanliness rules, informal social control, and moral reminders about maritime responsibility, although their sustainability is challenged by youth disengagement, tourism commodification, and continuing debates over religious orthodoxy.

The persistence of *Petik Laut* in Pengambangan can be explained through symbolic reinterpretation rather than cultural replacement. Geertz's understanding of religion as a symbolic system is useful here because ritual symbols do not carry fixed meanings; they are interpreted, reorganized, and made meaningful within specific cultural contexts (Geertz, 1973). In this study, ritual materials such as offerings, decorated miniature boats, *larung*, and collective prayers were not simply preserved as remnants of older coastal tradition. They were re-coded as expressions of gratitude, maritime safety, communal blessing, and responsibility toward the sea. This explains why *Petik Laut* should not be reduced to raw syncretism. The ritual survives because its older material forms remain socially meaningful for the fishing community, while their symbolic meanings are continuously adjusted to fit contemporary Islamic expectations and interreligious participation.

However, this symbolic reinterpretation does not occur freely or without regulation. Asad's concept of Islam as a discursive tradition helps explain how religious authority shapes the boundaries of acceptable practice through argument, correction, and institutionalized interpretation (Asad, 1993, 2009). In Pengambangan, boundary-making appeared through committee meetings, religious advice from the *kiai*, the replacement or softening of terms such as *sesaji* into *sedekah laut*, the simplification of decorations considered ambiguous, and the repeated clarification that the ritual intention is gratitude to Allah rather than worship of the sea. These findings show that acculturation occurs through selective transformation: *larung* may continue, but it must be framed as gratitude; offerings may remain, but they must be halal, organic, and not associated with worship of non-divine beings; communal participation may be broad, but Islamic liturgy remains carefully supervised. Thus, *Petik Laut* persists because theological boundaries are actively negotiated rather than ignored.

At the same time, the findings also show that this process is not a one-way Islamization in which Islamic authority simply absorbs or dominates Hindu and local cultural elements. Hefner's work on religious accommodation and civic pluralism helps clarify how plural societies sustain coexistence through negotiated social arrangements

rather than through uniformity or forced assimilation (Hefner, 2000, 2021). In the *Petik Laut* ritual, Islamic authority provides legitimacy through prayer, halal material review, and theological clarification, but Hindu actors remain present in non-liturgical, organizational, spatial, and symbolic domains. They participate in decoration, preparation, procession support, spatial arrangement, shared maritime narratives, and respectful co-presence during Islamic prayer. This means that Hindu participants are not erased from the ritual; their agency is maintained through differentiated participation. The ritual therefore survives because it creates an accommodative structure in which Muslim and Hindu actors can cooperate within one ritual cycle while maintaining distinct religious boundaries.

Compared with previous studies on Indonesian coastal and maritime rituals, this study supports the view that rituals such as *Petik Laut*, sea alms, *Semah Laut*, and *Larung Sesaji* function as expressions of local wisdom, cultural heritage, maritime identity, gratitude, and ecological awareness (Danugroho et al., 2025; Martini & Rahma Wulan, 2020; Nur Rimawan & Asmarani, 2021; Sejati et al., 2026; Swastiwi et al., 2024; Utomo et al., 2026; Wulandari et al., 2024). However, the Pengambangan case extends this literature by showing that coastal ritual is not only a medium for preserving tradition or expressing gratitude to the sea, but also an arena in which religious meanings are actively negotiated among actors with different faith affiliations. While previous studies tend to emphasize symbolic meaning, cultural continuity, ecological knowledge, or community resilience, this study demonstrates that such meanings are not simply inherited; they are debated, corrected, relabeled, and legitimized through committee meetings, religious advice, and shared ritual labor. The novelty of this finding lies in showing that maritime ritual heritage becomes socially effective because it is continually negotiated within interreligious relations, rather than merely transmitted as a stable cultural form.

In relation to studies of religious acculturation, syncretism, and Islamization, this study both confirms and refines earlier arguments. Previous research has shown that Indonesian local rituals often survive through the localization of Islam, the harmonization of Islamic teachings with customary practices, and the vernacularization of Islamic concepts into local cultural forms (Asrawijaya, 2022; Sulaeman, 2019; Wekke et al., 2018; Zuhri, 2022). Studies on Pegayaman, Bugis Tolotang, and sacred pilgrimage practices also show that religious boundaries are negotiated through legal pluralism, cross-religious communication, and debates over the limits between cultural expression and theological orthodoxy (Hadawiah et al., 2025; Irawan et al., 2025; Nurhanifah et al., 2025). The findings of this study extend those arguments by showing that acculturation in *Petik Laut* is neither a one-way Islamization nor an unregulated syncretism. Islamic authority is important in defining prayer, halal materials, and theological limits, but Hindu actors remain present as co-organizers, spatial participants, symbolic contributors, and members of the shared maritime community. This means that acculturation occurs through negotiated boundary-making, not through unilateral religious domination.

Compared with studies on ritual, cohesion, civic pluralism, and religious ecology, this research also offers an integrative contribution. Previous studies have shown that ritual can generate solidarity, social connection, civic belonging, and interreligious encounter through shared participation, collective effervescence, synchrony, crisis response, and public religious performance (Draper, 2014; Gillin, 2023; Johnson, 2022; Kreinath, 2016, 2021; Liu & Tao, 2019; Piven et al., 2022). Other studies on coastal and indigenous environmental practices show that ritual can embed ecological values through sacred narratives, marine stewardship, community-based conservation, and environmental wisdom (Amiruddin et al., 2025; Latuapo & Farid, 2024; Rots & Lu Rots,

2023; Suyasa & Azizurrohman, 2024; Zamzami et al., 2025). The Pengambengan case adds to this literature by showing that cohesion, boundary-making, and ecological ethics operate simultaneously within one ritual cycle. *Petik Laut* produces interreligious cohesion through *gotong royong*, joint committee work, shared ritual space, and collective maritime narratives, while also institutionalizing ecological ethics through ritual meanings, biodegradable materials, cleanliness rules, and informal social control. Thus, the main contribution of this study is to show that a coastal ritual can function at once as a mechanism of religious negotiation, an infrastructure of interfaith cohesion, and a medium of religious ecology.

Petik Laut can therefore be interpreted as an infrastructure of interreligious cohesion because it shows that harmony is not a passive cultural condition, but an organized social achievement. In line with Durkheim's view that ritual generates solidarity through collective participation and shared moral energy, the cohesion found in Pengambengan emerges through repeated *gotong royong*, joint committee work, task distribution, and shared presence in the same ritual space (Durkheim, 1995). Turner's concept of *communitas* is also relevant because *Petik Laut* creates temporary togetherness among Muslim and Hindu participants through collective preparation, procession, and maritime symbolism (Turner, 1969). However, the Pengambengan case also modifies Turner's idea: *communitas* here is not purely spontaneous or anti-structural, but carefully organized through committee rules, spatial arrangements, religious etiquette, and differentiated participation. This finding resonates with studies showing that interreligious cohesion is produced through structured dialogue, shared ritual participation, educational transmission, and community-based organization rather than through abstract tolerance alone (Campdepadrós-Cullell, Pulido-Rodríguez, Marauri, & Racionero-Plaza, 2021; Fahed & Daou, 2021). In *Petik Laut*, the pier, decorated boats, *larung* procession, and the narrative that "the sea belongs to everyone" become practical and symbolic infrastructures that allow Muslim and Hindu actors to cooperate without requiring liturgical uniformity or conversion. Thus, the ritual contributes to broader theories of pluralism by showing that interreligious cohesion is sustained through organized labor, shared space, negotiated boundaries, and collective narratives that make religious difference socially manageable.

Petik Laut can also be interpreted as a medium of religious ecology because ecological ethics are embedded not only in environmental messages, but in ritual meanings, materials, prohibitions, and communal discipline. The sea is understood as a source of *rezeki*, *Petik Laut* is framed as gratitude to God, and ecological responsibility is translated into practical actions such as using organic materials, reducing plastic and styrofoam, cleaning the beach before and after the ritual, monitoring waste through youth volunteers, and morally discouraging destructive fishing practices. This pattern resonates with Jenkins, Tucker, and Grim's religious ecology framework, in which inherited ecological knowledge is retrieved from tradition, re-evaluated in response to contemporary environmental concerns, and reconstructed into practical ethics for sustainability (Jenkins et al., 2016). In Pengambengan, local knowledge about the sea as a life-giving space is retrieved through ritual memory, re-evaluated through Islamic-Hindu negotiation and modern concerns about pollution, and reconstructed into concrete rules such as biodegradable offerings, cleanliness norms, and informal social control. This finding is consistent with broader studies showing that rituals can mediate religious values and ecological stewardship, such as Sarnaism rituals that sacralize forests and rivers, Naxi ritual plant use that supports biodiversity conservation, sacred groves protected by religious taboos, Thai Buddhist tree ordination rituals, and indigenous environmental

protection practices in Ethiopia (Gautam, 2025; Geng et al., 2017; Pesonen, 2022; Saikia, 2026). However, *Petik Laut* adds a distinct contribution by showing that religious ecology in a coastal Muslim-Hindu setting is not only about reverence for nature, but also about negotiated ritual legitimacy, interreligious cooperation, and community-based ecological regulation.

Nevertheless, the findings also reveal the ambivalent character of *Petik Laut* as a living ritual. On the one hand, *Petik Laut* preserves coastal cultural heritage, strengthens Muslim-Hindu cohesion, regulates theological boundaries, cultivates ecological ethics, creates a space for *gotong royong*, and reinforces maritime identity among fishing communities. On the other hand, these same functions contain vulnerabilities that must be critically acknowledged. Youth participation is still present, but it is shifting away from sustained ritual responsibility toward occasional or documentation-based involvement; tourism increases visibility and economic opportunity, but may transform sacred practice into public spectacle; and orthodoxy debates help clarify theological boundaries, but may also narrow the space for local tradition if handled rigidly. In addition, Hindu agency, although visible in preparation, decoration, spatial organization, and procession support, remains largely located in non-liturgical domains, which raises further questions about the depth and equality of interreligious participation. The ecological dimension also remains partially informal, since rules on plastic reduction, waste control, and environmental discipline are still based more on committee reminders and social expectations than on formalized community agreements. Thus, *Petik Laut* should be understood not only as a successful example of ritual harmony, but also as a fragile social institution whose cultural, religious, and ecological functions require continuous negotiation.

Practically, these findings suggest that the sustainability of *Petik Laut* requires community-based ritual governance rather than mere cultural preservation or tourism branding. At the local level, the community needs to involve youth in core committee positions, create intergenerational programs for transferring ritual knowledge, document the symbolic meanings of *Petik Laut*, *larung*, *sedekah laut*, and gratitude, and establish clearer visitor rules during prayer and sea procession. The committee may also develop written agreements on plastic reduction, waste management, and coastal cleanliness so that ecological ethics are not dependent only on informal reminders. For local government and tourism actors, *Petik Laut* should not be managed only as a cultural festival, but as a sacred communal ritual that requires ethical tourism guidelines, restricted tourist zones during sacred moments, involvement of religious and community leaders in event management, and integration with coastal conservation programs. Academically, this study implies that ritual studies should pay closer attention to micro-negotiations rather than symbols alone, pluralism studies should examine everyday organization and shared labor, and religious ecology studies should include interreligious dynamics in explaining how environmental ethics are produced and sustained in lived ritual practice.

Conclusion

This study concludes that *Petik Laut* in Pengambangan should not be understood merely as a preserved coastal tradition, a static form of syncretism, or a one-way process of Islamization. Rather, it functions as a negotiated ritual arena in which Muslim and Hindu actors reinterpret ritual symbols, regulate theological boundaries, organize shared participation, and embed ecological ethics into communal practice. The findings show that Islamic-Hindu acculturation occurs through symbolic relabeling, Islamic liturgical adaptation, and committee-based boundary-making. Ritual elements such as offerings,

larung, decorated boats, and prayers are neither fully erased nor left unchanged; they are reviewed, adjusted, and reinterpreted so that they remain culturally meaningful while reducing theological ambiguity.

The study also demonstrates that interreligious cohesion in *Petik Laut* is not a passive cultural inheritance, but an organized social achievement. Cohesion is produced through *gotong royong*, joint committee work, division of ritual labor, shared ritual space, differentiated participation, and collective maritime narratives such as the idea that “the sea belongs to everyone.” Muslim and Hindu participants do not participate in identical ways, but their different roles are organized into a shared ritual structure that enables cooperation without requiring liturgical assimilation. In addition, *Petik Laut* functions as a medium of religious ecology. The sea is understood as a source of *rezeki*, the ritual is framed as gratitude to God, and ecological responsibility is practiced through biodegradable materials, reduced plastic use, beach cleaning, youth monitoring, and moral reminders against destructive maritime behavior.

The main contribution of this study lies in showing that a coastal ritual can simultaneously function as a mechanism of religious negotiation, an infrastructure of interreligious cohesion, and a medium for institutionalizing environmental ethics. This expands previous studies that tend to treat coastal rituals mainly as cultural heritage, local wisdom, or ecological symbolism by showing how ritual meaning is actively negotiated within a multi-religious community. However, this study is limited to one ritual cycle in a single coastal village, with fieldwork conducted over a short period. Further research should compare *Petik Laut* across different coastal regions, examine gendered participation and Hindu agency more deeply, and conduct longitudinal studies on youth involvement, tourism commodification, and orthodoxy debates. The future of *Petik Laut* depends not only on preserving its ritual form, but on sustaining its capacity to adapt, clarify, and reproduce shared moral commitments across generations.

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