

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be argued from the case of *Pesantren At-Thaariq* that a religious community's response to environmental problems makes use of two main sources: religious-based environmental understanding and ethics, and existing and innovative ecological practices. Furthermore, the understanding and practices from the two sources influence each other; so the eco-practices are not simply a "translation" or implementation of the religious understanding and ethics, but at the same time help constitute the understanding and ethics. Nevertheless, at *At-Thaariq*, religion is still a main foundation in the learning process as it considers the practices to preserve nature: the living and nonliving beings as obedience to God. For example, they preserve local seeds, biodiversity, and the quality of soils and consider these activities obedience to God. Therefore, the problem of articulation of ecological principles in Islam can go further in the *eco-pesantren*.

The universal ecological value of *At-Thaariq* lies in the idea of planting. The idea comes from their understanding that we need to learn how to plant appropriately from the verses explaining that God has grown some plants by rain. *At-Thaariq* interprets that God indirectly instructs humans to preserve the earth by planting. Moreover, they believe that each God's creation is meaningful, similar to humans. Therefore, by planting, they can support the earthly life: humans, animals, soil, water and so forth.

Planting by ecological farming (agroecology) in the *Eco-Pesantren Ath-Thaariq* makes the community have deeper understanding of Islam and ethics to nature. It is because the *pesantren* has Islamic spiritual character and has ecological character as seen in their daily activities. By performing the eco-practice, firstly, they understand that being ecological as they plant ecologically is Islamic divine values. Secondly, they understand that the practice teaches them to love nature sincerely because nature and humans should sustain each other as they understand that humans and nature are equal in front of God. Thirdly, they understand that the practice teaches them to be socially open to every human because the environmental problems cannot be solely responded by a single community. In other words, the ecological farming can support their Islamic understanding of how to relate with nature and their Islamic understanding also can convince them that their ecological practices are appropriate to Islam.

Because of the spiritual reasons to preserve the environmental crisis, *At-Thaariq* consistently works to develop the *pesantren*. Ibang and Nissa plant plants every day to fulfil needs of the community in the *pesantren* and to preserve various plants, animals and the land. The *pesantren* is considered the best method to educate morality to God, humans and nature. However, the *pesantren* is not built in exclusive ways. The *pesantren* welcomes some communities from various religious identities who want to study there.

Lay people to various communities have visited the *pesantren*. Some influential communities from agrarian activists, environmentalists and pluralists have ever come and worked with the *pesantren*. Sayogyo Institute has ever

worked with *At-Thaariq* in holding Jambore Pejuang Tanah Air Perempuan. KEHATI has conducted research on biodiversity in *At-Thaariq* and publish it in the form of a book. PUSAD Paramadina also writes about the relation of *At-Thaariq* because it is a place for members of religions to talk each other peacefully. Those are just a few examples of those who visit *At-Thaariq*.

The *pesantren* also build conservation areas, which is called Buruan Bumi and Kebun Hutan. The conservation areas are not only conservation. Those are also areas to follow up the alumni who want to a farmer, but they do not have access to be a farmer. Today, the areas are managed by Jajang, an alumnus of the *pesantren*. He works with society to protect various plants in the area. The conservation area is built to anticipate development in Garut Selatan and to teach people about the need of the green environment. The *pesantren* also dreams to create an institution in this area to teach them ecological knowledge to politicians, so that they are aware of the importance of the green policy in every region.

The *pesantren* is also aware of the role of social media and mass media as Nissa and Ibang often upload what they have done in the *pesantren* to Facebook, Instagram and Website. They also write some articles about the *pesantren* in some magazines. *At-Thaariq* is also often visited by some journalists that publish their articles in printed newspaper and online newspaper. *At-Thaariq*, moreover, often appears on some national televisions. In other words, *At-Thaariq* has awareness to spread the ideas of being ecological is being pious, generous to nature and pluralist. Moreover, it develops those ideas further inside and outside the *pesantren*.