



MAJELIS ULAMA INDONESIA

LEMBAGA PEMULIAAN LINGKUNGAN HIDUP DAN SUMBER DAYA ALAM
WADAH MUSYAWARAH PARA ULAMA ZU'AMA DAN CENDEKIAWAN MUSLIM

Jalan Dempo 19, Pegangsaan, Jakarta Pusat 10320. Telp./Fax. 021-31908367
Website : www.mui-lplhsda.org Email: info@mui-lplhsda.org



MUSLIM STATEMENT ON WILDLIFE AND ANIMAL WELFARE

Hayu Prabowo

*Chairman of Environmental and Natural Resources Board
The Indonesian Council of Ulema*

Allah has made known through the Qur'an and via the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) in the Hadith that He is the creator of all life on Earth and indeed in the Universe (Qur'an 6:12; 21:19). We also know from the Qur'an that Allah has placed humanity in the role of Khalifa - Vice Regent on Earth (Qur'an 2:30; 38:26). We know that on the Day of Judgement we will have to answer before Allah as to how well we conducted ourselves as Khalifas for life on Earth (Qur'an 6:165). We know also from the Qur'an that all creatures live in community (Qur'an 6:38) and we know from the Hadith, where the Prophet Mohammed (pbuh) stopped people tormenting a mother bird by taking her young that Allah forbids the infliction of unnecessary pain and suffering on other living creatures. As Khalifas we have the right to use nature but not to abuse it.

Unfortunately many animal and wildlife species are threatened with extinction. Other animals stray abandoned and hungry in the streets. On the whole, it cannot be said that we treat animals as well as we should, or carry out our responsibilities towards them.

The Qur'an refers to animals as a "community" (*umma*) just like ours. Qur'an, 6:38:

"There is not an animal (that lives) on the earth, nor a being that flies on its wings, but (forms part of) communities like you. Nothing have we omitted from the Book, and they (all) shall be gathered to their Lord in the end."

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also adheres to the following principles, which are part of the duties that Islam encourages Muslims to fulfill:

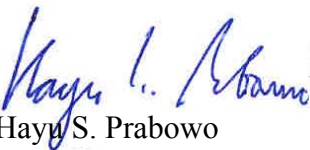
1. A Muslim feeds or gives water to an animal if he finds it hungry or thirsty. This is based on the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), statement: *"There is a reward (for serving) everything with a moist liver (that is, every living creature)."* [Ahmad]
2. A Muslim should have compassion and mercy towards animals. When The Prophet saw a group of people using a live animal for archery target practice, He said: *"May Allaah curse the one who uses any creature with a soul as a target."* [Muslim]
3. The Muslim must be kind to animals, even when he is about to slaughter them. The Prophet has said: *"Verily, Allah has prescribed excellence in all things. Thus, if you kill, kill in a kind manner. If you slaughter, slaughter in a kind manner. Each of you should sharpen his blade and spare suffering to the animal he is slaughtering."* [Muslim]

4. A Muslim should never pain an animal by any means of torture, such as beating it, making it carry more than it can handle, mutilating it or burning it by fire. The Prophet, sallallaahu alayhi wa sallam, also prohibited the tying down of animals until they die. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), once said: *“A woman entered the Hell-fire because of a cat that she tied down. She neither fed it nor let it free to eat the insects of the earth until it died.”* [Al-Bukhaari]

Wildlife and other living things were created by Allah, the Lord of the Universe. It is Allah who gave every life its spark. He enabled birds to fly, fish to swim and horses to gallop. Animals were here on Earth long before humans. Therefore if we use animals to help us, we must feed them and not overwork or harm them. If we eat animals, we must slaughter them according to *Dhabihah* rules which prevent all cruelty to animals.

We also ask all the faithful to protect those species in our own lands that are most threatened, such as the elephant, tiger, primates, pangolins and many others, and to assist in the prevention of poaching and the illegal wildlife trade in order that on the Dreadful Day of Judgement, when the community of creatures stand before Allah, we will not be condemned by their words.

The richness of this world is a gift and a blessing from Allah. May we in turn be a blessing to all that Allah has made and given to our care.


Hayu S. Prabowo

