ROKAT PRAYER AS SPIRITUAL COPING AND CULTURAL COUNSELING: SUPPORTING PERCEIVED ECOLOGICAL RESILIENCE AND PRO-ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION IN COASTAL SITUBONDO

Samsul Arifin
Ibrahimy University
Sukorejo, Banyuputih, Situbondo, Indonesia
Email: syamsulahasan@ibrahimy.ac.id

Moch. Nuril Anwar
Ibrahimy University
Sukorejo, Banyuputih, Situbondo, Indonesia
Email: syamsulahasan@ibrahimy.ac.id

Rahmat Saputra
Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin
Gong Badak Campus, 21300 Kuala Nerus, Terengganu, Malaysia
Email: si3406@putra.unisza.edu.my

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Abstract

The expansion of coastal tourism in Situbondo, Indonesia, places increasing pressure on marine ecosystems and local livelihoods. Although local rituals have been examined as expressions of ecological wisdom, their psycho-spiritual roles in collective coping and cultural counseling remain underexplored. This qualitative study combines ethnographic and hermeneutic approaches to examine Doa Rokat (Rokat Prayer) in 15 coastal villages between Banyuglugur and Merak. Data were collected over 12 months, from April 2025 to March 2026, through participant observation of 15 Rokat ritual cycles, in-depth interviews with 40 purposively selected informants (10 community leaders and 30 community members), and a three-layer hermeneutic analysis of prayer texts. The data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model. The findings suggest three mechanisms through which Rokat may support ecological awareness and action: (1) symbolic cosmology, which frames ecological care as a spiritual responsibility; (2) communal solidarity, which fosters awareness and collective action, with 31 of the 40 informants (77.5%) reporting that Rokat forums were their first source of awareness of ecological threats; and (3) the internalization of ecopsychological values, which reinforces a sense of environmental stewardship. However, a negative case emerged: outside visitors were observed littering, suggesting that the ecological norms expressed in Rokat forums may not extend to tourists. Based on these findings, the study proposes an analytical model linking spiritual coping, cultural counseling, and ecological action. It argues that Rokat may strengthen perceived ecological resilience while supporting psychosocial well-being and pro-environmental action within the community. However, clinical, health, and ecological outcomes were not directly measured and warrant further investigation through mixed-methods research.

Keywords: *Cultural Counseling, Doa Rokat, Ecopsychology, Pro-Environmental Action, Spiritual Coping*

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INTRODUCTION

Overthe past two decades, the Anthropocene has emerged as a framework for understanding the rapid transformation of Earth driven by human activity. This period is characterized by escalating and interconnected ecological crises, including climate change, biodiversity loss, and widespread pollution of aquatic systems and coastal areas (Lewis & Maslin, 2015; Waters et al., 2016). These changes also have psychological implications for communities most directly affected by environmental degradation (Association, 2017). Religious worldviews have long shaped how societies understand their relationship with nature (White, 1967). Coastal areas are particularly vulnerable because they lie at the intersection of terrestrial and marine ecosystems, where ecological, economic, and social interests often compete.

Tourism presents a paradox in this context. Although it generates regional income, unsustainable tourism can degrade coastal habitats, disrupt local livelihoods, and weaken social structures. Natural landscapes become commodities, local identities are reshaped to meet visitors' expectations, and relationships between people and nature may become disconnected from their spiritual and cultural foundations (Arifin & Anwar, 2025; Arifin & Baharun, 2024; Arifin, 2025; Arifin et al., 2021). This disconnection can distance communities from their ecological surroundings and erode the meanings embedded in traditional ways of life.

These challenges call for approaches that extend beyond economic considerations. This study examines local spiritual and cultural practices as collective responses to ecological and economic stress. It focuses on the Rokat ritual practiced by coastal Madurese-Javanese communities in Situbondo, East Java. Originally performed as a magico-religious ceremony to ward off misfortune and ensure safety at sea, Rokat has acquired additional meanings in contemporary contexts(Arifin, 2019, 2020). Observations and informants' accounts suggest that, amid pressures from tourism and coastal reclamation, the ritual has been reinterpreted as a form of collective spiritual coping and community-based environmental counseling. Through narratives such as *bumiasusunsusun Muhammad*, Rokat presents the Earth as a divine trust (As'ad, 1990), while concepts such as*barokah*,*tawassul*, and*syafaat*are interpreted in relation to ecological responsibility.

Previous studies have shown that local rituals can embody conservation ethics and transmit them across generations (Baskoro, 2026), while local wisdom can foster harmonious relationships with the environment (Suroyo et al., 2024). However, such studies often take a conceptual or descriptive approach. Ethnographic evidence remains limited regarding how prayer texts and ritual forums shape collective ecological action.

Against this background, this study investigates how Doa Rokat functions as a form of spiritual coping and cultural counseling that supports ecological awareness and pro-environmental action in coastal communities. It addresses three questions: (1) How do prayer texts and ritual structures frame ecological responsibility? (2) How do ritual forums encourage collective action? and (3) How are ecopsychological values internalized and transmitted within the community? Drawing on spiritual coping, ecopsychology, and At-Tawazun counseling, the study contributes to discussions of Islamic ecopsychology, environmental counseling, and community-based conservation. It examines perceived ecological resilience and psychosocial well-being as reported by informants rather than claiming

objectively measured health or ecological outcomes.

Novelty and Contribution

The authors' earlier studies on Rokat followed two main directions. Arifin (2019) examined the structure ofDoa Pangrokat in *Al-Adzkar Al-Yaumiyyah*and explored the meaning of Rokat in Situbondo through an indigenous counseling perspective, with a focus on mental health. Arifin and Baharun (2022) examined community recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic through service-learning and *pesantren*-based counseling. Although their study identified environmental harmony as one of the reflective meanings of the practice, it did not investigate ecological action (Arifin & Baharun, 2022; Arifin, 2019). Table 1 compares these earlier studies with the present research.

Table. 1: Comparison of the Present Study with the Authors' Earlier Research on Rokat

Aspect	Arifin (2019)	Arifin and Baharun (2022)	This study
Data	Documents (*Al-Adzkar Al-Yaumiyyah* and *Jam'u ad-Da'awat*), field observation notes, and in-depth interviews with seven purposively selected informants (three *kiai* who lead Rokat and four community members); data analyzed through reduction, display, and conclusion drawing	Community service and service-learning activities, community assistance, and an examination of local wisdom and the Doa Pangrokat text; the number of informants, ritual cycles, and interviews was not explicitly reported	Observations of 15 Rokat ritual cycles, 40 interviews, prayer texts, seven member checks, and two focus group discussions (FGDs) involving 25 participants
Location	Situbondo, with references to Madurese-speaking communities in Bondowoso, Jember, and Banyuwangi; specific villages were not identified	Situbondo area; specific villages were not identified	Fifteen coastal villages between Banyuglugur and Merak, Situbondo
Period	No defined research period; interviews were conducted on September 25 and November 27, 2018	No explicit research period reported; the conference paper was presented on October 24–26, 2022, in the context of post-COVID-19 recovery	April 2025 to March 2026
Setting	indigenous mental health practice, including the *selamatan* ritual and prayer text	Post-COVID-19 recovery and public health improvement through *pesantren*-based counseling and Doa Pangrokat	Coastal communities facing pressure from tourism and reclamation
Theoretical framework	Indigenous counseling, indigenous psychology (Kim), and a structural-ethnographic approach	Service-learning, *pesantren*-based counseling, indigenous counseling, and At-Tawazun counseling	Spiritual coping, ecopsychology, and At-Tawazun counseling
Research question	How is Doa Pangrokat in *Al-Adzkar Al-Yaumiyyah* structured, and what does Rokat mean to the Situbondo community from a counseling perspective?	How can *pesantren*-based counseling informed by the wisdom of Doa Pangrokat support post-COVID-19 recovery and public health improvement?	How does Rokat function as a form of collective ecological coping, and how is it connected to pro-environmental action?
Analysis of prayer texts	Structural analysis of Arabic-Javanese prayers organized into three components: *purwa* (title and opening),*madya*(purpose,*tawassul*, and hopes),and*wasana*(*shalawat*), presented in a structural table	The beginning, middle, and ending of the prayer text are discussed in terms of purpose, *tawassul*, and hopes, but the analysis is less detailed than in Arifin (2019) and is not the primary focus	The same Doa Pangrokat text is examined at semantic, syntagmatic, and pragmatic levels and interpreted in relation to observed collective action

Source: Authors' comparison of the cited publications

The present study differs from the authors' earlier work in four main respects. First, it draws on data collected over 12 months across 15 coastal villages. Second, it examines Rokat in the context of environmental pressures rather than community health recovery. Third, it integrates spiritual coping and

ecopsychology into the theoretical framework of At-Tawazun counseling. Fourth, it shifts the focus from mental health to ecological awareness and collective action. Its main contribution lies in analyzing prayer texts alongside observed communal practices and identifying three mechanisms through which spiritual coping may support pro-environmental action: symbolic cosmology, communal solidarity, and the internalization of ecopsychological values.

Literature Review

Ritual and Spiritual Coping in Counseling Research

Research on religious coping has largely focused on individual processes (Pargament et al., 2023; Pargament, 1997, 2007). Studies of Javanese rituals and health, including research on Ruwatan Murwokolo, have examined ritual-related health outcomes (Rahanto, 2012) but have paid less attention to how rituals facilitate shared meaning-making. Scholarship on cross-cultural counseling also emphasizes the need to move beyond Western models by incorporating local cultural perspectives and ways of understanding human experience (Arifin & Zaini, 2019; Kim & Park, 2023).

Rokat in Madurese-Javanese Studies

In Madurese cosmology, health is understood in terms of relational balance rather than merely the absence of individual pathology (Nurwidodo, 2006). Previous studies have examined Rokat as a communicative practice that conveys Islamic symbols (Ilaihi & Aisah, 2012) and as a setting in which *abangan* practices are reinterpreted in relation to*santri*values. Arifin (2019) examined Doa Pangrokat as a form of indigenous counseling for mental health. Although these studies illuminate the symbolic, sociological, and counseling functions of Rokat, few have explored its role in collective ecological coping.

Pesantren, Religious Authority, and Environmental Ethics

Kiai hold spiritual and social authority within *pesantren* communities (Rosalia et al., 2024), while discourse in *pesantren* settings increasingly connects Islamic jurisprudence with environmental concerns (Annisa et al., 2023; Mibtadin, 2023). Studies elsewhere in Indonesia illustrate how religious and customary leaders interpret ecological ethics for their communities. Examples include the Ammatoa of Kajang, described as an "ecological imam" (Ridhoh & Alfian, 2025),and research showing how ecological *da'wah* can support conservation efforts (Hakis et al., 2024). Other studies highlight how communal rituals foster solidarity through the values of *ta'awun* and *ukhuwah* (Mubarak et al., 2025). Calls for ecological responsibility in response to extractive pressures have also emerged within other religious traditions (Usman et al., 2026). Similarly, research on the religious and psychological dimensions of pro-environmental behavior suggests that these dimensions are relevant to understanding environmental engagement (Taylor et al., 2019).

Research Gap

Existing studies have documented the symbolic and sociological functions of Rokat and examined the ecological ethics embedded in other local rituals. However, limited attention has been paid to how Rokat's prayer texts and ritual forums function as forms of cultural counseling that connect spiritual coping with ecological action. This study addresses this gap by examining the meanings conveyed through Doa Rokat and how these meanings relate to collective ecological awareness and action in coastal communities.

Conceptual Framework

This study draws on three complementary frameworks to examine

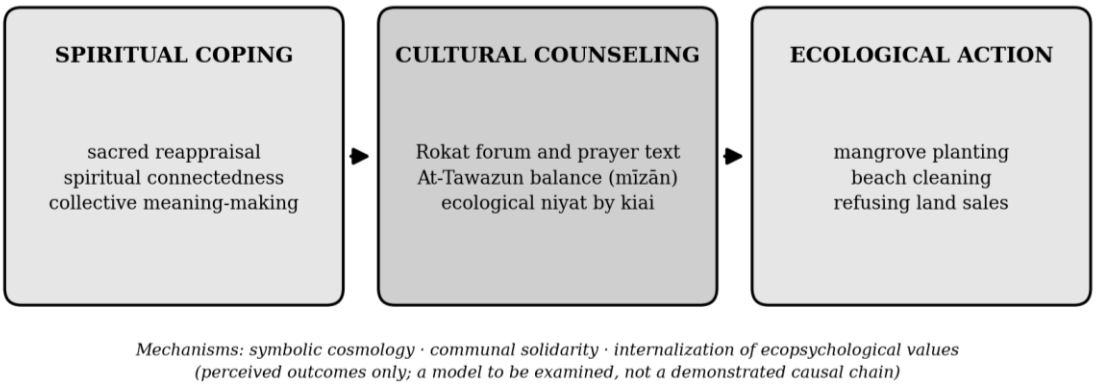
the relationship between spiritual coping, cultural counseling, and ecological action.

Spiritual coping (Pargament, 1997, 2007)explains how people draw on sacred resources to manage stress and adversity. This study extends the framework to a collective ecological context and examines three potential mechanisms through which Rokat may facilitate coping: (1) sacred reappraisal, through which *barokah* is interpreted in relation to ecological responsibility; (2) spiritual connectedness, expressed through symbols such as *bumiasusunsusun Muhammad* that frame human-nature relationships in spiritual terms; and (3) collective meaning-making, whereby Rokat forums provide spaces for community members to express concerns, negotiate shared meanings, and discuss possible responses.

Ecopsychology (Buzzell, L., & Chalquist, 2009; Doherty, 2009; Roszak, 2001)examines how environmental conditions affect not only physical well-being but also psychological states and people's cultural and emotional connections to place. Environmental threats can generate psychological distress (Pihkala, 2020, 2025), making collective responses an important subject of inquiry. In coastal Situbondo, tourism expansion and reclamation place pressure on mangroves and may challenge the sacred meanings residents attach to land and sea. This study uses ecopsychology to interpret how Rokat may help sustain or reconstruct an ecological identity grounded in local cultural and religious values.

At-Tawazun counseling(Arifin & Ummah, 2021; Arifin, 2020, 2021, 2026)is a *pesantren*-based counseling model that emphasizes *mīzān*, or balance, between spiritual and ecological dimensions. In this study, the framework is applied through three related principles: (1) interpreting sacred texts to clarify the relationship between human responsibility as *khalīfatullāh* and nature as *āyātullāh*; (2) integrating *hifdz al-bi'ah*(environmental protection) into religious practice; and (3) reframing ritual almsgiving as *shodaqahlingkungan* (environmental almsgiving). At-Tawazun counseling thus provides an emic perspective for examining how local religious concepts inform the cultural counseling dimension of the analytical model. Together, these frameworks inform an analytical sequence comprising spiritual coping, cultural counseling, and ecological action. Spiritual coping refers to individual and collective responses to ecological stress; cultural counseling describes the process through which ritual practices and local religious values mediate the interpretation of that stress; and ecological action refers to observable or reported responses to environmental concerns. Figure 1 presents this sequence as an analytical model to guide interpretation, rather than as an established causal pathway.

Figure 1. Analytic model of Rokat as spiritual coping, cultural counseling, and ecological action (perceived outcomes only



Source: Author's analysis, 2026

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative design combining ethnography and hermeneutics. The ethnographic approach provided a holistic understanding of the community through sustained engagement in its social and cultural context. The hermeneutic approach was used to interpret the symbolic meanings and functions of the prayer text and ritual (Alvesson & Skolberg, 2000; Barak, 2020; Canel Çınarbaş et al., 2020).

Research Sites and Period

Data were collected over 12 months, from April 2025 to March 2026, in 15 coastal villages in Situbondo Regency, East Java, extending from Banyuglugur in the west to the eastern part of the regency. The sites were purposively selected based on two criteria: (1) the continued observance of annual Rokat prayer rituals and (2) exposure to coastal environmental pressures, including tourism development, coastal land-use change, or reclamation, where applicable. These criteria enabled the study to examine how an established prayer tradition intersects with changing environmental conditions and how its religious, cultural, and communal meanings may shape responses to coastal challenges.

Participant Observation

Participant observation covered 15 Rokat ritual cycles, one in each village, comprising seven Rokat Bumi rituals and eight Rokat Tasek rituals. Observations included prayer processions, the distribution of *rasolan*, and related activities, such as mangrove planting and community discussions. The researcher participated in ritual preparations and documented ecological symbols and changes in ritual practices. Fieldnotes distinguished direct observations from the researcher's interpretations.

Informants

In-depth interviews were conducted with 40 informants selected through purposive sampling. The informants comprised 10 community leaders (four religious leaders, three elders, and three environmental activists) and 30 community members (15 fishers, 10 young people, and five traders and tourism managers). All community members had attended Rokat at least 13 times. Table 2 presents the informants' profiles. Community members were interviewed separately from community leaders to minimize the influence of deference to religious authority on their response

Table. 2: Profile of Informants (N = 40)

Group	Subgroup	n	%
Community leaders	Religious leaders (*kiai*)	4	10.0
	Elders	3	7.5
	Environmental activists	3	7.5
	Subtotal	10	25.0
Community members	Fishers	15	37.5
	Young people	10	25.0
	Traders and tourism managers	5	12.5
	Subtotal	30	75.0
Total		40	100.0

Source: Field data, April 2025 to March 2026

Prayer Texts

The prayer texts examined were *Al-Adzkar Al-Yaumiyyah* (As'ad, 1990) and *Jami'ud Da'awat* (Sukaryo, 1996). They were analyzed at three levels: semantic, focusing on key terms such as *barokah*, *poncoboyo*, and *ngarukat*; syntagmatic, examining the relationships among textual elements and the overall flow of the prayer; and pragmatic, exploring how the prayer functions as a medium of cultural counseling in the contemporary context (As'ad, 1990; Sukaryo, 1996). The Doa Pangrokat text is the same as that examined in Arifin (2019). However, the present study interprets it in conjunction with observed ritual practices and informants' accounts rather than repeating the earlier structural analysis.

Data Analysis

Analysis followed Miles and Huberman's interactive model. Interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and prayer texts were compiled; open coding generated initial codes (e.g., sacred land, loss of *barokah*, and replanting); codes were grouped into categories and three themes; prayer texts were interpreted at semantic, syntagmatic, and pragmatic levels and compared with informants' accounts; and themes were checked against documented activities such as mangrove planting, beach cleaning, and decisions not to sell land.

The coding matrix in Table 3 traces illustrative excerpts from the source data through initial codes, categories, and themes to potential applications. It also specifies what each excerpt supports and what cannot be established from it alone. Each example is presented only once in this table and is not repeated in the Discussion. Where an excerpt supports an interpretation but does not document an ecological action, this distinction is made explicit. The applications listed are proposals unless the Discussion identifies them as practices observed in the field.

Table. 3: Coding Matrix: From Source Excerpts to Themes and PotentialApplications

No.	Source excerpt	Initial code → category	Theme	Interpretation and limitations	Possible application
1	Prayer phrase "jagahusungberkah, sitiusungbuktibumi"	Land as a vessel of blessing → nature as a sacred trust	Symbolic cosmology	Land is presented as a bearer of blessing rather than merely a resource. The phrase alone, however, does	Reflection on land stewardship in community environmental education

No.	Source excerpt	Initial code → category	Theme	Interpretation and limitations	Possible application
				not establish an ecological ethic.	
2	"bumiasusunsusun Muhammad"	Cosmic order rooted in prophecy → sacred cosmology	Symbolic cosmology	The relationship between humans and the Earth is interpreted through a sacred order. Environmental damage may consequently be framed as a moral responsibility, although this interpretation requires contextual support.	Community discussions on land stewardship
3	"antukngarukatcelakaneingdunyarawu hingakhirat"; "amundurakenponcoboyonyelametake nummat"	Removal and prevention of calamity → ritual and collective protection	Symbolic cosmology	Calamity is framed as a collective concern extending to both this world and the hereafter. The wording itself does not specify an ecological meaning.	Incorporating ecological considerations into ritual intentions and community discussions of tourism impacts
4	Protection of houses, yards, rice fields, dry fields, gardens, crops, vehicles, and boats (Sukaryo 1996: 30)	Protection of livelihood assets → ritual embedded in everyday life	Symbolic cosmology	Ritual protection encompasses the places, property, and resources that sustain livelihoods.	Discussions on sustainable land management
5	*Barokah* as "nilai lebih… banyaknya nikmat dari Allah" (Abdusshomad 2018)	Blessing as added value → moral and spiritual responsibility	Symbolic cosmology	Well-being extends beyond material accumulation. Overexploitation may therefore be interpreted as a loss of nonmaterial well-being.	Framing decisions not to sell land as an expression of responsibility, where supported by field data
6	Burial of a black chicken's foot at the center of a yard	Symbolic protection of land → ritual talisman	Symbolic cosmology	The act represents ritual protection. Replacing this practice with another form of protection constitutes an observed adaptation only if documented in the field; its environmental significance depends on	Tree planting as a form of ritual protection, with outcomes monitored

No.	Source excerpt	Initial code → category	Theme	Interpretation and limitations	Possible application
				participants' explanations.	
7	The ritual leader explains the purpose of the gathering before the ceremony	Purpose communicated before the ritual → ritual framing and shared intention	Communal solidarity	The explanation establishes a shared purpose among participants. Any ecological dimension must be supported by field evidence.	Incorporating ecological concerns into the *niyat* (ritual intention), where locally appropriate
8	Collective recitation of Surah Yasin and *shalawat* 100 times	Collective worship and devotion → shared ritual practice	Communal solidarity	Repeated devotional practices create a shared religious experience and may reinforce collective identity. A direct link to ecological action requires empirical evidence.	Using ritual gatherings as a setting for discussing shared responsibilities
9	Distribution of *rasolan* (*ketupat*, *lepet*, *tumpeng*, whole chicken, or fish)	Shared food → mutual support	Communal solidarity	Food sharing provides a social basis through which collective initiatives may be organized.	Pooling community resources to support mangrove nurseries
10	M12: Rokat is *buthok* ("pupuk untuk merawat dan memelihara mereka yang dirokat"); "Kalau kita ingat kepada mereka, mereka pun akan ingat kita"	Ritual as fertilizer; reciprocal remembrance → relational care and social reciprocity	Communal solidarity	Rokat is understood as nurturing relationships. Extending this reciprocal logic to human-nature relationships requires evidence from participants' accounts.	Exploring whether reciprocal care informs *shodaqahlingkungan*
11	L3: "Berdoa dengan bahasa lokal agar lebih mantab"	Prayer in the local language → cultural accessibility	Communal solidarity	Using a familiar language may make religious expression more accessible and meaningful to participants.	Communicating environmental messages through local religious expressions, following community consultation
12	*Tawassul* to Prophets Solomon and Joseph, the angels Jibril, Mikail, Isrofil, and Izroil, and the angels associated with the seven *arasy* and *kursi*	Sacred invocation and angelic protection → spiritual connectedness and cosmic order	Internalization of ecopsychological values	The prayer situates human life within a sacred order. An ecological interpretation requires supporting explanations from participants.	Exploring an ecological identity centered on stewardship

No.	Source excerpt	Initial code → category	Theme	Interpretation and limitations	Possible application
13	"salamatingdunyaakhirat"	Well-being in both worlds → long-term perspective	Internalization of ecopsychological values	The phrase provides a framework for considering how present decisions may affect long-term communal well-being and future generations.	Connecting land-use decisions with long-term community well-being
14	"rokatngarukatbumi"	Healing the Earth → ecological restoration	Internalization of ecopsychological values	The phrase can be interpreted as expressing a need for collective care for the Earth. Restoration activities count as observed actions only when confirmed by field data.	Tree planting and spring protection
15	Setting aside a handful of rice for the poor; "ash-shadaqatutadfa'ulbala'"	*Shodaqah* as habitual practice; charity as protection against calamity → ritual giving and spiritual protection	Internalization of ecopsychological values	Giving is embedded in family practices. Extending this practice to environmental protection remains a potential application rather than an established outcome.	*Shodaqahlingkungan* in itiatives
16	*Purwa–madya–wasana* interpreted as awareness, understanding, and action	Three-part structure → cultural pedagogy	Internalization of ecopsychological values	The prayer's structure may serve as a pedagogical resource. The proposed correspondence requires support from local interpretations.	Ecological learning activities with young people
17	"Riyadhah + shadaqah = balance"; *khaira ummah* (Qur'an 3:110)	At-Tawazun balance (*mīzān*); exemplary community → moral identity	Internalization of values	Environmental action is interpreted as a form of social piety that complements religious devotion. This interpretation does not, by itself, demonstrate that such action occurred.	Community-led conservation framed as a form of collective moral responsibility

Source: Authors' analysis of field data and prayer texts

Percentages are reported as n/N. For the item on first awareness of ecological threats, informants were assigned to a category only when their interviews explicitly documented how they first became aware of these threats. Responses were classified into three categories: (1) ritual forums, (2) media or organizational outreach, and (3) personal experience.

Credibility

The three themes identified in Table 3 correspond to the mechanisms discussed below: symbolic cosmology, communal solidarity, and internalization of ecopsychological values. Credibility was strengthened through triangulation of interviews, fieldnotes, customary documents, and audio-visual recordings of community forums. Member checking was conducted with seven informants, and two focus group discussions (FGDs) involved a total of 25 participants.

Reflexivity and Bias Control

Because the researcher participated in conservation activities, advocacy and confirmation bias were possible. Mitigation included a reflexive journal, active search for disconfirming cases, triangulation, member checking with seven informants, and peer debriefing with colleagues specializing in *pesantren*-based psychology and counseling. The institution is withheld for double-anonymous review. Negative cases are discussed below.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was granted by [institution masked for review] (No. 7 of 2025, dated March 5, 2025). Written informed consent was obtained from all participants. To protect their identities, participants are identified by codes: L1–L10 for leaders and M1–M30 for community members. The study respected local cultural authority, particularly that of religious figures. Research outputs were shared with the community through ritual documentation and support for conservation advocacy.

DISCUSSION

Informants' accounts and observations of ritual-related practices suggest three interrelated mechanisms through which Doa Rokat may support ecological awareness and action: symbolic cosmology, communal solidarity,and internalization of ecopsychologicalvalues. Table 4 summarizes these mechanisms, which are examined in the following sections. To avoid repetition, the discussion refers to the relevant rows of Table 3 rather than reproducing the coded excerpts. The findings distinguish between meanings reported by informants and practices observed in the field. They do not constitute direct measurements of ecological resilience or health outcomes, nor do they establish that Rokat caused the reported awareness or actions.

Table. 4:Analytical Matrix of the Three Mechanisms of Rokat

Analytical dimension	Symbolic cosmology	Communal solidarity	Internalization of ecopsychological values
Theoretical anchor	Spiritual coping through sacred reappraisal	Spiritual coping through collective meaning-making; cultural counseling	*Tawassul* (invocation through sacred figures); the phrase "salamat ingdunyaakhirat"; *shodaqoh*; the *purwa–madya–wasana* framework
Ritual elements	Prayer phrases concerning the Earth and calamity; references to the scope of protection; burial of a chicken's foot	Community forums involving Surah Yasin, Doa Rokat, and discussion; *niyat* (intention); *rasolan*; Rokat Tasek	Tawassul chain; "salamat ingdunyaakhirat"; *shodaqoh*; *purwa–madya–wasana*framework

Analytical dimension	Symbolic cosmology	Communal solidarity	Internalization of ecopsychological values
Meaning reported by informants	*Barokah* understood in relation to the continuity of resources; land understood as a sacred trust	Forums perceived as sources of awareness and platforms for collective agency	Stewardship identity, a long-term perspective, and *shodaqohlingkungan*(environmental charitable giving)
Evidence from the study	28 of 40 informants associated commercialization or reclamation with the loss of *barokah*	Ecological messages were identified in the *niyat* in 11 of 15 ritual cycles; most informants reported ecological awareness (see text)	22 of 40 informants associated *tawassul* with a sacred network; 15 described *shodaqohlingkungan*; 7 of 10 young participantsused the three-part framework
Observed or reported actions	Tree planting as a ritual substitute (see text); refusal to sell land	Funding for nurseries, cleaning equipment, and monitoring in nine villages; Rokat Tasek-related activities in six villages	Refusal to sell land, opposition to resort development, and restoration described as "rokatngarukatbumi"
Limitation	The ecological outcomes of tree planting were not assessed	Ecological awareness was reported, but its attribution to Rokat was not established	Ecological recovery was not assessed

Source**:** Authors' analysis of field data

Symbolic Cosmology

The prayer text situates the living environment within a sacred framework. Phrases that present land as a source of blessing and a sacred trust (Table 3, rows 1–2; As'ad, 1990; Sukaryo, 1996), together with references to the protection of houses, rice fields, crops, and boats (row 4), place the spaces and resources on which livelihoods depend within this framework. References to calamity (row 3) similarly frame misfortune as a collective concern. However, as Table 3 indicates, such wording does not by itself establish an ecological ethic. Its ecological significance depends on how informants interpret and relate it to their environment.

Informants linked *barokah* to the continuity of natural resources rather than material accumulation alone (row 5). Twenty-eight of 40 associated commercialization or reclamation with a loss of *barokah* and *poncoboyo* (calamity). Through this sacred reappraisal, overexploitation was framed as a threat to livelihoods and nonmaterial well-being, helping explain why some informants connected refusing land sales or opposing reclamation with moral responsibility.

In 12 of 15 villages, planting endemic trees had replaced burying a black chicken's foot as a protective practice (Table 3, row 6). Informants described planting at the same location as protecting land and opposing reclamation. This suggests ritual adaptation, although its chronology needs further documentation and the ecological outcomes of planting were not assessed. Its significance therefore rests on participants' explanations, not demonstrated environmental effectiveness.

Communal Solidarity

Rokat forums bring together the recitation of Surah Yasin, the Rokat prayer, and community discussion. In 11 of the 15 observed ritual cycles, religious leaders incorporated ecological messages into the *niyat* (ritual intention) and discussed tourism-related concerns, including restricted access to fishing grounds, coral reef damage, and beach pollution. Explaining a ritual's purpose before its performance is an established practice (Arifin, 2019; Table 3, row 7). The apparent development in the cases examined here lies in the incorporation of explicitly ecological concerns into that explanation.

Thirty-one of the 40 informants (77.5%) identified Rokat forums as the

setting in which they first became aware of ecological threats affecting their living environment. This included 8 of 10 community leaders (80.0%) and 23 of 30 community members (76.7%). The other nine informants identified alternative sources: four cited media or organizational outreach, while five referred to personal experiences at sea. These figures describe informants' reported sources of initial awareness; they do not establish that participation in Rokat independently increased ecological awareness. They nevertheless suggest that, for many participants, the forums provided a setting in which individual observations of coastal change could be discussed and understood as shared concerns.

Informants emphasized familiar religious and linguistic expressions. Describing Rokat as a form of fertilizer for those included in the prayer and preferring prayer in the local language (Table 3, rows 10–11) indicate the perceived importance of relational familiarity and accessibility. Whether this reciprocity extends to nature requires supporting accounts or observed practices. Participants also cited collective supplication to explain prayer's perceived efficacy; this helps explain the forum's social significance but does not show that prayer produces ecological action.

In nine villages, funds pooled during Rokat supported mangrove nurseries, beach-cleaning equipment, and coastal monitoring. Although *rasolan* has previously been associated with charitable giving (Arifin, 2019), using pooled funds for environmental activities appears to be a more recent development in these communities. Rokat Tasek also combined prayer and *tawassul* with beach cleaning, mangrove planting, and coastal patrols in six villages. These activities provide more direct evidence of a connection between ritual gatherings and environmental action than symbolic interpretations alone, but they do not establish ecological outcomes or causal effects.

Internalization of Ecopsychological Values

During *tawassul*, informants invoked prophets and angelic protectors (Table 3, row 12). Twenty-two of the 40 informants associated these invocations with a sense of belonging to a sacred network and a responsibility to maintain harmony on Earth. The *tawassul* sequence in the prayer text (As'ad, 1990; Ibrahimy & Arifin, 2018; Sukaryo, 1996)thus provides a symbolic resource for ecological interpretation. However, the invocations alone do not establish an environmental ethic; their ecological significance depends on how participants explain them. Similarly, the repeated plea for well-being in this world and the hereafter (Table 3, row 13) was interpreted by informants as expressing a long-term orientation toward stewardship. Refusing short-term offers to sell land is consistent with this interpretation only where participants explicitly connected the decision to these beliefs.

Fifteen informants described refusing land sales, opposing resort construction, or restoring marine ecosystems as *shodaqoh lingkungan*. They extended an established ethic of giving to environmental concerns. One participant recalled that his parents set aside rice for people in need (Table 3, row 15), illustrating intergenerational transmission of charity. Informants also used *rokatngarukatbumi* for restoration activities such as tree planting and spring protection (row 14). These accounts indicate perceived stewardship, but environmental outcomes were not measured. In the At-Tawazun framework, *khaira ummah* frames conservation as collective moral responsibility.

In Rokat discussions involving young people, the prayer's three-part structure was interpreted in terms of awareness, understanding and solidarity, and action (Table 3, row 16). Seven of the 10 young participants described this correspondence. Although the prayer's

tripartite structure has been documented in earlier analyses(Arifin, 2019),its interpretation as a framework for ecological learning appears to be a more recent development. This finding suggests that the prayer may serve as a pedagogical resource not only through its content but also through the way its structure is interpreted. However, the study does not establish whether this interpretation produces sustained changes in young people's environmental knowledge or behavior.

How the Three Mechanisms Work Together

The three mechanisms are analytically distinct but interconnected in informants' accounts. Symbolic cosmology provides a framework of meaning in which land, sea, and *barokah* are understood in relation to a sacred order. Within this interpretation, coastal degradation becomes more than a material threat; it also raises concerns about the community's moral responsibilities. Communal solidarity provides a social setting in which these meanings can be discussed and translated into shared intentions, pooled resources, and collective activities. Internalization of ecopsychological values may help sustain these orientations over time through *tawassul*, intergenerational charitable practices, and interpretations of the prayer's structure as a framework for learning.

From a cultural counseling perspective, the Rokat forum can be understood as a setting in which these mechanisms intersect. Religious leaders interpret concerns such as the loss of *barokah* through familiar religious concepts; participants engage with these interpretations through shared language and ritual; and, in some cases, the gathering is associated with collective environmental activities. This interpretation underpins the study's analytical model, which positions cultural counseling as a mediating process linking spiritual coping with ecological action. The model represents a theoretically informed interpretation of participants' accounts, rather than an empirically established causal sequence.

The proposed sequence should therefore be interpreted cautiously. Informants' accounts of how they first became aware of ecological threats and what Rokat meant to them are retrospective and interpretive. Moreover, the researcher's involvement in conservation activities may have influenced participants' responses. The three mechanisms are best understood as plausible pathways through which participants described the relationship between Rokat and environmental concern. Further research using longitudinal designs would be needed to examine how these processes develop over time and whether they are associated with sustained changes in environmental behavior.

Differing Views and Negative Cases

A search for disconfirming evidence was conducted across all 40 interviews, including those with five traders and tourism managers, and through fieldnotes from all 15 research sites. No informant explicitly rejected the association between Rokat and ecological concern, and none expressed support for tourism projects described as environmentally harmful. These findings should not, however, be interpreted as evidence of unanimous agreement, particularly given the potential influence of social desirability and deference to religious authority.

One disconfirming observation emerged from the fieldnotes rather than the interviews. At three of the 15 sites, outside visitors were observed littering on the beach during or after Rokat events. This observation indicates that the ecological norms expressed during Rokat forums did not consistently extend to visitor behavior

at those sites. It therefore cautions against assuming that the values articulated by community members influence all people who attend or visit the ritual setting. One fisher remarked, "Kami bersihkan sampahnya, tapi besok datang lagi" ("We clean up the trash, but tomorrow it comes again"; M8). The statement reflects awareness of the recurring nature of beach litter and the limits of community clean-up efforts, although it does not independently establish the visitors' motivations or the causes of continued littering.

The absence of explicit dissent in the interviews also warrants caution. Interviews with community members were conducted separately from those with leaders, but this arrangement may not have eliminated the effects of deference to religious authority or the researcher's association with conservation activities. Participants may have been reluctant to express disagreement, even in the absence of leaders. The observed littering is therefore an important counterpoint to the interview accounts, demonstrating a gap between the ecological norms expressed in ritual forums and behavior observed in the wider setting. Rather than negating the reported significance of Rokat, this discrepancy highlights the limits of its apparent influence and the need to distinguish community narratives from observed conduct.

Position Relative to Earlier Work

Earlier studies examined Rokat as personal protection and a site of identity negotiation (Ilaihi& Aisah, 2012; Khalik, 2007). The authors' previous work analyzed the prayer's structure and perceived mental-health significance (Arifin, 2019) and its role in post-pandemic recovery (Arifin &Baharun, 2022). This study instead examines how the same prayer and its associated forums are interpreted amid coastal environmental change. Its contribution is to analyze prayer texts alongside observed environmental activities, in dialogue with studies of other Indonesian rituals that incorporate conservation ethics (Baskoro, 2026; Ridhoh&Alfian, 2025).

Theoretical Contribution

The findings extend spiritual coping to collective responses to environmental threats. Informants linked *barokah* with ecological responsibility, framing environmental degradation as a threat to livelihoods and sacred values. From an ecopsychological perspective, tree planting and ritual discussions can express care for places regarded as sacred. At-Tawazun concepts of *khalīfatullāh* (humanity's role as God's vicegerent) and *āyātullāh* (the signs of God) provide a culturally grounded language for discussing environmental stewardship. These interpretations inform Figure 1's model, which is a conceptual account for further investigation rather than an established causal sequence.

Religious Authority and Moral Responsibility

Religious authority, particularly that of *kiai*, appears important in articulating Rokat's ecological meanings (Rosalia et al., 2024). In observed cycles, leaders incorporated environmental concerns into the *niyat* and connected prayer with local ecological issues. This aligns with work on moral responsibility and pro-environmental behavior (Kaiser et al., 1999, 2003) and Islamic environmental practice (Annisa et al., 2023). The concepts of *ta'awun* and leaders' interpretive roles also help frame collective religious practice and environmental engagement (Mubarak et al., 2025; Ridhoh&Alfian, 2025). These are interpretive frameworks, not hypotheses tested by this study. Littering by outside visitors shows that ecological norms articulated in ritual forums did not consistently extend to all visitors; the reach of religious messaging beyond the community should not be assumed.

Practical Implications

The findings suggest that Rokat may offer a culturally grounded entry point for integrating religious practice, community counseling, and environmental action in coastal settings. However, the applicability of this approach in other communities requires further assessment. Four practical recommendations follow.First, counselors and community facilitators could collaborate with *kiai* and community members to incorporate locally relevant ecological concerns into the*niyat* and pre-ritual explanations, provided that these adaptations are culturally appropriate and supported by the community. Second, digital storytelling could document Rokat's ecological narratives and engage younger audiences, particularly because some young participants interpreted the prayer's structure as a progression from awareness and understanding to action. Such initiatives should be evaluated rather than assumed to produce lasting changes in environmental knowledge or behavior.

Third, participatory ecotourism initiatives could provide visitors with opportunities to join community-led activities, such as mangrove planting and beach cleaning. This approach may offer a point of engagement for visitors who are not reached by the ritual forum, although its effectiveness in reducing littering remains to be established. Fourth, local governments could identify and support culturally significant ecological sites and community-led conservation initiatives while respecting the religious meanings through which local residents understand these places. Comparable approaches could also be explored in other ritual contexts, including sea-offering ceremonies in Bali, without assuming that practices or outcomes would be directly transferable.

CLOSING

This study examined how Doa Rokat in coastal Situbondo is interpreted and practiced in relation to ecological awareness and environmental action. Informants' accounts and field observations suggest that Rokat, traditionally associated with protection and communal well-being, has also become a setting in which coastal environmental concerns are expressed through collective spiritual coping. Three interrelated mechanisms emerged from the analysis. First, symbolic cosmology connects *barokah* and *poncoboyo* with interpretations of environmental change, allowing some informants to frame ecological degradation as a threat to sacred values and community livelihoods. Second, communal solidarity provides a setting for discussing environmental concerns, pooling resources, and organizing activities such as mangrove planting and beach cleaning. Third, the internalization of ecopsychological values is reflected in informants' interpretations of*tawassul*, charitable practices, and the prayer's structure as expressions of environmental responsibility and collective identity. Together, these findings inform an analytical model linking spiritual coping, cultural counseling, and ecological action. Informants described Rokat forums as meaningful settings for collective engagement and environmental concern, while observations documented specific conservation-related activities. However, the study did not measure changes in ecological conditions or establish that Rokat caused the reported awareness or actions. The littering observed among outside visitors further indicates that the environmental norms expressed within the ritual setting do not necessarily extend to everyone who uses these coastal spaces.

Limitations and Future Research

This study draws on qualitative data from one regency in Indonesia. Its findings provide context-specific

interpretations rather than statistically generalizable conclusions. The study did not measure clinical outcomes, validated well-being indicators, or changes in ecological conditions. Accordingly, claims concerning resilience and well-being are limited to informants' accounts, while the relationship between Rokat and environmental action remains interpretive rather than causal. The findings may also have been influenced by deference to religious authority, the researcher's involvement in conservation, and the retrospective nature of reports about the initial sources of ecological awareness.

Future research could address these limitations through mixed-methods designs combining qualitative inquiry with ecological monitoring and validated measures of well-being or environmental awareness. Comparative studies across coastal communities could examine how local religious traditions shape environmental interpretations and practices. Further research could also investigate gender dynamics in ritual governance and follow Rokat-related activities over time to assess the continuity of community engagement and the extent to which environmental norms reach visitors. Such work would help determine whether the culturally embedded relationship between Rokat, counseling, and conservation identified in this study can inform interventions in other coastal settings.

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