



## GHÂNCARAN: JURNAL PENDIDIKAN BAHASA DAN SASTRA Indonesia

<http://ejournal.iainmadura.ac.id/index.php/ghancaran>

E-ISSN: 2715-9132; P-ISSN: 2714-8955

DOI 10.19105/ghancaran.vi.21644



# Environmental Conservation Values in Zawawi Imron's Literature: An Ecosemantic Study

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### Abstrak

**Kata Kunci:**  
Ekosemantik;  
Pelestarian alam;  
Karya sastra;  
D. Zawawi Imron.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap pesan-pesan pelestarian lingkungan yang terkandung dalam karya sastra Zawawi Imron melalui pendekatan ekosemantik. Ekosemantik sebagai cabang kajian linguistik ekologis memfokuskan perhatian pada keterkaitan antara makna bahasa, alam, dan budaya. Zawawi Imron, sebagai penyair yang dikenal dengan sebutan "Penyair Laut," banyak melahirkan karya-karya bernuansa ekologis, yang merepresentasikan hubungan harmonis antara manusia dan alam, khususnya dalam konteks budaya pesisir Madura. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif dengan teknik analisis isi terhadap puisi-puisi terpilih karya Zawawi Imron. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa karya-karya tersebut sarat dengan pesan pelestarian seperti ajakan menjaga laut, merawat tanah, mempertahankan kearifan lokal, serta peringatan terhadap kerusakan lingkungan akibat ulah manusia. Melalui diksi, metafora, dan citraan khas yang digunakan penyair, pesan-pesan tersebut tidak hanya bersifat estetis, tetapi juga etis dan ekologis. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa sastra dapat menjadi medium penting dalam membangun kesadaran ekologis dan memperkuat nilai-nilai pelestarian lingkungan yang berakar pada budaya lokal.

### Abstract

**Keywords:**  
Ecosemantics;  
Nature  
conservation;  
Literary;  
D. Zawawi Imron.

This study aims to uncover environmental conservation messages contained in Zawawi Imron's literary works through an ecosemantic approach. Ecosemantics, as a branch of ecological linguistics, focuses on the relationship between the meaning of language, nature, and culture. Zawawi Imron, a poet known as the "Sea Poet," has produced many ecologically nuanced works, representing the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, particularly in the context of Madurese coastal culture. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method with content analysis techniques on selected poems by Zawawi Imron. The results of the study indicate that these works are full of conservation messages such as calls to protect the sea, care for the land, maintain local wisdom, and warnings against environmental damage caused by human activity. Through the poet's distinctive diction, metaphors, and imagery, these messages are not only aesthetic, but also ethical and ecological. This study concludes that literature can be an important medium in building ecological awareness and strengthening environmental conservation values rooted in local culture.

Terkirim: 18 Agustus 2025; Revisi: 1 September 2025; Diterbitkan: 12 September 2025

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## INTRODUCTION

Literature serves not only as a medium for aesthetic and cultural expression but also as a space for the articulation of ecological values that reflect human awareness of the environment (Chen, Xiaoli, Kong, & Lafayette, 2019). Amid the global ecological crisis,

an urgent need has emerged to rediscover local wisdom captured in literary works, particularly those derived from oral traditions and regional cultures. One writer who consistently displays ecological sensitivity in his poetry is Zawawi Imron, a Madurese poet known as the "*Sastrawan Laut*" (Zykova, 2023). Through his distinctive style and powerful imagery, Zawawi's works not only express love for his ancestral homeland but also contain implicit and explicit messages of environmental preservation. This study uses an ecosemantic approach to examine how ecological meaning is constructed in Zawawi Imron's literary works and how these messages shape readers' ecological awareness (Efendi, Ahmadi, & Indarti, 2025; Efendi et al., 2025).

Regarding D. Zawawi Imron's ecosemantic poetry, although specific research on Zawawi Imron's ecosemantic poetry may not be widely available, several researchers and studies on poems focusing on the themes of ecology, the environment, and the relationship between humans and nature can provide relevant insights and references. Zawawi Imron is known as a poet sensitive to social issues, nature, and environmental issues, which is why his works are often viewed from an ecosemantic perspective (Gorin & Gorin, 2025). The following are several approaches and researchers relevant to the study of ecosemantic poetry, which can serve as references for research on Zawawi Imron's work. Researchers such as J. B. Priestley (1973) have written about the relationship between humans and nature in literary works, which can provide a foundation for thinking about ecosemantics.

Although Priestley did not write directly about D. Zawawi Imron's poetry, his ideas about how literature, including poetry, reflects or responds to the ecological crisis are relevant to analyzing Zawawi Imron's work, particularly regarding nature and its role in poetry. M.A.K. Halliday, renowned for his semantic theory, can provide a strong linguistic approach to analyzing ecosemantic poetry. The theory of systemic functional semantics developed by Halliday (Resnick & Walker, n.d.) is often used to analyze the relationship between meaning and language in literary texts, including poetry. In the context of Zawawi Imron, this approach can be used to explore how the use of natural symbols in his poetry conveys ecological meanings and environmental messages. Several researchers in Indonesia have examined the ecological influence in modern Indonesian literature, including poetry. For example, research conducted by Arswendo Atmowiloto and Sutardji Calzoum Bachri (Bachri, 2024), both of whom frequently write about the relationship between humans and nature in their works (Yunus RH & Efendi, 2024; Jannah & Efendi, 2024). This research can serve as a relevant reference for understanding how Zawawi

Imron uses nature in his poetry, as well as how ecological or ecosemantic themes develop in Indonesian literature.

D. Zawawi Imron's ecosemantic-based poetry has developed significantly within the context of Indonesian literature, which focuses on environmental issues and the relationship between humans and nature (Mayse, 2024). D. Zawawi Imron is known as a poet who often depicts the beauty of nature while simultaneously critiquing environmental damage through strong natural symbolism in his poetry (Nobbs, 1923). D. Zawawi Imron often uses nature as the main object in his poetry to express his worries and concerns about environmental damage. Themes such as environmental destruction, pollution, deforestation, and ecosystem damage are central to his poetry. His poems demonstrate how nature is not merely a backdrop or aesthetic object, but a living subject with profound meaning in explaining ecological issues. This poet uses natural symbols to invite readers to think about the negative impacts of human activity on the environment. The purpose of this study is to discuss the literary aspects of D. Zawawi Imron's poetry, which are based on ecosemantics that are developing in society.

## METHOD

A qualitative approach in research is used to understand phenomena in depth, particularly in literary, cultural, and social studies. When linked to ecosemantics in poetry, qualitative methods help interpret ecological meanings within poetic texts, focusing on language, symbolism, and cultural context (Genis & Moen, 2024). The research method used to examine ecosemantics in environmental-themed poetry will involve an approach that combines literary and ecological analysis. Ecosemantics itself focuses on the study of the relationship between language, meaning, and the environment. In this case, ecosemantics examines how poetry depicts, responds to, and evaluates nature and the relationship between humans and their surroundings (Aslan & Tekin, 2024). Hermeneutics is a method for interpreting texts by examining the context, the author's intentions, and the message conveyed through the literary work. In ecosemantic research, a hermeneutic approach will be used to uncover the ecological or social messages contained in environmental poetry.

Hermeneutics focuses on the dialogue between text and reader, where meaning derives not only from the text itself but also from the reader's understanding, influenced by their experiences (Sheng et al., 2024), background, and personal knowledge. In analyzing environmental poetry, readers bring their ecological awareness and may view the poem in the context of current environmental issues, which then shapes their

interpretation of the meaning. Hermeneutics in analyzing environmental poetry allows researchers to explore deeper meanings related to the relationship between humans and nature and to reveal the ecological messages implied in literary works (Dewi & Indriyanto, 2023). By taking steps such as reading poetry in depth, understanding the social and historical context, exploring the poet's intentions, and creating a holistic interpretation, hermeneutics can help unlock a deeper understanding of how poetry functions as a medium for expressing environmental concerns.

Through in-depth reading, researchers seek to uncover meanings that are not only explicitly apparent (e.g., literal depictions of nature) but also implicit meanings related to ethical, cultural, and existential values. This involves applying the concept of the hermeneutic circle, which is the interaction between parts of a text and its overall context (Bortoluzzi, 2024). Within this framework, rhetorical questions or question marks arise from the text, which is then answered through further interpretation. This hermeneutic code helps guide readers to reflect and seek deeper meanings in the relationship between humans and nature (Harun, Artika, & Wildan, 2023). Hermeneutics not only studies the text internally but also places it within its historical, cultural, and social context. Thus, this analysis can reveal how local values and traditions (e.g., the environmental wisdom of local communities) are integrated into the poem. The hermeneutic approach emphasizes the dialogue between the text and the reader's background and experiences (Anggriawan, Farid, & Sari, 2023). This process allows for richer and more personal interpretations, and opens up the possibility of diverse meanings depending on the reader's perspective.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Ecosemantics: A Theoretical Reading**

Ecosemantics focuses on how words, metaphors, and symbols in poetry represent, shape, or even influence human perceptions of nature (Demirciler, 2024). In the poetry of Chairil Anwar and Sapardi Djoko Damono, natural elements are often used as symbols of life, death, and impermanence. Through ecosemantic analysis, we can understand how ecological meanings are implied in the word choice and structure of their poems. Ecosemantic theory plays a crucial role in understanding how poetry can shape ecological awareness and reinforce environmental conservation messages through the art of language (Stępień, 2024). Semantic theory in the poetry of D. Zawawi Imron can be used to analyze the meaning contained in words, symbols, and the structure of poetry, and how these elements function to convey certain messages and emotions to readers

(Kiseleva, 2024). In this context, semantics focuses on how words and meanings work within a text to express the thoughts, feelings, and values within a poem. Ecosemantic theory is a type of semantic approach that connects the meaning of language with the relationship between humans and the environment or ecology of the surrounding nature. This concept focuses on how language reflects, shapes, and is influenced by human understanding and interaction with the natural world, and how this plays a role in shaping ecological consciousness (Ninawati Syahrul, 2023).

Ecosemantic theory is relevant in discourses on climate change, sustainability, and other ecological crises because it helps us better understand the role of language in shaping collective consciousness and action. It is also important in the study of how media and other cultural texts depict or conceal environmental issues (Fadila & Israhayu, 2023). D. Zamawi Imron's poetry is often chosen in ecosemantic studies because of its ability to depict the relationship between humans and nature, as well as the ways in which the language in his poetry reflects and shapes ecological consciousness. Within the ecosemantic context, Imron's poetry possesses several distinctive characteristics that make it relevant for analysis from an ecological perspective, both in terms of its depiction of nature, its use of nature, and how it leads readers to reflect on their relationship with the environment (Kim & Kim, 2024).

In many of D. Zamawi Imron's poems, nature is not merely a backdrop or object to be admired. Still, it is often positioned as a living entity and plays a role in human experience (Cesar et al., 2023). Nature is not only depicted physically, but also given an emotional and spiritual dimension that allows the reader to feel close to the surrounding environment. Some poems also show aspects of poetry for the genre of climate change that is happening today (Harun et al., 2023). Aspects of poetry also show that in exploring a poem that describes a study of environmental damage in a place in England (Asante, 2015).

### **Zawawi Imron: A Poet Who Embroiders Nature in Prayer**

On a small, barren island surrounded by sea and salt wind, a human being was born who would later be known as a gentle voice from a harsh land: D. Zawawi Imron. He was born in Batang-Batang Village, Sumenep, on the northern coast of Madura, a place where long droughts, palm trees, and relentless coastal winds coexist. Madura was not only his birthplace but much more. It was the pulse and essence of his life and poetry.

Zawawi grew up in a *pesantren* (Islamic boarding school) family, studied religion, and lived a simple life. Nevertheless, from a young age, he realized that there was

something more silent than the letters of holy verses and moral sermons: nature. Nature imbued him with beauty, majesty, and an indescribable curiosity. He gazed at the sea, heard the rustling of the wind, smelled the cracked earth during the dry season, and all of this was captured in his feelings. He does not speak much, but he is poetic in silence. Nature becomes his friend, teacher, and inner mirror (Tabarok, Miranda, Aini, & Ambarwati, 2024).

Zawawi's poetry not only tells of love for humans: for his mother, for his lover, but also for the natural world where he grew up, where he found all the love in life. His poems about nature transcend space and boundaries, not merely criticizing environmental damage but also offering a new perspective on the environment: love without possessing it, like Zawawi's love for the sea, for the palm tree, for the land. However, that is precisely his strength: he raises awareness through empathy, not propaganda. In his poem "Madura, I Am Your Sea," the sea is not merely a backdrop, but a body and soul. The sea is not a source of threat but rather a nurturer of humanity, a protector, and a source of life. He writes:

*Madura, akulah lautmu  
Gelombangmu darahku  
Aku terbentuk dari ombak dan karangmu*  
  
Madura, I am your sea  
Your waves are my blood  
I am formed from your waves and your rocks

Through these lines, Zawawi emphasizes that the sea is not a tourist attraction or merely a resource. The sea is part of humanity. Therefore, the sea should be treated like humans: protected, respected, and cared for for its sustainability. The sea is a source of livelihood for fishermen, a road and market for traders. Damage to the sea is damage to the body, to identity, and the very survival of humanity. Zawawi's poetry is more than just a poem about identity; it is a warning to everyone, anytime, and anywhere that the sea is the source and estuary of all human hopes (the coast). Zawawi's poetry is a reminder, a guideline, and a norm that we should all understand. Zawawi's poetry is a stern warning without the need to scold anyone (Darni, 2025).

In "*Ibuku*," often considered a spiritual and more personal poem because it speaks of his relationship with his mother, Zawawi includes a very ecological image: a well that dries up during the dry season. He wrote:

*Kalau aku merantau  
Lalu datang musim kemarau  
Sumur-sumur kering  
Daunan pun gugur bersama reranting  
Hanya mata air air matamu, Ibu...*



When I wandered away  
Then came the dry season  
The wells dried up  
The leaves fell along with the twigs  
Only your tears remain, Mother...

Here, we read not only the longing of a child for its mother, not only the spiritual bond between a child and the mother who gave birth to it, but also the loss of water, of the coolness of nature that was once a source of life. The drought becomes both metaphor and reality, both a shock and a wake-up call. The longing for a mother while away from home is the culmination of a child's feelings, who often feels her presence is trivial when they live in the same house. The bitterness born of this longing is also an image that Zawawi uses to remind us of the importance of water to quench thirst during the dry season. It is a simple thing that we often forget to realize during the rainy season. It is a depiction that not everyone can master.

As a Madurese, Zawawi knows all too well what it is like to live on land that's often hard and barren. It is not easy to plow for planting, hoping for a livelihood in the next season. The harshness and barrenness of Madura's land during the dry season do not make him curse it. Instead, he embraces it, loving it unconditionally. The barrenness serves as a constant reminder to him to strengthen his faith and gratitude for what he has achieved. While singing the lines of his poetry, he urges us to preserve nature. His poetry is a form of prayer and acceptance, which in today's context serves as another way to encourage people to make peace and protect nature (Tabarok et al., 2024).

Zawawi sensitively grasps that damage does not always take the form of visible ruins or destruction. He explores a deeper meaning: damage as a perspective, an attitude that slowly distances humans from the wisdom of nature. In his poetry, he elevates simplicity as the breath of life, reminding us of the humility often forgotten when the glitz and glamour of luxury tempt humans. He wrote about humans who are oblivious to the land they stand on, lost in ambition and forgetting their roots. Through his mellow poetry, Zawawi delivers a sharp yet subtle critique of the greed that masks itself under the guise of progress. He uncovers the mask of need, which is actually an unstoppable desire, a lust that is constantly demanding, never satisfied, and slowly disrupts the balance of the universe. It destroys the very place where humans live (Priyadi, 2016).

To this day, despite his fame reverberating nationally and even internationally, Zawawi still chooses to live in his hometown. He has not moved to the city, nor has he been tempted by the glittering lights of the stage or the hustle and bustle of public attention. For Zawawi, his village is not just a birthplace, but an irreplaceable source of life. It is there that he can hear the whisper of the wind among the trees, smell the scent

of wet soil after rain, and absorb the crashing waves that he often praises in his poems. The village is the pulse of the universe for him, the land that nurtures, the sea that inspires, and the sky that is always open to receive gratitude. It is there that he feels whole, at home, and continues to write with a soul that remains connected to his roots. Zawawi has grown into a towering tree whose strong roots penetrate deeply into the essence of Madura's soil.

Zawawi Imron is not a poet raising a megaphone to shout about activism, but rather, he teaches us about ecology in a much deeper and more meaningful way. Zawawi's loyalty to his homeland is not a mere verbal claim, but a commitment evident in his every step and action. He shows us that to love the earth, we do not need to make grandiose pronouncements; what we need is sincerity in caring for it, sensitivity in writing about it, and sincere prayers for its preservation. Through words that flow from a grateful heart, Zawawi teaches us that true love for nature does not require the spotlight, only an awareness born from the depths of the soul that appreciates every gift bestowed by the Creator (Wasniah, Sumiyadi, & Ma'mur, 2021).

### **Zawawi Imron's Poetry and His Concern for Environmental Conservation**

Zawawi Imron's poetry is often considered spiritual and humanistic, but upon closer reading, his works also harbor a strong ecological awareness. He does not write directly about the "environment" in the technical sense, but rather uses natural symbols as a way to express the values, pain, and hopes of his community. In his poems, nature is not merely a backdrop. It is a character. Nature is part of the human self. One of his most famous poems, "Mother," is often read simply as spiritual and personal poetry. However, it goes beyond that; it also contains a meaningful ecological metaphor. At the beginning, he writes:

*Kalau aku merantau / lalu datang musim kemarau / sumur-sumur kering / daunan pun gugur bersama reranting...*

*When I wandered away / then the dry season came / the wells dried up / the leaves fell along with the twigs...*

In these four lines, Zawawi goes beyond simply depicting the dry season in the usual way, as a natural phenomenon that only affects the soil and plants. He also leads readers to reflect on the larger implications hidden behind the drought: a deeper crisis, a crisis of ecology and sustainability. The drought he writes about is not simply about the loss of water or the drying up of land, but also a symbol of a broader loss, the loss of humanity's connection to nature, and the threat to the balance that sustains life. For Zawawi, who grew up on Madura, an island frequently hit by long dry seasons, nature is not merely a



backdrop for life, but the source of everything he values. Human dependence on nature, in the form of water and fertile soil, is the essence of life itself. The balance of nature is the breath of the entire ecosystem, and its destruction threatens not only the environment but also human existence itself. Therefore, in Zawawi's view, nothing should disturb this harmony. No one should destroy the land, plunder its resources, or neglect our responsibility to the earth that gives life. Yet amidst the threat of destruction, there is one inexhaustible source of life:

... *hanya mata air air matamu, Ibu / yang tetap lancar mengalir.*  
 ... only the spring of your tears, Mother / continues to flow freely

The mother's tears in this poem are not merely a depiction of sadness, but rather a symbol of lost resources, reminding us of the ecological impact of human exploitation of nature. A mother's tears become the remaining "springs" that replace those that have been lost, whether in the form of barren land, dried-up water sources, or deforested forests. In this context, a mother's affection is not only a manifestation of human love, but also reflects the resilience and resilience of nature, which is increasingly threatened. Zawawi carefully uses the diction "*mata air air matamu Ibu*" to raise our awareness of the importance of ecosystem sustainability, which is increasingly being eroded by uncontrolled human needs and desires. Water, which in a scientific context we know as a fundamental source of life for all living things, has now become a symbol of the threatened fragility of nature. This poem, in turn, is not only about maternal love, but also an invitation to restore our relationship with nature. It reminds us that without a collective commitment to preserving nature, we will ultimately lose everything that has given us life (Wasniah et al., 2021).

In another of Zawawi's famous poems, "Madura I Am Your Sea," the sea is more than just a place or geographical object on a map. For Zawawi, the sea is an inseparable part of human life, like the blood that flows through the body. It is not only a source of life, but also a protector that keeps humans alive and balanced. The sea gives life, gives hope, and often serves as a refuge when the world seems harsh. For Zawawi, the sea is not just a physical space that borders land, but an entity that is integral to humans, forming an unbreakable bond. The sea is the heart that pumps life, providing energy and a sense of security to all who depend on it. The sea is identity, like the blood that flows in every vein, giving meaning and strength to every step of life. In other words, the sea is the heart of Madura, pumping life, giving, protecting, and keeping humans integrated with nature.

*Madura / akulah lautmu / gelombangmu darahku / aku terbentuk dari ombak dan karangmu..*

Madura / I am your sea / your waves are my blood / I am formed from your waves and your rocks...

When he says "Madura I Am Your Sea," Zawawi clearly illustrates that he and the sea are one and interdependent. This is not an empty metaphor, but a profound reality felt in every breath of Madurese life. For Zawawi, the sea is more than just a vast expanse of water. It is both origin and destination, a place that gives life and a place to return to. It is a source of livelihood for many, a place to fish for their primary food, a trading point connecting many islands, and even a salt field that is the economic mainstay of most Madurese. However, for Zawawi, the sea is more than just a means of life. It is part of our identity. When the sea is damaged, when its waters are polluted, when its coral reefs are destroyed, or when its coastline is eroded, it is not only nature that is affected, but also the lives of the people who depend on it. This environmental damage is not just about the loss of natural resources, but also about the loss of a part of ourselves. When the coral reefs that provide homes for thousands of marine life are destroyed, the human body connected to the sea feels the effects. It is felt in the body, it is felt in the soul. This is the essence of Zawawi's powerful ecological message: humans and nature, especially the sea, are inseparable (Priyadi, 2016).

Through his poetry, Zawawi indirectly reminds us that environmental damage is not only detrimental to the environment but also to ourselves. Destroying nature means undermining the sustainability of our lives. This poem conveys that preserving the ocean is more than just preserving its ecosystem or its flora and fauna. Preserving the ocean is about preserving the cultural history embodied in humanity's relationship with nature, which has existed for centuries. The ocean is not just a place from which we extract resources, but also a symbol of the past and the future. The ocean contains an immeasurable spiritual heritage, reflected in the ways of life of the communities that depend on it, through interconnected rituals, beliefs, and customs. Therefore, preserving the ocean is part of preserving cultural sustainability, preserving historical heritage, and even safeguarding the future of future generations.

In many of his poems, Zawawi uses weeds, dew, soil, rocks, dusk, and wind as symbols of the human experience. In the poem "*Bunga Tertusuk Ilalang*" (The Moon Pierced by Weeds), he depicts the relationship between humans and nature in an absurd and wounded state: the moon, majestic and distant, can be wounded by a small and fragile weed. This serves as a metaphor for the way nature can be wounded, even by seemingly trivial things. Our every action, often without consideration for the well-being of life, will always have lasting consequences. The symbols of nature in the poem are not presented exotically or romantically. Instead, it presents nature in its ordinary, intimate,

and honest form, demonstrating that ecological life is not something distant or abstract, but rather exists around us every day (Priyadi, 2016).

Zawawi's poems are more than just beautiful words; they are living witnesses, recording the journey of history and the growing ecological awareness within humanity. Zawawi teaches us that nature is not merely a resource to be exploited for economic gain, but also a source of life that holds profound human values. In an increasingly industrialized, modern, and alienated world, Zawawi's voice serves as a gentle reminder of something crucial: nature is our home. Moreover, like any home, it requires not only rules and regulations to maintain it, but also genuine respect, attentive care, and love that flows from our hearts. Zawawi's poems invite us to reflect on our relationship with nature, not as rulers or exploiters, but as part of a larger ecosystem. Protecting nature, for Zawawi, is not merely a moral obligation but a spiritual duty. We must care for it more deeply, with the awareness that its preservation is a reflection of the preservation of our own lives. Nature gives us life, and for that, we must give back with gratitude and responsibility.

## **Socio-Cultural and Environmental Issues in Zawawi Imron's Poetry**

### ***Spiritual Expression***

Zawawi Imron's poetry is not just a form of artistic expression, but is also a manifestation of deep spiritual gratitude, which is reflected in every word and stanza. In the background of his life as a *santri*, who grew up in a boarding school environment that was steeped in religious teachings, Zawawi used his poetry as a channel to express his closeness to God, as well as his gratitude for the natural gifts He has given. Nature, in Zawawi's view, is not just a physical object that can be utilized, but more than that, nature is a form of God's love that needs to be guarded and maintained with full respect. For Zawawi, poetry is not only a way to express gratitude for what He has given, but also as a form of reminder for us not to forget our relationship with God and nature.

In every poem that has a natural theme, such as the sea, land, and wind, Zawawi seems to voice a prayer, conveying his gratitude to God for the beauty and abundance he has given. This is a form of spirituality that speaks through words, where each stanza becomes a prayer that penetrates the reader's soul. Zawawi's poetry, with all its beauty and depth, not only reflects his love for Madura's nature but also reflects the deep religious convictions that flow within him. In the Islamic teachings he received at the Islamic boarding school, nature is viewed as one of God's creations that must be protected. This is reflected in many of Zawawi's works, which clearly encourage us to

value nature as part of our faith in God. Nature is not only a place to find sustenance, but also a spiritual test: how we protect, care for, and nurture it. In Zawawi's view, destroying nature means destroying our relationship with God, who has entrusted us to care for this earth with full awareness and responsibility.

Poems that explore the sea or land, for example, are not merely expressions of his innermost thoughts but also a means for Zawawi to draw closer to God. The sea, which he frequently mentions in his poems, is not only a symbol of the life-giving nature but also a manifestation of God's greatness. The sea is a place of peace for the heart, like a prayer recited devoutly. When Zawawi writes about the sea, he is not simply speaking of the waves that come and go, but rather of the cycle of life created by God, of gratitude for His endless gifts. The sea is a symbol of the Almighty God, who gives life and at the same time reminds us of the transience of this world.

Furthermore, Zawawi's poetry also serves as a call to return to religious teachings, which emphasize the importance of preserving nature as part of worship. In the Islamic boarding school tradition, maintaining a balance between the worldly and the hereafter is a central tenet that underpins every aspect of life, including how we interact with nature. Thus, Zawawi's poetry is not only a social critique of environmental degradation, but also a form of worship. This prayer reminds us to maintain harmony between humans, nature, and God. With every word, Zawawi expresses gratitude and reverence for God, who has given us everything, while reminding us of our immense responsibility to safeguard what God has entrusted to us. Zawawi's poetry, in this context, becomes a form of sublime spirituality. He expressed his gratitude to God for all of His creation, speaking not only of the beauty of nature but also of our responsibility as humans to protect and care for it. This was a call to return to the fundamental values of Madurese religion and culture, which teach that protecting nature is part of worship, an effort to maintain the balance and harmony that God has created in this world. As a *santri* (Islamic boarding school student), Zawawi believed that through poetry, he could express his deep gratitude to God, while encouraging others to reconsider their relationship with nature and God.

### ***Ecological Values***

Zawawi Imron's poetry presents a deep ecological awareness, highlighting the relationship between humans and nature as an inseparable whole. Ecological values are strongly felt in Zawawi's work, particularly in the way he portrays nature as an entity that not only provides life but also requires care and protection. Nature, for Zawawi, is not an object to be exploited without limit, but a fragile and interdependent system that must be

maintained for its sustainability. In many of his poems, Zawawi highlights the damage to nature as a result of irresponsible human exploitation. The sea, land, and air, natural elements that frequently appear in his poems, are seen as integral parts of the larger human life. Damage to these elements not only affects the ecosystem but also disrupts the balance of human life itself. For example, in his poems depicting the sea, Zawawi speaks not only of the sea as a source of livelihood but also as an indicator of the vitality of the broader ecosystem. When the sea is polluted, it is not only fishermen who are affected, but also the larger ecological balance, which can affect food security, social life, and the economic stability of a community.

Zawawi also depicts nature as a space that gives, but also as a space that requires attention and care. In his poems, environmental damage serves as a reminder of the ongoing imbalance. Zawawi's poems not only critique the visible damage but also invite readers to reflect on its deeper causes: human greed that pursues short-term profit without considering the long-term impact on the ecosystem. These poems serve as a call to protect and preserve nature, to not only over-exploit natural resources, but also to strive for sustainability so that future generations can benefit. In many of his poems, Zawawi invites readers to think more deeply about the interconnectedness of humans and nature. Nature is not a separate entity from human life, but an inseparable part of it. Through his poetry, Zawawi highlights the importance of a heightened ecological awareness, where humans must begin to take responsibility for the preservation of nature as part of the sustainability of life itself. Any damage done to nature, according to Zawawi, will have consequences for humans, whether in the form of natural disasters, a decreased quality of life, or social imbalance.

It is important to note that Zawawi is not only discussing environmental damage as a global phenomenon, but also as a problem occurring at the local level. In the context of Madura, for example, which is heavily dependent on the sea and agriculture, environmental damage directly impacts the lives of its people. When the sea is polluted, when natural resources are depleted, not only does nature suffer, but the communities that depend on it also feel the impact, both in terms of livelihoods, health, and social stability. This is Zawawi's call to view nature more critically, recognizing that every action we take towards it has consequences far beyond what we can directly observe.

One of the strong ecological values in Zawawi's poetry is respect for the diversity of nature and the importance of preserving biodiversity. In his poetry, he often depicts nature in all its diversity: sea, forest, soil, and wind, as interconnected elements that form a complex ecosystem. Damage to one part of nature will affect other parts, and thus, this

damage disrupts the established order of life. Here, Zawawi reminds us of the importance of preserving every element of nature, because each part, even if seemingly small or insignificant, plays a vital role in maintaining the overall ecological balance.

Furthermore, Zawawi also emphasizes the importance of collective awareness to preserve nature as a shared responsibility. His poems not only call for individual care for nature but also invite society to collaborate in preserving the environment. In this context, his poems convey a strong social message: that environmental damage is not just the problem of one individual or one generation, but a problem that must be borne by the entire community and passed on to future generations. Through these works, Zawawi invites readers to respond to environmental damage with concrete actions, whether through preservation, conservation, or more sustainable policies. This is so that nature can continue to provide life for future generations.

### ***The Value of Local Wisdom***

In the world of modern Indonesian literature, few poets are able to maintain local roots while reaching for universal meanings. Among the few who have succeeded, Zawawi Imron stands out as a figure loyal to his homeland, Madura, making it both a center of inspiration and an arena for discursive struggle. His poetry is not merely an expression of the soul or a form of aesthetic expression, but rather a symbolic space of resistance against the dominance of meanings that often marginalize local culture. Through his poetic lines, Zawawi constructs a narrative that speaks to local wisdom as a foundation of identity and a source of values worthy of respect by a wider audience. Zawawi Imron's poetry not only tells stories about Madura, but also gives voice to Madura. He maintains no distance between the poet and his homeland; in his poems, he merges into the landscape itself, from the salty soil, the sea breeze, the sound of boats, to the silent cries of a mother.

In his poem "Ibuku," which has become an icon of modern Indonesian literature, he presents a portrait of Madurese women in a simple yet deeply moving image: the mother as the sun, as the force of life, as the field of sincerity that silently sustains the family. Behind this seemingly personal metaphor lies a collective discourse about inherited cultural values: fortitude, sacrifice, loyalty, and strength in silence. This reflects a vibrant and enduring value system within Madurese society, a wisdom that grows from the limitations of nature and the harshness of reality, yet remains gentle in its manifestations of life. Zawawi never transforms Madura into a utopia. He does not turn a blind eye to the



harshness of life in his homeland, but rather speaks to it as it is. Yet, within that violence, he instills dignity.

One poem that powerfully embodies this strategy is "Celurit Emas." The sickle, often interpreted by outsiders as a symbol of violence, in Zawawi's hands becomes a symbol of honor and work. He gives new meaning to local symbols and offers readers a form of cultural knowledge that differs from the dominant narrative. In this way, he not only writes poetry, but also reconstructs the meaning of local symbols through a persuasive discourse process. It is important to realize that in Zawawi's poetry, local wisdom is not presented normatively. He does not advise, does not dictate, does not preach. Instead, through reflective and empathetic lyrical narratives, he makes the reader feel these values indirectly. That is an argumentative strategy wrapped in aesthetics: introducing values through inner experience, not through slogans. He does not say, "Madura is great," but makes the reader slowly acknowledge that the harsh life in the land of salt holds invaluable life lessons.

Zawawi does not force readers to love Madura. He demonstrates, with tenderness and care, that Madura is an essential part of the Indonesian mosaic. He allows his poetry to act as a window, allowing anyone who reads it to peer into the world of Madura: a world harsh yet warm, simple yet profound, silent yet brimming with meaning. He touches not only the reader's reason but also their conscience. Moreover, therein lies the power of his poetry: conveying the local as something universal. What Zawawi does is more than just poetic aesthetics. He creates a cultural discourse that serves a dual purpose: preserving local identity while simultaneously introducing it to the outside world. In this process, he engages in subtle resistance to the dominance of mainstream culture that often drowns out voices from the margins. Through his poetry, Zawawi reclaims space for Madura, not with anger or provocation, but with sincere testimony and captivating language. He conveys that this often-overlooked land actually holds a nobility no less sublime.

Therefore, reading Zawawi Imron is not merely reading poetry. We are also reading Madura, reading Indonesia, and rereading ourselves: about where we come from, what values we hold, and what meaning we need to maintain in an ever-changing era. Zawawi teaches that local wisdom is not a fossil of the past, but rather a pulse of life that continues to flow, as long as people are willing to write it down with love and perseverance.

### **An Ecosemantic Analysis of Nature Conservation in D. Zawawi Imron's Poetry**

As the modern world begins to lose its sensitivity to nature, poetry becomes a space where nature regains its place, not as a passive object to be exploited, but as a living,

powerful, and meaningful subject. Within the treasury of modern Indonesian literature, Zawawi Imron emerges as a poet who builds a unique relationship with nature through his poetry. He does not speak of nature from a distance, but rather experiences it, interprets it, and expresses it with profound and humble language. Through an ecosemantic approach, we can examine how Zawawi Imron constructs ecological meaning in his poetry and how that meaning also conveys the importance of nature conservation within a cultural and spiritual framework.

The ecosemantic approach, according to Fill and Mühlhäusler (2001), focuses attention on how ecological meanings are formed in and through language. Language, in this case, is not neutral: it contains values, ideologies, and power relations between humans and nature. The words we use to refer to nature, whether described as "resource" or "mother," carry different ecological consequences. Therefore, poets like Zawawi Imron, who construct meaning in an intimate way with nature, are actually engaged in the work of preserving meaning, as well as ecological preservation at the level of discourse.

Ecosemantics, in general, is an approach that examines how language and meaning are constructed in the relationship between humans and the environment. It views language as a relational trace between humans and nature, how words convey certain views of nature, how natural symbols are given meaning, and how relations of power, ethics, and spirituality are reflected in the choice of diction and imagery. In Zawawi Imron's poetry, the relationship with nature is not an objective and exploitative one, but rather a personal one filled with respect. The sea, the soil, the sun, and the wind all have equal standing with humans in Zawawi's poetic space. One powerful example is how Zawawi interprets land in his poetry not as an object of ownership, but as the origin of life. Land is not a possession, but a place of return. He writes with the awareness that land not only gives life but also deserves respect, care, and love. In certain lines, land is referred to as a "nurturing womb," and it is there that true preservation begins: from gratitude, not from regulation, but from an affective relationship cultivated from the beginning.

The same is true of the sea. As a child of the coastal communities of Madura, Zawawi does not write about the sea solely romantically and abstractly. He writes about the sea as a harsh yet blessed space for life. In his poems, the sea often appears as a metaphor for suffering, but also as a reservoir of vast love. The sea is not only a source of fish, but also a source of values: patience, fortitude, and steadfastness. Choices of diction, such as "patient waves," "silent sand," or "boats that understand their direction," demonstrate how Zawawi constructs ecological meanings that do not exploit, but rather unite. Nature has a language, and poetry is Zawawi's way of translating it. From an

ecosemantic perspective, this demonstrates that environmental conservation in Zawawi's poetry is not explicitly stated like a call to action, but is implicitly present in the way nature is interpreted and appreciated. He does not write, "Take care of the forest," but rather, he writes about how trees bear silent witness to life, how the sun is not only heat but also a gift. This is a form of conservation that stems from ecological awareness, not merely a moral obligation but also an emotional and spiritual need. In his other poems, the sea and wind are also often depicted not as economic resources, but as part of his inner space. In the following stanza:

*"Perahu itu berjalan pelan  
melintas laut yang muram  
angin hanya memandangi  
sambil menangis diam"*

*"The boat sailed slowly  
across the gloomy sea  
the wind just watched  
while crying silently"*

Zawawi attaches emotional meaning to natural elements. The sea is not described in terms of volume or wave depth, but in terms of feeling. The wind cries, and the sea is gloomy. This is not hyperbolic figurative language, but rather the poet's way of constructing spiritual and affective ecological meaning. Within an ecosemantic framework, this represents a shift in meaning from nature as object to nature as subject. Thus, the human-nature relationship in this poem is dialogical, not exploitative. A very powerful symbol in Zawawi's poetry is the land. Land often appears as a body, as a mother, as a womb. In the poem "Tanah Lahir," he writes:

*"Tanah ini adalah tubuh ibuku  
setiap injakan kakiku adalah luka  
setiap peluhku adalah maaf"*

*"This land is my mother's body.  
Every step I take is a wound.  
Every drop of my sweat is an apology"*

This expression is fraught with ecological meaning. Land as the mother's body dismantles anthropocentric logic and gives rise to an ecocentric ethic: that all human activity towards nature has moral consequences. Touching the soil is no longer a neutral act, but one that carries an ethical burden. Stepping on it can cause injury. Therefore, nature conservation in this framework is not merely a government regulation, but rather an inner responsibility born of an awareness of the profound relationship between humans and nature. In the Madurese tradition that serves as Zawawi's cultural background, the relationship with nature has never been purely technological. The sea,

soil, wind, and rain have always been respected, spoken to, and even ritualized. Zawawi carries this semantic heritage into the language of his poetry. He does not use technical ecological terms like "conservation" or "sustainability," but rather writes in lyrical lines that depict nature as an entity to be loved because he also loves.

Zawawi does not present an explicit activist narrative, nor does he loudly call out "Save the forest," but he whispers ecological awareness through vivid words. He writes about nature as a subject: *"tanah ini adalah tubuh ibuku... setiap peluhku adalah maaf"*. Such metaphorical choices make the human-nature relationship an ethical dialogue, not mere exploitation. The words *"sumur-sumur kering"*, *"daun berguguran"*, *"laut yang muram"*, atau *"angin menangis diam"* construct nature as a sentient entity. Ecological empathy and awareness are driven not by data, but by the presence of ecologically and spiritually conscious language. In this way, nature conservation presents itself as an inner responsibility, born of a sense of connection and respect.

Zawawi Imron may not write to be an environmental activist. However, in his poetry, we discover the ethical and cultural foundations of environmental conservation that are deeper than any policy jargon. He writes to remind, not with harsh rhetoric, but with the gentleness of language. Thus, his poems become gardens of meaning, where nature grows not only in the form of trees and seas, but also in saving words. Overall, Zawawi Imron's ecosemantics establishes nature conservation as an inner calling that is integral to Madurese culture. He embeds nature in language as an entity worthy of respect, protection, and love. He gives language to nature, which has long been considered silent, evoking subtle yet profound ecological meanings. His poems are not calls, but offerings: invitations to care with love, guard with awareness, and live in harmony.

## CONCLUSION

Through an ecosemantic approach, Zawawi Imron's literary works demonstrate a deep concern for the natural environment and local Madurese culture. Zawawi's poems not only depict natural beauty as a backdrop or symbol, but also convey a strong message of ecological preservation. Values of local wisdom, such as the harmonious relationship between humans and nature, respect for the sea, land, and rural life, form the core of the meanings conveyed implicitly and explicitly. Zawawi Imron utilizes the power of poetic language to raise ecological awareness and inspire a love for the environment. In the context of ecosemantic studies, ecological meaning is evident not only in the content (lexical semantics) but also in the deeper structures of meaning, including metaphors, symbols, and diction rooted in local culture. Thus, Zawawi Imron's literary works function

not only as aesthetic expression but also as a medium for environmental advocacy and cultural preservation. This study emphasizes the importance of an ecosemantic approach in reading Indonesian literature, particularly in exploring conservation messages relevant to contemporary environmental issues.

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