



# The Strategic Resistance of Muhammadiyah Green Cadres in the Wadas Socio-Ecological Conflict

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## ABSTRACT

State-led infrastructure projects in the Global South often trigger conflicts, yet the role of religious actors remains under-theorized. This study examines how Kader Hijau Muhammadiyah (KHM) navigates 'shrinking civic space' in Indonesia's Wadas mining conflict. Employing a qualitative approach with elite sampling and document triangulation, the research analyzes KHM's 'triad of resistance': science-based advising, confrontational advocacy for the marginalized (*mustad'afin*), and 'inside-track' lobbying. Although entrenched oligarchic interests prevented the mining permit's revocation, KHM successfully disrupted the state's monolithic development narrative by reframing resistance through Islamic theology. The study concludes that in post-authoritarian democracies, religious environmentalism offers a resilient form of counter-hegemony, providing a unique moral shelter for grassroots dissent where secular movements often falter.

**Keywords:** faith-based environmentalism, Muhammadiyah, Wadas socio-ecological conflict, state developmentalism, environmental justice

## ABSTRAK

Proyek infrastruktur yang dipimpin oleh negara di *Global South* sering kali memicu konflik, namun peran aktor keagamaan masih kurang dipelajari secara teoretis. Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana Kader Hijau Muhammadiyah (KHM) menavigasi 'penyempitan ruang sipil' (*shrinking civic space*) dalam konflik pertambangan di Wadas, Indonesia. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui *elite sampling* dan triangulasi dokumen, penelitian ini menganalisis 'triad perlawanan' KHM yang meliputi: pemberian saran berbasis sains, advokasi konfrontatif bagi kaum marjinal (*mustad'afin*), dan lobi 'jalur dalam' (*inside-track*). Meskipun kepentingan oligarki yang mengakar menghalangi pencabutan izin pertambangan, KHM berhasil mengganggu narasi pembangunan monolitik negara dengan membingkai ulang perlawanan melalui teologi Islam. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa dalam demokrasi pasca-otoriter, environmentalisme religius menawarkan bentuk kontra-hegemoni yang tangguh, yang menyediakan perlindungan moral unik bagi perbedaan pendapat di tingkat akar rumput di saat gerakan sekuler sering kali mengalami kegagalan.

**Kata kunci:** gerakan lingkungan berbasis agama, Muhammadiyah, konflik sosio-ekologis Wadas, developmentalisme negara, keadilan lingkungan



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## INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary discourse of global environmental governance, Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs) have transcended their traditional roles to become pivotal agents in climate change adaptation and mitigation (Boorse & Jablonski, 2024; Koehrsen & Ives, 2025; Noll, 2024), particularly in the Global South. Unlike secular NGOs that are increasingly constrained by the

phenomenon of 'shrinking civic space' in democratic developing nations, religious actors often retain a unique form of social legitimacy and resilient grassroots networks that allow them to navigate repressive political landscapes (Johnson et al., 2025). While the burgeoning literature on 'Green Islam' has largely focused on eco-theology and normative ethics, there remains a paucity of empirical research analyzing how these theological principles are translated into concrete political contestations against state-led developmentalism. This study addresses this gap by examining the strategic maneuvering of Muhammadiyah, one of the world's largest Islamic modernist organizations, in Indonesia's complex socio-ecological arena. This research specifically analyzes the role and relationship of the Muhammadiyah Green Cadre (KHM) within the dynamics of the socio-ecological conflict in Wadas, Purworejo. To guide this analysis, the study seeks to answer two primary questions: 1) How does KHM strategically navigate shrinking civic space in the Wadas conflict?; and 2) To what extent does faith-based environmentalism influence public policy outcomes?

The focal point of this analysis is the socio-ecological conflict in Wadas Village, Purworejo. The conflict emerged from the government's National Strategic Project (PSN) to construct the Bener Dam, where Wadas was designated as the primary supplier of andesite rock material. This plan faced intense rejection from local residents, organized under the Gerakan Masyarakat Peduli Alam Desa Wadas (Gempa Dewa), who feared that mining would lead to environmental destruction and the permanent loss of their agrarian livelihoods. The conflict intensified due to the use of coercive security measures and manipulation in land acquisition, representing a critical manifestation of the 'shrinking civic space' in contemporary Indonesia.

The diverse specific conditions in Indonesia, such as the democratic system, weak political coalitions, and the process of integrating organizations into political society, provide opportunities for Islamic organizations in this country to play two important roles: as a civil society that actively monitors the state and as a political society that has close ties with parties or the state (Putri, 2018). This dual role is particularly significant in the context of the global phenomenon of 'shrinking civic space,' where governments in developing democracies increasingly utilize administrative and legal instruments to curtail dissent. While secular environmental NGOs are often vulnerable to such repressive measures due to their reliance on foreign funding or lack of grassroots legitimacy, faith-based organizations like Muhammadiyah possess a distinct advantage. Their deep-rooted social capital and moral authority act as a protective shield, making them less susceptible to state co-optation or silencing compared to their secular counterparts. Thus, in an era where civil liberties are under pressure globally, Islamic organizations emerge not just as spiritual entities, but as resilient bastions of civil society capable of sustaining long-term resistance.

Muslims can utilize this concept of civil society to build awareness and remain progressive and adaptive to social change (Sukardi, 2010). In this context, the recent socio-ecological disasters have raised environmental concerns among Islamic organizations, reflected through religious fatwas and the formation of institutions to handle ecological issues (Dewayanti & Saat, 2020). One of the Islamic organizations involved in the struggle for socio-ecological sovereignty issues is Muhammadiyah, which has the potential to become an environmentally aware organization through progressive initiatives related to the environment, institutional and theological reform (water jurisprudence), and its involvement in judicial reviews of state policies known as 'constitutional jihad' as a form of political advocacy practice (Efendi et al., 2021).

In 2015, the Muhammadiyah Central Board (PP Muhammadiyah) carried out constitutional jihad by conducting a judicial review of Law Number 7 of 2004 concerning Water Resources (SDA), which was considered to have commodification and privatization content (Arizona & Chandranegara, 2017). This step is a strategy to submit corrections to laws that do not side with marginalized groups (*mustad'afin*) (Arizona & Chandranegara, 2017). Within the lexicon of international development, this theological imperative of defending the *mustad'afin* (the oppressed) deeply resonates with the global framework of 'Environmental Justice.' By positioning the

marginalized not merely as victims of ecological degradation but as subjects of rights, Muhammadiyah effectively contests the neoliberal commodification of nature.

Consequently, the organization's strategic recourse to 'Constitutional Jihad' can be conceptually reframed as a form of 'strategic legal activism' aimed at rectifying structural inequities in natural resource management. Although the SDA Law was revoked, the practice of commodification and privatization of water continues, with the government responding by creating ministerial regulations that support the continuation of these practices (Arizona & Chandranegara, 2017). Therefore, Muhammadiyah needs to strengthen its network with various civil society groups to supervise the implementation of the Constitutional Court (MK) decision (Arizona & Chandranegara, 2017).

In the post-Suharto era, various eco-religious groups, mostly led by young people, emerged organically with a climate change discourse that functioned as a response to local development issues in their home regions, so that sometimes it was more audible than the discourse of mainstream Islamic organizations (Dewayanti & Saat, 2020). Constitutional jihad became a turning point that sparked enthusiasm for young Muhammadiyah groups in their involvement in the struggle for socio-ecological sovereignty, which was marked by the formation of the Muhammadiyah Green Cadre (KHM). KHM was formed as a variant of the Muslim environment that was included in the progressive environment, namely a progressive Muslim environmental movement that began with the recontextualization of Islamic tradition sources towards socio-ecological phenomena (Permadi, 2023).

Within the lexicon of international development, Muhammadiyah's strategic recourse to 'Constitutional Jihad' can be conceptually reframed as a form of 'strategic legal activism' aimed at rectifying structural inequities in natural resource management (Parlan, 2024). This approach operationalizes the theological imperative of defending the *mustad'afin*, a concept that deeply resonates with the global framework of 'Environmental Justice'. By positioning the marginalized not merely as victims of ecological degradation but as subjects of rights, Muhammadiyah effectively contests the neoliberal commodification of nature. However, unlike typical confrontational activism, this form of religious environmentalism employs a dual strategy, utilizing judicial reviews to challenge laws at the national level (litigation advocacy) while simultaneously mobilizing 'green cadres' for grassroots resistance, as exemplified in the Wadas conflict.

The emergence of KHM became a new discourse in the intersection of Islam and civil society in the context of the struggle for socio-ecological sovereignty in Indonesia. This is because more and more environmental movements are recognizing the need for a change in human spiritual approaches to the environment, while we are simultaneously witnessing the rise and development of eco-theology and religiously motivated environmental activism (Härmälä, 2019). Islamic theological discourse on environmental and ecological issues has long been dormant, but in recent decades it has increased (Härmälä, 2019). Usually, the discussion remains at a theoretical level, and it is increasingly rare to see these ideas reproduced in religious fatwas or as implemented actions (Härmälä, 2019). To see the role of KHM in the dynamics of socio-ecological conflict, this study uses a case study of the socio-ecological conflict in Wadas, Purworejo. Before going further, it should be noted that the socio-ecological phenomenon in Indonesia cannot be separated from the grand ambitions of the ruling government. The socio-ecological phenomena occurring throughout Indonesia as a result of the National Strategic Project (PSN) need to be reviewed as an expansion of capitalism, and therefore, in the future, it is estimated that it will become more intensive in (re)producing the socio-ecological crisis throughout the archipelago (Batubara et al., 2020).

One of the interesting socio-ecological phenomena to analyze is what happened in Wadas, Purworejo. In the context of PSN, the construction of the Bener Dam located in Bener District, Purworejo Regency, Central Java, is faced with the challenge of land acquisition in Wadas Village. Although the village is not part of the Bener Dam administrative area, Wadas plays a role as the main supplier of andesite rock material. Until now, the Wadas community still rejects the use of their land

for andesite mining activities. This rejection was triggered by concerns about environmental damage caused by mining activities and the risk of losing livelihoods for residents, as expressed by the Wadas Village Environmental Care Community Movement (Gempa Dewa) (Tempo.co, 2022).

This study argues that in an era of shrinking democratic freedoms and entrenched oligarchic interests, religious environmentalism, exemplified by KHM, offers a resilient form of counter-hegemony that provides a unique "moral shelter" for marginalized communities. We contend that while structural barriers prevented the revocation of the mining permit, KHM successfully disrupted the state's monolithic development narrative by reframing environmental resistance through Islamic theology and the imperative of defending the *mustad'afin*. By transforming the identity of local residents from "anti-development rebels" into "guardians of ecological faith," this movement demonstrates a model of resistance that maintains legitimacy even when facing state-led repressive measures.

The remainder of this article is organized into four subsequent sections. The second section establishes the theoretical framework, operationalizing the concepts of 'shrinking civic space' and political ecology within the context of state developmentalism. The third section outlines the qualitative methodology, specifically detailing the purposive elite sampling strategy and document triangulation used to gather data. The fourth section presents the research findings, analyzing KHM's 'triad of resistance' through the lenses of science-based advising, confrontational advocacy, and inside-track lobbying. Finally, the study discusses the structural limits of religious advocacy when confronting oligarchic capital interests and concludes with the broader implications of faith-based environmentalism for global development studies.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### Political Ecology and State Developmentalism

Political ecology examines the power dynamics and relationships between various actors—private, government, and community—within the management and extraction of natural resources. According to Bryant and Bailey (1997), the political ecology process often produces unequal relationships where private sector interests can dominate or even control state policies. In the context of Indonesia's "state developmentalism," the government prioritizes large-scale infrastructure through National Strategic Projects (PSN). This study positions the state not merely as a neutral facilitator, but as an active actor whose commitment to infrastructural expansion often supersedes socio-ecological ethics, effectively shielding capital interests from local resistance.

The framework of political ecology is further contextualized within the phenomenon of 'shrinking civic space,' which characterizes the systematic utilization of administrative, legal, and coercive instruments by the state to curtail dissent. In democratic developing nations like Indonesia, this process often renders secular environmental NGOs vulnerable due to their reliance on external funding and a perceived lack of deep-rooted grassroots legitimacy. In contrast, faith-based organizations (FBOs) such as Muhammadiyah possess significant social capital and moral authority that function as a protective shield against state co-optation or silencing. This unique institutional positioning allows religious actors to maintain a presence in the public sphere and navigate repressive political landscapes more resiliently than their secular counterparts.

Furthermore, the study employs the lens of 'oligarchic developmentalism' to analyze the institutional architecture of National Strategic Projects (PSN). In this context, the PSN designation functions as a "shield of immunity," where the state's commitment to infrastructural expansion and capital accumulation supersedes socio-ecological ethics and community sovereignty. This regime is underpinned by entrenched politico-business alliances that utilize the legal and security apparatus to facilitate extraction and land acquisition, often leading to the exclusion of rural communities from their natural resources. Consequently, the socio-ecological crisis occurring in areas like Wadas is an

empirical manifestation of how state-led developmentalism operates as an expansion of capitalism that intensifies ecological conflicts.

To navigate these structural barriers, this research explores how religious environmentalism provides a "moral shelter" through the reframing of resistance. By "vernacularizing" high-level theological edicts—such as Muhammadiyah's *Fiqh al-Mā'* (Water Jurisprudence)—KHM transforms abstract religious obligations into tangible grassroots activism. This theological reframing positions environmental defense not merely as a secular protest, but as a religious obligation (*fardhu kifayah*) aimed at defending the *mustad'afin*. Ultimately, this strategy allows religious movements to disrupt the state's monolithic development narrative and provide a resilient form of counter-hegemony that protects the identity and agency of marginalized dissenters when secular democratic channels are restricted.

### Shrinking Civic Space and Religious Resilience

The phenomenon of 'shrinking civic space' refers to the increasing use of administrative, legal, and coercive instruments by governments to curtail dissent and limit the activities of civil society groups (Wolff, 2023). While secular environmental NGOs are often vulnerable to such measures due to their reliance on foreign funding or lack of grassroots legitimacy, faith-based organizations (FBOs) possess a unique form of social capital (Khan et al., 2025). This study utilizes the concept of "moral shelter" to explain how religious actors navigate repressive landscapes (Bendroth, 2002). Their deep-rooted moral authority and social networks act as a protective shield, allowing them to sustain long-term resistance where secular movements might falter.

In the Indonesian context, this constriction of civic space is often observed in the implementation of National Strategic Projects (PSN), where the state employs legal and administrative frameworks to prioritize infrastructural expansion, frequently sidelining community dissent. While secular environmental NGOs may find their influence curtailed or their legitimacy questioned due to reliance on external funding, faith-based organizations (FBOs) like Muhammadiyah leverage their long-standing institutional presence and local trust to remain active. This resilience is anchored in "deep-rooted social capital," consisting of established social networks, shared religious norms, and a level of moral authority that provides a degree of immunity against state-led delegitimization efforts.

Furthermore, the strategic advantage of FBOs lies in their ability to occupy a dual role within the political landscape: acting simultaneously as a civil society monitor and as a political society with institutional ties to the state. This "dual role" allows organizations like KHM to navigate a shrinking democratic arena by utilizing a dual-track strategy, engaging in confrontational grassroots mobilization on the one hand, while leveraging 'inside-track' access to religious and political elites through bodies like the Muhammadiyah Central Board on the other. Consequently, these organizations emerge as "resilient bastions" capable of sustaining socio-ecological resistance over the long term, effectively bypassing the legal and administrative bottlenecks that often paralyze more traditional, secular advocacy movements.

The concept of "moral shelter" further explains how this religious resilience empowers marginalized communities, specifically the *mustad'afin*. By "vernacularizing" abstract eco-theology into tangible religious duties—such as the "Eco-Jihad" practiced in Wadas—KHM provides a sacred legitimacy to local resistance that secular human rights frameworks may lack in specific socio-political settings. This theological reframing transforms the state's narrative of the residents from "anti-development rebels" into "guardians of ecological faith," thereby creating a symbolic and moral sanctuary that sustains grassroots dissent even when structural political opportunities are closed.

### Oligarchic Developmentalism and Strategic Legal Activism

Oligarchic developmentalism in Indonesia is characterized by entrenched politico-business alliances that utilize the state's legal apparatus to secure resource extraction (Anugrah, 2023). To

counter this, religious organizations like Muhammadiyah employ 'Constitutional Jihad'—a form of strategic legal activism aimed at rectifying structural inequities through judicial reviews and litigation. This approach transforms the theological imperative of defending the *mustad'afin* (the oppressed) into a formal framework for 'Environmental Justice'. In this study, society is treated not as a passive object of policy, but as an active subject in political science, capable of disrupting monolithic state narratives through ideological and legal contestation (Antje, 2025).

The institutional architecture of National Strategic Projects (PSN) provides the legal foundation for this oligarchic regime, functioning as a "shield of immunity" where the state's commitment to infrastructural expansion often supersedes socio-ecological ethics. Under this framework, the government utilizes administrative and legal instruments to facilitate land acquisition and resource extraction, effectively creating a formidable wall against local resistance. This "shield" is reinforced by entrenched politico-business alliances that ensure state policies prioritize capital interests over community sovereignty, often backed by coercive apparatuses that render traditional legal and moral arguments ineffective against bureaucratic intransigence. Consequently, the PSN status serves to legitimize the expansion of capitalism and state developmentalism at the expense of marginalized rural populations.

In response to this structural rigidity, Muhammadiyah's 'Constitutional Jihad' operates as a dual strategy that combines high-level litigation with grassroots mobilization. This form of strategic legal activism does not merely focus on administrative procedures but seeks to rectify structural inequities in natural resource management by reframing environmental defense as a theological imperative. By filing judicial reviews and *amicus curiae*, the organization attempts to correct laws that facilitate the neoliberal commodification of nature, such as the privatization of water or coercive mining permits. Although the government often responds with ministerial regulations that circumvent these legal corrections, this activism remains crucial for providing a formal framework for 'Environmental Justice' and defending the rights of the *mustad'afin*.

Ultimately, this activism achieves a significant symbolic victory by disrupting the state's monolithic narrative of development and reclaiming the agency of the community. By reframing resistance through Islamic theology—positioning environmental defense as a religious obligation (*fardhu kifayah*)—the movement transforms the identity of local residents from what the state labels as "anti-development rebels" into "guardians of ecological faith". This discursive shift validates the study's position that society must be treated as an active subject in political science, capable of sustaining long-term resistance even when policy outcomes remain unfavorable. Thus, while legal maneuvers may falter against oligarchic power, they succeed in expanding the boundaries of civic space and providing a moral shelter for grassroots dissent.

### Operationalizing the 'Triad of Resistance'

To analyze the tactical maneuvers of KHM, this research operationalizes the framework developed by Start and Hovland (2004), which categorizes civil society roles into three distinct yet overlapping strategies. First, the advising role is manifested through evidence-based mechanisms, including academic studies, policy briefs, and public discussions, which are designed to provide the government with an in-depth understanding of ecological issues and sustainable policy recommendations. Second, the strategy of confrontational advocacy is executed through direct social and legal assistance to affected residents, notably through the filing of *amicus curiae* and the protection of vulnerable groups, particularly children, from the psychological trauma associated with coercive land acquisition. Finally, KHM utilizes inside-track lobbying by collaborating with internal cooperative channels and institutional networks, specifically the Muhammadiyah Central Board (PP Muhammadiyah), to activate the organization's massive political capital and influence decision-makers through official diplomatic pressure and structured communication.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study approach, as defined by Bidang (2009) as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded system, phenomenon, or social unit. This design is particularly suitable for exploring the strategic role of KHM as an emerging actor in Indonesia's civil society discourse, utilizing the socio-ecological conflict in Wadas, Purworejo, as the focal case due to its contemporary relevance and its representation of a critical episode in national socio-ecological dynamics. Given the movement's hierarchical structure, the research employed purposive elite sampling, targeting key decision-makers with exclusive knowledge of the organization's tactical maneuvers and policy formulations. The sample comprises five key informants who represent the core "brain" of KHM: two Presidium Advisors responsible for ideological direction and three Presidium members—acting as regional coordinators in Semarang, Surabaya, and Yogyakarta—who manage tactical field mobilization. In qualitative political research, such elite informants provide high "information power"; as Malterud et al. (2016) argue, a small number of participants in strategic positions can offer significantly more analytical depth than a larger, random sample of rank-and-file members. Consequently, their insights are treated as authoritative representations of KHM's institutional stance rather than mere personal opinions.

Data were collected through in-depth interviews conducted over three months, from April 16 to June 21, 2023. To ensure validity and analytical rigor, source triangulation was employed by cross-referencing interview data with primary documents, including KHM's policy briefs and institutional recommendations, *amicus curiae* filings, digital campaign archives from various social media platforms, and relevant national and local media coverage. These data were then synthesized using a descriptive-analytical framework to comprehensively map the dynamics of resistance. Finally, this research acknowledges several methodological limitations that provide necessary context for its findings. While the qualitative case study allows for intensive analysis, the results are bound to the specific socio-political environment of the Wadas conflict and may not be universally generalizable. Furthermore, although the five elite informants provide significant information power regarding institutional strategy, the sample primarily reflects the internal perspective of KHM's leadership. Additionally, the data collection was confined to the second quarter of 2023, and while robustness was sought through document triangulation and digital footprints, the focus on KHM's maneuvers means that perspectives from state officials or private contractors were primarily gathered through document analysis rather than direct interviews—a deliberate choice to maintain the study's focus on civil society's strategic resistance within a shrinking civic space.

To maintain analytical rigor, this study treats KHM's theological frameworks as discursive strategies rather than absolute moral truths. Concepts such as "defending the mustad'afin" and "Eco-Jihad" are analyzed as part of KHM's "triad of resistance" and its effort to recontextualize Islamic tradition for socio-ecological advocacy. By reframing environmental resistance as a religious obligation (*fardhu kifayah*), KHM strategically aims to legitimize grassroots dissent within a shrinking civic space. This analysis does not seek to validate the moral superiority of one party over another, but rather to demonstrate how religious environmentalism functions as a resilient form of counter-hegemony in post-authoritarian democracies. This approach ensures that the findings contribute to political science and development studies through a critical examination of civil society dynamics, rather than through subjective normative endorsement.

## ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT: KHM AS AN EPISTEMIC COMMUNITY

Established in December 2018, KHM has evolved into a progressive epistemic community operating within the theological and institutional framework of Muhammadiyah, one of Indonesia's largest Islamic modernist organizations. Unlike the rigid, hierarchical bureaucracy that characterizes its parent organization, KHM functions as a fluid, organic collective designed to bridge the gap between normative Islamic eco-theology and grassroots environmental praxis. Structurally, KHM disrupts the traditional centralized command of Islamic mass organizations by adopting a collective

leadership model, a Presidium, rather than a single authoritarian figurehead. This decentralized configuration, which spans 23 regional committees across Indonesia (including key nodes in Semarang, Yogyakarta, and Surabaya), allows for rapid mobilization and decision-making autonomy that is often required in conflict zones like Wadas.

In the landscape of Indonesian civil society, KHM plays a critical 'intermediary' role: translating high-level religious edicts (such as Muhammadiyah's *Fiqh al-Ma'* or Water Jurisprudence) into direct, confrontational environmental activism. This 'vernacularization' of theology transforms abstract religious obligations into tangible social movements, such as the 'Eco-Jihad' enacted in Wadas. To sustain this movement, KHM operationalizes a dual-alliance strategy. They maintain 'strategic allies' with Muhammadiyah's internal autonomous bodies (e.g., Pemuda Muhammadiyah, Naswiatul Aisyiyah) to secure ideological legitimacy and protection within the Islamic fold. Simultaneously, they cultivate 'tactical allies' with secular Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) such as the Legal Aid Institute (LBH) and WALHI (Friends of the Earth Indonesia). This hybrid coalitional capacity enables KHM to navigate the secular-religious divide, utilizing legal-technical instruments from secular NGOs while deploying moral-theological narratives from their religious base to challenge state-led extraction.

## THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE KHM PRESIDUM IN MONITORING SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL CONFLICT IN WADAS

There are several instances of KHM involvement in overseeing the socio-ecological conflict in Wadas, Purworejo. Drawing on Start and Hovland's (2004) framework, KHM implements 'advising' through evidence-based mechanisms. KHM carries out the advising role in the form of academic studies, policy briefs, and public discussions. This demonstrates the practical application of advising theory in managing ecological conflicts. Using a research and analysis approach, Muhammadiyah Green Cadres make a significant contribution by providing the government with an in-depth understanding of ecological issues and implementable solutions. By preparing policy briefs, they provide concrete, practical policy recommendations for the government to follow up on. Public discussions held by Muhammadiyah Green Cadres also expand the reach and impact of their advising role by directly involving the community and building consensus on relevant ecological issues.

This advising process is a strategic step taken by civil society to attract public attention; this role aims to gain public support (Heroepoetri & Santosa, 2003). This opinion is based on the understanding that documenting decisions and public concerns at every level of decision-making can enhance the credibility of the decision. Overall, the findings of research conducted by Muhammadiyah Green Cadres, who undertake the advisory role through academic studies, policy briefs, and public discussions, support their civil society role in overseeing ecological conflicts. Through this approach, civil society groups can become important partners for governments in addressing ecological issues, while providing in-depth understanding and sustainable policy recommendations that benefit the environment and society. In the context of advocacy carried out by KHM related to the conflict in Wadas, their actions in making two *amicus curiae* and providing assistance to affected residents, especially children who experience psychological impacts, can be considered as a concrete implementation of this confrontational approach. By filing an *amicus curiae*, KHM actively conveys its views and research in the ongoing legal process related to the conflict.

In this context, KHM utilized *amicus curiae* as a strategic means to express concerns, convey substantive information, and provide support to the affected parties during the legal proceedings in 2022. A pivotal moment in this advocacy timeline occurred on Monday, April 25, 2022, when the Central Board of Muhammadiyah, through the Institute of Wisdom and Public Policy (LHKP), issued a formal recommendation and expressed serious concern regarding the Wadas case. This institutional intervention explicitly urged the government to halt its violent approach, withdraw

security forces from the village, and conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the andesite mining plans in Wadas.

To substantiate this legal and institutional maneuver, our analysis of the advocacy substance indicates that KHM's *amicus curiae* argued beyond standard environmental law. Instead of merely focusing on administrative procedures, they highlighted the neglected human dimension, specifically arguing that the state had failed to protect the psychosocial well-being of vulnerable groups, particularly children, from the trauma of coercive land acquisition. This argument serves as tangible evidence of how KHM translates religious compassion into formal legal defense for the marginalized (*mustad'afin*), leveraging the institutional weight of Muhammadiyah to challenge state-led developmentalism.

In addition, by assisting affected residents, especially children who experience psychological impacts, KHM also demonstrates a confrontational approach in their advocacy. In this assistance process, KHM interacts directly with affected residents, listens to their stories, and provides the necessary support and assistance. The main purpose of this assistance is to protect the rights of affected residents, fight for justice, and expose the psychological impacts experienced by children to those responsible for the conflict. In this case, KHM plays an active role in fighting for the rights of affected individuals and becomes a voice for those who may not have access or power to voice their interests.

The findings regarding KHM's role in assisting the Wadas community, including children who have experienced psychological trauma, are in line with what Arimbi and Santoso expressed, that the role functions as therapy. This explains that this advocacy effort also aims to "cure" psychological problems experienced by the community, such as feelings of helplessness, lack of self-confidence, and feelings that they are not an important component of society. KHM seeks to influence public opinion, expose problems openly, and encourage concrete actions to resolve conflicts and protect the rights of affected residents. In this role, they become a voice for those who cannot or do not have access to voice their interests. One of the causes of the conflict in Wadas is the use of violence, manipulation, and deception in large-scale land acquisition for development projects, involving large companies and concession holders in the fields of production, extraction, and conservation. In addition, the exclusion of a group of rural communities from the land and natural resources they manage, which are then included in business concessions, is also a factor that triggers conflict. This encourages activism or direct rejection actions from civil society in response to the exclusion (Rachman, 2013).

In the research findings regarding the role of KHM activism in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas, they were involved in demonstrations and actions of rejection against government decisions in various regions. Through this direct action, KHM tried to show their support and disagreement with the policy that designated Wadas as a location for andesite stone mining for the construction of the Bener Dam in Purworejo, which was considered detrimental to the environment and society. These demonstrations and acts of rejection served as tools to openly express dissatisfaction, attract public attention, and pressure the government to reverse its decision. In addition, the activism carried out by KHM was based on the interests and values they adhere to, by the rules of the KHM movement. They are committed to protecting the environment and promoting sustainability and social justice. Their activism reflects their concern about the negative impacts caused by the political-ecological conflict in Wadas on the local community and ecosystem.

Digital triangulation of KHM's online footprint reveals that recurring campaign visuals frequently utilized the slogan '*Wadas Melawan*' (Wadas Resists) across social media platforms juxtaposed with Islamic narratives of environmental stewardship. This visual data illustrates how KHM successfully blends pop-culture aesthetics with theological messages to mobilize the youth demographic, validating the interview data regarding their 'creative resistance' approach. Through these direct actions, they seek to give voice to those who do not have access to decision-making platforms and emphasize the importance of environmental protection and community welfare.

Overall, the findings regarding the role of Muhammadiyah Green Cadre's activism in overseeing the political-ecological conflict in Wadas are in line with Daniel Start and Ingie Hovland's theory of activism as the role of civil society in dealing with public policy. The activism carried out by KHM involves direct actions in the form of demonstrations and protest actions based on the interests and values they hold. Through these actions, they seek to influence policies and achieve changes that are by these interests and values.

In the context of KHM's strategic maneuvers, the cadres lobbied the Central Board of Muhammadiyah to adopt a decisive institutional stance and produce a formal policy brief addressed to the government regarding the ecological conflict in Wadas. The Central Board responded affirmatively to this internal pressure; on Monday, April 25, 2022, Muhammadiyah, through its Institute of Wisdom and Public Policy (LHKP), issued an official recommendation expressing serious concern over the situation in Wadas. This response included a firm demand for the government to halt its coercive approach, withdraw security forces from the village, and conduct a thorough evaluation of the andesite mining plans. This institutional backing confirms that KHM successfully employed 'inside-track' diplomacy to mobilize Muhammadiyah's substantial political and moral capital against the state's developmentalist agenda. KHM employs a cooperative, insider approach by collaborating with related organizations, such as PP Muhammadiyah, which has influence and direct access to government decision-makers. By producing a relevant policy brief, KHM aims to convey knowledge, situational analysis, and specific policy recommendations related to the ecological conflict in Wadas.

The strategic lobbying is evidenced by the Policy Brief drafted by KHM for the Central Board. The document urged a decisive institutional stance, recommending that Muhammadiyah should leverage its moral authority to demand an immediate suspension of mining activities pending a comprehensive, independent social-ecological assessment. This archival trace confirms that KHM operates through 'inside-track' diplomacy to activate Muhammadiyah's massive political capital against the status quo. This document presents strong arguments and proposed solutions to the government, which are expected to influence decision-making and encourage measures that address the ecological issues under debate. Through this lobbying approach, KHM seeks to build partnerships and leverage PP Muhammadiyah's strategic position as a platform to convey its messages to the government. By using official, structured communication channels, they seek to influence government policies that could significantly affect the management of the ecological conflict in Wadas. Overall, the application of the cooperative and inside-track lobbying theory by the Muhammadiyah Green Cadres demonstrates advocacy efforts that focus on cooperation with PP Muhammadiyah and the use of official communication channels to influence the government through policy briefs. This approach not only enables KHM to participate in the decision-making process actively but also increases the likelihood of success of their advocacy in addressing ecological conflict in Wadas.

## **THE DYNAMICS OF KHM PRESIDIUUM IN MONITORING POLITICAL ECOLOGICAL CONFLICT IN WADAS, PURWOREJO**

In general, the dynamics that occur can be mapped into four categories: the network owned by KHM, the KHM actors who play a role, the responses in the form of threats and support, and the impact on the Wadas residents. The following are some of the dynamics experienced by the Muhammadiyah Green Cadres in their oversight of the conflict in Wadas.

*First*, advising as an opening path. As described above, the KHM's advising role in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas reflects its character as an intellectual role. In this context, KHM has sufficient social capital to support the execution of the advisory role. It should be noted that this advising does not simply present solutions without basis; it is grounded in rigorous academic research. In addition, the Wadas residents trust KHM to address environmental and agrarian issues. This trust is created through consistent interaction and KHM's efforts to show concern and support

for communities affected by ecological conflict. KHM operates based on religious norms that underlie its commitment to protecting the environment and disadvantaged communities. These norms not only serve as ethical guidelines for KHM members but also strengthen the legitimacy of their movement in the eyes of the community. This series of norms encourages collaboration and solidarity between KHM and residents in dealing with complex issues. KHM maintains a strong network of educational institutions, including Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY). This network is very useful in supporting research and intellectual development. Collaboration with academics and universities provides KHM with access to relevant knowledge, empirical data, and support in making evidence-based policies. By utilizing social capital in the form of trust, norms, and networks, KHM can make meaningful contributions in the form of advising the community and government, based on in-depth academic research. This approach not only strengthens KHM's advocacy position but also increases its capacity to address complex ecological and social issues in Wadas.

The advisory role serves as a vital communication tool in decision-making, providing the government with community-based information necessary for responsive governance. KHM actively provides recommendations on the Wadas conflict but faces significant barriers to communicating scientific studies to the state due to limited access and misaligned priorities. These obstacles often reduce the impact of KHM's recommendations, necessitating more strategic outreach to ensure their findings are integrated into formal policy processes. Government responses to KHM's advising have remained inconsistent and frequently reactive. While symbolic engagements, such as Governor Ganjar Pranowo's visit to Wadas, indicate a willingness to listen to community views, they do not always translate into a direct response to the specific evidence provided by KHM. Consequently, KHM often finds it necessary to apply external pressure to move the government beyond reactive dialogue toward a proactive consideration of socio-ecological recommendations.

However, although such steps demonstrate government concern, this response is not always followed by a direct engagement with the role of KHM or other alliances involved. In many cases, civil society groups, including KHM, must exert various pressures to encourage the government to be more proactive in responding to emerging issues. The pressure can be in the form of demonstrations, public awareness campaigns, or direct submission of reports and recommendations to the authorities. As a result, the government is compelled to take a stance, including visiting the site of the conflict. The dynamics are a challenge for the KHM Presidium because sometimes the government's slow or reactive response can hinder their efforts to oversee the political ecology conflict in Wadas. If the government takes action only in response to community pressure, responsive decision-making can be hampered, and legitimate recommendations from the KHM may not be fully considered in long-term solutions. To overcome these challenges, the KHM needs to continue to foster constructive communication, strengthen relationships with government stakeholders, and demonstrate the positive impact of their input. In this way, it is hoped that the government will not only respond after pressure but also proactively involve the KHM and the community in the decision-making process from the start.

Political ecology highlights the relationships among actors within the vortex of interests across economic, political, and community spheres. Bryant and Bailey (1997) explain that the overall political ecology process produces different relationships among actors, including private control of the community, private control of the government, and community resistance to private interests. In other words, the relationship among actors indicates the dominance of the private sector, which can even control the government. In this context, the government should exercise control over the private sector through policies and development plans. In the political ecology conflict that occurred in Wadas, the government prioritized development interests, especially through the National Strategic Project (PSN), which was intended to support tourism in Central Java and the Special Region of Yogyakarta. One of the impacts of this project was the flow of water for the Bener Dam, which was directed to the interests of Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) and private hotels

around it. During this situation, the Muhammadiyah Green Cadre Presidium (KHM) acted as a civil society group that interacted with various other related actors, including the government, local communities, environmental organizations, and other interest groups. In its dynamics, the KHM Presidium faced challenges in the form of differences in views, interests, and approaches in handling political ecology conflicts. Interaction with these various actors influenced the dynamics of KHM's advising role and may have an impact on the strategies they used in overseeing the conflict. The process of monitoring with an advising role was initiated by several individuals, including an academic study initiated by KHM Semarang together with PC IMM Semarang City led by Arif Afruloh, as the Coordinator of KHM Semarang and the General Chairperson of PC IMM Semarang City at that time. He had an important role in formulating the academic study that was made.

Furthermore, in the making of the policy brief, the influential figure is David Efendi, advisor to the KHM Presidium who also serves at the Muhammadiyah PP Public Policy and Wisdom Institute and as a lecturer in Government Science at the Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta (UMY). Through his relations and roles, David Efendi attempts to communicate the interests of KHM with the Law and Human Rights Council, represented by Busyro Muqoddas, to encourage PP Muhammadiyah to take a stance. This action is then expressed in the form of a policy brief that is prepared. Thus, the interaction between actors, understanding of intertwined interests, and the key roles of individuals in KHM, greatly determine the direction and strategy taken in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas. The political ecology conflict in Wadas has also changed along with the development of time and the social dynamics that occur. These changes can affect the role and advising strategy carried out by the Muhammadiyah Green Cadre Presidium (KHM). For example, increased public awareness of environmental issues or shifts in government policy can have an impact on KHM's focus and approach in overseeing the conflict. Likewise, social change can affect the demands and expectations of society towards the role of KHM. Overall, the dynamics of the advising role of the KHM Presidium in resolving the political ecology conflict in Wadas, Purworejo, reflect the various challenges and responses faced in their interactions with the government, related actors, and the social changes that occur. Understanding these dynamics is important for identifying the strengths and limitations of the KHM role, as well as in developing effective strategies for influencing the handling of political ecology conflicts in the region. The output produced from this advising process is the influence of public opinion regarding the conflict that occurred in Wadas. The dissemination of this public opinion is crucial so that the discourse regarding the actual conflict can be understood by the wider community, thereby raising awareness and support for Wadas residents affected by the conflict. With increased public awareness, it is hoped that there will be greater solidarity from the community to fight for their rights and encourage actions that support environmental recovery and social justice.

*Second*, advocating for the disempowered “them”. In the context of the advocacy role of the KHM in overseeing the Political Ecological Conflict in Wadas, Purworejo, several dynamics can be observed. These dynamics reflect the challenges, strategies, and impacts that occur in KHM's efforts to advocate for the issue of political-ecological conflict in the region. Social capital acts as a driving force in community advocacy, playing an important role in forming, maintaining, and mobilizing collective support. Strong social networks, shared norms, and built trust create the foundation for effective advocacy. In the context of the KHM, their confrontational approach to advocacy triggers the psychological drive of the Wadas community, who feel that they are not alone in facing ecological conflict. Through solid interpersonal relationships, KHM members can mobilize active community participation, disseminate information quickly, and build collective awareness of the issues being advocated. The trust that is created also provides the necessary legitimacy, thereby strengthening the influence of advocacy in decision-making and forming social cohesion. Thus, social capital is not only the basis for effective advocacy but also a key element in building a sustainable community movement to achieve positive change. According to Haider (2009), a community-based approach to conflict resolution focuses on empowering groups and institutions at

the local community level by giving direct control to the community over decision-making. In the context of monitoring the political ecology conflict in Wadas, KHM acts as a community and environmental advocate. The first dynamic that can be observed is the acceptance and impact of the advocacy carried out by KHM. KHM was well received by Wadas residents, which is inseparable from the implementation of a community-based approach that emphasizes participation and empowerment through psychological and cultural assistance.

The impacts felt by Wadas residents include psychological support for children and the cultural closeness that exists between KHM members and the local community. Although the impact of advocacy in terms of policy may not be felt directly, such as in the case of *amicus curiae* that is not beneficial to Wadas residents or policy briefs that are archived, KHM's interaction and support still have a significant influence. Effective communication is a crucial element in the advocacy role. KHM conducted a strategic campaign to raise public awareness and gain support regarding the political ecology conflict in Wadas. These communication dynamics include selecting the right message, targeting a relevant audience, and using effective media and communication channels. Social media has become a very useful tool for KHM in disseminating information and conducting campaigns related to issues in Wadas. By utilizing platforms such as websites, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter, KHM can build public opinion and influence community perceptions regarding the ongoing conflict.

KHM interacts with the government and other related actors in conducting advocacy. This dynamic involves collaboration, negotiation, and sometimes confrontation. Relations with the government include meetings with officials, participation in policy forums, and efforts to influence government decisions and actions related to the political ecology conflict in Wadas. Facing obstacles in accessing the government, KHM adopted a confrontational approach and encouraged PP Muhammadiyah to apply pressure through lobbying and diplomatic efforts. In the context of litigation advocacy, KHM succeeded in creating and submitting *amicus curiae* to the Semarang and Jakarta PTUNs, although in the end, the Wadas residents lost the case. In addition, KHM also plays a role in psychological assistance for children affected by the conflict, with KHM members directly involved in the process. As a civil society organization, KHM faces various supports and challenges. Support can come from the community, partner organizations, and other actors who have similar interests in protecting the environment and society. However, challenges such as resistance from parties who feel threatened by changes in policy or KHM advocacy actions also arise, including the possibility of persecution or delegitimization by parties who oppose their advocacy. Overall, the dynamics of KHM's advocacy role in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas reflect complex interactions with the government, related actors, and the community. Understanding these dynamics allows KHM to optimize their advocacy strategy, strengthen the impact generated, and overcome the challenges that arise in their steps in dealing with the political ecology conflict in Wadas.

*Third*, lobbying as “another path”. The social capital of the Muhammadiyah Green Cadres (KHM) plays a crucial role in lobbying activities for conflict resolution in Wadas. Strong social networks, such as relationships with PP Muhammadiyah, Muhammadiyah, and non-Muhammadiyah campuses, and other community advocacy networks (such as LBH) allow KHM to form alliances and gain broad support. The trust established in this social capital strengthens the credibility of activists in fighting for peace. In lobbying activities, this social capital can be utilized to mobilize community participation, compile evidence of the impact of the conflict, and persuade policy-makers and related institutions to support fair solutions. Shared norms in social capital can be the basis for moral and ethical arguments in lobbying efforts, thereby creating effective public pressure. The combination of strong social capital with activism in lobbying activities is a significant force for producing change and advancing the conflict resolution agenda in the Wadas community. From a political ecology approach, the role of the state and government apparatus greatly determines the form and dynamics of the conflict. The state is expected not only to be a facilitator and neutral

judge but also to be an active actor that influences the management of natural resources. Differences in interests between related actors can worsen the conflict that occurs. One of the main aspects of the lobbying role is interaction with the government and related institutions. KHM seeks to influence government policies and actions through meetings, consultations, and direct advocacy.

This dynamic involves negotiation efforts, the preparation of strong arguments, and the creation of proposals or policy briefs addressed to the authorities. However, KHM's lobbying efforts cannot always be carried out in-depth, so they are more often carried out in the context of cooperation with PP Muhammadiyah. Limited data on actors and parties targeted in lobbying with the local government is also a challenge in itself. In carrying out its lobbying role, KHM can form a coalition or join an alliance with other organizations that have similar interests in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas. The alliance includes PP Muhammadiyah, which is encouraged to issue a stance and policy brief related to the issues being advocated. This dynamic understands cooperation, strategic coordination, and strengthening the collective voice to influence government policies and actions. Interaction with stakeholders and alliances strengthens the power of influence that KHM has. In the context of conflict resolution, referring to Burton's view, finding a way out of conflicting behavior is the main focus. KHM, in lobbying, faces varying responses from the government, ranging from acceptance to rejection. This response has an impact on the strategy and approach taken by KHM in overseeing the conflict. The government often responds to KHM actions with tight security, on the grounds of maintaining order. However, there are also moments when positive signals emerge, such as when Ganjar Pranowo held a dialogue with the community after witnessing a significant rejection of mining permits. In terms of KHM actors in the field, two key individuals, namely Yusuf and Widia, play an important role as liaisons between residents and the KHM network.

Through the information they convey, KHM can communicate with PP Muhammadiyah through David Efendi to encourage the necessary actions. In carrying out its lobbying role, KHM must be prepared to face various dynamics that influence the adjustment of its strategy. Challenges, political changes, or policies that emerge related to political ecology conflicts can influence the approach taken. KHM needs to continue to monitor these developments and adjust its strategies so that its advocacy remains relevant and effective in influencing government policy. Overall, the dynamics of the lobbying role of Muhammadiyah Green Cadres in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas include interactions with the government and related institutions, the formation of coalitions and alliances, government responses, and the necessary adjustments to strategies. Understanding these dynamics allows KHM to plan and implement more effective lobbying activities and increase its influence in fighting for interests related to the political ecology conflict in Wadas. Demonstrations and actions carried out by KHM are important as a form of pressure that encourages the government to reconsider policies that have been set, even though the results have not been entirely as expected.

*Fourth*, activism as the main path. The social capital and activism of the KHM complement each other in the context of conflict resolution in Wadas. Social capital includes social networks, trust, and shared norms that form a strong foundation for the activism movement. The existing social networks allow KHM activists to garner broad support from the community, gather information, and coordinate peace actions. The trust built through social capital also provides legitimacy to KHM activism initiatives. By taking action, activists can mobilize community energy, emphasize the importance of dialogue, and encourage parties involved to seek fair solutions. The combination of strong social capital and progressive activism creates effective momentum in promoting peace and conflict resolution in Wadas. One of the main aspects of the role of activism is the implementation of actions and demonstrations to highlight the issue of political ecology conflict in Wadas. KHM can carry out various actions, such as demonstrations, protests, or visual campaigns, to attract the attention of the community and government. This dynamic includes the planning, coordination, and implementation processes of actions carried out by KHM, as well as the responses received from

the community and related parties. This civil society activism is also related to the rejection of the government's exclusion of natural resources (Rachman, 2013). However, repressive forms often emerge in the follow-up of KHM and other organizations, where the government uses the apparatus to confront civil society, which seeks to defend their rights. In carrying out its activism role, KHM forms and is involved in various alliances and networks with other organizations and community groups, such as LBH Yogyakarta, SP Kinasih, student press, and FNKSDA.

This dynamic involves collaboration, information exchange, and coordination of strategies to strengthen advocacy and activism in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas. Interaction with these alliances and networks strengthens the dynamics of KHM's activism role and increases the strength of the movement they represent, and the role of civil society in building articulation and representation structures for the common good. KHM interacts with the government and other related actors in conducting advocacy. This dynamic includes the government's response to demands and actions taken by KHM, as well as the response of related actors such as companies or other interest groups. The government's response can vary, from acceptance and positive action to rejection and confrontation. In some cases, the government responded to KHM's actions with tight security, claiming this was to maintain security and order. However, demonstrators also experienced repressive actions from government officials. A significant moment occurred when Ganjar Pranowo, the former Governor of Central Java, visited Wadas to have a dialogue with the community regarding the rejection that occurred, in response to the many news reports about this conflict. In the context of KHM's escort, there were two key people, namely Yusuf and Widia, who played an important role as liaisons between residents and KHM's networks, including PP Muhammadiyah. The information they conveyed allowed KHM to communicate with PP Muhammadiyah through David Efendi, as an advisor and member of PP Muhammadiyah's LHKP.

The role of KHM's activism in overseeing the political ecology conflict in Wadas reflects the various influences and impacts it has produced. KHM's activism contributed to increasing public awareness, changing attitudes and behavior in society, and influencing government policies. This dynamic shows the extent to which KHM's activism can bring about positive change and encourage conflict resolution. Overall, the dynamics of the role of the KHM Presidium's activism in overseeing the political-ecological conflict in Wadas include actions, demonstrations, interactions with the government and related actors, and the resulting influence. Understanding these dynamics allows KHM to plan more effective strategies, increase the impact of their advocacy, and overcome the challenges that arise in their efforts to protect the environment and communities in Wadas. Although the demonstrations and actions carried out have not succeeded in changing the policy of the Governor of Central Java on the determination of andesite stone mining location permits, these actions have become a symbol of solidarity and concern for the affected communities.

## **THE LIMITS OF RELIGIOUS ADVOCACY IN OLIGARCHIC DEVELOPMENT**

While KHM successfully mobilized the 'inside-track' strategy to activate the religious elite (PP Muhammadiyah) and generated evidence-based counter-narratives, the material outcome of the Wadas conflict exposes the stark structural limitations of civil society in Indonesia's post-authoritarian landscape. The failure of these combined high-level religious lobbying and grassroots mobilization efforts to revoke the mining permit serves as a potent empirical demonstration of the state's imperviousness when core capital interests are at stake. It reveals that the label of 'National Strategic Projects' (PSN) functions as a shield of immunity, where the state's commitment to infrastructural developmentalism supersedes socio-ecological ethics, even when those ethics are voiced by one of the country's most influential Islamic organizations. This case suggests that 'Constitutional Jihad' faces a formidable wall when confronting the entrenched politico-business alliances (oligarchy) inherent in Indonesia's resource extraction boom; legal and moral arguments crumble against the rigidity of bureaucratic intransigence backed by coercive apparatuses.

However, viewing the Wadas conflict solely through the lens of policy failure would be a reductionist perspective. Academically, KHM's intervention succeeded in a crucial discursive arena: it disrupted the state's monolithic narrative of development. By reframing the resistance through Islamic theology, positioning environmental defense as a religious obligation (*fardhu kifayah*), KHM effectively legitimized the dissent of the Wadas villagers. They transformed the identity of the resisting residents from what the state labeled as 'anti-development rebels' into 'guardians of ecological faith.' Thus, while the advocacy did not successfully alter the governor's decree, it achieved a significant symbolic victory by expanding the boundaries of civic space. It proved that in an era of shrinking democratic freedoms, faith-based movements can serve as resilient counter-hegemonic forces, providing a moral shelter for marginalized communities that secular movements alone often fail to secure.

## CONCLUSION

The role of the KHM as civil society organization in the dynamics of socio-ecological conflict in Wadas, Purworejo, Indonesia, highlights the importance of civil society in political science studies, as Islamic organizations in Indonesia can play two crucial roles: as civil society that actively monitors the state and as a political society with close ties to the state. The recent socio-ecological disasters have raised environmental concerns among Islamic organizations, reflected through religious fatwas and institutional formations. Muhammadiyah, an Islamic organization, has the potential to become environmentally aware through progressive initiatives, institutional and theological reform, and judicial reviews of state policies, known as 'constitutional jihad'. The Muhammadiyah Green Cadre (KHM) emerged as a new discourse in the intersection of Islam and civil society in the struggle for socio-ecological sovereignty in Indonesia. The study uses a case study of the socio-ecological conflict in Wadas, Purworejo, to examine the role of KHM in the dynamics of socio-ecological conflict. The socio-ecological phenomenon in Indonesia cannot be separated from the grand ambitions of the ruling government, and the National Strategic Project (PSN) is expected to intensify the socio-ecological crisis throughout the archipelago.

Ultimately, the Wadas case offers a critical lesson for global development studies, namely, resistance against unsustainable development becomes significantly more resilient when reframed through theological narratives. While secular movements may falter under state pressure, KHM demonstrates an alternative model of environmental activism in the Global South, one that does not solely rely on scientific data or liberal human rights discourse, but harnesses spiritual values and religious legitimacy to challenge state hegemony. This suggests that in the face of the global climate crisis, faith-based organizations are not merely support systems, but legitimate political contenders capable of redefining the boundaries of environmental governance.

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