IJ HC
International Jurnal on Hindu Culture
ISSN : 3124-5625 Vol 4, No 2

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDONESIAN MINISTER OF RELIGIOUS AFFAIRS' ECOTHEOLOGY STRENGTHENING POLICY BASED ON TUMPEK WARIGA FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TRI HITA KARANA AT THE INAUGURATION OF PPPK EMPLOYEES AT THE HINDU STATE UNIVERSITY OF I GUSTI BAGUS SUGRIWA

I Wayan Joni Artha
Universitas Hindu Negeri I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Denpasar
Corresponding email: joni.laxmiputra@gmail.com

Received: 07-05-2026 **Revised:** 31-08-2026 **Accepted:** 08-10-2026

Abstract
This article explores the integration of Hindu religious values, particularly those expressed in the Tumpek Wariga ritual, with increased ecological awareness through tree-planting activities involving the Suwi and Matoa species. This initiative took place at the State Hindu University I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa, Denpasar, on May 23, 2025, as part of the inauguration of Government Employees with Work Contracts (PPPK) under the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia. This study aims to analyze how Hindu rituals and socio-religious practices can function as an ethical and spiritual framework for ecological sustainability. Using a Hindu social theology approach, this study employs qualitative-descriptive analysis based on field observations and documentation of the event. The findings reveal that the integration of religious practices with ecological actions strengthens collective environmental awareness and promotes sustainable living rooted in cultural-religious values. This article concludes that Hindu traditions such as Tumpek Wariga offer valuable insights for contemporary eco-theology ethics and the development of community-based environmental movements.

Keywords: Tumpek Wariga; Hindu Ecotheology; Religious Rituals

INTRODUCTION

Balinese Hinduism has a rich religious tradition full of local wisdom, where spirituality is not only reflected in the relationship between humans and God, but also in the harmonious relationship between humans and the universe. One tradition that reflects this value is *Tumpek Wariga*, a sacred moment specifically dedicated to expressing gratitude to plants. Within the framework of the *Tri Hita Karana* teachings, this celebration emphasizes the importance of maintaining balance between *parahyangan* (relationship with God), *pawongan* (relationship with fellow humans), and *palemahan* (relationship with nature).

Tumpek Wariga, also known as *Tumpek Bubuh* or *Tumpek Pengatag,* is celebrated every *Saniscara Kliwon Wuku Wariga,* approximately 25 days before *Galungan Day*. On this day, Balinese Hindus offer porridge (*bubuh*) to trees as a symbol of offering and gratitude for the blessings of fertility and life they provide. This celebration is not merely a spiritual ritual but also carries a strong ecological dimension, as it fosters collective awareness of the importance of environmental conservation and respect for nature as a manifestation of divine power.

In a contemporary context, *Tumpek Wariga* can be interpreted as a form of Eco theology: a theological understanding that places nature as an integral part of human spirituality and morality. Hindu Eco theology views nature not merely as an object to be exploited, but as a sacred entity that deserves respect and protection. Thus, *Tumpek Wariga* is not merely a routine ritual but a relevant teaching for building an environmental ethics rooted in Hindu spiritual values. This celebration serves as a tangible expression of practical theology, guiding devotees to act ecologically as part of their *dharma* (sacred duty) in maintaining the harmony of life.

Based on the introductory description, the issues raised in this paper can be formulated as follows: 1) What is the theological meaning of *Tumpek Wariga* in Balinese Hindu tradition? 2) How does the celebration of *Tumpek Wariga* reflect the principles of Hindu Eco theology? and 3) What is the relevance of the celebration of *Tumpek Wariga* in strengthening environmental ethics today?

METHOD

This article employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a literature review method. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources such as Balinese lontar manuscripts, Hindu religious texts (e.g., *Bhagavad Gītā* and the Vedas), and contemporary research on eco-theology and Balinese culture. Analysis was conducted using a contextual theology and cultural hermeneutics approach to understand the connection between the spiritual values of *Tumpek Wariga* and environmental conservation practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Theological Meaning of *Tumpek Wariga* in Balinese Hindu Tradition

In the Balinese calendar system, *Tumpek Wariga* is a sacred day celebrated every six months, precisely on *Saniscara Kliwon Wuku Wariga,* or 25 days before *Galungan.* This day is specifically dedicated to honoring and giving thanks for plants as a source of life. Theologically, *Tumpek Wariga* reflects the sacred cosmic relationship between humans and the universe.

According to the teachings of *Tattwa,* all of creation is considered a manifestation of *Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa.* Plants, as part of *bhutakaya* (material elements), play a role in the human life cycle. Thus, offering offerings, holy water, and sacred songs to trees is not only an ecological form of respect but also a spiritual one, acknowledging the presence of God in all aspects of nature (*Tat Tvam Asi*).

Tumpek Wariga in the Perspective of Balinese Hindu Theology contains profound philosophy regarding the relationship between humans and the universe. The teachings of *Tri Hita Karana* emphasize the importance of maintaining harmony between humans

and nature. The practice *of ngebubuh (*making a special porridge as an offering to plants as an expression of love and respect for their significant contributions to human life) symbolizes the spiritual bond and interdependence of humans with nature as the source of life.

According to Nasaruddin Umar, Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, in line with ecological theology: At the 2024 National Christmas Seminar, he stated: "I urge everyone that the religions in Indonesia have one language to preserve our environment." "Religious language can penetrate the deepest recesses of the heart. Religious language is more effective than formal language such as laws."

Within the framework of Hindu theology, particularly as formulated by I Ketut Donder (2006) in *Brahmavidya: Teologi Kasih Semesta* (Brahmavidya: Theology of Universal Love), every religious act should be based on the principle of universal love (*prema*), which is divine love that encompasses all of creation without discrimination. Donder emphasizes that love in Hindu teachings is inclusive and cosmic, encompassing humans, animals, plants, and even natural elements such as water, earth, and air.

Furthermore, this principle is in line with the teachings of the *Bhagavad Gita*, particularly in verse 5.18 (Puja, 2007), which states that wise people view all beings with equality, whether human, animal, or plant—because they all have the same soul and come from one divine source. This view affirms that all of creation is part of a unified spiritual reality, and that respect for nature is a form of deep spiritual awareness.

vidyā-vinaya-sampanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śva-pāke ca paṇḍitāḥ sama-darśinaḥ

Translation:

A wise person with true knowledge sees a humble and knowledgeable Brahmin, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog eater in the same way.

This verse teaches about the existential equality of all beings in the eyes of the enlightened, a theological principle that forms the basis of ecological ethics in Hinduism. In the context of *Tumpek Wariga*, this view reinforces the understanding that trees and plants are not merely material objects, but rather part of the divine creation that deserves respect.

This perspective places nature as a spiritual partner in achieving *mokṣa* (liberation). The act of greeting trees with respect in *Tumpek Wariga* can be interpreted as ecologically applied bhakti, namely love and devotion that does not stop at the altar but extends to the environment.

In Prema Vahini, Sathya Sai Baba emphasizes that love is the highest form of spiritual service. True love does not discriminate; it flows to all beings because all beings originate from the same source—God. *Tumpek Wariga*, when associated with this teaching, becomes a means for Balinese Hindus to actualize *sevanam*—selfless service to nature as an expression of love for God manifested in all things.

Thus, the theological meaning of *Tumpek Wariga* transcends the formalities of ritual. It is a practice of universal love theology that guides humans to see trees not merely as ecological objects, but as part of a sacred cosmic body. In this context, caring for, greeting, and glorifying nature is part of a holistic Hindu spirituality—a theology that is alive, dynamic, and salvific.

From this perspective, the celebration of *Tumpek Wariga* has a deep theological meaning. It is not merely a ritual of reverence for plants, but a tangible expression of universal theology that encourages people to treat nature as part of divine existence. Offering gifts to trees, greeting them with prayers and good wishes, and preserving them are manifestations of love for God's creation. This aligns with Donder's view that true religiosity is not merely about praying in temples, but about how God's love is manifested in a life filled with compassion toward all beings.

Thus, *Tumpek Wariga* can be interpreted as the realization of the theology of love in an ecological context. It affirms that the preservation of nature is not only a moral obligation but also a spiritual act—part of the of devotion and service to God through loving care for His creation.

This view is in line with the Balinese cultural understanding as expressed by Fred B. Eiseman Jr. (1990) in Bali: *Sekala and Niskala*, that: "Everything in this universe, both visible (sekala) and invisible (niskala), is considered alive and has a spirit. Therefore, human interaction with nature is always accompanied by respect and ritual ceremonies as a form of spiritual communication." (Eiseman, 1990, pp. 15–16).

The Practice of *Tumpek Wariga* Celebrations as a Form of Balinese Hindu Ecotheology

Balinese Hindu ecotheology is based on principles such as *Tri Hita Karana* (three sources of happiness: harmonious relationships with God, humans, and nature) and *Nyama Braya* (universal brotherhood). In the context of *Tumpek Wariga*, symbolic practices such as sprinkling holy water, reciting prayers (*kidung* or mantras), and wrapping tree trunks with white-and-yellow cloth are tangible expressions of efforts to maintain ecological balance within a spiritual framework.

The *Tumpek Wariga* celebration reflects efforts to maintain harmony between humans and nature as a manifestation of the *Tri Hita Karana* values, particularly the *palemaha*n dimension. In this philosophy, environmental sustainability is not merely an ecological issue but also a spiritual and ethical one. As explained by Putra (2014), *Tri Hita Karana* serves as the foundation for harmonious living, encompassing the relationship between humans and God (*parahyangan*), with fellow humans (*pawongan*), and with nature (*palemahan*).

Therefore, as explained by Putra (2014) in *Tri Hita Karana*: Philosophy of Harmony in Life, the Hindu community in Bali interprets the *Tumpek Wariga* celebration as a moment to strengthen harmonious relationships with nature, especially with plants. This tradition reflects the principle of *palema*han in the teachings of *Tri Hita Karana*, which is to maintain balance between humans and the environment. In practice, this relationship is manifested through symbolic communication with trees, where the community greets (communicates with) and praises the plants with love and affection (sayang). For example, as practiced by I Made Sukadi (a farmer from Banjar Perean, Perean Village,

Baturiti), who communicates with his rice plants: “Ratu Betara Sri, with devotion and love from my family, we offer you porridge, *tipat-bantal,* and offerings, so that you may grow abundantly and yield a bountiful harvest. Today, I offer this offering to you as a sign of our gratitude.” This expression is not merely rhetoric but a representation of eco-theological awareness that is intertwined with local spirituality. This tradition can also be interpreted as a form of *sevanam*, an expression of devotion and service to nature—an ethical act that is not merely ritualistic but also educational and reflective. From this perspective, the relationship between humans and nature is not hierarchical or utilitarian but dialogical and participatory.

Furthermore, this practice reflects cosmic consciousness, which is the understanding that all creation is part of one interconnected spiritual unity. The universe is seen not only as the backdrop of life, but as the living body of God (*Brahmanda*); a place where humans, plants, animals, and other elements of nature exist in one sacred network. In this context, greeting and honoring trees is not merely a magical or mythological act, but an expression of recognition of the cosmic soul (*ātman*) that dwells in all beings.

Therefore, when Balinese Hindus celebrate *Tumpek Wariga* by offering sacrifices and words of devotion and love to trees, they are actualizing the Cosmo theandric values of the sacred relationship between God, humans, and nature.

In some communities, *Tumpek Wariga* is even followed by concrete actions such as tree planting, logging bans, or green space revitalization. This demonstrates how spiritual values do not remain at the symbolic level but manifest as concrete ecological actions.

The Relevance of *Tumpek Wariga* in Strengthening Contemporary Environmental Ethics

Amidst the global environmental crisis, celebrations such as *Tumpek Wariga* have become a source of inspiration for cultural-based ecological ethics. Balinese Hinduism, through *Tumpek Wariga,* offers an alternative paradigm for addressing environmental degradation by building ecological awareness based on spirituality.

In Hindu teachings, the relationship between humans and the universe is spiritual and integral. Titib (1996) in *Hindu Theology and Philosophy* asserts that all creation is a manifestation of divine power (*Śakti*) that is inseparable from transcendental reality (*Brahman*). Thus, respecting nature is a form of respect for the manifest aspect of God Himself. This concept reinforces the understanding that ritual actions such as *Tumpek Wariga* are not merely symbolic but have deep theological meaning: a recognition of the sanctity of nature as part of divine reality.

Meanwhile, Narayanaswami (2011) in *Ecotheology in Hinduism* states that religious practices in the Hindu tradition have long promoted environmental ethics based on spirituality. He argues that Hindu Eco theology is rooted in the principles of *Ṛta* (cosmic order) and Dharma, which encourage followers to live in harmony with nature, not exploit it. From this perspective, celebrations such as *Tumpek Wariga* become part of the religious mechanism to maintain harmony between beings and the universe, while internalizing the values of service (*sevanam*) in an ecological context.

The *Tumpek Wariga* celebration can be interpreted not only as an ecological ritual, but also as an expression of Hindu social theology rooted in concern for human and environmental issues on a collective level. Donder and Wisarja (2009) assert that Hindu

social theology demands a form of diversity that favors the welfare of humanity in harmony with the universe. From this perspective, religious diversity is not limited to vertical relationships with God, but also encompasses social responsibility toward all living beings and the surrounding environment.

Tumpek Wariga as a form of service (*sevanam)* to nature reflects this idea: that religious rituals should encourage ethical and solution-oriented actions towards ecological crises and environmental degradation. When communities offer sacrifices to trees and pray for their growth and benefits, they are actually putting into practice the Hindu teaching of human cosmic responsibility as part of *ṛta*—the cosmic order that must be collectively maintained.

Thus, *Tumpek Wariga* contains strong social theological aspects: it becomes a space where spirituality and ecological ethics meet, and a vehicle for the formation of collective consciousness to love and care for nature as part of human dharma.

These perspectives support the interpretation that *Tumpek Wariga* is a tangible manifestation of spiritual and cosmic consciousness within Balinese Hindu society. It is not merely a routine ritual but also a theology of action—a form of religious practice that demands active engagement in maintaining ecological balance as part of humanity's sacred duty.

Religious-based environmental education is an important strategy for internalizing the values of nature conservation, especially among the younger generation. By making *Tumpek Wariga* a moment for ecological reflection, the Balinese Hindu community has a great opportunity to revive the cosmic awareness that protecting nature is part of dharma (sacred duty).

CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia's ecotheology strengthening policy based on the Tumpek Wariga values in the inauguration of PPPK employees at I Gusti Bagus Sugriwa Hindu State University demonstrates that religious policy not only functions administratively, but also has strong theological, ecological, and pedagogical dimensions. From the Tri Hita Karana perspective, this activity represents the harmonization of the relationship between humans and God (parahyangan), humans with each other (pawongan), and humans with nature (palemahan), which is manifested symbolically and practically within the space of state institutions. Thus, the inauguration of PPPK is not merely a formal state ritual, but also a medium for internalizing Hindu ecotheological values that emphasize the commitment of state officials to environmental preservation, cosmic sustainability, and strengthening spiritual ethics in public service.

This paper demonstrates that *Tumpek Wariga* is not merely a traditional ceremony, but contains profound eco-theological values within the Balinese Hindu tradition. This celebration affirms the spiritual awareness of the community regarding the importance of plants as manifestations of God and the foundation of life. Theologically, *Tumpek Wariga* affirms the view that the universe is sacred and must be respected. The accompanying ritual practices reflect the principles of *Tri Hita Karana* and *Tat Tvam Asi, which* form the basis for harmonious relations between humans and the environment.

Beyond its cultural heritage, *Tumpek Wariga* also holds contemporary relevance in strengthening environmental ethics rooted in the concept of "*Tri Hita Karana*". Through this celebration, spiritual values can be translated into concrete actions for nature conservation and ecology education grounded in local culture. Thus, *Tumpek Wariga* can serve as a model of contextual eco-theology, rooted not only in religious beliefs but also contributing to holistic efforts for the preservation of the earth. Tree planting is a form of ecological devotion in Hindu tradition. Through this activity, devotees demonstrate their concern for the environment as part of their spiritual responsibility. UHN Sugriwa Denpasar serves as a concrete example of the implementation of Hindu teachings in a modern context that is ecologically and religiously relevant.

REFERENCES

Donder, I Ketut, Wisarja, I Ketut. (2009). *Social Theology: Human and Religious Issues from a Hindu Perspective*. Impulse

Donder, I. K. (2006). *Brahmavidya: Theology of Universal Love, Epistemology, Comparison, and Conversion of Hinduism*. Surabaya: Paramita.

Eiseman, F. B. Jr. (1990). *Bali: Sekala and Niskala*. Periplus Editions.

Lansing, J. S. (2006). *Perfect Order: Recognizing Complexity in Bali*. Princeton University Press.

Narayanaswami, A. (2011). *Ecotheology in Hinduism*. Banaras Hindu University Press

Parimartha, I Nyoman. (2015) *The Tumpek Ceremony in Balinese Tradition*. Denpasar: Udayana University Press.

Puja. (2007). *Bhagavad Gita*. Surabaya: Hanuman Sakti Press.

Putra, I B. G. Y. (2014). *Tri Hita Karana: The Philosophy of Harmony in Life.* Widya Dharma.

Sathya Sai Baba. (2004). *Prema Vahini: The Stream of Divine Love (Authorized English Translation).* Prashanti Nilayam: Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust.

Shiva, V. (2005). *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace*. South End Press.

Sudiana, I G. N. (2025). *Speech for the 26th Anniversary of the Faculty of Dharma Duta*. UHN Sugriwa Press. Bhagavad Gītā. Translated by S. Pendit. Bhagavad Gītā: The Sacred Song of Sri Krishna. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya, 2000.

Titib, I. M. (1996). *Hindu Theology and Philosophy*. Paramita.

Umar, N. (2024). *Religion and the Environment: A Theo-Ecological Perspective*. Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia.