



## Ecocide in Aesna's Novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*: An Ecocritical Discourse Analysis

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### **Abstract**

Aesna's novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* raises environmental concerns. Acts of ecocide threaten the existence of living things on earth by causing damage to the natural environment. Ecocide threatens the natural environment on the island of Borneo. The purpose of this research is to analyze and explain the form of ecocide that occurs in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* and to reveal the impact of ecocide through the theoretical study of ecocritical discourse analysis. This research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing data from the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* as its primary source. The result of this research is that the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* contains a form of ecocide and the impact of ecocide that threatens the environment and other living things.

**Keywords:** *Ecocide; Ecocriticism; Novel; Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*

### **Introduction**

Damage to the environment can lead to unhappiness in life and significantly contribute to human rights violations. The environmental crisis is one of the problems faced by humans today (Saleh, 2020). The earth's ecosystem, a web of interconnected ecosystems, facilitates the simple spread of the environmental crisis (Marianta, 2011). In the modern era, there are many incidents of environmental destruction that have a negative impact and cause significant losses to ecosystems and survival, one of which is the act of ecocide (Anudiwanti & Ahmad, 2022).

Ecocide is defined as a criminal act that significantly alters and damages the environment, making recovery difficult (Saleh, 2020). Ecocide can be a serious cause of destruction if there is no preventive effort to maintain and protect the ecosystem (Jumhari & Effendi, 2022). The 1972 Stockholm Conference on Human Environment in Stockholm, Sweden, introduced the concept of ecocide, marking the first international conference to focus on environmental issues, particularly environmental degradation (Hamzah, 2013). This is an attempt to focus on the issue of environmental damage that does not recognize certain geographical boundaries (Saleh, 2020).

Human life is filled with literary works, which are a significant source of environmental awareness because of their expression of interest in nature and inspiration from it (Kurniawan & Yuwana, 2019). Literature contributes to raising issues about the environment through novels, short stories, poetry, drama, and films (Juanda, 2018). According to Nahdhiyah et al. (2023), numerous novels today depict environmental issues, frequently portraying nature as a human-endangered entity. The wealth of literary works reflects the destruction of nature that occurs today.

Ecocriticism examines the connection between literature and the environment, allowing us to apply ecological concepts to literary works (Glotfelty & Fromm, 1996). Ecocriticism can help determine, explore, and address ecological issues more broadly because literature grows out of society and the natural environment (Garrard, 2004). According to Larasati & Manut (2022), ecocriticism aims to characterize the actions of literary works that address environmental issues, with the expectation that these efforts will prompt other areas to also focus on environmental issues.

Aesna's novel, *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, explores issues related to the natural environment, particularly the act of ecocide. Through the novel, *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, the author depicts the state of the natural environment, especially in the forests on the island of Borneo, as a result of ecocide. The trees that grow lush green are no longer visible. The island, once green with the leaves of various kinds of trees, has now turned brown, replaced by barren forests and dark soil left over from forest fires. The forest's avian inhabitants started to vanish, leaving behind only a handful of bird species, whose survival was under constant threat. The novel portrays humans as creatures incapable of appreciating the existence of other living things, such as birds.

Many humans hunt and destroy birds in the forest. Despite their limited ability to fly from one tree to another, birds, viewed as useless creatures in that era, frequently polluted the environment where humans lived. Meanwhile, plastic trees, unable to shed their leaves, began to replace the trees depicted in the novel. People consider plastic trees more efficient because there is no need to clean up the dirt when the leaves fall. This becomes a parable about how humans no longer care about the preservation of plant life around them; they actually commit crimes against living things, such as plants and animals.

The acts of ecocide described in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* include forest fires on Borneo, pollution of water sources, poaching of animals, logging on the island of Borneo that does not comply with the rules, and environmental ethics that are no longer considered by humans. These problems are a form of ecocide that can destroy the natural environment if there is no prevention. The opinion (Hamzah, 2013) bolsters the notion that ecocide constitutes a criminal act that can inflict environmental changes and damage, posing significant challenges to restoration without proactive measures.

No one has conducted research using Aesna's novel data source, *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*. However, researchers have used ecocritical theory to scrutinize some literary works. The following are some previous studies that found literary works using ecocritical theory and research that discusses the act of ecocide. The study by Apriyanti Sihotang, Een Nurhasanah, and Slamet Triyadi (2021) called *Ecocritical Analysis in the Novel Kekal Karya Jalu Kencana* reveals that there is an environmental crisis and that the problems in the novel *Kecal* are caused by things that are already there. Juanda & Azis (2023) conducted further research on *Dolphin Conservation in Pengelana*. The study, *Laut Short Story: Greg Garrard's Ecocriticism Study*, revealed that the short story encompasses events occurring on Earth, particularly the exploitation of dolphins by humans. Puja Anudiwanti and Ahmad Hatim's 2022 study, "Education for the Protection of Environmental Preservation in Village Communities Through Strengthening Regulations on Ecocide," revealed that national and international law does not view ecocide as an exceptionally dangerous crime.

Aesna's novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* presents a variety of ecocide-related issues, necessitating a thorough investigation into the novel to establish ecocide as a crime against the natural environment that

demands prevention. This research differs from previous studies in that it employs data sources from the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, a previously unexplored subject for ecocritical theory analysis. Additionally, ecocide remains largely unexplored, necessitating further research to increase its public awareness.

Thus, the problem of this research can be formulated, namely the form of ecocide that occurs in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* and the impact that occurs due to these ecocide actions. This study aims to examine and elucidate the types of ecocide depicted in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, as well as the consequences of these acts.

### ***Methods***

This study employs a qualitative research approach, specifically focusing on descriptive research methods. This aligns with the research objective, which is to examine the manifestation of ecocide and its impact on environmental damage, as presented in Aesna's novel, *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*. The quotations from the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, which take the form of conversations, sentences, and discourse, serve as the data sources for this research. We continuously carry out data analysis activities in qualitative research until we have saturated the data.

The stages of data analysis in this study are data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. We gather data from the data source, which is Aesna's novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, by analyzing the sentences, dialogues, and conversations of the characters about the act of ecocide. Next, the stage of data condensation involves identifying, selecting, and focusing the collected data in the form of quotations from the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, ensuring it aligns with the research objectives. After collecting the data and completing the data condensation stage, the next step is data presentation, which takes the form of a reduction or summary. Reliable evidence and explanations that align with the used theory must follow the data presentation. The novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* uses excerpts in the form of sentences from the act of ecocide, describing them using ecocritical theory in a clear and understandable manner. The final phase involves formulating conclusions, which serve as a response to the initial problem formulation. The conclusion provides an answer to the question of ecocide in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, utilizing the theory of literary ecocriticism.

### ***Research Results and Discussion***

The results of the research and discussion in this study aim to analyze the form of ecocide that damages the environment, as well as the impact of ecocide in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* Karya Aesna, through the study of ecocritical discourse analysis.

#### **Forms of Ecocide in Aesna's 2683 Earth Stories Novel**

The state of the natural environment, which continues to degrade as a result of continuous damage, threatens the safety of living things on earth, including Indonesian people (Niman, 2019). Some humans feel guilty for causing damage to the environment; therefore, they create programs to save the environment. However, some other humans still do not care about the environment. They continue to exploit and destroy the environment for profit (Marianta, 2011).

Based on the results of research on the act of ecocide in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* by Aesna, several forms of ecocide were found in the novel. Ecocide is a cruel act that undermines environmental conservation because it kills living things on earth (Ausath, 2022). The following are quoted data that have been found and analyzed in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* as a form of ecocide.

**(Data 1)**

*“Mulut Rindang akhirnya mulai mengucap sesuatu. Ketika ia baru sampai di suku kata ka-, sebuah peluru berkecepatan lumayan muntah dari senapannya. Semua burung terkaget-kaget dan cepat cepat terbang luntang-lantung. Decit-decit mereka begitu bising, hingar-bingar panik memenuhi hutan Kalimantan. Mereka mencari letak penembak itu, beberapa ada yang langsung terbang ke langit dan memilih berlindung di balik awan”* (Aesna, 2018:25).

Hunting animals in the forest is no stranger to humans on this planet. There are still many individuals who engage in hunting activities without considering the location or conditions, focusing solely on their personal enjoyment of the hobby. The quote suggests that the actions of animal hunters in the Kalimantan forest often put birds in danger. Poaching and illegal trade are the causes of bird species extinction, which threatens animal conservation (Efendi & Yossyafaat, 2023).

Even though the birds migrate to the forests of Kalimantan to live quietly and safely, they are often suddenly surprised to learn that some of their members have been shot with blood, and some are even beyond help. But as time goes by, humans do not preserve the forest and everything in it; on the contrary, they consider the contents of the forest to be their rights, so they are free to do anything. This is what causes the unsustainability of the forests on the island of Borneo.

**(Data 2)**

*“Pohon adalah tempat terbaik bagi para burung dan mereka tidak akan bisa disuruh pergi dari habitat aslinya semudah itu.”*(Aesna, 2018)

With their shade, trees provide the most comfortable habitat for birds in the forest. However, humans consistently disturb these trees. Humans often shoot at the birds in the forest without warning. Some humans believe that birds are weak animals with no long-term benefits, thus justifying their hunting. Birds are difficult to leave their natural habitat. The birds in the forest always try to keep their lives safe from poachers. They refuse to abandon the forest, considering it their most comfortable habitat.

**(Data 3)**

*“Aku terkesiap. Manusia-manusia yang bertugas memadamkan api kulihat hanya selonjoran membaca koran pagi dan meminum kopi. Lagi-lagi, hal ini juga terjadi di seluruh negara. Mereka, seakan-akan, secara sadar bersekongkol untuk membiarkan pohon-pohon itu terbakar. Satu jam kemudian, matahari menyinariku dengan latar belakang merah darah.”* (Aesna, 2018)

The novel's excerpt illustrates that despite possessing common sense and the ability to think intelligently, humans fail to use these advantages to aid their fellow living creatures. The occurrence of forest fires did not prompt humans to take action to rescue the burned trees. In fact, humans often intentionally set forest fires. Jumhari & Effendi (2022) argue that Indonesian legislation should incorporate the concept of ecocide, a crime in the natural environment that jeopardizes the lives of other living things.

The fire that devours the lushly growing trees in the forest destroys them. If we fail to prevent illegal burning and humans remain unaware of their negative actions, we will swiftly demolish forests teeming with trees, ensuring a future devoid of shady trees. Given the advantage of reason, we, as living beings, should strive to preserve nature wherever we find ourselves.

## The Impact of Ecocide in Aesna's 2683 *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* Novel

Ecocide is an environmental crime that seriously, extensively, and eternally damages the ecology, as evidenced by widespread and systematic damage (Jumhari & Effendi, 2022). The novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* by Aesna highlights the impact of ecocide.

### (Data 1)

*“Maka dengan habisnya pepohonan, burung-burung yang sekarang total jumlahnya tidak lebih dari lima ratus spesies itu bermigrasi ke daerah Kalimantan, tepat di garis lintang khatulistiwa, mengingat negara ini adalah negara yang selalu menjunjung tinggi nilai kehijauan dan pentingnya udara segar yang sekarang sudah teramat jarang.”*

(Aesna, 2018)

The quote accurately depicts the present state of the natural environment, particularly the impact it has on numerous individuals. Due to the environmental damage caused by the loss of trees, an increasing number of birds have decided to migrate to the Kalimantan area. In Kalimantan, there are still forest areas that can shelter threatened animals.

Kalimantan's forests are still regarded as the safest and most comfortable. As stated by Desy (2019), a natural forest is one that grows naturally without human intervention. Natural forests usually contain various types of trees, ages, and sizes. The current situation in the forests of the Kalimantan region has begun to cause land fires even in various regions of this country. People are now finding it difficult to obtain the fresh air they always crave, as many do not consider clean air free from pollution, whether it comes from vehicles or fires. Indeed, this nation is known for its promotion of environmental conservation. Reforestation of the land has undoubtedly occurred multiple times, yet it hasn't proceeded smoothly due to numerous human actions that fail to acknowledge the natural environment surrounding them.

### (Data 2)

*“Hutan di Kalimantan adalah hutan yang terakhir”* (Aesna, 2018)

The statement in the excerpt from the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* indicates a significant event that led to the destruction of existing forests. Numerous factors impact the situation, with humans being the primary cause. Deforestation won't occur if humans don't initiate the process. The excerpt from the novel should encourage humans to recognize the importance of preserving the existing forests. Avoid allowing the forest in Kalimantan to become extinct. Forest exploitation becomes excessive human activity, such as illegal logging and forest encroachment, without considering the survival of the community or living things around the forest (Niman, 2019).

### (Data 3)

*“Hujan-hujan itu masuk ke dalam saluran pipa yang nanti diolah menjadi air minum bernutrisi. Manusia sudah kekurangan air di zaman ini”* (Aesna, 2018)

The novel's excerpt depicts a future, specifically the year 2683, where the title predicts a shortage of water sources to sustain life on Earth. Clean water is already difficult to get. This can happen if more and more people pollute the river with factory waste, littering, and many other bad things that cause the scarcity of clean water. Not reforesting the forest is also a bad thing, and humans should start reforesting or replanting more often so that many trees grow in the environment.

Thriving trees help preserve water supplies. However, without proper maintenance, the survival and perpetual existence of clean water will undoubtedly be challenging. This issue aligns with Niman's (2019) perspective, which suggests that persistent environmental degradation can lead to a reduction in water flow, thereby endangering the lives of living organisms.

**(Data 4)**

*“Suara desis pohon seperti orang yang tengah kelaparan dan merintih –rintih meminta bantuan dan sumbangan seadanya” (Aesna, 2018).*

The novel *Stories about Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* portrays humans as becoming increasingly indifferent to the environment and plants, despite their status as fellow living beings. Many humans only think of the short term. The quote illustrates how the care for trees in Kalimantan's forests, or any other area, diminishes gradually. Such as not being cared for during tree growth and not providing fertilizer or nutrients so the tree doesn't moan anymore. Humans, who coexist as living beings, no longer care about the moaning of the trees around them.

**(Data 5)**

*“Padahal, Rindang sudah meyakinkan kepada dirinya sendiri bahwa ia bisa melindungi segalanya yang dititipkan Tuhan padanya. Ia telah berjanji menjaga alam hutan yang membuat banyak makhluk hidup bergantung. Namun, bagaimanapun, selain kuasa Tuhan, kuasa yang lain pada akhirnya akan runtuh juga.” (Aesna, 2018).*

Through one of the characters in the novel, Rindang, as the goddess of the bird nation, she feels that she has failed to protect the forest on which many living things depend. Not only do birds live in the forest, but many other animals make it home. But because of the advantages that humans have, the creatures living in the forest with limited abilities cannot prevent these humans' bad deeds. God orchestrated everything; despite the efforts of birds and other animals to safeguard the forest, humans' disregard for its preservation and protection has led to its destruction and depletion.

**(Data 6)**

*“Perbedaan yang paling mendasar terletak pada tempurung kepala kalian. Tahun 2683 ini, kami, bangsa manusia sudah berhasil menggunakan hampir separuh dari kekuatan otak kami untuk berpikir, hei, itu melebihi Einstein! Bayangkan, baru separuh saja otak kami bekerja, tapi kami sudah berhasil membuat teknologi apapun kau mau, apalagi kalau kami menggunakan semuanya? Sementara, bangsa kalian? Bahkan sampai saat ini, aku masih ragu apakah bangsa burung itu punya otak atau tidak? Kalaupun punya, apakah aku sedang tidak berhalusinasi? Oh alam, aku bingung terhadapmu, kenapa kau ciptakan hal yang tidak berguna seperti mereka?” (Aesna, 2018).*

The quote shows that there is a dialogue from one of the human characters, a forest hunter named a bullet, in the novel. The dialogue reveals the existence of human beings who harbor similar thoughts to those in the quote. Humans pride themselves on being more intelligent, thus underestimating other living beings such as birds. The Bullet character believes that in 2683, half of the human race has developed advanced technology; if this trend continues, the human world will surpass the technological advancements of the bird world. This arrogance leads to the destruction of the earth's natural environment. Humans, endowed with reason, should be able to preserve other living things, but instead, they damage them and fail to protect them. In contrast, humans continue to rely on other living organisms, including trees and forests, for their survival on Earth. However, there are still humans who don't think about it, so damage to the natural environment continues to occur.

**(Data 7)**

*“Rindang sudah putus asa dan tidak menyangka kalau tahun 2683 adalah tahun terakhirnya menjaga hutan di bumi ini, sekaligus menandai tamatnya perjuangan aktivis hijau.”*

(Aesna, 2018).

According to the quote, the character Rindang, a goddess in the forest world, particularly the bird nation, has given up hope and considers herself unable to preserve the forest on which the living creatures and her people depend. She is powerless to stop humans from destroying and burning the forest. This results in the destruction of the forest's contents and the exhaustion of the trees that thrive there. In the year 2683, Rindang believed that her struggle as a green activist had come to an end.

**(Data 8)**

*“Di tahun 2683, hutan terakhir di Kalimantan habis dibabat.”*(Aesna, 2018).

The novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* tells the story of how humans' indiscriminate clearing of the forest in Kalimantan led to its demise that year. If humans do not realize their bad deeds now, the sustainability of the forest will not last long, and the natural environment will be quickly destroyed due to human actions. In the year 2683, with the possibility of advanced technology in that era, we should still protect the natural environment where all living things live. Humans, the natural environment, and other living organisms coexist harmoniously to ensure the earth remains safe and comfortable for everyone to inhabit.

**Conclusion**

Aesna's research on ecocide in the novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683*, utilizing the ecocritical discourse analysis study, leads to the conclusion that ecocide in the novel poses a threat to the environment and other living beings. The novel *Cerita Bumi Tahun 2683* characterizes the ecocide event as a crime that negatively impacts the environment, potentially harming both human and natural life. This is shown by the forest fires on the island of Borneo, the extinction of trees in the forest, animals in the forest threatened by poaching, the decline in water sources for the life of living things, and other environmental damage events. Earth will lose many forests in 2683, including the forests on the island of Borneo. Human actions that do not respect the natural environment cause the forests to burn down. The novel *Earth Stories in 2683* provides a clear picture of how ecocide manifests and its impact on the survival of living things on earth.

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