



# Environmental Conservation Movement in Sundanese Short Stories: Literary Ecocritic Perspective

Laily Fitriani<sup>(✉)</sup> and Nushrotun Nida

Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, Malang, Indonesia  
laily@bsa.uin-malang.ac.id

**Abstract.** The environmental preservation movement arises as a result of environmental damage that occurs everywhere, so it is important to preserve the environment for the sustainability of all living things on the earth. This environmental conservation movement is represented in the Sundanese short stories *Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* by Kasturi and also *Kang Sobri Ngusep Lauk di Walungan* by Mamat Samista. The two *carpons* (short story) represent the destruction of nature in Tatar Sunda as well as the environmental conservation movement through the characters of Aki and Kang Sobri. This study aims to describe the environmental conservation movement for environmental damage as described in the two *carpons*. The researchers used a literary ecocritical approach. The results of this study indicate that the conservation movement represented in the *Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* carpon is the preservation of flora in the form of a conservation movement forbidding illegal logging and reforestation. While, the environmental conservation movement represented in the *Kang Sobri Ngusep Lauk di Walungan* carpon is fauna conservation in the form of a movement to avoid overfishing, and use the environmentally friendly fishing gear. This research proves that humans have an important role in preserving the natural environment because humans and nature have a symbiotic mutualism.

**Keywords:** Environment · literary ecocriticism · mutualism · movement · preservation

## 1 Introduction

Humans must have an important impression of preserving and protecting nature so that the ecology remains sustainable. He needs natural resources such as animals, plants, air, oxygen, and the sun to sustain human life and other living things on earth [1] because humans and the natural environment have a symbiotic mutualism [2]. However, in reality, today's humans are different from their ancient ancestors. Modern humans use nature almost without conscience, are anthropocentric [3]. They have a frontier character, assuming that nature and the earth as givers of life are unlimited and must be mastered [4]. As a result, there has been a drastic decline in the quality of natural resources, pollution and natural damage [5].

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In Tatar Sunda, BNPB said that in 2022, January-July, many natural disasters such as floods occurred in four areas, namely West Bandung district, Bogor district, Cirebon district and the city of Cirebon. Droughts and earthquakes occurred in the Bogor district. The volcanic eruption disaster happened in the community. West Bandung and the forest fire disaster occurred in Pangandaran district [6]. Various efforts are needed to maintain and protect nature from these events, so the environment remains sustainable. Kophnia et al. argue that humans must be responsible and heal spirits caused by anthropocentric ideological domination [3].

Environmental conservation is usually formed through public awareness of protecting nature. The community movement in protecting wildlife is directly proportional to the ecological literary movement. It is commonly referred to as literary ecology, which represents the pattern of relationships between plants, animals, and humans to each other and their environment [7]. Ecological texts raise awareness of the importance of maintaining cosmic harmony and balance by making texts and literary contexts as vehicles, media, and means [8].

When ecology wants to be deepened, an eco-critical theory appears, which was introduced by Gerrad as a form of literary sensitivity to the natural or ecological environment [9]. He stated that eco criticism could help define, seek and solve ecological problems in a broader scope [10]. Glotfelty asserts that eco criticism is the study of the relationship between literature and the physical environment, namely the study of the relationship between humans and non-humans depicted in literary works [11]. Eco criticism explains how nature is reflected in the text and how the author tries to bring environmental awareness to academic work [12]. Therefore, eco criticism has the potential to bring about change in society, helping to define, explore and solve ecological problems [13]. Eco critic texts have a vision and mission of awareness from a destructive lifestyle to being a nurse [14].

Several studies have explained about environmental conservation efforts that are represented in literary work, such as preserving local culture in environmental conservation [10, 11], forest conservation of rare plants [15], saving clean water consumption [16], reducing waste in the sea [17], and reduce air pollution [18]. This shows that environmental conservation efforts or movements can be carried out with various methods, especially by maintaining local cultural elements. However, this research aimed at the direction of environmental conservation of flora and fauna through the method of reforestation and protecting water ecosystems reviewed critically with eco-critical studies.

The campaign for the preservation of flora and fauna in the Sunda region is interpreted in two Sundanese *carpons* (*Carita Pondok*) entitled "*Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" by Kustian and "*Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*" by Mamat Samista. The short story of *Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* describes the struggle of an older man to protect trees from the hands of ignorant humans who want to cut them down and sell them to a furniture company. In contrast, in *Kang Sobri Ngusep Di Walungan* short story, environmentalism is represented through the activities of the Sobri character, who has concern for the water ecosystem.

The phenomenon of environmental conservation in the Sundanese short stories "*Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" and "*Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*" has helped define, explore and solve ecological problems in the Sundanese. Implicitly, the environmental

conservation movement in literary works exposes the anthropocentric world that humans are not the highest element in the universe because humans need natural entities for survival [19]. Therefore, an environmental conservation movement is required in order to keep nature sustainable. Accordingly, this study aims to analyse the environmental conservation movement in the Sundanese short stories "*Akibat Hasil Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" by Kustian and "*Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*" by Mamat Samista from a literary ecocritic perspective. The two *carpons* are representations of the literary movement (green literature) in protecting the environment in Tatar Sunda which is studied through the theory of literary eco criticism (deep ecology), because eco critical studies integrate literary works with ecological ideas [20].

## 2 Literature Review

Eco criticism is a new discipline that examines literature critically from an ecological or environmental aspect. It often discusses the depiction of nature in literary works [21]. Glotfelty in Arianto argues that Eco criticism explores the relationship between humans and the physical environment [14]. In line with this, Buell in Asmawati et al. asserts that the study of literary eco critic focuses on the relationship between nature and humans as depicted in literary works [22]. It means that ecocriticism focuses on academic textual strategies in building an ecological discourse about how humans interact with other creatures' lives.

Eco criticism includes four disciplines: ecology, ethics or morals, language, and criticism. Ecology describes the relationship or interrelationship between nature and culture. Ethics or morality is a way to resolve a social conflict. Language itself, in this case, refers to how words or expressions reflect human life, other living things, and the surrounding natural environment. At the same time, the last one is critical, assessing the quality and integrity of a work that carries a theme or topic regarding the environment [23]. Therefore, literary eco criticism is a scientific discipline that bridges science and the world of literature. The pioneers of literary eco criticism want to show their contribution to the world of literature in dealing with global issues concerning environmental and environmental or natural damage [23].

The application of literary eco critic theory focuses on three questions. They are: how nature is represented in an academic work, is there a difference between the depiction of nature in literary works and natural beauty, and lastly, what is the ideology behind the representation of nature. In other words, Eco criticism is an expression of the author's feelings towards the natural environment [20]. Thus, it shows how literary works have a concern for the environment and contribute to solving ecological problems [2]. Two Sundanese authors do this, Kustian wrote the short story "*The Effect of Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" and Mamat Samista, with the title "*Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*." Both short stories are suitable to be analysed with eco critical theory. This combination of ecology and literature makes anthroposhen humans aware of being egocentrism humans [24].

### 3 Method

This research is a literary criticism research with a literary eco critic approach. This research takes a Sundanese short story entitled "*Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" by Kustian and "*Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*" by Mamat Samista as a source of research data. The two Sundanese short stories were published by Basasunda.com in 2022. The researchers chose the two *carpons* because they narrated the environmental conservation movement and the issue of environmental damage occurred in West Java. The data is taken from events and dialogues related to the topic of environmental conservation, such as the events and dialogues of Aki's character with people who cut down trees illegally.

Data collection techniques used in this study are reading techniques and note-taking techniques. These two techniques aim to find information in researching, broaden views, and understand the series of events in the *carpon Nuar Tankal Papaduan* and *Kang Sobri Ngusep Lauk di Walungan* [25]. The researchers read the *carpon* text as a whole and records the sentences containing the nature conservation movement carried out by the characters Aki and Kang Sobri in the story. The data analysis uses the principles and practices of textual analysis adopted by eco critic about nature, humanity and the environment [1]. The researchers describe and analyse the data using the eco critic concept to show the human movement in protecting and protecting the environment.

### 4 Result and Discussions

The environmental preservation movement in Tatar Sunda is depicted in the short stories "*Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" and "*Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*". The authors of the two short stories use the ideological role of literature to describe eco critical attitudes and thoughts, namely the characters of Aki in the short story *Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* and Kang Sobri in the short story *Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan*, both of whom have concern and love for nature. Aki figures carry out conservation movements in the forest, while Kang Sobri figures preserve marine ecosystems. The environmental conservation movement represented in the two short stories is summarized in Table 1.

The table of the environmental conservation movement above shows the form and implementation of environmental conservation in the Sundanese. From the available data, reforestation is an implementation that is highlighted in the short story "*Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*" this is the current reality. Many volunteers make programs to plant 100 plants and so on. However, in addition to reforestation, maintaining flora

**Table 1.** The environmental conservation movement

Title	The form of movement	Implementation of conservation
<i>Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan</i>	Flora preservation	Reforestation Prohibition of illegal logging
<i>Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan</i>	Fauna conservation	Prevention of overfishing Use of environmentally friendly tools

preservation can be done by prohibiting illegal logging. Usually, this movement is carried out by the government or the authorities, but the surrounding community can carry out the prohibition of illegal logging. In addition to preserving flora, the conservation of fauna is a vital thing highlighted in the short story. One implementation that is often carried out in flora conservation is overfishing prevention. Because overfishing prevention is effortless without incurring high costs, overfishing prevention only requires balance and human awareness in treating aquatic ecosystems. In contrast to using environmentally friendly tools, preserving water ecosystems must cost a lot. The explanation of the form of environmental conservation represented in the two Sundanese short stories is as follows.

#### 4.1 Flora Preservation

Preservation of flora is one of the efforts in environmental conservation. Flora which are all types of plants or plants in specific habitats must be protected and maintained to benefit human survival because plants are the primary food source for humans [13]. Humans and plants have a close relationship, meaning that humans need plants to survive, and plants need humans to stay sustainable [2]. Preserving flora is usually done by reforestation, land rehabilitation, making *sengke*, and others [26]. The efforts to preserve flora depicted through the character of Aki in the short story “*Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan*” are as follows.

##### 4.1.1 Reforestation

Reforestation is one of the efforts to preserve flora. Aki’s character in the *Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* short story is doing reforestation because there are fewer trees in the forest. It aims to make the soil firm so the risk of landslides can be avoided.

*“Ayeuna kuring geus moal bisa ngereunan eta jalma-jalma nu nuaran tangkal, mun kitu kuring rek melakan bibit tangkal bae, jadi mun manehna nuar hiji tangkal, kuring rek melak bibit sapuluh siki”* [Now I can’t be afraid of those people who plant trees, so I want to plant tree seeds, so if they plant one tree, I want to plant ten seeds.] [27].

Aki’s character tries to protect the environment by planting tree seeds in the forest. He did reforestation as his third attempt after banning the illegal felling of trees in the community and reporting to the village head. When the community disobeyed Aki’s advice and was not afraid of the threat of reporting, Aki’s leaders carried out reforestation to replace the trees that had been lost. He plants ten times as many tree seeds as the previous tree, meaning that if one tree is lost, Aki’s character will plant ten new roots in the forest, and if two trees are lost, Aki’s character will plant twenty new seeds in the woods.

Aki’s concern for the preservation of nature is a representation of the nature of egocentrism. Egocentrism is the view that preserving nature is our duty as human beings. Aki’s character performs reforestation to prevent soil erosion in bare forests caused by wind and rain. Barren forests will quickly erode due to a lack of water infiltration in the

soil, and if there is erosion, the natural ecosystem will be unbalanced. The preservation of nature carried out by the character Aki is to Leopold's opinion in Dharmika (2019) that ecocentric humans recognize that all species are interrelated in life in the universe [29].

Preserving flora by reforestation in *Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* is a form of the environmental conservation movement that aims to protect, care for, and keep the environment. This is because humans and other living things have an interdependent relationship, so reforestation can make humans and nature coexist and provide mutual benefits. Indirectly, the *carpon Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* delivers a solution for preserving the environment by reforestation. This is to the opinion of Santoso et al. that literary eco criticism contributes to solving ecological problems [2].

#### 4.1.2 Prohibition of Illegal Logging

The prohibition of illegal logging is one of the efforts in environmental conservation. This prohibition aims to protect flora and fauna in the forest because the forest is a living place for flora and fauna. The ban on illegal logging is described by the character Aki in the short story due to Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan.

*"Heh maraneh eureun nuaran eta tatangkalan!" Ceuk si aki ngomong ka gorombolan tukang nuaran kayu.* [Hey, you stop looking at those trees!" Grandfather said to the group of woodcutters] [27].

Aki's character forbids a group of carpenters who want to cut down trees in the forest. The motivation for this prohibition is that many living things depend on the woods, and if they continue to cut down trees, the forest will be deforested. However, a group of carpenters did not agree with the ban on batteries, and they continued cutting down trees and selling them to the furniture company at the bottom of the hill.

The attitude of Aki's figures forbidding the illegal felling of trees is one of the movements in preserving flora. This movement is one of the means to protect forests from natural disasters that can occur at any time. Aki's character tries to change society with anthroposhemistic thoughts into ecocentrism. He tried to make people aware not to act arbitrarily towards forests because forests also have limitations in providing benefits to humans. In addition, forests also have an essential role in ecosystems, namely ecological, hydrological, biological-genetic, pedagogical-edaphological, and climatological [28]. If this role does not go well, planet earth and its life will enter a phase of extinction.

Preserving flora by prohibiting illegal felling of trees in the *carpon Akibat Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* is a form of the environmental conservation movement. The short story is one of the literary works that apply the principle of going back to nature because the author makes the character a theme in his academic work. This is by going back to nature in reviewing literary works using an approach based on nature so that eco-criticism gives nature and the environment a foothold in its study [23].

## 4.2 Fauna Conservation

Preserving fauna is one of the efforts to maintain natural ecosystems. Humans must protect animal life so that their habitats or species do not become extinct, both fauna that

live on land and at sea, because the main factor of fauna scarcity is excessive exploitation of natural resources. The efforts to preserve flora carried out by Kang Sobri's character in the carpon Kang Sobri Ngusep Lauk in Walungan are as follows.

#### 4.2.1 Prevention of Overfishing

Avoiding overfishing is one of the ecocentric human obligations in maintaining fauna. Overfishing is the concept of overfishing or taking too many fish from what nature produces sustainably every year. If overfishing continues, it will weaken the entire fish ecosystem and result in the depletion of a third of fish stocks worldwide [29]. Kang Sobri's character avoids overfishing by thinking about the subsequent fish breeding. This is as represented in the carpon Kang Sobri Ngusep Lauk in Walungan.

*“Lauk engap-engapan, kang Sobri neutaup ka jauhna, kana budah cai nu kabawa palid, kana tuntung jeujeur, kana keur manteng. Mun lauk digoreng, didahar jeung sambel jahe, ukur nikmat saharita. Mun lauk dileupaskeun tuluy endogna megar, meureun bakal baranahan, lakuk nu galede bakal nambahan di walungan”* [The fish was panting, Sobri looked at the distance, at the pale water, at the end of the water, at the stretch. If the fish is fried, and eaten with ginger sauce, it is only delicious immediately. If the fish is released and the eggs are hatched, it will probably reproduce, and the bigger fish will increase in the river] [30].

The quote above represents Kang Sobri, who is fishing on Sunday. Kang Sobri fills his free time by fishing. He chose not to return to his hometown because of the old date. Kang Sobri managed to catch some fish, but he felt sad when he saw the fish opening and closing its mouth quickly as if to talk. One of the fish caught by Kang Sobri is a fish that is laying eggs. Finally, kang Sobri chose to let go of the fish because, according to him, if the fish laying eggs were released, it would create other small fish.

Kang Sobri's behavior in releasing fish that are laying eggs is one of the fauna conservation movements. Kang Sobri didn't care about his interest in eating the fish, but he thought that if the spawning fish were released, other fish would be born. Parent fish that lay eggs can give birth to 100 fish. It shows that Kang Sobri avoids overfishing (catching too many fish without thinking about the rights of the fish). He also exhibits ecocentrism, namely emphasizing other rights to life. Although humans can use them, they should not be treated arbitrarily [5].

#### 4.2.2 Use of Environmentally Friendly Tools

One of the ethics when fishing is using environmentally friendly fishing gear. A fisherman may not use prohibited fishing gear, such as containing bombs, cantrangs, trawls, tugs, and so on, because this can cause damage to the bottom of the waters, which harms the aquatic ecosystem. The ethics of using environmentally friendly fishing gear when fishing is represented in *Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan* as follows:

*“Kang Sobri inget ari keur mere pelajaran lingkungan hidup ka barudak. Sok nganaha-naha ka nu ngala lauk make setrum. Sok nganaha-naha ka nu ngala lauk make tuak”* [Mr. Sobri remembers when he was giving environmental lessons to

the children. He always asked the fishermen to use stun guns. He often asked the fishermen to use *tuak*] [30].

The quote above shows that Kang Sobri is a teacher. Kang Sobri is an elementary school teacher appointed a civil servant. When fishing, he remembers the words he conveyed to his students. He said to the children about environmental ethics, namely prohibiting stun fishing. Using environmentally friendly fishing gear when fishing is a form of the fauna conservation movement because it will not damage the ecosystem in the water. The more humans love nature, the more humans develop into mature humans.

The movement to preserve fish fauna by avoiding overfishing and using environmentally friendly fishing gear in eco critical studies is a trait of honouring the environment. So, keeping the fauna here shows that the author has observed the environment through his work. It helps to be one of the efforts that can be applied in overcoming the environmental crisis. The author has described how human attitudes should be towards their environment [31].

## 5 Conclusion

The environmental conservation movement represented in the *carpon* of *Nuar Tangkal Papaduan* by Kustian and *Kang Sobri Ngusep di Walungan* by Mamat Samista is the preservation of flora and fauna. The form of conservation of flora is carried out by reforestation and prohibiting illegal logging. In contrast, the state of protection of fauna is carried out by avoiding overfishing and using environmentally friendly tools.

The environmental conservation movement is an effort to save the environment from damage or repair the damaged environment. Preserving the environment is not only the responsibility of the government or state leaders. It belongs to the responsibility of the entire community. The depiction of the environmental conservation movement in a literary work has helped to explore, define, and solve ecological problems with a detailed picture.

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