

## Synergy of Nature Conservation and Local Wisdom Through the Ruwatan Bumi Tradition in Winongo Subdistrict Manguharjo District Madiun City

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### Abstract

*The Ruwatan Bumi tradition in Winongo Village, Madiun City, is a cultural heritage that reflects the synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom. This study aims to analyze how ecological values are internalized through the ritual process and how the tradition fosters collective environmental awareness. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research involved seven informants, including community leaders and youth participants. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews and analyzed thematically. The findings reveal that Ruwatan Bumi functions not only as a cultural ceremony but also as an effective ecological education medium through symbolism, customary prohibitions, and intergenerational involvement. Practices such as the use of natural materials, prohibitions against river pollution, and water rituals using seven springs instill conservation values both spiritually and practically. This tradition also strengthens social solidarity and cultural identity. In conclusion, Ruwatan Bumi serves as a contextual and sustainable model of cultural and environmental preservation. The findings highlight the potential of local traditions as instruments for ecologically conscious development.*

**Keywords:** Ecological, Environmental conservation, Local culture, Ruwatan Bumi, Youth generation

### INTRODUCTION

The *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition in Winongo Subdistrict, Manguharjo District, Madiun City, represents a form of local wisdom that continues to be preserved to this day. This ceremony begins with a procession featuring offerings of agricultural produce and traditional market snacks, followed by a *wayang kulit* (shadow puppet) performance and communal prayers as expressions of gratitude to God Almighty and reverence for ancestors (Abadi & Soebijantoro, 2016). In addition to serving as a form of *sedekah bumi* (earth alms) intended to protect the community from harm or disaster, *Ruwatan Bumi* also plays a significant role in strengthening the social and cultural bonds within the local community (Putri et al., 2023). However, in line with the progression of time, the preservation of this tradition faces various challenges, particularly in the context of modernization and social change that affect the values of local culture. These issues raise questions about what preservation strategies can effectively address modern challenges while retaining the values embedded in the tradition.

As a form of synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom, *Ruwatan Bumi* in Winongo encompasses profound ecological practices. The tradition teaches the community to maintain harmony between humans and nature through various symbols and customary rituals. During the ceremony, offerings made from agricultural products are prepared as expressions of gratitude and reverence for nature and ancestral spirits. All offerings are derived from natural materials that do not pollute the environment, reflecting principles of sustainability and mindful consumption. A series of activities—including cleaning homes, decorating the surroundings, holding communal meals (*slametan*) at ancestral gravesites, and conducting processions with agricultural offerings and prayers at sacred places like the *punden* and rivers—

demonstrate that nature is not merely regarded as an object, but as a sacred living space that must be protected (Abadi & Soebijantoro, 2016). The *wayang kulit* performance held at night serves as a medium for conveying moral and cultural values that enhance social solidarity and ecological awareness within the community.

This study aims to analyze how the synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom is embodied in the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition in Winongo. It examines the social, cultural, religious, and ecological aspects that contribute to the sustainability of the tradition (Cipta, 2002). Through this approach, the study is expected to contribute to the preservation of environmentally based local culture and to enhance community awareness regarding the importance of maintaining the balance between humans and nature. Moreover, this research also explores the socio-economic impact of the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition on the community and its potential as a model for cultural and environmental preservation within the context of sustainable development (Basuni et al., 2017). Based on these considerations, the proposed hypothesis is that the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition in Winongo represents a tangible synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom, capable of maintaining ecological balance and strengthening the cultural identity of the local community.

### METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design. The case study was chosen to explore in depth the processes, meanings, and values embedded in the implementation of the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition in Winongo Subdistrict, Manguharjo District, Madiun City. The research problem addressed in this study is: how the synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom is manifested through the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition, and how conservation and socio-cultural values are internalized through community participation, particularly among the younger generation. Although not formulated mathematically due to the qualitative nature of the study, the research questions were broken down into thematic and narrative-based analytical focuses derived from field data.

The research subjects consisted of seven informants, including two key figures involved in organizing the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition (Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa and Mukti Renggo Aprianto), and five youth participants actively involved in the procession (Alfina Dwi Rahmawati, Anisya Sinta Puspita, Davigo Hildan Erlangga, Muhammad Abu Abdillah, and Wahyu Surya Amelia). The researcher used purposive sampling to select informants based on their active roles in the tradition under study.

Data collection was conducted through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. Interviews were carried out both face-to-face and online, such as via WhatsApp chat, depending on the informants' availability and comfort. These interviews aimed to uncover the knowledge, experiences, and values upheld by the participants of the tradition. All interviews were recorded and transcribed for analysis.

The intervention procedure in this study refers to the researcher's approach in building communicative relationships with informants in order to obtain authentic narratives. The researcher served as the primary instrument in the data collection and interpretation process.

The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis, which involved data reduction, categorization, and drawing conclusions. The collected data were analyzed to identify patterns of meaning related to the synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom values integrated within the *Ruwatan Bumi* procession. The results of this analysis were used to explain how the tradition can be sustained as a model of cultural and environmental preservation within the context of modern society.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

## A. Environmental Conservation in *Ruwatan Bumi*

*Ruwatan Bumi* in Winongo Subdistrict is not merely a cultural tradition passed down through generations; it also serves as a tangible reflection of how local communities strive to maintain harmony with nature. This ritual procession represents a form of environmental conservation rooted in local wisdom, in which natural resources are managed sustainably and ecological values are passed on to younger generations. The tradition closely aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 15 (Life on Land) (Putri et al., 2023).

In practice, *Ruwatan Bumi* involves various activities that positively impact the environment, such as the prohibition of excessive exploitation of natural resources and the obligation to maintain environmental cleanliness. The tradition is not only an expression of gratitude for the harvest but also an effective medium of ecological education. The people of Winongo practice *sedekah bumi* (earth alms) by distributing agricultural produce such as fruits, vegetables, and traditional snacks, symbolizing efforts to uphold ecological balance in both spiritual and social dimensions.

According to Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa, a local community leader, *Ruwatan Bumi* is an expression of gratitude to God and the ancestors for protection and the abundance of the earth. He explained that the tradition encompasses spiritual, social, and ecological dimensions. *"We believe that maintaining the balance of nature is part of our duty as a community that lives off the earth's bounty. This tradition teaches us not to be greedy and to always be grateful,"* he stated. Activities such as *bersih desa* (village clean-up), *wayang kulit* performances, *kirab gunung* (a ceremonial parade), and inter-neighborhood cleanliness competitions are organized as part of the *Ruwatan Bumi* series. The *kirab gunung* itself symbolizes prosperity and communal gratitude, with offerings later distributed to residents as a form of almsgiving. The communal prayer is the sacred climax of the procession, blending elements of *Kejawen* Islam and *Shari'a* Islam, thus fostering harmony between spirituality and environmental preservation.

The implementation of this tradition also serves as a platform to strengthen community solidarity and promote cultural regeneration. Mukti Renggo Aprianto, a youth leader involved in organizing the event, explained that involving the younger generation is a strategy to instill ecological awareness from an early age. *"This tradition becomes a moment of mutual cooperation, bringing together people from various backgrounds in an atmosphere of unity and kinship,"* he said. According to him, *Ruwatan Bumi* teaches the community to respect nature and avoid its destruction, while also embedding cultural values and social responsibility in young people.

The ecological awareness embedded in this tradition is also evident from the perspectives of the youth. Alfina Dwi Rahmawati, one of the young participants in *Ruwatan Bumi*, stated that the community sees the event as an expression of gratitude and a reminder of the importance of protecting ecosystems. She emphasized that the use of natural materials such as rice, corn, and banana leaves symbolizes respect for nature and the rejection of harmful substances. *"The youth are also actively involved in keeping the environment clean during and after the event, participating in communal work and planting activities. Values of cooperation and conservation are instilled through these actions,"* she explained.

A similar view was expressed by Muhammad Abu Abdillah, who highlighted the importance of using natural materials and upholding ecological ethics throughout the procession. According to him, the tradition teaches that nature is not an object to be exploited but a living partner to be protected. *"We've started to reduce plastic use, join village clean-ups, and keep the river clean. This is not just a cultural tradition, but also an ecological responsibility,"* he said. He

added that collective prayers held at sacred sites or rivers carry both spiritual and ecological significance, as they aim to preserve water sources and ancestral ecosystems.

Thus, *Ruwatan Bumi* serves as a strategic space for synergizing environmental conservation and the preservation of local culture. This tradition not only maintains the spiritual and social heritage of the Winongo community but also internalizes sustainability values across generations. Through a holistic approach, it remains resilient and relevant amid modern challenges, bridging the wisdom of the past with the ecological imperatives of the present and future.

## B. Environmental Conservation through Ritual and Symbolism

One of the most prominent ecological aspects of the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition is the use of natural materials in every ritual procession. The offerings, consisting of fruits, vegetables, and traditional market snacks, reflect the awareness of the Winongo community in choosing environmentally friendly materials. They prefer agricultural products over processed or chemical-based items. This choice conveys an educational message about sustainable consumption patterns and respect for nature as a source of life (Abadi & Soebijantoro, 2016).

Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa, a local community leader, emphasized that the philosophy of environmental stewardship has been passed down through generations via *ruwatan*. *"We were taught from a young age that nature is a part of life that must be protected. If we damage it, the balance will be disturbed,"* he said. A similar sentiment was expressed by Mukti Renggo Aprianto, a cultural practitioner and event organizer, who mentioned that every ritual activity always considers its environmental impact. *"We ensure that all materials used do not pollute the environment. Even the remains of the offerings are returned to the earth, as a form of respect,"* he stated.

During the implementation of this tradition, there are also norms and prohibitions that serve as indirect ecological education. For instance, the community is prohibited from cutting down trees indiscriminately, throwing away plastic waste, or polluting rivers during and after the procession. These prohibitions are believed to be part of honoring the ancestors and maintaining harmony with nature (Shalsabila & Maryuni, 2024).

This ecological awareness is also instilled in the younger generation who participate in the tradition. Alfina Dwi Rahmawati, a youth involved in the procession, expressed that her involvement helped her better understand the importance of protecting the environment. *"We were asked to bring natural offerings, no plastic allowed. That taught us not to litter,"* she said. Anisya Sinta Puspita added, *"During the parade, we were also reminded to keep the route clean. It becomes a shared responsibility."*

Davigo Hildan Erlangga mentioned that the teaching of environmental care is deeply embedded in the procession. *"It doesn't feel like an order, but more like a habit. Because it's part of tradition, we follow it gladly,"* he said. Similarly, Muhammad Abu Abdillah stated, *"We were taught that if we take care of nature, nature will take care of us."* Meanwhile, Wahyu Surya Amelia noted that this tradition can be an effective way to instill love for the environment. *"Sometimes, learning*

*through school lessons can be boring, but through this tradition, the message becomes more enjoyable and meaningful."*

Thus, the symbolism and rules embedded in the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition not only carry spiritual and cultural significance but also function as an effective ecological mechanism. This tradition serves as a medium for conveying environmental preservation messages that are acceptable and practicable by all layers of society because they are delivered in a familiar and sacred context.

### C. Integration of Local Wisdom and Environmental Conservation

As part of conservation efforts, the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition reflects ecological values embedded in the daily practices of the Winongo community. This tradition teaches the concept of harmony between humans and nature, which from a conservation perspective can be understood as a form of environmental ethics. The community believes that excessive exploitation of nature may lead to disasters; hence, they apply sustainable farming systems and avoid environmental destruction (Putri et al., 2023).

Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa explained that these values are not merely preached but practiced in daily life. *"We always remind the younger generation not to pollute water sources, because they are our source of life,"* he said. This is reinforced by Mukti Renggo Aprianto, who stated that the teachings in *ruwatan* are not only symbolic but also practical. *"For example, during the cleansing ritual using Banyu Tuk Pitu, it is not only a ritual but also a reminder of the importance of maintaining clean water sources,"* he explained.

The *siraman* ritual using *Banyu Tuk Pitu*, or water from seven springs, holds deep symbolic and ecological meaning. The water is believed to cleanse negative energies, but in practice, it also serves as an educational tool for the importance of spring water conservation (Cipta, 2002). In this context, water conservation is not merely theoretical teaching but is embedded in the community's cultural experience.

The youth actively involved in the procession are also aware of the importance of environmental preservation through tradition. Alfina Dwi Rahmawati stated that the experience made her more sensitive to her surroundings. *"We helped fetch water from the spring, and we were taught not to pollute the place,"* she said. Anisya Sinta Puspita added, *"The water is considered sacred, so we must respect it. We must not litter, especially near the spring."*

Davigo Hildan Erlangga remarked that environmental conservation is part of the tradition carried out voluntarily. *"We learn that caring for nature is part of respecting our ancestors,"* he revealed. In the same vein, Muhammad Abu Abdillah stated, *"Water from seven sources is united, meaning we must also unite to protect the environment."* Wahyu Surya Amelia expressed that the environmental conservation message is more strongly felt through cultural processions. *"If someone just tells us 'don't litter,' sometimes it doesn't register. But through a tradition like this, the message becomes deeper and more impactful,"* she explained.

Through the integration of local wisdom and conservation practices, the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition becomes an effective medium for fostering ecological awareness. Traditional values are wrapped in sacred rituals that not only bind spiritually but also shape a collective environmental consciousness within society. This integration shows that cultural preservation and nature conservation are not separate entities, but rather mutually reinforcing. Ancestral values



concerning harmonious relationships with nature serve as the foundation for environmentally friendly actions, creating a synergy between cultural heritage and ecological ethics that is relevant and sustainable. This is the true form of integration, where local traditions are not only preserved but also function as living, contextual instruments of conservation with a direct impact on environmental sustainability.

#### **D. The Influence of *Ruwatan Bumi* on Environmental Awareness**

The active participation of the community in the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition has proven effective in raising awareness about the importance of cleanliness and environmental preservation. Cultural carnivals and inter-neighborhood cleanliness competitions, which are part of the celebration, encourage residents to be more attentive to their surroundings. These activities are not merely symbolic, but have a tangible impact on the community's daily behavior. Moreover, *Ruwatan Bumi* has a positive effect on the local economy by providing opportunities for farmers and vendors to sell agricultural products and local processed goods during the event (Basuni et al., 2017).

Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa emphasized the strong educational value of this tradition, particularly for children and youth. *"We want children to understand that culture and the environment must go hand in hand. Ruwatan Bumi is our way of teaching that to them,"* he said. Mukti Renggo Aprianto echoed this sentiment, actively mentoring the younger generation to implement these values through concrete actions. He added, *"We involve the youth directly so they don't just watch, but also learn and feel the responsibility to protect the environment and preserve the tradition at the same time."*

The participating youth also acknowledged the lessons they gained through the process. Alfina Dwi Rahmawati said, *"Through this event, I realized that keeping the environment clean can't be postponed, especially during the cleanliness competition—we really paid attention to our yards and the drainage."* Anisya Sinta Puspita added that the event helped her better understand the link between culture and environment: *"I just realized that tradition can be a great way to teach people about environmental issues."*

Davigo Hildan Erlangga shared a similar reflection, saying, *"At first, I joined because I was told to, but over time I understood that this is about our future too."* Muhammad Abu Abdillah noted that being involved in these activities strengthened his sense of belonging: *"When we take part in cleaning and preserving, it feels like we have a greater responsibility."* Wahyu Surya Amelia remarked that a cultural approach is more effective in delivering environmental messages: *"Environmental messages conveyed through culture like this hit differently, especially for people our age."*

In the context of environmental education, *Ruwatan Bumi* serves as a contextual learning medium deeply rooted in the community's daily life. It not only introduces the history and local cultural heritage but also instills values of sustainability through direct experience. Children and adolescents are not merely spectators, but active participants in an educational process that integrates social, cultural, and ecological aspects. Hence, *Ruwatan Bumi* not only preserves cultural identity but also becomes a strategic instrument for fostering ecological awareness that is embedded in daily life from an early age (Shalsabila & Maryuni, 2024).

Furthermore, the environmental impact of this tradition extends beyond the celebration period and is reflected in the community's habits afterward. Many residents begin to adopt more eco-friendly practices, such as waste sorting, reducing household waste burning, and regularly participating in village clean-up initiatives. *Ruwatan Bumi* has become a catalyst for positive social

transformation in how the community perceives the relationship between humans and nature, demonstrating that local culture can be a driving force for a more sustainable life.

### **E. The Implications of *Ruwatan Bumi* for Environmental Sustainability**

The water springs in Kelurahan Winongo play a crucial role in the implementation of the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition. These springs are considered sacred as they are believed to bring blessings and form a part of the village's history. Therefore, their preservation becomes a shared responsibility among community members. Efforts include maintaining cleanliness, avoiding waste disposal near the springs, refraining from indiscriminate tree cutting, and routinely cleaning the area as a form of communal cooperation and respect for ancestral heritage (Putri et al., 2023).

Spiritual values are also preserved through rituals such as communal prayers and the chanting of mantras at sacred sites like rivers and *punden* (ancestral shrines). As stated by Abah Ali, *"There are usually processions with symbolic offerings, communal prayers, and the recitation of mantras at certain sites like rivers or shrines."* He also highlighted the importance of involving the younger generation to ensure the tradition is not only remembered but also lived and cherished: *"Children are introduced to their culture from an early age,"* he explained.

Mukti Renggo Aprianto, who actively mentors the youth in the area, supports this view. He explained that involving adolescents is part of a sustainable preservation strategy: *"We want the younger generation not only to be spectators but to help maintain the tradition and the environment that sustains them,"* he said. He has been actively guiding five local teenagers—Alfina Dwi Rahmawati, Anisya Sinta Puspita, Davigo Hildan Erlangga, Muhammad Abu Abdillah, and Wahyu Surya Amelia—in various *Ruwatan* activities, including preparing offerings, maintaining the cleanliness of the springs, and assembling symbolic *gunungan* structures.

The five teenagers stated that their participation is not merely ceremonial, but a practical learning experience about culture and the environment. Anisya expressed, *"We now understand why water springs need to be protected. It's not just about clean water, but also about respecting nature."* Davigo added, *"Ruwatan feels like a reminder that we live in harmony with nature and must protect it together."*

As a form of local wisdom, *Ruwatan Bumi* makes a concrete contribution to environmental conservation. The tradition teaches responsibility in managing natural resources wisely. In the context of sustainable development, *Ruwatan Bumi* exemplifies how communities can contribute to conservation efforts without abandoning their cultural practices (Putri et al., 2023).

In a WhatsApp interview, Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa concluded with a reflective message that unites the meanings of culture and ecology: *"As long as we protect our culture and nature, we are also safeguarding the future of our descendants,"* he stated. The implications of the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition for environmental sustainability are both significant and long-term. The preservation of sacred water sources has become a central focus for the community—not only as cultural heritage but also as vital lifelines to be protected together. Activities such as cleaning spring areas, restricting environmentally harmful practices, and honoring nature through rituals and communal prayers have shaped a strong collective awareness of ecological responsibility (Putri et al., 2023).

Moreover, the active involvement of youth in the rituals and the preservation of the tradition ensures the transfer of environmental values and knowledge across generations. Through their participation, ecological awareness becomes more than a concept, it becomes a

lived practice for the people of Kelurahan Winongo. Thus, *Ruwatan Bumi* serves as an effective medium for integrating local wisdom with the principles of sustainable development, creating enduring harmony between people and nature.

#### **F. Environmental Conservation Efforts for the Sustainability of *Ruwatan Bumi***

*Ruwatan Bumi* is not merely a cultural procession, but also a tangible manifestation of environmental conservation efforts collectively undertaken by the community of Winongo Subdistrict. This tradition is deeply rooted in the social life of the residents and has become an inseparable part of their local identity. One of the crucial elements that reflects the interconnection between tradition and environmental conservation is the community's attention to natural resources, particularly water springs.

The water springs in Winongo play a central role in the implementation of the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition. These springs not only serve as providers of clean water but also hold spiritual significance, as they are believed to bring blessings and are considered integral to the village's ancestral history. Therefore, the local community regards the preservation of these water sources as both a moral and social responsibility, passed down through generations. In practice, conservation is carried out through various means, including keeping the surrounding areas clean, refraining from disposing of household waste into rivers or springs, avoiding deforestation around the springs, and conducting regular clean-ups through communal work. All these actions are expressions of respect for ancestral heritage and are manifestations of ecological awareness deeply embedded in local culture (Putri et al., 2023).

The spiritual aspect of *Ruwatan Bumi* further reinforces the ecological meaning of the tradition. Places such as rivers, water springs, and *punden* (sacred ancestral sites) are used as the main locations for collective prayer and the chanting of *mantras* prior to the main event. According to Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa, commonly known as Abah Ali, "*There are usually processions of offerings, communal prayers, and the recitation of prayers or mantras at specific sites such as rivers or ancestral shrines.*" These activities are not only intended as a form of respect for the ancestors but also as a means of raising awareness about the importance of preserving the sanctity and sustainability of nature as part of the community's spiritual life. Thus, the tradition implicitly integrates conservation values into the religious and cultural practices of the community.

However, the main challenge in preserving this tradition lies in ensuring its continuity amidst modernization and the changing lifestyles of the younger generation. Therefore, the involvement of youth is regarded as a key factor in sustaining *Ruwatan Bumi* as well as environmental conservation. Abah Ali stated, "*Children are taught from an early age or introduced to their culture.*" This indicates that the transmission of values is not conducted merely through theoretical instruction but through direct practice and active involvement of children and adolescents in every stage of the event.

In an interview, Mukti Renggo Aprianto, a key figure in *Ruwatan Bumi* and a youth activity mentor in Winongo Subdistrict, explained that he and other community leaders actively guide and encourage youth to gain a deeper understanding of the meaning behind *Ruwatan Bumi*. He added that this tradition is not just a cultural routine, but also a means of character education and environmental awareness. According to him, by involving children and teenagers directly, they develop a sense of ownership over the tradition and are motivated to preserve it. "*We want to nurture their love for culture while also instilling a sense of responsibility towards the environment,*" Mukti explained.

This is evident in the active participation of youth in every *Ruwatan Bumi* procession. Alfina Dwi Rahmawati, one of the participating youths, admitted that her involvement helped her better understand the importance of environmental cleanliness and appreciation of nature. "*I used to just follow along, but now I understand that all of this has meaning,*" she said. She also expressed



her hopes: *"The biggest hope is that this tradition must and will continue from generation to generation, especially in this era of modernization. Ruwatan Bumi is not just about culture, but it is also a reminder for people living alongside nature that we have a great responsibility to always care for and conserve it. Abundant nature begins with human awareness."*

Anisya Sinta Puspita expressed a similar sentiment. According to her, the communal work and rituals made her feel closer to both the community and the surrounding environment. *"Participating in this event made me appreciate nature more and understand why culture is important,"* she shared. She hopes, *"This tradition will continue to be preserved by the younger generation—not just as a ceremonial event but truly understood in its meaning as a form of gratitude to God and nature. I want society to become more aware that caring for the environment is not just the government's or activists' duty, but a shared responsibility that can begin with small actions, like not damaging nature, disposing of waste properly, or planting trees. Ruwatan Bumi can serve as a reminder and a strengthener that humans and nature must live harmoniously. So, I hope this tradition continues to be practiced, while also being adapted to current times to remain relevant and resonate with the hearts of the people, especially the youth."*

Davigo Hildan Erlangga added that youth participation is crucial for the sustainability of the tradition. He said, *"My hope for the continuity of Ruwatan Bumi and environmental conservation in the future is that this tradition will continue to be preserved and passed down across generations—not just as a cultural legacy, but as a source of ecological values relevant to contemporary challenges. Ruwatan Bumi should not merely be an annual ceremony, but a collective reminder of the importance of living in harmony with nature. I hope that the younger generation becomes increasingly involved in the process, understands its meaning, and is able to develop this tradition creatively without losing its original essence."*

Muhammad Abu Abdillah also highlighted the importance of environmental education through culture. He hopes that more young people will become involved and understand the deeper meaning of Ruwatan Bumi. *"I hope more youth become aware that this ritual is not just about custom, but also about our responsibility to the Earth, such as protecting water sources, trees, soil, and the surrounding environment so they remain sustainable. If we can truly preserve this tradition while educating the community to be more environmentally conscious, I believe our village and many other places can become examples of how culture and conservation can go hand in hand. Essentially, I want Ruwatan Bumi to be a bridge connecting the past and the future so that nature and culture are preserved for a better life."*

Wahyu Surya Amelia conveyed a similar hope, with an emphasis on collective awareness. *"My hope for the future is that the environment will be better protected, free from pollution, and that the community becomes more sensitive and aware of their surroundings."*

Through the involvement of these youths, the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition has become an effective educational space for building public awareness, especially among the younger generation—about the importance of protecting nature. This value-rich tradition proves that environmental conservation can go hand in hand with cultural preservation. Moreover, it serves as evidence that local wisdom is not outdated but remains highly relevant in addressing today's environmental sustainability challenges.

At the end of the interview via *WhatsApp*, Abi Ali Sjukur Santosa emphasized, *"As long as we preserve our culture and nature, we are also preserving the future of our descendants."* This statement serves as a powerful conclusion and a reflection that environmental and cultural preservation are not separate matters, but interrelated and mutually reinforcing in realizing a sustainable future.

## CONCLUSION

The synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom through the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition in Winongo Subdistrict, Manguharjo District, Madiun City has successfully instilled deep ecological awareness in the community. The use of natural materials in the ritual processions, such as fruits, vegetables, rice, and banana leaves, not only symbolizes respect for nature but also supports the principles of sustainable resource management. The prohibition of excessive exploitation and encouragement of environmentally friendly behaviors—such as avoiding littering and maintaining the cleanliness of water sources—form an integral part of values passed down through generations. Communal work, environmental cleanliness competitions, and the involvement of youth in this tradition further strengthen social solidarity while fostering an environmentally friendly culture embedded within the community's spirituality. While the *Ruwatan Bumi* tradition excels in holistically integrating local wisdom and environmental conservation, challenges remain in ensuring the continuity of these values amid modernization and social change. Youth involvement is key to the sustainability of this tradition, but it requires guidance and strengthened education to prevent ecological and cultural values from being eroded. Moving forward, developing programs that integrate tradition with modern conservation technologies can amplify its positive impact. In this way, *Ruwatan Bumi* not only preserves cultural heritage but also serves as an effective model of synergy between environmental conservation and local wisdom in achieving sustainable development in Winongo Subdistrict.

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