

# Beyond the Shore: Reconstructing Islamic Worship Jurisprudence for Fishing Communities Through the Lens of *Fiqh Sosial*

A *Manhaji* Reconstruction of 'Ubūdiyyah Obligations Within a *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah* Framework

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## Abstract

Fishing communities in Pati, Central Java, demonstrate strong Islamic devotion but encounter a persistent "formalistic deadlock" when classical Shafi'i rulings on worship are strictly applied to the challenging and variable conditions of months-long deep-sea voyages. Existing scholarship has only partially addressed this issue, relying either on rigid textual (*qaṭi*) prescriptions or on descriptive sociological analysis. This article aims to reconstruct an integrated worship jurisprudence (*fiqh al-baḥr*) for these communities, extending the scope of ubudiyah beyond purification and prayer to include fasting (sawm), almsgiving (*ṣakāt*), and the customary maritime ritual *Sedekah Laut*. The study adopts a qualitative, library-based juridical methodology, employing a *manhaji* (methodological) approach aligned with K.H. Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial*, prioritising *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*—particularly the preservation of life (*ḥifẓ al-naḥs*) and property (*ḥifẓ al-māl*)—and reading classical texts (*turāth*) in dialogue with ten recent scholarly works (2020–2026) and empirical data from the Pati coastal context. The results yield a four-pillar *Fiqh Nelayan*: (1) GPS navigation as an obligatory means (*wasīlat al-wājib*) for qibla determination, supported by onboard water filtration as *istihālah*; (2) *rukhsah* from fasting during extended voyages with compensatory *qada'*; (3) productive *ṣakāt* from maritime yields to dismantle structural poverty; and (4) the transformation of *Sedekah Laut* into an Eco-*Sharī'ah* conservation covenant. This reconstruction positions Islamic law as an emancipatory social ethic, empowering coastal communities with dignity and ecological sustainability.

**Keywords:** *Fiqh Sosial*, *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah*, *fiqh al-baḥr*, maritime jurisprudence, coastal empowerment.

## Introduction

The Regency of Pati, particularly the sub-district of Juwana on the northern coast of Central Java, constitutes one of Indonesia's most productive maritime epicenters. Statistical data from the Pati Regency Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) recorded that fish sold at the Fish Auction Place (*Tempat Pelelangan Ikan/TPI*) peaked in the fourth quarter of 2023, reaching 28.83

thousand tons (BPS Kabupaten Pati, 2023). According to the strategic plan of the Central Java Provincial Marine and Fisheries Service, the province holds the largest fleet of fishing vessels in Indonesia, numbering 108,356 units (Dinas Kelautan dan Perikanan Provinsi Jawa Tengah, 2017). At the heart of this maritime activity stands Bendar Village in Juwana, whose purse seine fleet regularly undertakes long-distance voyages (long trip) to the Arafura Sea and the Strait of Makassar, each lasting between three and nine months (Damayanti et al., 2021). Such extended voyages represent one of the most demanding forms of maritime labor in the Indonesian fisheries sector.

Yet behind this impressive productivity lies a profound and largely unaddressed religious challenge. Existing field studies confirm that the fishermen of Juwana exhibit high levels of Islamic devotion, maintaining communal *tahli* and *manaqib* rituals aboard their vessels even during extended voyages (Miftahudin & Muhyiddin, 2026). However, they regularly find themselves trapped in a condition of "permanent religious emergency" (*darurah*) at sea: limited freshwater forces reliance on mechanically contaminated seawater for ritual purification (*tabarah*); extreme waves undermine the standing posture (*qiyam*) and qibla accuracy required for prayer (*salat*); the Ramadan obligation to fast collides with months-long traveler status (*musafir*) and extreme physical labor; and deep economic inequality between boat owners (*juragan*) and crew laborers (*Anak Buah Kapal/ABK*) demands a more dynamic and empowering approach to *zakat* (Khoir, 2024; Syamsiyah, 2024).

Existing Islamic legal scholarship tends to approach these issues through either a purely textual (*qauli*) lens — resulting in rigid prescriptions ill-suited to maritime realities — or through descriptive sociological studies that stop short of offering actionable legal solutions. This article bridges that gap. Positioning itself at the intersection of empirical maritime research and contemporary Islamic legal *ijtihad*, it proposes a systematic reconstruction of "Fisherman's Fiqh" (*Fiqh Nelayan*) through KH Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial*, shifting legal reasoning from literal textual reproduction toward a *manhaj* (methodological) mode that prioritises *maqashid al-shari'ah*. This study enriches existing literature both empirically — drawing on updated data from the Pati coastal context (2020–2026) — and theoretically, engaging ten new strands of scholarship to deepen the reconstruction beyond prior research.

The choice of KH Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* as the governing framework—rather than alternative approaches such as classical *taqlid madhhab*, the maqashid-only *ijtihad* of Jasser Auda, or purely sociological theories of

religion—rests on three scholarly considerations. First, while a strictly *madhhab*-bound (*qaulī*) reading reproduces the very formalistic deadlock this article seeks to overcome, and a generic *maqāṣid* framework risks detaching legal reasoning from the lived madhhab tradition that coastal Muslims actually inhabit, Fiqh Sosial uniquely retains the Shafi'i textual canon while reorienting it methodologically (*manhajī*) toward *al-maṣlaḥah al-‘ammah*, offering both fidelity and flexibility (Mahfudh, 2011; Sulthon, 2019). Second, Fiqh Sosial was itself formulated by Mahfudh in response to the concrete social conditions of the Kajen–Pati region of which Juwana's fishing communities are part, making it epistemologically proximate to the empirical object of this study rather than an imported abstraction (A. A. Rachman, 2010). Third, its five defining features—contextual interpretation of fiqh texts, the shift from *qaulī* to *manhajī*, verification of *ushul* and *furu'*, fiqh as social ethics rather than state positive law, and the use of philosophical-social reasoning—provide a ready-made analytic structure for diagnosing and reconstructing worship obligations as instruments of social empowerment, a task for which no rival framework is as well suited (Mahfudh, 1994; Sulthon, 2019).

Two interrelated theoretical pillars underpin this reconstruction. The first is the epistemology of *Fiqh Sosial* as developed by KH Sahal Mahfudh. Mahfudh argued that the classical *madhhab* tradition should not be applied as a static, literal repository but rather as a living methodological framework for diagnosing social problems (Mahfudh, 2011). This shift from *qaulī* (textual reproduction) to *manhajī* (methodological reasoning) reorients Islamic jurisprudence toward achieving the public good (*al-maṣlaḥah al-‘ammah*) with long-term, transformative vision (Sulthon, 2019; Rachman, 2010). The second theoretical pillar is Al-Syatibi's theory of *maqāṣid al-sharī‘ah*, which identifies five fundamental values Islamic law must protect: religion (*al-dīn*), life (*al-naḥs*), intellect (*al-‘aql*), lineage (*al-nasl*), and property (*al-māl*) (Al-Shatibi, 2003). In the maritime context, *ḥifẓ al-naḥs* (preservation of life) provides the central legitimating rationale for granting broad legal dispensations (*rukḥṣah*) when extreme sea conditions threaten physical safety, while *ḥifẓ al-māl* underpins the case for productive *zakāt* as an instrument against structural economic marginalization (Harahap et al., 2026).

Academic engagement with Islamic law and coastal communities has grown considerably since 2020, though critical lacunae remain. This study positions itself in dialogue with four clusters of recent scholarship. The first cluster concerns the historical and cultural grounding of maritime *ijtibād*. Fadal

(2020) recovered the early twentieth-century treatise *Aisy Al-Bahr* by Kiai Anwar of Batang, demonstrating a long tradition of empirically grounded maritime legal reasoning in coastal Java. Chamro and Widjyanthi (2020) revealed how seasonal prohibition periods (*laeb*) create cyclical economic precarity in fishing communities, paralleling the spiritual precarity this article diagnoses. Fuaad (2021) documented the substantial Islamic integration of *Sedekah Laut* in Bendar Village, Juwana, providing the empirical foundation for the ritual's juridical re-reading proposed here. In a broader comparative frame, Khalilieh (2019) demonstrates that maritime jurisprudence (*fiqh al-bahr*) has a deep and sophisticated tradition in Islamic legal thought dating to the medieval period — a tradition that modern scholarship in Indonesia has only recently begun to excavate.

The second cluster addresses environmental stewardship. Hilmawan (2021) demonstrated that indigenous customary law (*awig-awig*) in coastal Lombok has historically governed marine resource use effectively, establishing precedent for juridically legitimizing customary maritime practices such as *Sedekah Laut*. Mufid (2021) introduced the concept of *Eco-Syari'ah* for the Lamongan coastline, framing marine conservation as a collective Islamic obligation (*fardhu kifayah*) — a framework this article extends to Pati. Miftahudin and Muhyiddin (2026) challenged the *abangan* typology by demonstrating that fishermen in coastal Brebes actively negotiate religious identity, affirming that coastal Muslims deserve tailored jurisprudential frameworks rather than generic clerical rulings. An emerging body of scholarship on Islamic environmental jurisprudence (*fiqh al-bi'ah*) — exemplified by Susilo, Santoso, and Ambarwati (2025) in the context of Indonesia's waste governance — confirms that *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* principles such as *lā ḍarar wa lā ḍirār* (prohibition of harm) and environmental stewardship as *amānah* (divine trust) can be effectively institutionalized in positive law.

The third cluster focuses on governance, *zakāt*, and macro-level economics. Rozikin and Riyadi (2024) established that effective coastal empowerment requires collaborative governance structures involving community leaders, religious authorities, and state institutions — the institutional scaffold this article envisions for *Fiqh Nelayan*. Puskas Baznas (2025) documented the untapped macro-economic potential of maritime *zakāt* as a driver of Blue Economy development. Harahap, Hamid, and Librayanto (2026) demonstrated that *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* provides a coherent framework for achieving Sustainable Development Goals in maritime governance, while

Rachman, Santoso, and Imamuddin (2026) proposed a fully integrated Halal Maritime Industry model within a Blue Economy framework. At the individual level, Choiriyah et al. (2020) and Herianingrum et al. (2023) provide empirical econometric evidence that productive *zakāt* distribution significantly reduces provincial-level poverty in Indonesia, lending quantitative weight to this article's jurisprudential argument.

The fourth cluster addresses jurisprudential dimensions directly. Raihan (2026) analysed rulings on *ṭahārah* in contexts of environmentally degraded water, validating the application of the *istiḥālah* (transformation) principle to contaminated water — a jurisprudential move central to this article's treatment of contaminated onboard water. Budiwati (2016) demonstrated that GPS technology and Google Earth provide the most accurate means of determining coordinate-based qibla direction, a finding that grounds this article's argument for the legal obligation of GPS use at sea. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI Fatwa No. 5/2010) explicitly mandates the use of modern astronomical technology and calculation for qibla determination — establishing that the Indonesian Islamic legal establishment has already endorsed technological means for fulfilling *salat* obligations (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2010). Taken together, this body of scholarship confirms a growing consensus that Islamic law in maritime contexts must be reconstructed to serve real conditions. What remains underdeveloped is a holistic framework integrating individual *ubudiyah*—*ṭahārah*, *salat*, *sawm*, and *zakāt*— with collective customary practices (*Sedekah Laut*) into a single emancipatory jurisprudence anchored to a specific fishing community. This article addresses that lacuna for Pati's Juwana fishermen. The urgency of this study is threefold. Empirically, it concerns hundreds of thousands of Muslim fishermen aboard Indonesia's 108,356 registered vessels who endure three-to-nine-month voyages in which the ordinary preconditions of worship—clean water, stable standing, fixed qibla, normal physical capacity—are structurally absent, leaving devout communities in a chronic state of religious uncertainty. Juridically, the absence of an integrated, authoritative framework forces fishermen to improvise rulings or abandon obligations altogether, eroding both ritual validity and religious dignity. Socially, the same communities face acute economic inequality and accelerating marine-ecological degradation that a classical individualistic reading of fiqh leaves unaddressed; without a reconstruction that links worship to social justice and environmental stewardship, the poorest crew laborers (ABK) bear the heaviest burden. Addressing these intertwined pressures—before ecological and

economic decline deepen—is what makes this reconstruction timely rather than merely academic.

This study uses a qualitative approach with a juridical-normative (doctrinal) design, combined with a library-research method (study kepustakaan) as its primary technique of data collection. Consistent with *Fiqh Sosial*, the legal reasoning operates in a *manhajī* (methodological) rather than *qaulī* (literal-textual) register, prioritising *maqāṣid al-sharī'ah* over formal adherence to a single madhhab position. Data are drawn from two strata of sources. The primary classical sources (*turats*) comprise *Minhaj al-Thalibin* (Al-Nawawi), *Tuhfat al-Muhtaj fi Syarh al-Minhaj* (Ibn Hajar al-Haytami), *Al-Majmu' Syarh al-Muhadzdzab* (Al-Nawawi), and the early-twentieth-century coastal-Javanese treatise Aisy al-Bahr (Kiai Anwar of Batang). The secondary sources comprise ten contemporary scholarly works (2020–2026) on maritime jurisprudence, productive *zakāt*, and Islamic environmental law, together with empirical and statistical data on the Juwana fishing community drawn from BPS Pati, fisheries studies, and prior field research. Analysis proceeds in three stages: (1) identifying the formalistic deadlock that arises when classical Shafi'i rulings meet maritime realities; (2) re-reading the relevant *turats* through the *manhajī* lens of *Fiqh Sosial* and the *maqāṣid* framework of Al-Syatibi; and (3) formulating actionable legal reconstructions. The method is therefore principally jurisprudential rather than ethnographic: it mobilises documented evidence of lived maritime religious practice to construct normative legal conclusions. The discussion is organised into four sections: (1) *ṭahārah* and *salat* in the maritime environment; (2) fasting and the traveler's legal dispensation; (3) productive *zakāt* from maritime yields; and (4) *Sedekah Laut* reconstructed as an Eco-*Sharī'ah* covenant.

## Result and Discussion

### Reconstructing *Ṭahārah* and *Salat*: Techno-*Fiqh* Adaptation

The performance of the five daily prayers aboard a Juwana fishing vessel presents a multi-layered jurisprudential challenge. The Prophet's *hadīth* narrated by Al-Darquthni instructs believers to pray on boats while standing unless they fear drowning — a ruling Imam Al-Nawawi endorses in *Minhaj al-Thalibin* while permitting seated prayer (*salat duduk*) when extreme waves pose an existential risk (Al-Nawawi, 2005). In the *Fiqh Sosial* framework, this exception is not a concession of last resort but a principled application of *hifdz al-nafs*: the physical safety of the fisherman is a religious duty, not a compromise of it. The *manhajī* reading amplifies this point: because maintaining proper standing posture

(*qiyam*) in three-meter swells aboard a vessel designed for fishing, not prayer, constitutes a genuine threat to life, the dispensation for seated prayer is not marginal but central to correct Islamic practice in this context.

The question of qibla direction raises equally pressing jurisprudential concerns. In the context of rapidly rotating *purse seine* vessels navigating the open Arafura Sea, classical methods of solar and stellar observation break down entirely, since vessel heading changes continuously during fishing operations. Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* explicitly frames the use of GPS navigation technology as a *wasīlat al-wājib* (obligatory means): a tool whose use is legally mandated when it is the only reliable mechanism for fulfilling a religious obligation (Mahfudh, 2011). This principle is directly supported by MUI Fatwa No. 5 of 2010, which explicitly endorses the use of astronomical science and technology (*ilmu falak dan teknologi*) for determining qibla direction, affirming that technological precision in facing the Kaaba is not a secular innovation but a religious imperative (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2010). Budiwati (2016) empirical study confirms that GPS-based coordinate calculation provides the most accurate available means for qibla determination in dynamic environments. When a vessel changes heading unpredictably, GPS provides the only practically reliable mechanism for continuous correction — making its use aboard fishing vessels not optional but obligatory (*wājib*) under the principle that what is necessary to fulfil a duty is itself a duty (*mā lā yatimmu al-wājib illā bihi fa-huwa wājib*).

Perhaps the most technically complex issue is ritual purification (*ṭahārah*). Freshwater on fishing vessels is severely rationed, and seawater in Pati's harbor zones is frequently contaminated with engine oil and industrial runoff. Ibn Hajar al-Haytami's *Tuhfat al-Muhtaj* establishes that seawater is inherently pure and purifying (*tāhir mutahhir*). However, contamination by engine waste introduces impurity (*najasah*), returning the water to a legally problematic status. This article proposes the application of *istiḥālah* (jurisprudential transformation): when contaminated seawater is processed through onboard filtration systems, its properties are substantially transformed, making it functionally equivalent to *mā' mutlaq* (pure, unqualified water). This aligns with MUI Fatwa on Recycled Water and is supported by Raihan's analysis of *ṭahārah* law in contexts of environmental water degradation, which validates *istiḥālah* as a legitimate jurisprudential move for water rendered impure by industrial pollution (Raihan, 2026). The practical implication is significant: the installation of onboard water filtration systems aboard Juwana's *purse seine* vessels is not merely a sanitation improvement but a religious obligation.

A further dimension concerns the combination (*jama'*) and shortening (*qasr*) of prayers. The fishermen of Juwana maintain continuous *musāfir* (traveler) status for three to nine months — a duration far exceeding any threshold contemplated in classical Shafi'i jurisprudence. The school's internal debates on the upper limit of *rukḥṣab* duration highlight the need for a *manḥajī* re-reading that privileges *maṣlahah* over formal duration-thresholds. The *Fiqh Sosial* reconstruction holds that the *musāfir* status of maritime laborers is substantively different from that of land-based travelers and deserves independent *ijtihād* rather than analogical extension of classical norms. The intent of *qasr* and *jama'* dispensations — to relieve the hardship of travel — is manifestly more urgent for a fisherman on a nine-month voyage than for a passenger on a three-day land journey.

### **Fasting at Sea: Physical Sovereignty, Legal Dispensation, and Compensatory Obligation**

The obligation to fast during Ramadan (*sawm*) poses one of the sharpest tensions in the religious life of deep-sea fishermen. Fishermen on long-haul voyages satisfy the condition of *musāfir* (traveler) throughout Ramadan, entitling them in principle to *rukḥṣab* with the obligation to compensate (*qadā'*) later. Yet classical Shafi'i jurisprudence contains an internal debate: Imam Al-Nawawi holds that a traveler who commences a journey after dawn on a Ramadan day may not break their fast for that day, whereas Ibn Qudamah of the Hanbali school permits it (Khoir, 2024; Syamsiyah, 2024). These divergent positions within the classical tradition itself indicate that the question is not one of textual ambiguity but of which principled framework — formalistic or *maṣlahah*-oriented — governs the resolution.

The *Fiqh Sosial* reconstruction adopts the principle *al-masyaqqah tajlib al-taisir* (hardship generates facilitation). The physical reality aboard a *purse seine* vessel — hauling nets under equatorial heat, working sixteen-hour shifts with limited hydration — creates a level of physiological stress that constitutes genuine *masyaqqah* of the highest order. Forcing fishermen to fast under these conditions risks severe dehydration, heatstroke, and operational hazards that endanger not only the individual but the entire crew. This is not marginal hardship but a direct threat to *hifdḥ al-nafs*, the most foundational of the *maqashid*. Accordingly, fishermen in extended maritime employment are not merely permitted to break their fast: they are legally encouraged to do so, with mandatory *qadā'* upon return to shore (Syamsiyah, 2024).

An equally important dimension is psycho-spiritual. Syamsiyah (2024) notes that the psychological burden of religious guilt felt by fishermen who break the fast — even legitimately — is itself a social harm that *fiqh* must address. A clear, authoritative legal statement that dispensation is not only valid but appropriate in these conditions relieves unnecessary spiritual suffering and restores the fisherman's dignity as a practicing Muslim. This psycho-spiritual dimension of legal reconstruction is a hallmark of Kiai Sahal's approach, which treats religious law as a source of liberation rather than anxiety. Herianingrum et al. (2023) document a parallel dynamic in the context of *zakāt*: when institutional frameworks fail to communicate their legal entitlements clearly, Muslim poor communities internalise unnecessary guilt about their economic condition. The *Fiqh Sosial* reconstruction thus serves simultaneously as legal clarification, pastoral care, and social empowerment.

### **Productive *Zakāt* from Maritime Yields: Structural Poverty and Social Justice**

The economic structure of Pati's fishing industry is marked by severe inequality. Vessel owners (*juragan*) accumulate capital through ownership of boats, nets, and quota licenses, while crew laborers (*ABK*) remain structurally dependent, often indebted to the *juragan* for wage advances. Conventional *zakāt* distribution in this context — whereby fishermen receive small cash handouts during Ramadan — reinforces dependency rather than dismantling it. The *Fiqh Sosial* reconstruction demands a fundamentally different approach: *zakāt* as an instrument of structural economic transformation consistent with the principle of social justice (*'adalah ijtima'iyah*) (Mahfudh, 1994).

Imam Al-Nawawi's discussion in *Al-Majmu' Syarh al-Mubadzdzab* provides classical grounding for an alternative: *zakāt* need not be distributed as cash consumption but can be delivered as productive capital to those with the skill to use it (Nazar, 2024). Contemporary *ijtihad* from scholars such as Yusuf Qardhawi extends the taxable objects of *zakāt* to all maritime yields reaching the *nisbab* threshold equivalent to 85 grams of gold. At the macro level, Choiriyah et al. (2020) provide panel econometric evidence that productive *zakāt* programs significantly reduce provincial poverty headcount ratios in Indonesia, while Puskas Baznas (2025) and Harahap et al. (2026) document the untapped potential of maritime *zakāt* for Blue Economy development. Herianingrum et al. (2023) further confirm that strategically managed *zakāt*

functions as both a counter-cyclical poverty alleviation mechanism and a structural poverty reduction tool.

Applied concretely to Pati, productive *zakāt* from *juragan* should be channeled through a managed *zakāt* body into: (1) provision of environmentally certified fishing nets for *ABK* seeking to establish micro-enterprises; (2) small-engine vessels to enable independent small-scale fishing; and (3) aquaculture capital for those wishing to transition from wage labor to self-employment. This model is consistent with Kiai Sahal's insistence that *zakāt* is an instrument of social justice (*'adalah ijtima'iyah*) (Mahfudh, 1994). Rozikin and Riyadi (2024) provide the collaborative governance framework through which such a *zakāt* fund could be administered, involving village authorities, *pesantren*, fishery cooperatives, and BAZNAS. When productive *zakāt* is simultaneously invested in eco-friendly fishing technology, it fulfils three *maqashid* at once: preservation of property (*hifdz al-maal*) for the *mustahiq*; preservation of livelihood dignity (*hifdz al-nafs*); and stewardship of the natural order.

### ***Sedekah Laut: From Customary Ritual to Eco-Syari'ah Covenant***

The annual *Sedekah Laut* (Sea Offering) ritual in Juwana, Pati, occupies a complex position in Islamic legal discourse. On one hand, it involves the ceremonial launching of miniature boats loaded with offerings — a practice whose cosmological origins are rooted in pre-Islamic maritime beliefs. On the other hand, the ritual has been thoroughly Islamized over centuries, now incorporating communal prayers, *tablil* sessions, and Quranic recitation. Fuaad's (2021) detailed case study of *Sedekah Laut* in Bendar Village documents this Islamic integration and provides the empirical basis for the *Fiqh Sosial* position that the ritual constitutes *al-'adah al-muḥakkamah* — a recognised customary practice elevated to juridical standing — provided its spiritual orientation remains monotheistic.

Drawing on Mufid's (2021) *Eco-Syari'ah* framework and Hilmawan's (2021) *avig-avig* model, this article proposes that *Sedekah Laut* be redesigned as an annual Eco-Islamic Covenant: a community-wide commitment to marine conservation performed in the register of Islamic obligation. Concretely, the climactic boat-launching ceremony is supplemented with: (1) collective mangrove planting along the Juwana estuary; (2) release of juvenile fish (*benih ikan*) to replenish overexploited stocks; (3) shoreline clean-up (*gotong royong*) as a community worship act; and (4) public declaration of a "no-blast-fishing" covenant for the coming year.

Through the lens of *fard kifāyah* (collective obligation), marine ecosystem preservation becomes not an environmental preference but a binding Islamic duty. When the coral reefs and mangrove belts that sustain Pati's fisheries collapse, it is the poorest fishermen — the *ABK* without capital to fish further offshore — who suffer most. Environmental destruction thus directly violates *ḥijz al-nafs* and *ḥijz al-māl* for the most vulnerable. *Sedekah Laut*, reconstructed through *Fiqh Sosial*, becomes the ritual vehicle through which this collective obligation is renewed annually, transforming cosmological memory into ecological responsibility (Mufid, 2021).

The theological grounding of this reconstruction draws directly on the concept of the sea as *amānah* (divine trust). In Islamic environmental jurisprudence (*fiqh al-bi'ah*), natural resources are not human possessions to be exploited without limit but trusts from God for which communities are accountable (Maskun et al., 2025). This principle — explicitly recognised by Mufid (2021) in the Lamongan coastal context — undergirds the legal transformation of *Sedekah Laut* from a cosmological observance into an ecologically active covenant. Miftahudin and Muhyiddin (2026) confirm empirically that coastal communities in Java are already receptive to theological framings of environmental responsibility. The *Fiqh Sosial* reconstruction formalises, deepens, and institutionalises what is already a living tendency in Pati's religious culture.

### **Synthesis: The Four Pillars Read Through Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial***

Read as a whole, the four reconstructions above are not an arbitrary collection of dispensations but a coherent expression of the five defining features of Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* (Mahfudh, 2011; Sulthon, 2019). First, each pillar enacts the contextual interpretation of *fiqh* texts (*kontekstualisasi teks*): the rulings of Al-Nawawi and Ibn Hajar al-Haytami are not discarded but re-read against the lived context of the purse seine voyage, so that the hadith permitting seated prayer and the doctrine of seawater purity acquire concrete maritime meaning. Second, the analysis consistently moves from a *qauli* to a *manhajī* mode of madhhab adherence: rather than reproducing a single literal opinion on the duration of *musāfir* status or the conditions of *rukhsah*, it derives a ruling from the underlying method and objective of the school, treating the nine-month voyage as a substantively new case requiring fresh *ijtihad*. Third, the reconstruction performs Sahal's verification of *ushul* and *furu'*: the protection of life (*ḥijz al-nafs*) and the relief of hardship (*al-mashaqqah tajlib al-taysir*) are

recognised as foundational principles (*ushul*) that legitimately govern the adjustment of derivative rules (*furu'*) on posture, fasting, and water. Fourth, and most distinctively, the four pillars treat fiqh as social ethics rather than state positive law: productive *zakāt* is framed as an instrument of '*adālah ijtimā'iyah*' against structural inequality, and *Sedekah Laut* is elevated into an ecological covenant (*farḍ kifāyah*), so that worship becomes a vehicle of social and environmental transformation rather than a private compliance checklist. Fifth, the recourse to maqashid reasoning and to the empirical realities of coastal labor exemplifies Sahal's use of philosophical and social analysis in legal thought. In this light, the contribution of Fiqh Sosial to the present findings is not merely that it permits these reconstructions, but that it supplies the integrated methodological logic by which individual *ubudiyah* and collective custom are bound together into a single emancipatory jurisprudence—precisely the “fiqh as social ethic and movement” that Kiai Sahal envisioned (Mahfudh, 1994; A. A. Rachman, 2010).

## Conclusion

Reading the worship obligations of Pati's Juwana fishermen through KH Sahal Mahfudh's *Fiqh Sosial* and the *maqāsid al-shari'ah* framework yields an integrated *Fiqh Nelayan* built on four findings: GPS navigation as an obligatory means (*wasilat al-wājib*) for qibla determination together with onboard water filtration (*istihālah*) for *ṭabarāh*; a clarified *rukhsah* from fasting during extended voyages with compensatory *qada'*; productive *zakāt* from maritime yields as an instrument of structural economic emancipation; and the transformation of *Sedekah Laut* into an Eco-*Shari'ah* covenant. Taken together, these pillars demonstrate that the Shafi'i tradition, read in a manhajī rather than qaulī register, possesses the internal resources to meet the demands of maritime life without abandoning its classical foundations, repositioning Islamic law from a source of guilt and constraint at sea into an emancipatory social ethic of dignity, solidarity, and ecological responsibility—a model whose institutionalisation through pesantren curricula, fatwa councils, fishery cooperatives, and BAZNAS protocols invites further ethnographic, comparative, and empirical research across Indonesia's coastal communities.

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