

A stylized map of Indonesia is the background of the page. The map uses a color palette of light green, dark green, and black. The island of Sumatra is in the upper left, and the Indonesian archipelago extends across the bottom. Several regions are highlighted in black, including parts of Sumatra, Kalimantan, and Sulawesi. Other regions are in shades of green. The title is positioned in the upper right quadrant.

# FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH

Stories of Those  
Who Fought to  
Save Indonesia's  
Environment with  
Siemenpuu from  
2002 to 2021



# FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH

*Stories of Those Who Fought to Save Indonesia's  
Environment with Siemenpuu from 2002 to 2021*

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*Team of writers  
Okto Yugo Setiyo  
Nurain Lapolo  
Herbet  
Nurul Fitria  
Suryadi  
Rina Syahputri  
Arpiyan Sargita  
Renal Husa  
Defri Sofyan  
Very Syardianta*

*Team of Editor  
Zainuri Hasyim  
Made Ali  
Okto Yugo Setiyo  
Nurul Fitria*

*Covers and Layouters  
Nurul Fitria*

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The Siemenpuu Foundation was founded in 1998 by 15 Finnish NGOs and foundations working on environmental and development issues. Between 2002 and 2018, Siemenpuu funded more than 600 environmental projects in more than 50 developing countries. This institution receives funding from public development cooperation managed by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Siemenpuu provides support for environmental and democratic initiatives carried out by civil society actors. Supported projects focus on addressing poverty and inequality and reducing biodiversity loss and climate change.

In Indonesia, Siemenpuu began to provide a lot of financial assistance since 2002 until now. Siemenpuu has funded 38 institutions over the last two decades, with a total of 74 projects completed. All of these activities in Indonesia are related to a variety of issues, including clean water, coastal areas, forest preservation, peatlands, indigenous peoples, agricultural land use, and others. Various types of activities are carried out. From policy advocacy to institutional and community capacity building, conservation, research, conflict resolution, and media campaigns.

# FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH

*Stories of Those Who Fought to Save Indonesia's  
Environment with Siemenpuu from 2002 to 2021*



*Jikalahari*  
Jaringan Kerja Penyelamat Hutan Riau

**2022**



# PREFACE

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*Kirsi Chavda,  
Siemenpuu Foundation  
Programme Coordinator*

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Siemenpuu Foundation started funding Civil Society Organisations' (CSOs) environmental initiatives in the Global South in 2002. The Indonesian civil society has been our partner since the beginning, so this year our journey together turns 20 years. During these years we have supported 75 projects designed and implemented by local Indonesian CSOs.

Altogether we have granted approximately 2,42 million Euros for these projects, and the implementing CSOs have contributed approximately 240 000 Euros in voluntary work, donated goods or funds as self-financing to carry them out.

Project themes have varied from peasant agriculture and environmental policy advocacy to forest campaigning, strengthening of community-based forest conservation, reforestation, sustainable livelihoods in forest areas, communications work and legal monitoring. The key element in all the initiatives has been strengthening the civil society and local communities themselves.

It is an honour for Siemenpuu to have witnessed the inspiration of our Indonesian partners to produce this publication titled FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH: Stories of Those Who Fought to Save Indonesia's Environment with Siemenpuu from 2002 to 2021.

The way they brainstormed the concept of this publication at the partners' meeting held in 2019, and then jointly analysed the 20 years of CSO work, as well as turned it into a publication, is a true description of the nature of our partners and our partnership with them.

It has consisted of vivid discussions, willingness for collaboration, search for shared objectives and sharing the lessons learnt together. Our partners have not perceived us as a distant funder, but as peers that form part of the global environmental and social movement.

In addition to project reporting, over the years many of Siemenpuu's staff members and activists have had the



opportunity to visit our partners and gain a deeper understanding of the forest and civil society context in Indonesia.

We have in our turn shared the Indonesian realities to the Finnish audience through our communications work.

At Siemenpuu we hope the stories told in this publication inspire both the Indonesian, as well as the global audience to continue working for a world where the immense value of biodiverse forests cannot be overlooked.

These stories show how local community members and environmental CSOs join their forces to demand decision-makers and authorities as duty bearers for effective regulation of natural resource use and its prompt implementation.

How they carry out continued communications and awareness-raising work. How they plant trees and block draining canals to reforest. How they innovate ways for local communities to gain sustainable livelihoods in forest areas. How they demand collective land use and natural resource rights for the communities, as well as free and safe space for the civil society.

They face conflicting interests and harassment by industries exploiting natural resources or authorities.

Many times, as environmental defenders our partners risk their own safety and may doubt whether their work is worthwhile. Needless to say, that it is.

Siemenpuu is thankful for everyone who shared their story through this publication and wishes them perseverance to continue their work.#

# SAVE THE FOREST AND THE ENVIRONMENT WITH AN IDEAS AND COURAGE

Okto Yugo Setiyo  
Deputy Coordinator of Jikalahari

The presence of Siemenpuu in Indonesia is a blessing for reform in Indonesia. At the same time, forestry permits were issued in the midst of widespread deforestation. Siemenpuu is delighted to assist civil society organizations dealing with such a perilous situation. Siemenpuu understands that the fight to save the forest necessitates bravery and militant efforts.

For example, Jikalahari strongly advocated for the abolition of illegal logging, which was well received by the Riau Police at the time. Riau Police conducted a large-scale operation. However, the Riau Police Department's brave action has enraged forest destroyers. Even forest encroachers arrived at the Jikalahari office, accompanied by sawmill workers transported in a single truck.

Siemenpuu is also open to supporting innovative and yet unpopular ideas. They freely provide opportunities for their Indonesian partners to develop and are not bound by project outcomes. Furthermore, Siemenpuu

has been successful in encouraging initiatives to improve the well-being of local communities impacted by business pressure.

Siemenpuu is always open to new ideas and initiatives from its partners. These initiatives frequently become inspiration in the future in the issue of saving the environment in Indonesia. For example, consider the issue of peat conservation in Riau's Kampar Peninsula. When little is said about peat issues, Siemenpuu is at the forefront of assisting Riau partners.

Until now, the Kampar Peninsula has managed to become one of Indonesia's, if not the world's, largest expanses of peat with natural forest. Similarly, in the YMI story, Siemenpuu supports the issuance of the first Social Forestry permit in Indonesia.

According to Forest Watch Indonesia, Siemenpuu supports the issue of mangrove restoration, which was initiated by civil society organizations. As a result of the Jangkar Mangrove, a mangrove





recovery movement was born in 2016. Of course, this is intriguing because the new government in 2020 prioritized mangrove rehabilitation by establishing the Peat and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM).

Other issues include Kaoem Telapak's research on potential damage and economic opportunities in seagrass ecosystems, where very few discuss the potential of seagrass beds and the dangers that may be faced in the future.

Siempu is unique in its support for partners. Siempu invites each of its partners to contribute to the self-financing program with such a small sum. The benefit is that this is the work of activists, and there is a value in mutual cooperation.

Despite the fact that Siempu is no longer financially supportive, we are confident that Siempu and its Indonesian partners will continue to work together to save forests and the environment. Furthermore, the Siempu employees are very close. For us, Siempu is an ally in the fight to save forests and peatlands, particularly in Riau and Indonesia.

Siempu's 20-year support in Indonesia has left a significant modality for civil society organizations in Indonesia to advocate for environmental issues and community welfare.

This book, a proof, and a simple monument were created as a symbol of Siempu's friendship with partners in Indonesia and the Siempu Indonesia senior advisory board.

Furthermore, it is hoped that this book will serve as a model for the global fight to save forests and the environment, not just from north to south. Simple umen created as a symbol of Siempu's friendship with Indonesian partners and the Siempu Indonesia senior advisory board.

However, we regret that this book does not contain all of the experiences of Siempu partners in Indonesia.

Once again, the authors and I would like to thank Siempu, particularly Kirsi Chavda, Otto Miettinen, and other Siempu colleagues. I'd also like to thank the partners who have agreed to share their stories and experiences. Thank you to the Senior Advisory Board, Noer Fauzi Rachman, Don Marut, Roem Tupatimasang, Rivani Noer, and especially Zainuri Hasyim for their assistance and support until the book was completed.

We would like to thank everyone who helped make this book a reality once more. Let us continue to fight for the preservation of forests and the environment for future generations.

Regards,  
Deputy Coordinator of Jikalahari





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# PROLOGUE

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## *Siemenpuu Foundation*

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Siemenpuu Foundation was established by Finnish NGOs active in the fields of environmental protection and development cooperation. Its funding is dependent on the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs development cooperation funding, which Siemenpuu receives in periods of 2-4 years. Both of these background facts are important in understanding how Siemenpuu works in Indonesia and found its partners there.

Among the founding organizations of Siemenpuu were a few that were active in Indonesia before Siemenpuu was

established. Finnish Service Centre for Development Cooperation Kepa (now part of Fingo) had a close collaboration and one staff member placed in INSIST in Yogyakarta. Activities of Finnish paper industry companies had been monitored and criticized by the Coalition for Environment & Development and Friends of the Earth Finland. In particular, pulp and paper mills in Riau had a strong link to Finland.

In the end of 1990s APRIL had a brief collaboration with Finland-based UPM, and also APP mills had received a lot of



Finnish machinery and governmental export guarantees. These connections were put in use when Siemenpuu started granting funding to NGOs in the south. Indonesia was an important recipient country from the beginning, second only to India.

The Siemenpuu Finnish office has dedicated one program officer for the Indonesia projects. Currently, that person is Kirsi Chavda. Indonesia-activists within Siemenpuu acted in the the Indonesia Working Group, advising the board on what to fund, finding new partners, assisting in project administration and developing strategy.

Among thematic groups of Siemenpuu, often had the largest budget allocation. A key figure in Indonesia work in the early years, Anu Lounela, also acted as the chairperson of the foundation for several years. In short, Indonesia work is highly valued and important to Siemenpuu.

Siemenpuu's philosophy has always been that local groups know best how to operate in their area. Focus of work is defined in dialogue with partners in the south. Siemenpuu focus in each country is also directed by the interest of the Finnish activist community, particularly by the choice of first partners. Forest and forest land have always been the main focus of Siemenpuu in Indonesia.

From the beginning, Siemenpuu supported work as close to the grassroot level as possible, as well as policy work (advocacy). Earliest recipients of Siemenpuu funding in 2002 included national level actors Serikat Petani Indonesia, Forest Watch Indonesia and Telapak, soon followed by more local level activities by provincial WALHI offices in Sumatra.

Later, in 2005, two important partnerships were established, with Arupa, supporting land rights struggle of local people against Perhutani in Central Java, and Jikalahari in Riau, were the main recipients. The connection with Jikalahari and INSIST has remained throughout, while there has otherwise been turnover among the partners.

After the first few years Siemenpuu developed its structure in Indonesia by designating an advisory group with a couple of senior activists such as Roem Topatimasang, Don Marut, Sandra Moniaga and Farah Sofa. A part-time Indonesian coordinator was also hired, at first Ade Fadli, later Asep Firdaus.

In 2010 HuMa was designated as an administrator and technical support organization, with an Indonesian part-time coordinator. The funding was directed more towards natural forest and peatland related work in Sumatra.

In fact, more than half of Siemenpuu funding has been spent in Sumatra, 41% in Riau alone. Riau was viewed



important due to long-standing ties to local NGOs, large amount of peatlands and concentration of pulp industry with ties to Finland. However, important and long-time partners were found in Kalimantan and Sulawesi as well, while the attempt to expand to Papua was short-lived.

In 2015, Siemenpuu experienced budget cuts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after a new right-wing government slashed government

spending. Siemenpuu's possibilities to fund new partners diminished, and downscaling also meant that the Indonesian coordinator and administrator posts in HuMa had to be discontinued.

After positive political developments in Indonesia, funding became focused further to securing forest land rights for local communities.

The Finnish activist community also wanted to profile Siemenpuu in climate issues, by channeling funding to mangrove conservation projects in Indonesia, which at the time was a neglected theme. Also activities related to seagrass conservation were explored, though they have not lead into dedicated projects being funded.

Since the early years, Siemenpuu partners' meetings in Indonesia have been an important institution. These meetings are the only chance for Finnish staff and activists to see partners and advisory group interact and talk to all of them personally, as well as get an understanding of important issues and policy context in Indonesia.



They have been also a venue to get feedback from partners and develop strategy based on that input. These meetings have been without exception highly motivating and inspiring for the Finnish participants. Siemenpuu has been also able to invite Indonesian activists to Finland, and these visits were important in shaping political debate in Finland and directing Siemenpuu funding.

While the Siemenpuu office and activists are generally very supportive and content about the Indonesia partnerships and while evaluations have found Indonesia work to be among the strongest within Siemenpuu,

Ministry of Foreign Affairs does not see Indonesia as a strategic country for its development cooperation funding, whose main purpose is poverty alleviation. Formally a middle-income

country (by OECD standards), Indonesia is viewed too rich to be a major target of such funding. Consequently, in 2022 the ministry announced it will not fund Indonesia work further at least until 2025.

Previously Siemenpuu's programs in India had been terminated similarly. Currently, Siemenpuu's Indonesia activists are part of the Feminist Agroecology and Community Forests theme group (Agroforest group for short), with forest-related projects in Liberia and Mozambique.

There is a continued strong motivation in Siemenpuu to continue its fruitful partnership in Indonesia. International or Finnish climate and/or biodiversity related funding will hopefully offer such possibilities in the near future.

Until the next partners' meeting!



## TWO DECADES WITH SIEMENPUU

Deforestation in Indonesia reached 2 million hectares per year between 1990 and 2001. Environmental activists in Indonesia are concerned about illegal logging, forest clearing for industry, and mining that causes natural disasters.

As a shared priority, various activities are being launched with the goal of saving the forest. In fact, this concern is not limited to the Indonesian people; the attention of other parties, one of which is Siemenpuu, has heightened the importance of this initiative.

Siemenpuu collaborates with Indonesian environmental organizations to realize initiatives to save forests and the environment in Indonesia. Synergy is also established between people in the northern hemisphere and communities in the southern hemisphere.

From 2002 to 2022, various movements and activities were carried out, and Siemenpuu has become a brother in arms for environmental activists in Indonesia over the last two decades. Together, we can save the forest and the environment for the benefit of the entire community.

More than 74 projects have been undertaken by partners with Siemenpuu in his travel history over the last two decades. More than 38 partner institutions from Sabang to Merauke are supporting this activity.

The issues advocated are also diverse, ranging from forests and peatlands, indigenous peoples, clean water, mangroves, land use planning, agriculture, saving coastal areas, empowering coastal communities, clean water, to knowledge-based management of fisheries natural





resources and environmental awareness from local communities.

These issues are developed in accordance with the regional conditions of each partner, which range from Sumatra to Java, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua. Several activities were developed in order to rescue and protect people from existing problems.

Policy advocacy is carried out to encourage the development of pro-Natural policies in order to ensure the protection of forests and the environment. Encouragement for community awareness at the site level is carried out not only at the level of civil society organizations, but also by increasing capacity related to policy advocacy.

By utilizing the Social Forestry scheme or Land Object for Agrarian Reform, the community is also assisted in encouraging the expansion of its management space. The key to this activity is sustainable forest and land management. By implementing environmentally friendly agricultural practices, we can ensure that communities retain their rights to manage land while also ensuring that the environment remains sustainable.

Saving peat ecosystems is a common concern, in addition to saving forests and encouraging community management space. Protecting peat ecosystem areas is important in order to avoid catastrophic damage in the future. Remember how forest and land fires that ravaged peatlands in Sumatra and Kalimantan in 2014 and 2015 caused ecological, social, economic, and health damage to the community.

Coastal rescue activities such as rehabilitation and mangrove planting, as well as campaigns to save coastal areas, were also carried out in collaboration with Siemenpuu.

In addition to policy assistance and advocacy, Siemenpuu and partners conduct research and training for activists in order to strengthen their capacity to save the environment. Understanding of environmental issues, applicable policies, and training in mapping and spatial analysis are all required.

This training is also provided to activists who have recently joined in order for them to obtain preliminary provisions to implement in their respective regions. The gathering of young activists in this training creates new synergies and brings a variety of advocacy activities that can serve as the foundation for a joint movement.

Not to forget, campaigns and the use of alternative and creative media become a mouthpiece for partners, and Siemenpuu voices this joint environmental movement. Various methods are used to draw a lot of public attention to this environmental saving movement in order to make people aware.

This joint movement has formed a strong bond between all Siemenpuu partners. Two decades is not a long time, but it is also insufficient to save Indonesia's forests and environment. Hopefully, this relationship can be repaired for the sake of the environment and the forests of Indonesia.

## SIEMENPUU's PARTNER

1. Jikalahari
2. Telapak Association
3. Federasi Serikat Petani Indonesia (FSPI)
4. INSIST Press
5. Aliansi Relawan untuk Penyelamatan Alam (ARuPa)
6. Forest Watch Indonesia (FWI)
7. HuMa, Association for Community and Ecological Based Law Reform (Perkumpulan untuk Pembaharuan Hukum Berbasis Masyarakat dan ekologis)
8. Wahana Bumi Hijau (WBH)
9. Akar Foundation
10. Centre for International Cooperation in Management of Tropical Peatland (CIMTROP)
11. Dana Mitra Maluku (DMM) Foundation
12. Jaring Advokasi Pengelolaan Sumberdaya Alam (JAPESDA)
13. Mitra Insani
14. Perkumpulan Bantaya
15. Perkumpulan Menapak Indonesia
16. Sahabat Masyarakat Pantai (SAMPAN)
17. Yayasan Keadilan Rakyat (YKR)
18. YPD, Yayasan Petak Danum (Petak Danum Foundation)
19. BIMA Lestari Sejahtera Institute
20. Community Alliance for Pulp Paper Advocacy (CAPPA)
21. Forum Kerjasama LSM Papua (Foker)
22. Hakiki Foundation
23. Hutan Kita Institute (HaKi)
24. International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)
25. Justice, Equality and Freedom Foundation Kalimantan Timur (JEFF Kaltim)
26. Kabut Riau (Yayasan Khasanah Alam dan Budaya Tropis Riau)
27. Kaoem Telapak
28. Lembaga Pengkajian Dan Pemberdayaan Masyarakat LP2M
29. Link-AR Borneo
30. Perkumpulan Elang
31. Sajogyo Institute
32. Sekretariat Keadilan dan Perdamaian Keuskupan Agung Merauke (SKP-KAM)
33. WALHI Kalimantan Selatan
34. WALHI Kalimantan Barat
35. WALHI Riau
36. WALHI Sumatera Selatan
37. Yayasan Lingkungan Hidup Humeibou Manokwari
38. Advocacy Network for North Sumatra Fisherfolk (JALA)

**PERIOD 2002 - 2018**





## Stories from Those Who Face Challenges

Siemenpuu collaborated with Indonesian environmental institutions to launch a grassroots movement aimed at saving the environment, forests, peatlands, and mangroves, as well as improving the community's economy.

This movement became a forerunner, inspiring or encouraging the government to 'pay attention to' the activities of Siemenpuu partners.

Not only is environmental protection important in the work of partners supported by Siemenpuu, but so is encouraging government participation

in its activities. Because a 'big impact' movement will be difficult to achieve without government intervention.

The stories of these partners' struggles are attempted to be presented to the readers. The hope is that the story will inspire and 'burn' the grassroots movement's spirit to continue fighting to protect Indonesia's natural resources and environment.

These are just a few of the many stories of Indonesians fighting to save the environment. Even if it's only a sliver, hopefully he can rekindle the spirit of our common struggle.





NATURAL RESOURCES  
MANAGEMENT ADVOCACY  
NETWORK (*Jaring Advokasi  
Pengelolaan Sumberdaya Alam -  
JAPESDA*)

# BINDING HOPE WITH CONSISTENCY

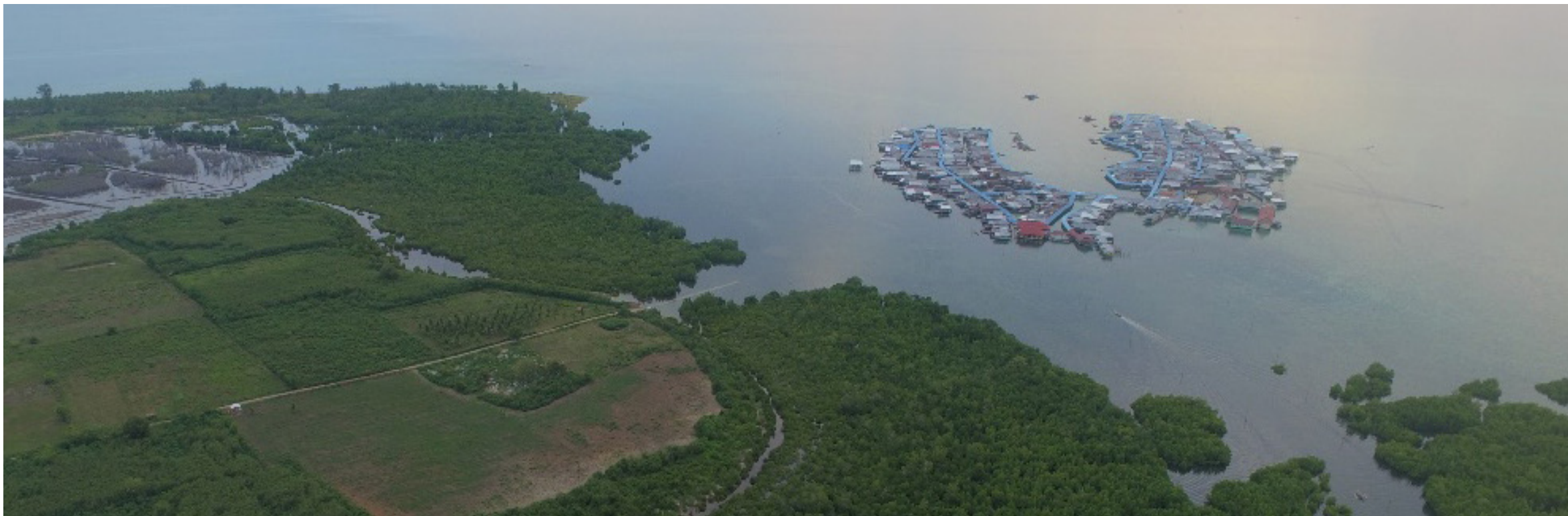
By: Nurain Lapolo and  
Renal Husa



**KELOLA MANADO FOUNDATION**, an organization concerned with natural resource management, particularly the management of the sea coast and small islands. During his work, the Kelola Manado discovered a poor record of natural resource management in North Sulawesi Province. It is specifically related to marine coastal management and unsustainable forest management in the Gorontalo area.



The CATP area seen from above in 2019 – JAPESDA



*Residential areas and mangroves in Torosiaje in 2019 seen from above – JAPESDA*

In practice, the presence of seven Forest Concession Rights (HPH) concessions scattered throughout the Gorontalo area does not result in sustainable forest management as required by law. Furthermore, massive encroachment on forest areas and illegal tree logging have degraded forest areas that have become water catchment areas. This contributed indirectly to the natural disasters that occurred in several areas of Gorontalo.

In response to this situation, Rahman Dako and several other people who shared his concern organized a training activity. Rahman Dako, or Aga, was the Kelola Manado Foundation's representative in Gorontalo. Begin by visiting the offices and secretariats of organizations focused on environmental issues, coastal areas, and marginalized communities.

Aga took this approach to invite several institutions and student groups who share the same goal of protecting the environment in Gorontalo so that it can be sustained. The meeting's message was that the environment in Gorontalo was in bad shape. Aga then invited the groups he met to participate in the Kelola Manado mapping and advocacy training for forest investigations.

Several organizations, including the IGPA Nature Lovers Group (KPA), the Gimbal Outdoor Adventurers Group (KPAB), Gopala KPA, Mutiara Hijau Foundation, Biosphere Student Study Group (KSMB) - Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, State University of Gorontalo, and KPA student lover associations, have expressed interest in participating in the training. Nature lover student Motolomoia UNG, nature

lover student STA - IAIN Sultan Amai Gorontalo, KPA Kompas, Fisherman Union Saronde Kwandang (SNSK), and KPA Mutiara in North Gorontalo.

Following the training, they began to study environmental conditions in Gorontalo by practicing investigative science in the HPH concession area belonging to PT. Centralindo, which stretches from Atinggola District to Kwandang District and is now included in the administrative area of North Gorontalo Regency, Gorontalo Province.

Many problems with forest management were discovered as a result of the investigation's findings. This issue must be guarded and resolved by the government and area managers so that it does not have a negative impact on the community in

the form of environmental damage. Furthermore, Gorontalo would form a new administrative area at that time, separating itself from North Sulawesi Province. This area expansion plan will have an impact on the management of forest areas in Gorontalo. According to Minister of Forestry Decree Number: 250/KPTS-II/1984 dated December 20, 1984, concerning Designation of Forest Areas in the Province of North Sulawesi Province, the forest area in Gorontalo totals 1,877,220 hectares.

Forest resources, if properly managed, will undoubtedly benefit the people of Gorontalo who live both inside and outside the forest area. On the other hand, if forest resources are not properly managed, the surrounding community will suffer. Floods and landslides, for example, are common in Gorontalo due to oligarchs' potential



conflicts of interest, and natural disasters such as this can occur.

As a result, all groups agreed to form an organization focused on natural resource management, particularly forest management. This organization will protect and serve as a watchdog for the policies that the Gorontalo government will devise in the future.

On June 5, 2000, a new organization called the Natural Resources Management Advocacy Network, abbreviated as JAPESDA, was formed. This organization is made up of a network of organizations and communities concerned with natural resource issues. A code of ethics was also developed at the time to bind JAPESDA Gorontalo members.

Aga agreed to serve as Chairman of JAPESDA, while late Arpan Polontalo of KSM Biosphere UNG served as

Secretary and Treasurer, and Muhlis Hutua of KPA Kompas served as Secretary and Treasurer. JAPESDA was the first environmental organization in Gorontalo because it was founded 5 months after the province was established.

"At the time, the motivation for establishing JAPESDA was to act as a check and balance on the government's policies." "We provide input to plans and programs before they are implemented in order to prioritize the community and the environment," said Aga, who was Chair of the JAPESDA Association Supervisory Board at the time.

Work to protect the environment, as agreed upon when JAPESDA was established, began. However, less than two years after JAPESDA was established, Aga is confronted with the law when he is named a suspect in a

*Dead mangrove in Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve (CATP) – JAPESDA*



defamation case filed by the Regent of Gorontalo, Achmad Hoesa Pakaya.

This lawsuit arose after the JAPESDA press release was published in the daily newspaper Gorontalo Post. Aga's statement, titled "JAPESDA Accuses the Pakaya Regent of Making Public Lies," and questions the Gorontalo Regent's commitment to combating illegal logging and reforesting forests in Gorontalo.

This is a criticism of JAPESDA because the Regent of Pakaya expressed his commitment to forest preservation while also inaugurating a wood processing factory owned by PT Korean Shoi Choi. The Regent of Pakaya was enraged by Aga's statement and reported it to the police.

This was the beginning test for JAPESDA's struggle and commitment to maintaining natural resource management in Gorontalo Province. This, however, did not put out the flames of struggle. JAPESDA members continued to show their support for Aga, who was arrested, by holding a peaceful protest in front of the Limboto District Court Building.

Unfortunately, the police who were guarding the court repressed this peaceful protest demanding justice for Aga. The action's eight participants were beaten to a pulp all over their bodies, with some even suffering broken nose bones and urinated blood.

The trial continued, and Aga was sentenced to 6 months in prison. An appeal was filed with the Manado High Court, but it was denied<sup>1</sup>.

### **KEEPING NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CONSISTENT**

The incident that happened to Aga and his friends sparked interest in the other members. Following the incident,

many institutions, organizations, and even individuals concerned about the environment began to join JAPESDA. JAPESDA Gorontalo spread its wings as well. JAPESDA transitioned from a network to a JAPESDA association on February 28, 2007. They agreed on that day to issue a new deed of establishment No. 181 on February 28, 2007.

JAPESDA's work has also expanded to advocate for the management of forest, land, coastal, and marine natural resources, environmental education, disaster mitigation, human rights, and gender equality, as well as sustainable economic development for the livelihoods of local people. Furthermore, JAPESDA focuses on encouraging environmental improvements in natural resource management.

In order to maximize capacity and network expansion, as well as to comply with the most recent laws and regulations governing the institutions of civil society organizations (Ormas). According to the Decree of the Minister of Law and Human Rights (Menkumham) of the Republic of Indonesia Number AHU-0003859. AH.01.07 of 2021, JAPESDA registered the institution with the Ministry of Law and Human Rights and received an institutional deed number 8 on March 8, 2021.

JAPESDA's leadership has changed nine times between 2000 and 2021. "The most important thing is to create a good organizational system and follow mutually agreed upon rules for the benefit of the organization," said Aga.

According to him, it is the consistency that has allowed JAPESDA Gorontalo to survive to this day.

Various forest and coastal restoration activities have been carried out since





Fishing boats were anchored at the Torosiaje Village boat moorings as a result of the transition – JAPESDA



JAPESDA's inception. This activity is carried out in collaboration with non-governmental organizations that help fund activities that have a positive impact on environmental sustainability.

Various forest and coastal restoration activities have been carried out since JAPESDA's inception. This activity is carried out in collaboration with non-governmental organizations that help fund activities that have a positive impact on environmental sustainability.

For example, consider the CIDA-IUCN collaboration on Sustainable Coastal Livelihood Management (SUSCLAM)

in the Tomini Bay area. From 2008 to 2011, this mangrove rehabilitation activity was carried out in four districts across three provinces in Tomini Bay. The total area of rehabilitation is 100 hectares.

In addition, JAPESDA, in collaboration with DANIDA-Wetland, sponsored Mangrove for the Future activities in the form of restoring 4 hectares of mangrove areas in the Boalemo and Pohuwato Regencies from 2013 to 2014. In 2013, a 10-hectare mangrove restoration project was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK).

JAPESDA will also carry out the Type III Mangrove Rehabilitation Swakelola Program in Pohuwato and Boalemo from 2019 to 2021 in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Forestry and BPDASHL Bone Bolango, covering an area of 17.5 hectares.

In addition, from 2016 to 2017, JAPESDA collaborated with Siemenpuu in the Sustainable Mangrove Management Program in Pohuwato, North Sulawesi, to rehabilitate 2 hectares of mangrove. Mangrove Management and Livelihoods is still being implemented in Pohuwato through the Coastal Community program from 2018 to 2021, and a total of 2 hectares have been restored.

### **MANGROVE FOREST AND SIEMENPUU**

JAPESDA, in collaboration with Siemenpuu, chose two pilot project locations: Siduwonge Village, Randangan District, and Torosiaje Jaya Village, Popayato District, Pohuwato, Gorontalo. These two areas share a stretch of mangrove forest but have different backgrounds in ecosystems and natural resource management.

For example, the stretch of mangrove forest in Torosiaje Jaya Village is relatively small but well-maintained. Nonetheless, there are many people who live and work in the area. JAPESDA and Siemenpuu collaborated on a sustainable natural resource





management strategy, inviting coastal communities in the village to use the mangrove forest as much as possible without harming the ecosystem.

For example, by producing a variety of processed mangrove snacks, such as mangrove sticks, from materials derived from the common mangrove fruit types *Avicennia* sp. and *Bruguiera* sp. JAPESDA promotes the formation of groups of women fishermen to process snacks from this mangrove plant. Following the formation of the group, processed snacks were produced by women's groups in Torosiaje Jaya and marketed to surrounding villages and even Gorontalo City.

JAPESDA hopes that by using the mangrove fruit, it will foster a sense of community ownership of the village's mangrove area. Starting with maintaining, preserving, and maintaining the mangrove area in their village. Because the processed snacks they are working on are primarily

*Mangroves die in the CATP area's ponds – JAPESDA*

mangroves, if the mangroves there die and disappear, the raw materials for their snacks will also be lost.

JAPESDA, in collaboration with Siemenpuu, was also successful in convincing the Torosiaje Jaya Village area to be included in the Essential Ecosystem Area (KEE), a new category of conservation area outside of protected and conservation areas.

In contrast to Torosiaje Jaya Village, Siduwonge Village in Randangan District has a large expanse of mangrove forest, and its management is protected by conservation laws. Because the Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve (CATP) conservation area encompasses an area of 3,174.10 hectares. Unfortunately, the expanse of mangrove forest has vanished, replaced by a pond area controlled by most of the immigrants from South Sulawesi, some of whom live there.

JAPESDA conducted a different awareness campaign in Siduwonge than in Torosiaje Village. JAPESDA encourages regional stakeholders

such as BKSDA and local governments from the sub-district to village levels to strengthen their legal frameworks. Because, despite the fact that Nature Reserve is the highest conservation forest and its management is protected by law, the mangrove forest there is still being encroached upon.

Weak supervision and a lack of knowledge about Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve among area stakeholders contributed to the damage in the conservation area. JAPESDA encourages regional stakeholders through discussions and media publications. Until JAPESDA's protest reaches the ministry level and the nature reserve area's status is maintained after it was previously included in the Land Object Plan for Agrarian Reform (TORA), a presidential nawacita program regarding the release of forest areas that have been cultivated by the community for a certain period of time.#





**FRIENDS OF THE KALIMANTAN  
COASTAL COMMUNITY** (*Sahabat  
Masyarakat Pantai Kalimantan –  
SAMPAN*)

# AGAINST INDUSTRIAL FORESTRY WITH THE SOCIAL FORESTRY SCHEME FOR THE PEOPLE OF KALIMANTAN AND FORESTS

By: Renal Husa



**THE MINING AND PLANTATION** industries, such as palm oil, has a significant impact on West Kalimantan's tenure disputes and deforestation. The expansion of plantation land, on the other hand, has had a significant impact on the livelihoods of small communities in and around the concession areas they control.



Mr. Saparudin, a farmer as well as a kelulut beekeeper in Nipah Panjang Village, Batu Ampar District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan – SAMPAN



Because industrial productivity has reduced and reduced their living space, some of them are forced to surrender to undocumented arable land. Others who are angry must accept the prison chair while they await charges.

This tragic incident occurred in 2016. PT Sintang Raya, a palm oil company in Kubu District, Kubu Raya Regency, West Kalimantan, is at odds with the community. The company charged 16 residents with land grabbing in the Cultivation Rights (Hak Guna Usaha - HGU) area that they controlled. Residents believe that the claimed land is located outside of the company's HGU land.

Without warning or socialization, PT Sintang Raya unilaterally damaged the community's plantations, cutting down rubber trees and other crops that they had planted and cared for for several years before harvest time<sup>2</sup>.

Industrial companies, such as palm oil, have a negative impact on people's livelihoods and the environment. In practice, many welfare opportunities for areas occupied by industrial companies with job offers are not fulfilled, and some have even been shown to violate human rights. Workers' rights there can even be said to be far from prosperous as promised.

Female palm oil workers in Kubu Raya Regency have reported that they do not receive menstrual or maternity leave while on the job. When spraying insecticides on oil palm plantations, the company fails to provide them with personal protective equipment, putting

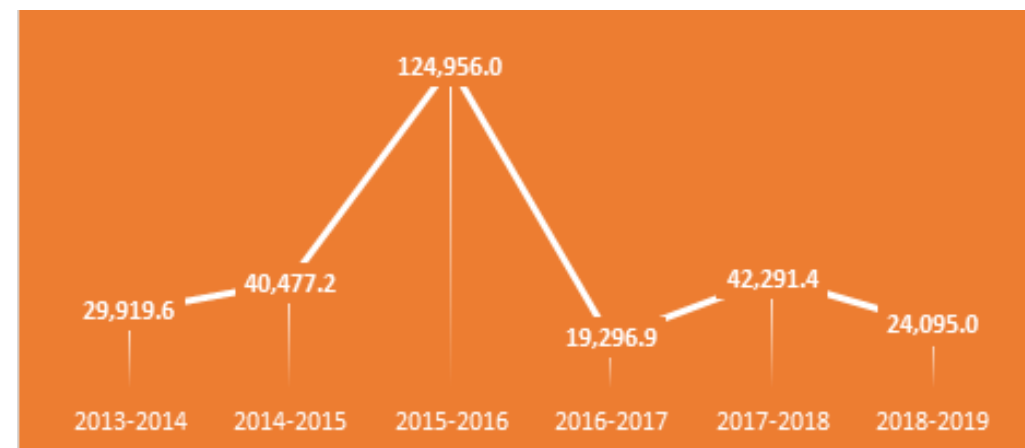
their health at risk. Because their BPJS Kesehatan — Social Security Administrator for Health is a social security agency of Indonesia aimed at providing universal health care to its citizens— is not activated by the company when they are sick, they must manage their own finances. Even when they want to pay for medical expenses, they do not have enough money because the company pays them less than their living wage<sup>3</sup>.

Unfortunately, West Kalimantan Province was third in Indonesia in 2019 with the largest oil palm plantation area, and the poverty rate in West Kalimantan was the highest compared to other provinces on the island of Kalimantan<sup>4</sup>.

### **KALIMANTAN AND ITS 'DISAPPEARING' FORESTS**

Kalimantan is well-known for its vast forest expanses, with 40.8 million hectares of forest covering the majority of the island. Meanwhile, Indonesia has 129.43 million hectares of forest<sup>5</sup>. Kalimantan Island contains nearly half of Indonesia's forest area.

Unfortunately, the forests in Kalimantan are beginning to degrade as a result of the booming development in the plantation and mining sectors. Oil palm plantations began to dominate in almost every region for investment purposes and for the sake of the country's economic growth. However, at the expense of nature conservation, deforestation has gradually begun to alter the appearance of Borneo.



**Total deforestation in forest and non-forest areas of West Kalimantan Province in the period 2013-2019<sup>6</sup>**



According to data from the Central Statistics Agency, the area of deforestation in West Kalimantan is increasing, with the highest in the 2015-2016 period reaching 124,956 hectares. Meanwhile, the majority of deforested areas have been converted into plantation areas for industries such as oil palm and industrial forest plantations to meet pulp and paper needs.

According to the 2019-2021 Plantation Statistics Book published by the Directorate General of Agriculture in 2021, West Kalimantan has an estimated area of 2,070,272 hectares of oil palm plantations. The largest of all provinces on the island of Kalimantan, and second only to Riau Province in terms of oil palm plantation area in Indonesia.

Deforestation in West Kalimantan is also inextricably linked to government support via legal policies. As in 2014, the original forest area of 9.101 million hectares was determined by

Minister of Forestry Decree number 259/kpts-II/2000 concerning Forest Areas and Water Conservation of West Kalimantan Province. West Kalimantan has lost at least 1.5 million hectares of forest land due to conversion to plantations and mining operations.

The government chose to release forest areas by rearranging forest area boundaries, as directed by the Minister of Environment and Forestry. Several Kalimantan Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are undoubtedly outraged by the decision. They argued that if the draft was approved, the government would ignore the expansion of illegal mining and oil palm plantations in forest areas<sup>7</sup>.

However, the government continued to carry out the plan, culminating in 2014 with the issuance of a decree on forest area boundary demarcation. According to Minister of Forestry Decree Number 733/Menhut-II/2014 dated September 2nd, the area of the

Forest and Water Conservation Area of West Kalimantan Province has officially changed to 8,389.60 hectares. West Kalimantan lost 712,160 hectares of forest as a result of the decree.

### INDEPENDENT IN THE FOREST ALONE

Fazrin Nailus Subschi, executive director of Friends of the Kalimantan Coastal Community (SAMPAN), stated that the presence of industrial companies that manage natural resources on a large scale is destructive in their implementation. "People have even lost their work areas," he explained.

This has an effect on the contamination of rivers where fishing takes place, the expropriation of people's plantation lands, and changes in work patterns by forcing them to accept and rely on jobs offered by industrial companies.

Fazrin emphasized the importance of involving the community in the management of forest resources. Implementing the government-provided Social Forestry (Perhutanan Sosial - PS) scheme is one example. It is hoped that by seizing the opportunity for PS, the conflict and criminalization will be transferred from the company and the government to the community.

According to Fazrin, residents face tenurial conflicts not only from industrial companies, but also from the government in some cases. Dabung Village, Kubu District, Kubu Raya Regency, for example. Residents in the village lost access

to land as a result of changes in forest area boundaries made by the government through the Minister of Forestry and Plantations' Decree number 259/kpts-II/2000.

With the issuance of the decree, some areas of Dabung Village, including ponds managed by residents and the settlements they live in, have been designated as protected forest areas. To restrict the living space of those who live there. The decree's stipulation also resulted in the criminalization of dozens of residents, who were then placed under house arrest<sup>8</sup>.

*Forest honey bee hive engineering made by the people of Padang Tikar Village – SAMPAN*



The PS scheme is a sustainable forest management system in state forest areas, with local communities or customary law communities serving as the primary actors. The PS program, which includes Village Forests, Community Forests, Community Plantation Forests, Customary Forests, and Forestry Partnerships, aims to improve welfare, environmental balance, and socio-cultural dynamics.

According to Regulation P.83/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/10/2016 of the Minister of Environment



and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia on Social Forestry. "By implementing Social Forestry, it is certainly a solution so that people are free to manage natural resources and avoid tenure conflicts," said Fazrin.

### NEW HOPE IN SOCIAL FORESTRY

SAMPAN Kalimantan is a non-profit organization that was founded on June 5, 2009. SAMPAN continues to work with the vision of realizing a fair and sustainable system for managing marine resources, coastal areas, small islands, watersheds, and buffer zones for community independence.

Given the context of the tenurial conflict, SAMPAN took the initiative to encourage every village within and outside the forest area to be directly involved in forest management by utilizing the PS Scheme for their benefit.

This activity is part of a Siemenpuu Foundation-supported work program that focuses on villages with protected forest areas and production forests. Villages are also at odds with industrial companies and the government.

The goal is for the people who live in the two areas to avoid long-term conflicts caused by the government and industrial companies. Furthermore, the main and most important goal is for the community to be actively involved in forest management, from ensuring its sustainability to reaping direct benefits from forests for their livelihoods.



SAMPAN's implementation stages include litigation, socialization, potential mapping, facilitating the preparation of administrative verification documents, and factual verification in each of the villages where social forestry permits are sought.

SAMPAN facilitates several villages in West Kalimantan Province obtaining Village Forest Management Rights (Hak Pengelolaan Hutan Desa - HPHD) by raising awareness and encouraging villages to take advantage of the PS scheme through focused discussion forums with the government and forest area stakeholders.

After the process is completed and the PS permit is obtained, post-permit assistance is provided in the form of preparing a village forest management plan that addresses the aspects of area protection, rehabilitation, business development, timber forest utilization, and environmental service utilization.

According to the PS regulation, every village that has obtained a PS permit under the Village Forest (Hutan Desa - HD) scheme is required to establish a Village Forest Management Institution (Lembaga Pengelolaan Hutan Desa - LPHD). The establishment of this institution is critical for HD management because its presence is analogous to a village's forestry service. Their task is to carry out the aspects of village forest management that they designed previously.

They encourage the formation of Social Forestry Business Groups



*Nipah flowers are surrounded by bees that are sucking nectar – SAMPAN*

(KUPS) to utilize Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) and environmental services such as ecotourism to meet the welfare of the villagers. By strengthening institutional and business capacity through training on the use of NTFPs, such as honey production from forest bees, mangroves, and kelulut. "After the business development is completed, we assist KUPS in running a business with their NTFPs," Fazrin continued.

SAMPAN assisted 10 villages in the Padang Tikar Coastal Landscape, Batu Ampar District, in 2014, in proposing to KLHK 70,346 hectares of Village Forest (HD)

schemes and 3,800 hectares of Community Forest (HKM) schemes. The proposal was accepted and determined the following year after going through a verification process, and the Padang Tikar Coastal Landscape was awarded the PS with the largest Village Forest in Indonesia.

With the passage of time, West Kalimantan Province received 116 Village Forest permits totaling 334 thousand hectares in 2020. With 235 KUPS and 105 potential non-timber business commodities<sup>9</sup>,

West Kalimantan also has the most business groups in the HD scheme.

The emergence of government and public awareness in West Kalimantan to implement the PS scheme is unquestionably a positive development. SAMPAN Kalimantan hopes that the community can preserve the ecosystem and run a sustainable economy. "Because the community's management of PS makes them the spearhead to maintain forest and peatland damage and forest fires that aggravate both," he explained.#



**Riau Forest Rescue Network**  
*(Jaringan Kerja Penyelamat  
 Hutan Riau - Jikalahari)*

# JKALAHARI, NOISE TO SAVE RIAU FOREST

By: Okto Yugo Setiyo  
 and Nurul Fitria



**“JKALAHARI WAS REFORM’S BIOLOGICAL SON**, which still exists today. Naturally, they are always making a racket about what is wrong in Riau. Because that is how things should be,” said Alm Al Azhar, a Riau traditional leader, humanist, activist, and academic.

The only Sialang tree remaining in the PT APP concession in Kesuma Village, Pangkalan Kuras, Pelalawan, Riau. Kepungan Sialang (natural forest trees) covering an area of 2 hectares has been cleared for acacia plantations – Jikalahari



Al Azhar is the Chairman of the Riau Malay Traditional Institute's Indigenous Density Council and is frequently where Jikalahari discusses indigenous peoples and the environment in Riau. He often said these words to the participants with enthusiasm whenever he attended a Jikalahari-hosted discussion or an activity.

"This expression is a parameter for Jikalahari's existence and role in saving Riau's forests and environment. A sentence that will never be forgotten, even though he is no longer alive," Jikalahari Coordinator Made Ali said. Al Azhar passed away on October 12, 2021.

*Trucks carrying natural forest logs cut from forest areas in Riau – Jikalahari*

Since its inception on February 26, 2002, Jikalahari has existed. Starting from the concerns of environmental activists in Riau who saw the increasingly threatened forest condition, a network of environmental watchdog organizations and student environmental groups was formed.

Jikalahari's work continues to make noise and confusion for environmental criminals, corporations destroying forests, and governments enacting anti-nature policies two decades later.



## THE EMERGENCE OF THE JIKALAHARI AND THE CHALLENGES FACED

Starting with seminars and workshops organized by environmental organizations from all over Riau at the Dyan Graha Hotel for two days on February 25 and 26, 2002, reduced forest cover became the main topic of discussion. The discussion titled Riau's Present and Future Forests included 22 environmental organizations and 7 groups of Student Nature Lovers (Mapala).

The condition of damaged forests, the increasing deforestation in Riau from 1999 to 2000 reaching 840 thousand hectares, and the lack

of efforts to save Riau's natural forests prompted the participants to think about what efforts could be made.

"In the past, Riau environmental organizations were weak in advocating for forest conservation because we had difficulty obtaining data on Riau's forests and concessions. After the discussion, we realized that we needed a forum to be able to overcome this," explained Susanto Kurniawan, Jikalahari's Coordinator from 2007 to 2011. Aside from being a database, the discussion also generated the idea of collaborating to save Riau's forests in order to build greater power.

This proposal was accepted by all, and a network was formed as the main forum, with members drawn from the institutions that attended the seminar.

The Riau Forest Rescue Network's name (Jikalahari) was chosen for its meaning. Where this network of organizations and students concerned about Riau's forests is collaborating to save the remaining forests in Bumi Lancang Kuning. Jikalahari was founded with 31 member institutions; however, as time has passed, Jikalahari is now led by 19 institutions comprised of 13 environmental organizations and 6 Mapala groups.

Jikalahari's work aims to achieve equitable forest management for present and future generations. This, of course, refers to Riau's local wisdom while also paying attention to biodiversity and environmental conditions.





The remaining natural forest area in the concession of PT Selaras Abadi Utama in Pelalawan Regency Riau – Jikalahari



Jikalahari's main goal since its inception has been to stop the conversion and conversion of natural forests in Riau and to encourage community-based forest management by upholding the value of local wisdom. Furthermore, advocacy for forest protection and sustainable management is carried out with an eye toward improving policies and transparency.

"The strategy, in addition to advocating for existing policies, empowers communities and strengthens information and data related to the environment and forestry in Riau," Made Ali explained.

Zulfahmi, Jikalahari's first coordinator, recalled the state of forestry in Riau when Jikalahari was formed. "At the time, illegal logging (illog) was widespread. "People were organized to cut natural

Closure of natural rivers by PT Selaras Abadi Utama for company canal water sources. This has an impact on the pollution of the Kampar River, Riau – Jikalahari



wood and sell it to pulp and paper companies," Zulfahmi recalls.

A campaign was started to stop this unlawful behavior. Jikalahari and members of the network conducted direct monitoring, observed how this logging activity was carried out in the field, collected documentation as evidence, and produced a report on findings. This report has been published and forwarded to the police for further investigation.

"The turning point came when President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono issued the Presidential Instruction on the abolition of illegal logging. This is our weapon against forest destruction," Zulfahmi explained.

Presidential Instruction (Inpres) No. 4 of 2005 was issued on March 18, 2005, concerning the eradication of illegal logging in forest areas and its dissemination throughout Indonesia. Various Sustainable Forest Operations (Operasi Hutan Lestari - OHL) were held in Indonesia as a result of this policy.

"Jikalahari is actively involved in the implementation of this Presidential Instruction on a national scale. We are members of the Monitoring and Evaluation Team, where we present our findings about the state of Riau's forests," Susanto explained.

Jikalahari, the only representative of a Riau environmental organization, explained the conditions of deforestation, illegal forestry, and forest crimes committed by corporations, as well as field findings. The presented results are then investigated by law





*Drone documentation captures cover differences between newly planted acacia and newly logged acacia in HTI concessions – Jikalahari*



“This is also due to Jikalahari’s positive relationship with the Riau Police Chief. They even provide briefings to police officers on forest crimes and provide input for eradicating illegal logging,” Zulfahmi explained. “When the police discovered 42 trucks carrying this natural wood, they contacted me and said, ‘Bang Zul, what should we do next?’”

From Jikalahari, led by Zulfahmi, to Susanto Kurniawan, this good relationship lasted. The role distribution in the eradication of forestry crimes in Riau is going well. Jikalahari provides data on investigation findings and supporting data, which is then followed up on and completed by the police.

### **SIEMENPUU AND ERADICATION OF ILLEGAL LOGGING IN THE KAMPAR PENINSULA**

Jikalahari’s acquaintance with Siemenpuu began when Otto Miettinen, a Siemenpuu staff member, was still a student. Otto met many environmental activists while conducting research in Indonesia. Otto met Zainuri Hasyim while working as an enumerator (field officer conducting surveys) with several environmental organization administrators. Zain was a Jikalahari member at the time and worked at the Riau Mandiri Foundation.

“I met Otto in a discussion held at Rumah Ongah Rab—Tabrani Rab, a Riau community leader

This gradual eradication of illegal logging has successfully ensnared 14 forestry companies, 7 of which are affiliates of PT Riau Andalan Pulp and Paper, a subsidiary of APRIL Group, and the remaining are affiliates of PT Indah Kiat Pulp and Paper, a subsidiary of Sinar Mas or APP Group. Sutjiptadi named this subsidiary of Indonesia’s largest paper-producing group as a suspect.

“As long as we have been advocating for this case, Siemenpuu has supported Jikalahari, and this is a big success for Jikalahari,” Zulfahmi said, “but unfortunately, after Mr. Tjip—nickname of Sutjiptadi’s—transferred, the case was stopped, and the suspect was in SP3.”

*Findings of oil palm planted in HTI concessions. This area is a conflict area and shows how HTI companies cannot resolve conflicts in their concession areas – Jikalahari*







Forest and Land Fires (Karhutla) in the area of PT Trisetia Usaha Mandiri, Belemen Village, Sungai Apit District, Siak Regency, which is peatland with a depth of about 1-2 meters. Burnt wood is natural forest wood – Jikalahari

and academic—when Otto was a student from Finland, and we met again after he worked at Siemenpuu and I became the coordinator of Jikalahari,” Zulfahmi recalls.

Otto was extremely helpful to Jikalahari in locating funding sources for campaign activities to save Riau’s forests. Apart from Siemenpuu, he tries to connect Jikalahari with other institutions that can help with funding. “Although the funds provided by Siemenpuu were initially small, Jikalahari was able to carry out work that had a significant impact,” Zulfahmi said.

With the help of Siemenpuu Jikalahari was able to ‘generate’

the term Kampar Peninsula, which is still used today. Siemenpuu also supports the efforts to preserve the remaining forest and peat on the Kampar Peninsula.

The location, known as the Kampar Peninsula, is a landscape that is Riau’s last remaining natural forest. This landscape area covers 681,752 hectares<sup>10</sup> and is divided into two districts: Siak and Pelalawan. Unfortunately, this area’s natural forest was the largest at the time, as many other natural forests had been cut down and converted into forestry concession areas.

Environmental activists became concerned when the dangers of deforestation began to creep into this area. The threat of



more natural forests being cut down was real. Jikalahari quickly closed his ranks. Discuss the strategy for saving this area. “In the 2000s, the Kampar Peninsula lost 45.86 percent of its forest stands—approximately 312,668.27 hectares—due to illegal logging and the issuance of forestry concession permits,” Zulfahmi explained.

Jikalahari members agreed to intervene in this area, beginning with conducting investigations to uncover illegal activities and reporting them to law enforcement, as well as providing assistance to communities near forest areas and protecting their peat lands.

“Jikalahari’s office was still on Angsa II Street, Sukajadi, Pekanbaru at the time. We talked about what kind of campaign we should run to save the forests on the Kampar Peninsula,” Zulfahmi recalled. “The points were agreed upon, and the terms we used had to be simple to remember.”

A proposal for the Kampar Peninsula inspired by the Malacca Peninsula was made. The Peninsula is a name that represents the uniqueness of Malay—because Riau is a Malay family—and its unique landscape. While the name Kampar was chosen because the area is centered on the Kampar River.

There was some debate about whether the Kampar Peninsula or the Kampar Siak Peninsula. Because, in addition to the Kampar River, this area also encompasses the Siak River. There is also a proposal for the Pelalawan Peninsula, which is mostly in the Pelalawan Regency. “In the end, the Kampar Peninsula was chosen because it was the easiest to remember,” Zulfahmi explained.

The name of the Kampar Peninsula was well received, and it is still used by the government to refer to this landscape. In fact, the APRIL Group developed the concept of protecting natural forests on the Kampar Peninsula by delimiting a belt by planting acacia, a concept known as Ring Kampar. APRIL Group, on the other hand, is still logging natural forests in the area.

“Jikalahari should be proud because we called it the Kampar Peninsula at the time. This is the language of our resistance to the ongoing



forest destruction,” Zulfahmi explained, “and there is support from Siemenpuu there.”

It is not easy to fight forest destruction on the Kampar Peninsula. Because law enforcement was still ‘sluggish’ at the time, illog thrived. When Inspector General Pol Ito Sumardi was replaced as Riau Police Chief by Brigadier General Pol Sutjiptadi, a bright spot for eradicating

forest destruction emerged. Riau environmental activists are encouraged by his pledge to declare war on logging and eradicate illegal logging.

“At the time, Mr. Tjip said, you report it, and we will process it right away. We are attempting to demonstrate this. We immediately sent a report on the Jikalahari and Walhi Riau investigations’ findings,” Zulfahmi recalled.

Jikalahari and Walhi Riau reported to the Riau Police 39 Industrial forest (Hutan Tanaman Industri – HTI) corporations involved in illegal logging and environmental crimes. This report is based on the findings of the field investigation. To back up his claim, the Riau Police confiscated 5,115,612 cubic meters of logs, 351,159 logs of processed wood, 9,403 pieces of sawn wood, 17,584 pieces of wood, and 369 tons of wood in 2007-2008.

Equipment to commit this crime was also confiscated, such as 3 tugboats, 3 barges, 48 ships, 59 klotok boats, 2 speedboats, 185 trucks, 23 motorcycles, 175 heavy equipment, 137 engines and 10100 chainsaw.

This accomplishment is a significant step forward in the protection of Riau’s natural forests. “Even at that time, the wood transporting car with the timber permit was afraid to walk. I’m afraid of getting caught by the cops,” Zulfahmi explained.

However, this bold action by the Riau Police has also sparked the anger of forest destroyers. “Jikalahari office was visited by sawmill workers and transported by 1 truck. There were so many people, at that time I was alone in the office. They all went insane,” recalls Zulfahmi.

Because of the good relationship between Jikalahari and the Riau Police, Zulfahmi sought assistance from Sutjiptadi. Several Riau Police officers who were nearby Jikalahari’s office immediately moved to help secure the situation.

There was a special code in place at the time for environmental activists, who frequently discussed and provided input on dealing with environmental crimes in Riau with Sutjiptadi. This is a type of passcode that is usually used before starting a conversation to indicate a quick decision to be made. “The code is red and white, once said, we will immediately tell you what happened. Either there are field findings, or urgent conditions like ours are threatened,” Zulfahmi explained.

Forest and land fires in the area of PT Trisetia Usaha Mandiri, Belemen Village, Sungai Apit District, Siak which is a peatland. Burnt wood is natural forest wood – Jikalahari







Heavy equipment operates in the middle of land clearing in a peat area in the concession of PT RAPP Pelalawan – Siak Sector in Dayun Village – Jikalahari

New land clearing and construction of new canals on peat by PT Suntura Gajapati in Dumai. Based on the BRG map, this area is in the priority of protected peat canal – Jikalahari

### STRUGGLE FOR SPACE AND SAVING FORESTS ON THE KAMPAR PENINSULA

Sutjiptadi's quick movement is without a doubt the most significant achievement in efforts to save Riau's forests. The active and complementary collaboration of law enforcement and environmental activists is a positive sign for the 'peace' of Riau's remaining natural forests. Even President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono directed the Coordinating Minister for Political, Legal, and Security Affairs,



Widodo A.S., as the Coordinator for Combating Illegal Logging, to announce the 14 HTI company suspects who were destroying the environment and were immediately processed by the Riau Police.

These companies are APRIL and APP Group subsidiaries spread across Pelalawan and Siak. PT Merbau Pelalawan Lestari, PT Mitra Kembang Selaras, PT Madukoro, PT Citra Sumber Sejahtera, PT Bukit Betabuh Sei Indah, PT Nusa Prima Manunggal, and PT Anugerah Bumi Sejahtera are among the companies affiliated with APRIL Group.

Meanwhile, the companies affiliated with the APP Group are PT Inhil Hutan Pratama, PT Ruas Utama Jaya, PT Arara Abadi, PT Suntura Gaja Pati, PT Bina Duta Laksana, PT Rimba Mandau Lestari and PT Wana Rokan Bonai Perkasa.

The Riau Police Department moved quickly, and the files for these 14 companies were transferred to

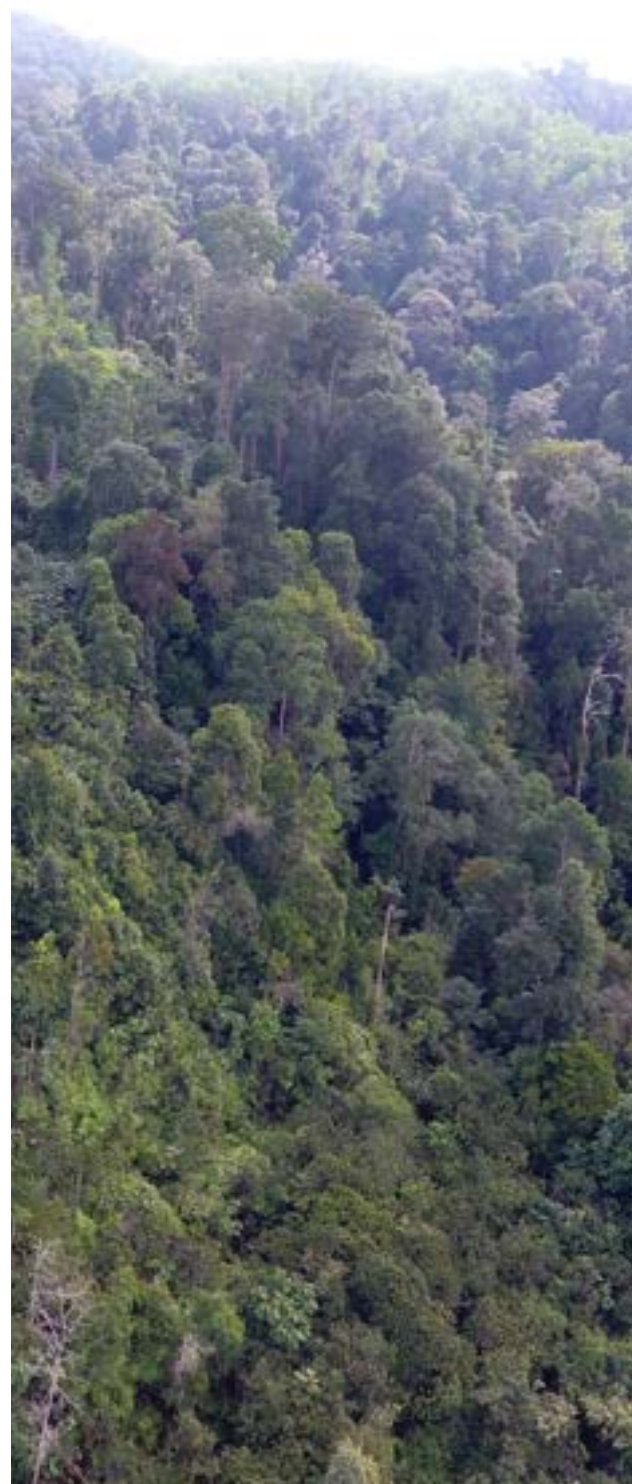
the Riau High Court in September 2007. Despite the back and forth between the Riau Police and the Attorney General's Office, evidence collection continued.

Not only law enforcement at the police level, Sutjiptadi in April 2008 also reported these 14 companies to the Corruption Eradication Commission (Komisi Pemberantasan Korupsi - KPK). Allegedly, there was a criminal act of corruption in the granting of permits to this company, indications of bribery in order to obtain a Business License for Utilization of Industrial Timber Forest Products (IUPHHKHT) and approval of the Annual Work Plan (RKT). That is, companies engage in corruption to obtain permits to 'legalize' efforts to destroy natural forests in Riau.

"At the time, Mr. Tjip and Jikalahari discussed the report documents to the KPK until midnight. Completing all the evidence and findings until they are submitted directly to the KPK," Susanto explained, "even though the KPK invited me several times to expose this report while presenting our findings."

The KPK handled this case quickly, with three of the 14 corporations involved in the investigation process, including PT Merbau Pelalawan Lestari, PT Madukoro, and PT Rimba Mandau Lestari. The KPK pursued this case and eventually uncovered a larger licensing corruption case involving 20 HTI corporations, the Governor of Riau, the Regents of Siak and Pelalawan, and three Riau Province Forestry Service heads.





gathered, are clearly displayed in front of our eyes as if they are meaningless,” Susanto Kurniawan explained, “but we know that Hadiatmoko has a close relationship with the company because they play golf together.”

A broken one grows a thousand, as the saying goes, but Jikalahari doesn't discouraged. Although efforts to save the Kampar Peninsula have 'stalled' in terms of law enforcement, Jikalahari and his members continue to look for ways to save the remaining forests on the Kampar Peninsula. One of them is the community's fight for space for forest area management.

This strategy makes use of government policies outlined in Law No. 23 of 2004 on Regional Government. The authority to manage and



*The remaining 1,565 hectares of natural forest in HKM Koto Intuok, Pulau Padang Village, Kuantan Singingi, is at risk of being cut down for acacia plantations - Jikalahari.*

regulate forest areas is delegated to regions. Governors and Regents have the authority to decide how forest areas in their jurisdictions will be managed by companies or communities.

Jikalahari intervened in several villages on the Kampar Peninsula to be proposed as Village Forests (Hutan Desa – HD) through its members, Mitra Insani Foundation. After a lengthy process, the Minister of Forestry, Zulkifli Hasan, issued a Decree on the Determination of Work Areas (Penetapan Areal Kerja - PAK) for HD Segamai - Serapung on March 8, 2013. Zulkifli handed over SK PAK HD Segamai (SK 154/Menhut-II/2013) with an area of 2,270 hectares and SK PAK HD Serapung (SK155/Menhut-II/2013) with an area of 1,956 hectares.

However, the road to proposing HD is a long one. Segamai and Serapung are a small part of the overall success of Jikalahari's and his members' efforts to propose a community management space. The Regent rejected many HD proposals, including HD in Pulau Muda and Teluk Meranti Village. H M Harris, the Regent of Pelalawan at the time, rejected HD's proposal for a variety of reasons.

However, when PT. Gemilang Citra Nusantara, a subsidiary of PT RAPP in Pelalawan Regency, applied for a 19,674 ha IUPHHK-RE area, the Regent of Pelalawan quickly recommended approval. Even if the rules are broken, there is no need to wait long.

According to Jikalahari's records, which were compiled from data from the Indonesian Ministry of Forestry, only 0.99 percent (12,000 ha) of the 1.25 million hectares of forest reserved was given specifically to the people. “Of the 12,000 hectares set aside for the people, 70% of the land has been robbed for the benefit of the paper industry and timber plantations,” said Muslim, Jikalahari Coordinator for the 2011-2015 period. “This indicates that the mode of forestry corporate crime is still in operation; the government is no longer siding with the people who live near the forest in order to manage their forest rights.”

As time passed, policies that favored community management space were implemented, one of which was Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation Number P.83/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/10/2016 on Social Forestry. There are several forest utilization schemes available, including village forests, customary forests, community forests, community plantation forests, and forestry partnerships.

One way to keep Riau's forests in good condition is to expand the community's access to forest management space. The key to its activities is sustainable management. So, in addition to protecting the forest, this can be an opportunity for the community to benefit from forest products in order to improve the community's economy.#





*Wahana Lingkungan Hidup  
Indonesia - Riau  
(WALHI Riau)*

## HUMANITARIAN HELP FOR ACEH FROM RIAU

By: Nurul Fitria



**SUNDAY MORNING ON THE** twenty-sixth in December 2004 was a day that the people of Aceh could never forget. A big shock hit the land of the veranda of mecca just as they were about to begin their activities that weekend.

The ground beneath shook violently. The entire community ceased their activities, including those who were walking or driving. Everyone felt dizzy as a result of the earthquake.



*The condition of Aceh after being hit by the tsunami on December 24, 2004 ago - Kompas.com*





Acehnese victims of the tsunami amid the rubble - TribunNews.com



An earthquake measuring 9.1 to 9.3 on the Richter scale shook several countries in the Indian Ocean that morning at 07.58 West Indonesia Time. This earthquake, centered in Aceh, triggered a tsunami wave with a height of up to 30 meters.

Aside from Indonesia, the earthquake and tsunami struck Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, Somalia, Myanmar, Maldives, Malaysia, Tanzania, Seychelles, Bangladesh, South Africa, Yemen, Kenya, and Madagascar. The earthquake and tsunami had the greatest impact in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, and Thailand.

According to the National Disaster Management Agency (Badan Nasional Penanggulangan Bencana - BNPB), the number of victims from the disaster in Aceh reached 220,000 people, while the total death toll from all affected countries reached 280 thousand people, and 6,245 people

in Aceh were declared missing. Communities on Aceh's coast were also wiped out by the tsunami.

The worst impact of the earthquake and tsunami occurred in the cities of Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, Aceh Barat, Aceh Jaya and several areas in the eastern part of Aceh such as Pidie, Bireuen and Lhokseumawe.

The United Nations designated this disaster as the deadliest humanitarian disaster in history. President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono has also declared three days of mourning.

#### **FROM RIAU TO ACEH BECAUSE OF SIEMENPUU**

Two days after the earthquake and tsunami, Rully Sumanda was looking for plane tickets to Aceh. Rully is the founder of the Riau-based non-governmental organization Wahana Lingkungan

Hidup (Walhi), which advocates for environmental protection. This organization was founded in February 2003 on the initiative of eight regional organizations. Walhi Riau encourages social transformation in the management and utilization of natural resources with the goal of realizing people's sovereignty over sources of life that are managed fairly and sustainably.

Rully is from Banda Aceh, and after hearing about the disaster in his hometown, he rushed to Aceh. At the time, the ticket from Pekanbaru to Aceh was empty; the nearest destination was Medan. He intended to take land transportation to Aceh after arriving in Medan.

He traveled from Pekanbaru to Jakarta and then to Medan at the time. Unfortunately, the plane was unable to land when it arrived near Medan. The plane returned to Jakarta that afternoon, and he had to wait from 2 p.m. to 2 a.m. "At 2 a.m. that night, the plane took us to Pekanbaru first, arrived at 4 a.m. and put us up in a hotel, and then went straight to Medan in the afternoon," Rully recalled.

Rully took the land route to Aceh after arriving in Medan. Rully, along with volunteers from the National Walhi, immediately identified the condition of the shelter—an emergency shelter for disaster victims—in Banda Aceh and recorded what the victims required. Rully was busy identifying the necessary needs while caring for his family in Banda Aceh for about three days. "When Walhi Aceh collapsed at the time, the survivors

were the Aceh NGO Forum (Forum LSM Aceh). As a result, all of the volunteers gathered there to serve as a joint post."

In the midst of assessing the conditions in each shelter, Otto Miettinen, a Siemenpuu employee, contacted him and asked what Siemenpuu could do for him. Walhi Riau did not have any activities with Siemenpuu at the time, but prior to Walhi, Rully had frequently worked with Siemenpuu through his original institution—Kaliptra Andalas, a Riau-based non-governmental organization focused on environmental issues—in campaigns against illegal timber entering Norway. "Otto immediately said that I needed to make a proposal for activities so that assistance could be sent right away."

Rully returned to Riau on the seventh day after the tsunami. "After I explained the field conditions, Many colleagues wanted to join us. But, and this is important, if you want to help, you must have the necessary skills. Because there was very busy," Rully recalled.

Following a discussion with the team at Walhi Riau, Rully immediately made a proposal, which Otto requested to be processed by Siemenpuu. Rully believes that the aids that have escaped the attention of many people as a result of his identification for four days in Banda Aceh are the provision of kitchen spices—because many provide instant noodles—for cooking, and pampers for children to wear.

"At the time, there were plenty of decent clothes to go around, but no one donated underwear because it was unethical. As a result, we provide new ones to each shelter," Rully explained.

In addition to assisting, Rully intends to provide generators as a power source and drill wells in several shelters. Because clean water was scarce at the time, the construction of this drilled well was deemed highly appropriate. Other planned activities include conducting a post-tsunami groundwater condition study. "Iron, building ruins, and corpses abound. The condition was destroyed, and I was thinking about the groundwater reserves there at the time."

The proposal was submitted to Otto that night, and it was just a matter of waiting for more information from Siemenpuu. The Walhi Riau team, on the other hand, continued to move the next morning, "Because from the beginning, we had planned to help, and even though the funding from Siemenpuu had not been arrived, we were still moving forward."

Two cars—a minibus and a pick-up truck—moved from Pekanbaru to Aceh, carrying a 12-person assistance team. When the Walhi Riau team arrived in Banda Aceh, they met at the Forum LSM Aceh. Because of the large number of volunteers present, Rully took the initiative to invite the team to clean his house so that it could be used as a post for the Walhi team. Walhi team moved quickly after cleaning Rully house to carry out the activity plan.

### **DRILLING WELLS, UNDERWEAR, SEASONINGS AND WATER RESERVE STUDIES**

Rully and his team moved to identify the location for the drill wells construction after receiving assistance from Siemenpuu. Selected 15 shelters in Banda Aceh that do not have access to clean water.

Making this drill wells is difficult because, in addition to the scattered condition of the field, building ruins, and scattered iron, experts for the manufacture of this drill wells were brought all the way

from Medan. Given the high cost of renting this well-making tool, Rully took the initiative to purchase one, and the Walhi team studied alongside experts.

The drilling of wells in 15 shelters around Banda Aceh will greatly assist the community in obtaining clean water sources. Because the state of stagnant water on the ground surface or in soil basins is poor. Rusted as a result of iron in water, garbage, and construction debris. This borehole excavation goes down to 30 to 40 meters to get clean water that can be consumed. Construction of this drilled well can take up to three months.

This is also what Rully intended to use as a study. Based on the preliminary identification results obtained upon arrival in Aceh, this is an important issue that must be investigated so that the Banda Aceh local government can find a

*The condition of Banda Aceh seen from above, the whole city is covered with mud and rubble - Getty Images/ Ulet Ifansari*

solution. Susi Anggraini, a member of Rully's team, was assigned to coordinate this research.

The study was carried out to assess the state of groundwater reserves in Banda Aceh. This is to identify the contaminants that contaminate water, which is one of the most important sources of life, particularly when this natural disaster occurs. With this study, it is possible to see how the tsunami affected the quality of groundwater in Banda Aceh.

This study will also look into whether there is contamination from hazardous substances or contamination of seawater to residents' drinking water sources. Because if the water source is contaminated, residents will be unable to drink or cook with it.

Sampling for this study was done at 11 different locations throughout Banda Aceh. Following that, the







*Ruins scattered around Banda Aceh after being hit by a huge tsunami wave - Getty Images/ Ulet Ifansari*

sample was examined in the laboratory of the University of Riau to determine how the presence of iron, manganese, and other substances could contaminate the Banda Aceh groundwater basin. "We submitted the findings of this research to the local government of Banda Aceh around June 2005," Rully explained.

The activities carried out by Walhi Riau in Aceh with the assistance of Siemenpuu are extremely beneficial to the community. Others, he claims, would have thought the assistance provided was unthinkable at the time. "Yes, a lot of instant noodles and rice were given at the time, but we also gave things like kitchen spices and chili powder," Rully explained. Walhi Riau team was looking for these kitchen spices to Bireun and Pidie at the time.

Similarly, with the assistance of children's underwear and diapers. These two things were indeed missed by the aid providers based on the results of his identification when he first arrived in Aceh.

"Women's, men's, and children's clothing were abundant at the time. However, there are no underwear or diapers, which is why we provide them." Walhi Riau also provides 20 thousand watt generators at various locations for residents to use as a source of electricity and lighting.

Rully's memories of what happen in Banda Aceh at the time were heartbreaking. "The atmosphere was tense, especially at night," he recalls. When he arrived in Banda Aceh, the only thing he saw were piles of rubble. If there were previously many buildings in the



area, now all that remains are the pillars or the building has collapsed to the ground.

"At the time, it was very difficult for us to determine what the victims required," Rully explained. Because survivors will disperse to look for missing relatives, shelters will be empty in the morning until late afternoon. They'd only returned as it was getting dark, and they were exhausted. Rully recalls that

not everyone wants to tell stories because of the chaotic conditions, and they are tired of being asked various questions that yield no results from the lengthy discussion.

"A lot of people came, asking for this and that, but then they vanished. It is unclear what advantage the talks will provide them. Finally, we took the initiative, did not ask questions, went straight to the shelter, brought help, gave it, and only then did we try to ask stories," Rully explained.

Another difficulty is the distance and transportation routes between locations. At the time, the roads were still littered with rubble, making transportation difficult. At the time, the path cleared by volunteers was only the main access point for distributing aid. However, there is still a lot of debris and metal that can be dangerous if you don't tread carefully.

The Walhi Riau team had to travel far to other cities that were still in better condition than Banda Aceh to buy necessities. "Several teams were not strong enough with the conditions there and eventually chose to return to Pekanbaru," Rully recalled. This, however, is not an impediment to carrying out activities in Aceh.

The Aceh tsunami was the worst humanitarian disaster in history at the time, but it inspired people all over the world to come together to help the country of the Veranda of Mecca recover quickly, and Siemenpuu is one of them.#





Hutan Kita Institut  
(HaKI)

## DRIVING ECONOMIC IMPROVEMENT AND MANGROVE RECOVERY

By: Suryadi



**RUDI HARTONO, DIZZY.** The shrimp ponds of other communities are being demolished. Tide large. Flooding approximately 50 cm above the embankment. The milkfish and prawns all fled. The disaster has been ongoing since last Wednesday. Throughout the day, the embankment sank. The highest tide is on Friday. Saturday will be a little chilly. On Monday, November 15, 2021, it began to recede. Even though the water isn't too deep, it's still coming in.



Mangrove planting activities with the community in the coastal area of the thymus coast of South Sumatra, precisely in Simpang Tiga Abadi Village, OKI Regency – HaKI





*Boundary determination activities for the application of the Simpang Tiga Abadi HKm - HaKI*



According to Rudi, the ebb and flow of sea water is causing the embankment of the community's shrimp ponds to erode. He once asked a nearby company to lend him heavy equipment to raise the embankment through the local village head. But the village chief said he couldn't without explaining why.

This year, sea water has submerged twice the shrimp ponds of the Simpang Tiga Abadi Village community, Tulung Selapan District, Ogan Komering Ilir Regency, South Sumatra. It already happened in May. This occurrence is extremely rare and occurs only once every year. High tides last invaded the community's shrimp ponds three years ago.

"Even if it sinks, it won't be much. This year is the end. It's a shame," Rudi stated. According to him, the only solution is to fortify shrimp ponds, which have been a source of income for the locals for decades. The trick requires heavy

equipment and cannot be dug manually or by hand alone.

"This is due to the loss of mangroves as a 'dyke' that holds back sea water on South Sumatra's east coast," explained Prastio Widodo, Staff of the Hutan Kita Institute (HaKI).

HaKI recognizes this issue and encourages the community to work together to restore coastal conditions so that the community can manage the area sustainably and ultimately gain economic benefits while protecting the mangrove ecosystem in Ogan Komering Ilir Regency.

### **SOCIAL FORESTRY, MANGROVES AND SHRIMP FARMERS**

The Ministry of Environment and Forestry (KLHK) granted a community forest permit (Hutan Kemasyarakatan - HKM) covering 123 ha in Simpang Tiga Abadi in 2017. It is managed by 26 family

heads. However, there has been no progress in restoring the mangrove forest in the protected area that has been converted into a shrimp pond.

"The Simpang Tiga Abadi HKM is the first social forestry project on South Sumatra's east coast, specifically in OKI Regency. The farmers are actually Lampung runaways who moved and opened shrimp ponds," Prastio explained.

Before learning about social forestry, HaKI selected Simpang Tiga Abadi, a coastal area facing the Bangka Strait, as one of the Siempenpuu-supported mangrove rehabilitation sites. Start by opening a dialogue and discussing the importance of protecting mangroves with community leaders to unite perceptions. The process takes about three months of back and forth to the location.

They directly involved the community in the activity after reaching an agreement. From the nursery to the field. Schoolchildren are included as well. Eventually, the local village government joined in.

The proposal for social forestry permits continued the activity. Given that many community shrimp ponds are located in forest preserves. Each person has five or more 100x200 square meter shrimp ponds. HaKI desires that the community's economy align with the restoration of mangrove forests.

The community also wants the government to recognize this activity by providing access to forest management. According

to Boni Bangun, an HaKI staff member, obtaining forest management rights is also a tool for community empowerment in order to protect mangrove forests as land buffers.

Previously, the community always built new ponds in response to sedimentation or land addition in the coastal area. This occurrence is also accompanied by the natural growth of new mangroves. The community believes that pond construction is still permitted if it is one kilometer from the forest's edge.

"In fact, the embankments surrounding their ponds frequently collapse as a result of the brunt of the waves or incoming sea water. This is due to the lack of a fortifying mangrove forest. Not only are the shrimp coming out, but they are also being attacked by snapper pests," Boni explained.

At Simpang Tiga Abadi, HaKI has mapped the protection and cultivation zones for HKM. The mapping indicates that approximately 95 ha are designated for shrimp and milkfish ponds, 6 ha for embankments, and 22 ha for coastal conservation zones. "Stable areas must be maintained in protected areas. The community is hoping to 're-embroider' the damaged and perforated mangroves," Boni said.

HaKI hopes that the protected area will also have mud crab potential and will be economically beneficial. "If crabs have always been pests of shrimp in ponds, they are now an additional source of income for the community," Prastio added.



So far, there has been no visible form of HKm management following the grant of the permit. Boni stated that there were plans to form a Social Forestry Business Group (KUPS), but that they had not been carried out. However, HaKI also suggests other possible developments in the HKm area. People are encouraged to plant vegetables on the embankment. At the very least, to meet the local community's vegetable needs.

Boni stated that the Simpang Tiga Abadi HKm (Community Forest) group had previously received feed, nets, and shrimp farming equipment from the Director General of Social Forestry and Environmental Partnerships (PSKL). "We also remind them that they should continue to socialize the prohibition of mangrove forest encroachment, not just think about profit."

Planting mangroves around community shrimp ponds prevent the embankment from abrasion and reduces pest entry. Mangroves work as forts, preventing tides from

affecting the amount of brackish water that enters the pond. "That is what the zoning in the HKm area has been determined to be. We're not talking about rules that make people dizzy, but rather about the benefits that the community can obtain," Boni explained.

For nearly 50 years, the Simpang Tiga Abadi community has had shrimp ponds. Rudy didn't do it himself. It was actually purchased by the previous owner. Shrimp ponds were created by destroying mangrove forests. By the end of the conversation, Rudy had realized how important the mangrove forest was to protect the already open pond, although the embankment height he needed was over a meter.

According to Boni, the community has stopped cutting mangroves to build new ponds since they were given management rights. In addition to maintaining the shrimp ponds that were already open prior to receiving HKm, the community is becoming more concerned about protecting the coast.

HKm Simpang Tiga Abadi is cited as an example. Other village communities with similar activities and problems want to gain management rights as a result of their unlicensed activities. The commitment is the same: stop clearing mangrove forests for new shrimp ponds and restore those that have been damaged.

In addition to Simpang Tiga Abadi, HaKI restores mangroves in Sungai Lumpur Village. The location is diametrically opposed. Activities are more volatile here because there have been many rejections and clashes between ethnic groups who do not agree on the importance of saving mangroves. HaKI also focuses on social forestry in various areas of this sub-district. The Mud River flows into the Cengal District.

Furthermore, there are still area or boundary disputes with the ditch master. He is the first to open the trench because he has the authority to clear the mangrove forest for shrimp farming. People also purchase ponds for the trench's head. The pond costs IDR 1 - 1.5 million for the less fortunate. The price of the pond with all of its equipment is IDR 10 million. That was the price that was in effect in 1995.

HaKI began its activities in Simpang Tiga Abadi and Sungai Lumpur, Malaysia, with a small group. They help lobby the trench head to allow mangrove restoration activities to begin. However, not everyone in the trenches agrees. As a

result, not all routes are viable for rehabilitation.

Some ditch heads who refused believed that more and taller mangrove trees would harm pond shrimp farming or reduce crop yields. This unfounded fear has also influenced some people to oppose mangrove restoration in their area.

However, because it was the first social forestry project in the area, the HKm in Simpang Tiga Abadi eventually became a pilot project. Although many pond owners are still unwilling to participate, people are gradually realizing and comprehending the legality of shrimp farming in protected areas. A note will not create a new pond.

"According to the indicative map of social forestry, the area will be around a thousand hectares if the entire community of Simpang Tiga Abadi and Sungai Lumpur is willing to propose social forestry," said Sigit Widagdo, HaKI staff. People are beginning to realize, according to Prastio, that their activities can be legalized through social forestry.

Many other civil society organizations have since become involved in mangrove restoration activities, including community empowerment for economic improvement. The Peat and Mangrove Restoration Agency (BRGM) has begun operations.#



*Preparation of mangrove seedlings to be planted with the community on the Simpang Tiga Abadi coast – HaKI*







## WE ARE NOT HEROES; SIMPLY PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH SOLUTION OPTIONS

By: Rina Syahputri and  
Nurul Fitria



**FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS,**  
the Perkumpulan Elang has  
collaborated with Siemenpuu  
to carry out various community  
empowerment activities in Riau.  
“It’s been since 2005,” says Susanto  
Kurniawan, Director’s Perkumpulan  
Elang.

Zamrud National Park’s peat swamp forest in Siak Regency, Riau. The Vice President of Indonesia, Jusuf Kalla, stipulated on July 22, 2016. Zamrud National Park covers 31,480 hectares of peatland - Perkumpulan Elang





Illegal Logging in the Kampar Peninsula, this logged natural forest wood is washed into the river to be transported to the company receiving this illegal timber - Perkumpulan Elang

Perkumpulan Elang was established in April 2001. Perkumpulan Elang's work was initially focused on the issue of water resources. As they grow older, Perkumpulan Elang spreads its wings and collaborates with the community to disseminate information and raise awareness about environmental conservation. Even Perkumpulan Elang has begun to work on changing local and national policies to care about environmental conditions.

Perkumpulan Elang was one of the organizations that helped launch the Riau Forest Rescue Network, also known as Jikalahari, in 2002. This step is regarded as a form of collaboration between the Eagle Association in carrying out its mission. Aside from Jikalahari, Perkumpulan Elang also helped to establish the Friends of the Earth

(Walhi) and became a member of Sawit Watch Indonesia.

Since its inception, Perkumpulan Elang has remained focused on work related to the protection of the community's economic resources in order to achieve socially, culturally, and environmentally responsible economic independence. Perkumpulan Elang also promotes the development of public awareness and power in order to achieve equitable political access. Not only that, but also promotes public access to management space and cultural access in Sumatran ecosystem management.

Until now, the work of Perkumpulan Elang, which is supported by Siemenpuu, has been a manifestation of the realization



of the focus of work, one of which is encouraging the expansion of community management space by utilizing the government's Social Forestry scheme.

### **SIEMENPUU, KAMPAR PENINSULA DAN KERUMUTAN**

Perkumpulan Elang has a strong bond with Siemenpuu. When Siemenpuu's support has only recently arrived in Riau, the fight to save the last remaining natural forests in the Pelalawan, Siak, and Indragiri landscapes is critical. "The big plan at the time was to advocate for the Kampar Peninsula with Jikalahari." "The term landscape of the Kampar Peninsula was named by Jikalahari because it is actually supported by Siemenpuu," Susanto Kurniawan explained.

The Kampar Peninsula Ecosystem, with an area of approximately 683,639 hectares, is one of the largest expanses of peat swamp forest in Riau Province. It is 90% peat soil, with three large peat domes and several small peat domes, and peat depths of up to 15 meters.

Many forestry company permits are issued in this landscape, including Business Permits for Utilization of Industrial Timber Forest Products (HTI) and Forest Concession Rights (HPH). The majority are affiliated with the Asia Pulp and Paper (APP) Group, which is owned by Eka Tjipta Widjaya, or the Asia Pacific Resources International Holdings Ltd (APRIL) Group, which is owned by Sukanto Tanoto. These businesses convert wood into pulp, fiber, and other products.

The preservation of the Kampar Peninsula's remaining forests is a top priority. Several management concepts were created. The participation of key policymakers is intended to save the remaining natural forests. "Perkumpulan Elang is also replicating this concept to be applied in Indragiri Hilir," explained Janes Sinaga, Director of the Perkumpulan Elang.

Perkumpulan Elang developed a concept to save the Kerumutan landscape for Indragiri Hilir, but due to the complexity of governance issues, Perkumpulan Elang attempted to focus on carrying out activities in Simpang Gaung Village. Activities include improving forest management through Non-Timber Products and encouraging law enforcement



against environmental and forestry crimes. In Kerumutan peat swamp forest, the Perkumpulan Elang also promotes community-based forest resource utilization initiatives.

Since 2016, the Eagle Association has worked to expand community management space through social forestry schemes. "At the time, we saw an opportunity for the community to use the former PT Bhara Induk HPH permit area to become a Village Forest because the old company did not operate, resulting in poor forest governance in the area." As a result, on October 1, 2017, the Perkumpulan Elang, Jikalauhari, and the community proposed rescinding PT Bhara Induk's permit covering 37,687 ha and submitting a proposal for Social Forestry," said Jay Jasmi, Deputy of Perkumpulan Elang.

Due to the limited management space for their livelihood, Perkumpulan Elang encourages the community to fully manage the former PT Bhara Induk HPH area. With the permit area of PT Bhara Induk reaching 48.000 hectares, the Simpang Gaung community will, of course, lose the opportunity to obtain its management space if further management is left to other companies.

"From this incident, we can see how chaotic the government's system for granting permits to companies that do not directly check locations in the field is." "We're fighting for this space so that the community doesn't lose its land," Janes explained.

Perkumpulan Elang created several scenarios to carry out the Simpang

*The discussion process with the community accompanied by Perkumpulan Elang for the application of Social Forestry - Perkumpulan Elang*



*Perkumpulan Elang held a workshop with the Siak Regional Government to discuss the management plan of the Zamrud National Park and the Kampar Peninsula - Perkumpulan Elang*



Gaung activity plan. In mid-2018, the Perkumpulan Elang received word that PT Bhara Induk's license would be revoked. "We went here and there looking for this information to see if it was true or not," Janes recalled. Finally, the HPH permit was officially revoked in 2019 by Siti Nurbaya Bakar, Minister of Environment and Forestry.

Unfortunately, Perkumpulan Elang was not the only one who heard the good news. The community surrounding the Bhara Induk HPH area was also aware of the revocation of this permit and began to 'occupy' the area in large numbers. Land clearing activities are carried out in order to convert the plant's function from wood to oil palm. Many even clear land by burning, resulting in a large number of fires in the area.

"That presents a challenge for us."

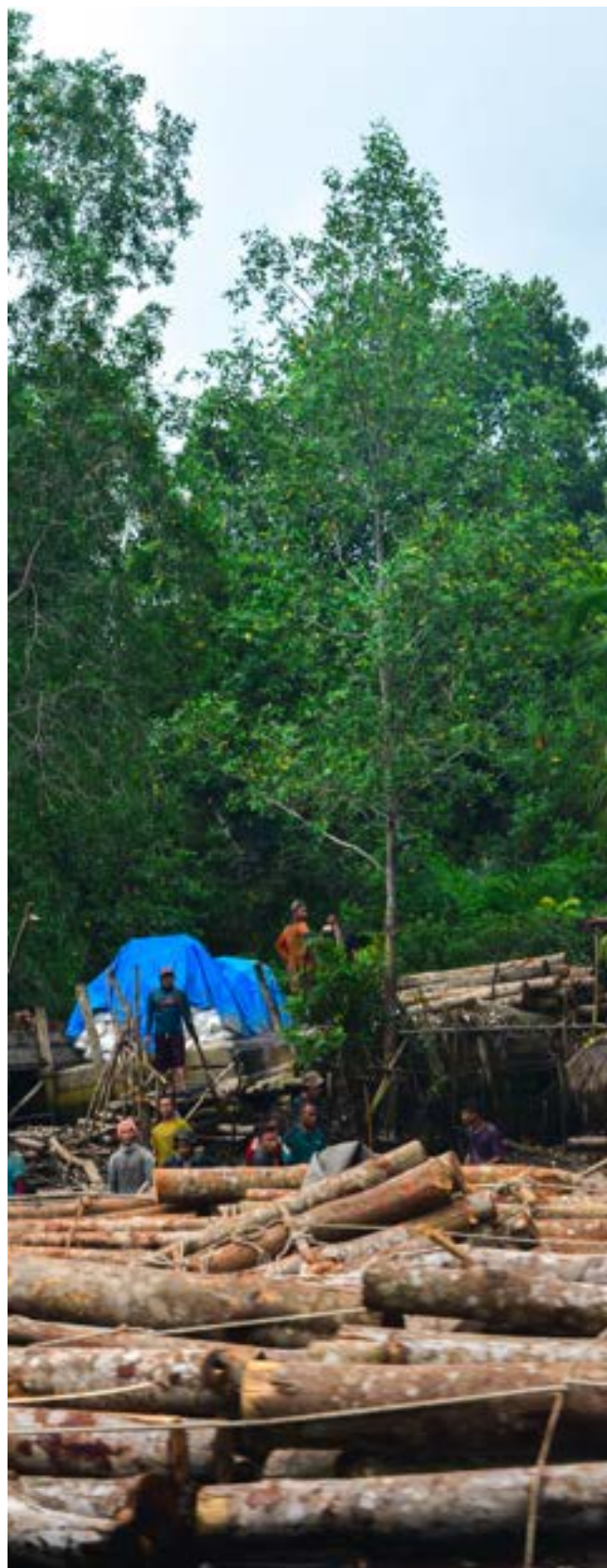
If allowed to continue, it has the potential to cause forest and land fires, as well as illegal logging," Janes explained. Between 2018 and 2019, at least three human-tiger conflicts occurred in the area, killing two residents and one critical person.

The community hopes to improve their well-being through social forestry with a village forest scheme. Furthermore, management will be carried out to prevent forest and land fires, as well as to minimize encroachment and illegal logging.

### **COMMUNITY RELIANCE ON TIMBER AND LAND CLEARING BY BURNING**

The former Bhara Induk HPH still has a large amount of forest cover. "About 80% of it is still covered by forest," Janes said. This condition,





*Illegal logging that is rampant in the Kampar Peninsula has resulted in a drastic reduction in forest cover - Perkumpulan Elang*



however, is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it is good that there is still a lot of forest cover in the area, but it is also a problem because the community is heavily reliant on forest wood for their needs.

Simpang Gaung is a village in the Gaung Indragiri Hilir district. This village area is located in a peat ecosystem and covers approximately 106,000 hectares. Simpang Gaung people spend a lot of time gardening, especially in coconut plantations. "Not many people are interested in palm oil because it requires high maintenance costs and has a lower selling value than coconut," Janes explained.

Many people dig canal 4 to 6 meters wide to support this coconut plantation activity. This canal becomes a transportation route, either for draining the harvested coconuts or for people's pompong or canoes.

Perkumpulan Elang discovered that the community's reliance on forest wood in this area is extremely high. Residents still require wood from the forest, particularly for building houses and making canoes. Giving the Simpang Gaung residents the option of using other materials for house construction is also difficult for the Perkumpulan Elang.

"The cost is quite high, and it will be even more expensive because access to this area is difficult." Going back to using wood or boards is the simplest option for them," Janes explains.

The Simpang Gaung area, which is linked to these rivers, is now more easily accessible by water transportation. A motorcycle is the best option if you want to use a motorized vehicle.

Another issue that has arisen as a result of this difficult access is the method of land clearing. Following the frequent occurrence of forest and land fires (karhutla) in Riau, campaigns for land clearing without burning have been widely voiced. "However, this is a problem in Simpang Gaung," Janes explained.

The solution to clearing land without burning is to use heavy equipment, which is obviously impossible given the condition of the Simpang Gaung area, which relies on water transportation.

Janes recalled discussing how to clear land without burning with residents, who then asked, "If we open land without burning, what

do we use to open the land again?" At that time Janes was confused to provide a solution to this problem.

Not to be discouraged, Janes and Perkumpulan Elang team attempted to find a solution at the time. Residents participated in discussions. They went to the homes of the hamlet's chief (Kepala Dusun) and Chairman of the Neighborhood Association (RT).

For a few days, I rode my pompong from house to house. They will clear the land in groups once a solution is found. It was thoroughly discussed how the land clearing system works, how many people will work in one group, and the management model that is used.

This process is critical for Perkumpulan Elang in order to avoid larger problems, particularly those related to forest and land fires. "This awareness activity is important and will become very important," Janes said.

Various forest protection-related pieces of training and knowledge-sharing activities are frequently held. Discusses the importance of maintaining peat ecosystems and how to manage and use forests in a sustainable manner. "The important point is that they understand the causes and consequences of dry peat fires, as well as the importance of protecting forests, which can also improve people's economies," Janes said.#





Mitra Insani Foundation  
(Yayasan Mitra Insani - YMI)

## SAVE THE PEAT SWAMP FOREST ECOSYSTEM OF THE KAMPAR PENINSULA FROM THE SITE

By: Herbet and  
Nurul Fitria



**TELUK MERANTI VILLAGE** is an area located along the Kampar Watershed (DAS). Rivers, forests, and peat land are extremely important to communities. Many tributaries in Teluk Meranti are popular for fishing, including the Kutub, Serkap, Pebilah, Sangar, Kerumutan, and Merawang rivers.



Canal construction activities on the Serkap River - YMI





Visit to Segamai Village Forest by Minister of Forestry Zulkifli Hasan in 2013 - YMI/ FB Rian Anggoro/ Greenpeace



Apart from the river, there are several lakes and lakes in Teluk Meranti Village, and the existence of these waters is very important for the pulse of the community because almost all community activities at the time relied on the river.

Teluk Meranti is located in Pelalawan Regency and is part of the Kampar Peninsula, a peat swamp forest ecosystem rich in biodiversity. The Mitra Insani Foundation (YMI), in collaboration with Siemenpuu, provides assistance and community-based activities to help save this ecosystem. "The Kampar Peninsula is important to YMI in our efforts to save the peat ecosystem," said Herbet, YMI's Executive Director.

The Kampar Peninsula is the foundation of YMI's community-based area rescue work. Since 2008, YMI has collaborated with Siemenpuu on numerous activities in this landscape. The first canal-blocking activity in Riau was carried out in the Kampar Peninsula area. YMI made efforts to restore damaged peat ecosystems, one of which was by building canal blocks, an effort initiated by learning from Wetland Indonesia.

This canal-blocking initiative<sup>11</sup> was chosen with the conditions around the Kampar Peninsula area in mind, where many canals were used to extract logging logs in mind. Previously, these canals were built with heavy equipment (Kobelco), with a width of 2-3 meters and a depth of 1.5-2 meters.

These canals were abandoned following a massive illegal logging law enforcement operation by the government of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in 2006, resulting in the destruction of peat conditions that could potentially dry out. Furthermore, fishermen on the Serkap River have begun to complain that their catch has decreased since the canal's construction.

Seeing this, YMI and the community decided to close the canal along the Serkap River. At the time, canal blocking had reached 20 blocks in 20 canals, with some of them stretching for 8 kilometers. The canal blocking is built using structures and models commonly used by the community to block ditches in their villages. The materials used include wood found near the canal as well as tarpaulin.

Consent and agreement from the community must be obtained prior to the construction of this

canal blocking. Discussions were also held with community groups, village officials, and canal owners<sup>12</sup>. In addition to obtaining permits, this agreement is required to establish a joint commitment to keep the canal blocked.

The blocked canals are also used to boost the income of the surrounding fishing communities. Selais (*Ompok hypophthalmus*), Baung (*Mystus murus*), Patin (*Pangasius sp.*), and Tapah (*Wallago*) fish seeds are stocked in canals and will be used by the community in the future. The blocked canal finally solves the problem of dry, flammable peat. The sealed peat is wetter, and the canal's water level is higher.

There are endemic fish species in the Serkap River Lake, according to YMI's activities in Teluk Meranti Village. The public commonly refers to this fish as red fish, and many of them appear in the afternoon. "According to the findings of

YMI found endemic fish species in Serkap River Lake - YMI









the proposed area could not be continued because it was included in the concession of the pulp and paper company PT Riau Andalan Pulp and Paper—APRIL Group subsidiary—based on SK 327/menhut-II/2009. The company holds a permit for 43,000 hectares of land in the Kampar Peninsula Block, which includes Teluk Binjai Village.

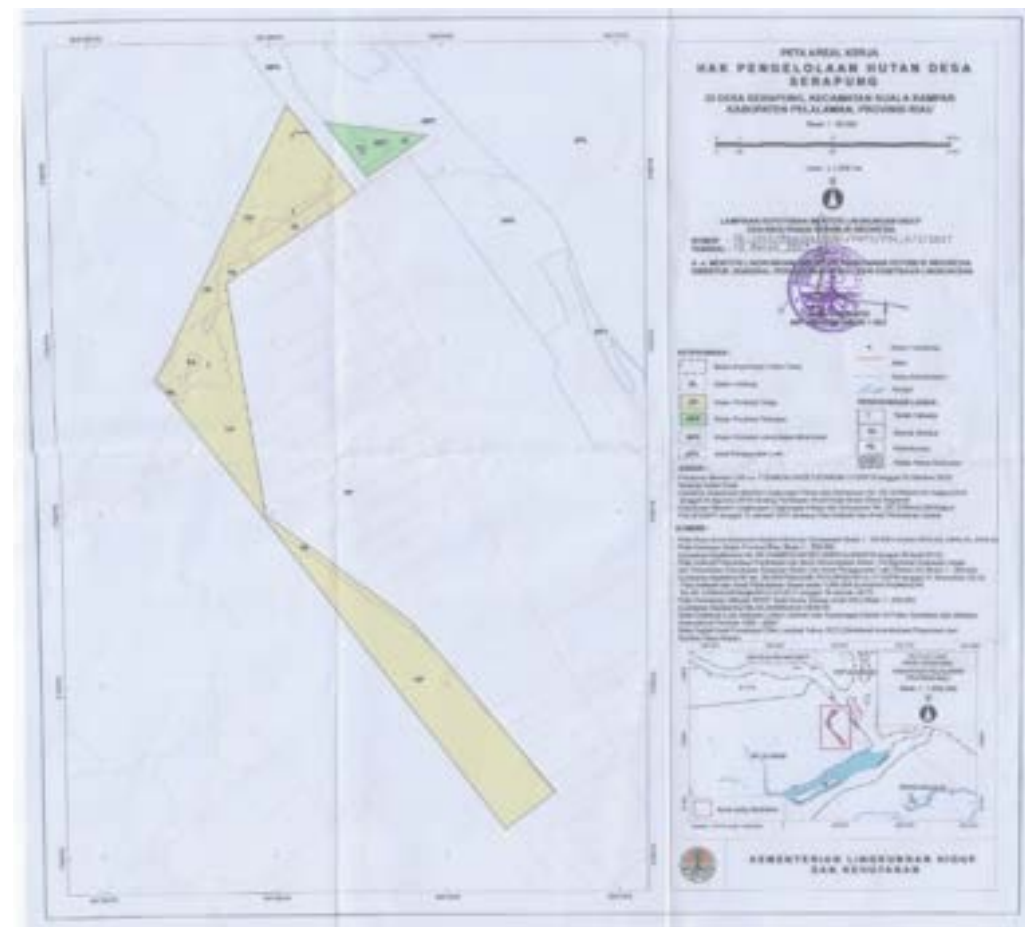
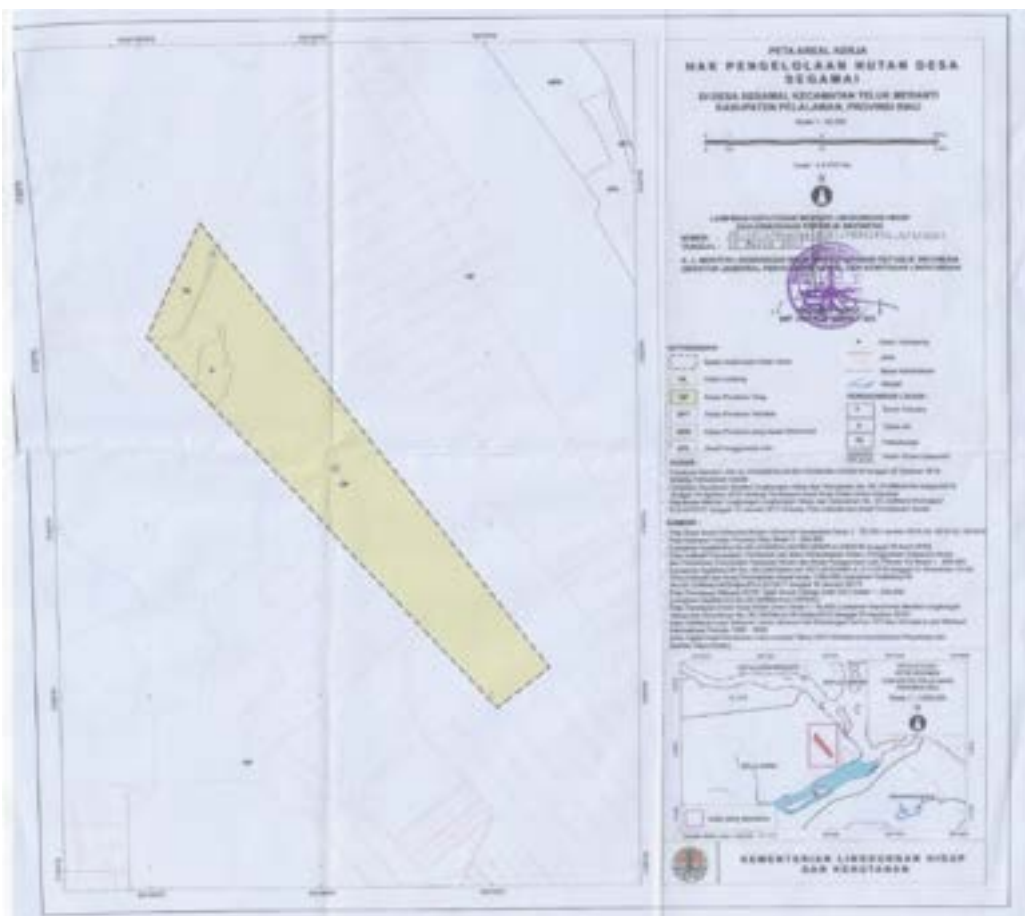
YMI conducted an analysis of the potential of the village forest that they could propose after learning from the proposal of Teluk Binjai Village. The ex-license company will expire, the permit will be revoked,

or the employee will resign. In a nutshell, it was discovered that PT Agam Sempurna handed over management rights over 18,000 hectares to the Minister of Forestry in 2007. This area was quickly proposed as a candidate for the Segamai - Serapung village forest.

The proposed area's current state is logged over natural forest. The area encompasses four villages: Teluk Meranti, Pulau Muda, Segamai, and Serapung. Following an examination of the area's condition and consultation with the community, the areas of Segamai



Map of the Segamai Village Forest Management Rights working area sourced from KLHK



Map of the Serapung Village Forest Management Rights working area sourced from KLHK



and Serapung were chosen to be processed for submission of the HD proposal to the Ministry of Forestry.

The proposed area for Serapung is approximately 2000 hectares, while Segamai is approximately 7000 hectares. On December 22, 2010, YMI and the community collaborated to create this proposal, which was submitted directly to the Assistant I of the Pelalawan Regent and the Head of the Pelalawan Forestry Service. This proposal could not be processed

immediately by the then Pelalawan Regent H Rustam Effendy. He objected to dealing with forestry permits because the previous regent, T. Azmun Jaafar, had been arrested for forestry permit corruption.

This proposal has yet to be approved following the elections for Pelalawan's regional head and the then-elected regent, H M Harris. The proposed area could not be processed because the Regent of Pelalawan also recommended that PT RAPP be granted a permit





SK village forest management rights to LPHD Serapung



in the former PT Agam Sempurna area.

The community was given permission to save the Kampar Peninsula from destruction through an intensive campaign. YMI is still trying to persuade the Pelalawan Regent to provide recommendations for the HD Segamai - Serapung proposal. The regent was finally willing to issue a letter of recommendation in 2011. "At the time, HD Segamai - Serapung was considered as an

initial trial to see if the community could manage the forest well," Herbert explained.

The Regent of Pelalawan's consideration at the time was related to the history of rampant illegal logging. There is a strong assumption that the community is the source of the problem and the cause of forest destruction. The HD Segamai proposal, like the HD Serapung proposal, was reduced in size to 2000 ha.

In order to realize HD Segamai - Serapung's determination, YMI not only persuaded the local government, but also met with the central government and the Ministry of Forestry. Discussions with the Directorate of BPDAS-PS and Planology, as well as the Director General of BUK (Forestry Business), took place on March 18, 2021.

On March 31, 2011, the Director General of BUK issued a letter of support for HD Segamai - Serapung's proposal. On June 7, 2011, the Head of the Pelalawan Forestry Service also issued a letter of technical consideration to the Regent of Pelalawan for this HD proposal.

On March 8, 2013, the Decree on the Determination of Work Areas (PAK) HD Segamai - Serapung was born as a result of YMI's struggle with the residents. At the time, the Minister of Forestry, Zulkifli Hasan, directly handed over the SK PAK HD Segamai with the number SK 154/Menhut-II/2013 and the SK PAK HD Serapung with the number SK155/Menhut-II/2013.

This PAK Decree, however, is only valid for two years. YMI and the communities of Segamai - Serapung must protect the HD management rights granted by the Governor of Riau for a 35-year period. On September 19, 2014, this process was followed in Segamai and Serapung, from submission to field verification.

As of September 22, 2014, the results of this verification are contained in the Minutes of Verification Results of the Serapung HPHD Application Number: BA. 187/BPDAS- INR-3/2014; Segamai Number: BA. 188/BPDAS-INR-3/2014.

This HPHD SK, however, remains unpublished. The problem was that the Governor of Riau at the time, Arsyadjuliandi Rahman, was hesitant to issue a permit for fear of being implicated in corruption after the Corruption Eradication Commission (KPK) arrested Annas Maamun for corruption in the conversion of forest areas in Riau.

The failure to issue this decree raises concerns because the Segamai - Serapung area can be proposed by anyone with an interest in forest destruction.

Siti Nurbaya's election as Minister of Environment and Forestry was a welcome development. She created a space for the community to communicate their needs via WhatsApp. The people of Segamai - Serapung also used this opportunity to express the community's desire to save HD Segamai - Serapung.

Siti Nurbaya positively responded to this request by sending a ministry team to meet with the Segamai and Serapung Village Forest Management Institutions (LPHD).

As a result, the Minister of Environment and Forestry extended the SK PAK Segamai - Serapung for another two years while securing this HD area before obtaining an SK HPHD from the Governor of Riau.

Various forest utilization schemes are provided so that whether or not in HD, the community can also submit proposals in the form of customary forests, community forests, community plantation forests and forestry partnerships.

This is an opportunity that YMI cannot afford to pass up. The previous failure to obtain HD in Teluk Binjau was remedied. The proposed area is a forest in Lanus Bay, Siak, which is still in the Kampar Peninsula and covers 3,400 hectares.

This area was previously proposed in 2014, but did not receive a favorable response from the Regent of Siak at the time. Finally, in March 2017, YMI submitted another HD Teluk Lanus application and received a favorable response from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry. Field verification was completed in August 2017, and the SK HPHD Teluk Lanus was issued in December with a land area of 3,580 hectares.#





## Riau Corruption Trial (RCT)/ Senarai



*The courtroom atmosphere during the verdict reading against the defendant, former Riau Governor Rusli Zainal, who was involved in the Riau forestry permitting and PON corruption case. - Senarai*

# LIVE FROM THE COURTROOM: ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME IN RIAU

By: Nurul Fitria



**THREE JUDGES READ** the case verdict file in turn. The reading of the verdict, which lasted more than 30 minutes and was presided over by Bachtiar Sitompul, reached its climax. Read the verdict that will be delivered to the defendant, H M Rusli Zainal, who was the Governor of Riau at the time.





Senarai directs the proceedings in court from the beginning to the end of the trial. Documenting the trial's atmosphere, as well as the actions of judges, prosecutors, defendants' and witnesses' legal counsel. Everything was photographed and videotaped. – Senarai



"The panel of judges decided to sentence the defendant to 14 years in prison with a fine of Rp. 1 billion," Bachtiar said, tapping his trial hammer three times. The visitors, the majority of whom were Rusli's relatives, made a lot of noise in the courtroom because they were shocked by the verdict.

"Thank you very much, Your Majesty. However, I was surprised that this court did not consider the facts in this trial at all. "I feel



wronged," Rusli Zainal said in response to the verdict.

Visitors to the Chakra courtroom at the Pekanbaru District Court on March 12, 2014, responded immediately to Rusli's expression. He muttered in disbelief at the

harsh verdict delivered to the Governor of Riau 2 for that time period. Rusli, called the "Father of Riau Development," was accused of corruption in the Riau forestry licensing case and the 2012 National Sports Week, which Riau hosted.

Two members of the Riau Corruption Trial team were on standby in the corners of the visitors' seats, crammed with other journalists, to capture the moment with cameras and video recorders. Capturing Rusli's anxiety after being severely punished, the defendant's wife's anxiety after learning that her husband will be imprisoned for 14 years, and the media's busyness in capturing important moments.

The other two teams were busy writing down the judge's explanation on a piece of paper, the pen moving quickly to write down the things that contributed to Rusli's conviction. While the other was busy typing on a smartphone, briefly relaying the judge's statement to the general public via the Twitter app. He occasionally stands to take photos or record short videos for Twitter.

Yofika Pratiwi, who was on duty at the time, recorded the proceedings, Lovina shared via Twitter, Edo documented with a photo camera, and Yaya recorded video. They were racing against other journalists to report on this case to the public.

When the trial ended, Rusli turned to the visitors and hugged his crying wife, Septina Primawati Rusli. Yaya raised the Handycam to capture the moment. Visitors who wanted to shake hands with Rusli and journalists who wanted to capture that moment for news headlines pushed them against the courtroom wall. This is the day-to-day life of the Riau Corruption Trial team when they are directly monitoring the proceedings.



## FROM RIAU CORRUPTION TRIAL TO SENARAI

On the afternoon of August 9, 2011, eleven people sat around a conference table at the Riau Forest Rescue Network Office—an organization that monitors Riau's forests and environment, also known as Jikalahari. Representatives from the Riau Student Press Forum (Fopersma), Jikalaharis staff, activists from Gurindam 12 and Look Riau, Riau's media, are among them.

They came from different backgrounds, but that afternoon they discussed issues of mutual concern. In Riau, a trial will be held in the case of forestry permit corruption.

*The name change of Riau Corruption Trial to Senarai on December 9, 2019, was filled with discussions criticizing Riau's status as a corruption emergency. – Senarai*



The first trial in the forestry licensing corruption case will be held in two days, with the defendant Arwin AS, the Regent of Siak, as the defendant. He committed corruption by accepting bribes and abusing his position in Siak Regency to issue forestry permits to industrial forest plantation companies. Arwin issued a total of 5 company permits at the time.

Arwin's case does not stand alone, besides Arwin there are other actors such as T Azmun Jaafar—issuing permits for 15 companies in Pelalawan—the Regent of Pelalawan, Syuhada Tasman, Burhanuddin Husein and Asral Rachman, the former head of the Riau Province Forestry Service and



*The trial of corruption in forestry permits, which was monitored by Senarai when it was newly formed, with the defendant Arwin AS, the former Regent of Siak. – Senarai*



the Governor of Riau, Rusli Zainal. These six officials are involved in this corruption case.

The trials of Azmun and Asral Rachman took place in Jakarta, while the other four took place in Pekanbaru and were directly monitored by the Riau Corruption Trial. Starting with the Arwin trial, was the precursor to the Riau Corruption Trial, or RCT for short.

"Two days before Arwin's trial, all the media were excited to report. Apart from the first corruption trial, this also involves the regent and is related to forestry permits," said Made Ali, at that time an Advocacy Staff of Jikalahari.

Considering that corruption is a risky case with many track records of the perpetrators being released, everyone present at the Jikalahari meeting agreed that this case must be followed from start to

finish. "We don't want the accused in corruption cases, particularly those involving forestry licensing corruption," Made explained.

Everyone agreed that this trial would be monitored, from the reading of the charges to the final verdict. Because those present at that time had the ability to write, especially news, it was agreed that each trial result would be made news and disseminated. However, wild ideas were floated at the meeting that afternoon.

"Inspired by the Cikeusik Trial," Made explained, "we agreed to adopt this trial monitoring system." The Cikeusik Trial is a group of young people who documented the trial of Ahmadiyah residents murdered in Cikeusik, Serang, Banten in July 2011. The Cikeusik Trial team documented the trial with photos, videos, and live tweets.





In addition to monitoring the trial, the network collaborates on actions to encourage judges to punish corporations that commit environmental crimes. – Senarai



This model was chosen to be used in the Arwin AS trial monitoring. Each time the trial was held, someone was in charge of taking photos and videos, broadcasting the proceedings live on Twitter, and recording trial information for use in news releases.

As the discussion of names progressed, various name suggestions surfaced. Muslim, the Jikalahari coordinator at the time, proposed the Riau Corruption Trial, abbreviated as RCT. The message is straightforward. They will keep an eye on the trials of corruption

cases in Riau. "But at the time, we thought the scope was very limited if it was only a corruption case, so we agreed that it was not only forestry corruption cases but also other cases related to the environment and society in Riau."

RCT is driven by passion in its work. They saw this as a form of social responsibility at the time and worked voluntarily. Jikalahari assisted RCT with consumption during trial monitoring. Jikalahari was looking for support for this activity at the time, and Siemenpuu was willing to assist.

Throughout the 19 Arwin AS trials, RCT was present from the beginning to the end of the trial. In addition to monitoring the trial, RCT conducted a case review, which included an examination of the facts revealed during the trial, the indictment, and the prosecution.

This is known as a Bentangan. Done prior to the claim's agenda or after the claim has occurred. This outline contains RCT team's analysis of the case and concludes with a recommendation for the judge to decide on the case.

Siemenpuu supported many of the congregations that RCT monitored. These include cases of forest and land fires involving Riau corporations such as PT Adei Plantation and Industry in Pelalawan, PT Palm Lestari Makmur in Indragiri Hulu, PT Wana Subur Sawit Indah in Siak, PT Jatim Jaya Perkasa in Rokan Hilir, and many others. Supported by Siemenpuu, RCT can be monitored and reported to the public.

RCT monitored not only cases of fires, but also cases of indigenous peoples' criminalization, conflicts between animals and humans, and citizen lawsuits against the government over environmental conditions.

The stretch also has a significant impact on the panel of judges' decisions. "Even during the trial process, when the panel of judges at the Rengat District Court (PN) said that if there is a Senarai, we must pay close attention to this case," Suryadi said, repeating the judge's words at the time.

Since 2017, Senarai has been the new name for RCT. Senarai was chosen as the new name six years later, on World Anti-Corruption Day in December 2017. This shift symbolizes the Senarai's larger struggle. Monitoring the trial is one of the activities, which also includes studies and discussions about social issues, corruption, human rights, culture, and ecology.

"Senarai comes from the Malay Language which means list or notes. This means that Senarai will record social movements against crime, social injustice, and





Discussions of the case outline discuss interesting findings during the trial, and the results of the analysis of the facts of the trial are frequently held ahead of the agenda of demands or decisions. – Senarai

ecological damage,” explained Made regarding the meaning of Senarai.



### SENARAI SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL JUSTICE

Senarai’s main goal since its inception has been to enforce social and environmental justice. The Senarai opposes intimidation and partiality that cause environmental damage and tarnish justice.

During the trial monitoring process, Senarai team had a number of interesting experiences. The main trigger was that the defendant and his supporters did not want Senarai to be present in the courtroom from the start to the end of the trial.

“During the trial of the Burhanuddin Husein case, the team was offered money to not participate in the recording at the next trial,” said Jeffri Novrizal Torade Sianturi, the current Senarai Coordinator, recounting unforgettable experiences.

During the trial, actions and raising issues are frequently carried out with the network to the High Court or the Judicial Commission Liaison. – Senarai



In addition to being offered money, videos recorded by Senarai were offered to be purchased on the condition that they not be re-posted on Senarai’s YouTube. The team suspected this at the time because they did not want the trial facts to become widely known.

“Because the media is rarely willing to follow a trial from beginning to end.” In fact, even though the trial begins at 10 p.m., we will continue to wait,” Jeffri explained. Senarai was present at the trial of the decision of the lawsuit against the Ministry of Environment and Forestry against PT Merbau Pelalawan Lestari at the Pekanbaru District Court at the time. “The media primarily covers significant events such as indictments, witnesses presenting significant figures, demands, and decisions.”

Senarai has reported on the panel of judges who were deemed not to have followed the code of ethics

until they were sentenced, in addition to waiting for the trial to begin at midnight.

Senarai was present at the Bengkalis District Court in January 2015 to monitor the forest and land fire case involving the PT National Sagu Prima Corporation (NSP). At the time, the judges were Sarah Louis, Melki Salahuddin, and Renny Hidayati, with legal counsel from the Otto Cornelis Kaligis team.

The Senarai team discovered irregularities during the trial. From taking sides with questions from the panel of judges to the statements of PT NSP’s attorneys to giving the defendants preferential treatment. The panel of judges was also deemed inactive in uncovering the facts of this case’s trial.

Senarai reported this because it believed the panel of judges had violated the Code of Ethics for Judges to the Judicial Commission Liaison (KY). After a lengthy process, the KY’s decision finally sentenced Melki and Renny to no bonus for six months and Sarah Louis to no hammering for six months.

During the monitoring process, Senarai frequently provided input to the Public Prosecutor via a summary that included a summary of the trial facts as well as a legal analysis that was prepared. The Prosecutor welcomed this stretch. Even in some cases, prosecutors have expressed gratitude to Senarai for his assistance in following the trial, allowing the proceedings to proceed smoothly and efficiently. #





Mangrove buds start growing amid the threat of shrimp farming in Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve. - FWI

Forest Watch Indonesia  
(FWI)

## JANGKAR MANGROVE FOR MANGROVE ECOSYSTEM PROTECTION

By: Okto Yugo Setiyo



**WHO REALLY PROTECTS  
MANGROVE** ecosystems in  
Indonesia? This question is a crucial  
issue that should be discussed by  
environmental activists.





Portrait of the mangrove ecosystem in Sungai Sembilan, Riau – FWI



Forestry issues received a lot of attention in the early 2000s due to massive illegal logging and clearing of forests for concession areas. However, something is missing: the massive felling of mangroves, which serve as important coastal fences.

Mangroves are natural ecosystems that play an important role in preventing coastal erosion caused by ocean circulation. Mangroves typically grow along the coast or in estuaries with swampy or dense soil structures. Mangroves typically grow in large numbers in groups<sup>14</sup>.

The mangrove ecosystem provides numerous advantages. Several types of plants in the mangrove ecosystem can be used and processed into a variety of snacks and crafts, ranging from the roots

to the fruit. Mangroves are also a breeding ground for fish and crabs, and they can help to mitigate natural disasters and adapt to climate change.

Unfortunately, many stakeholders have not paid attention to efforts to protect the mangrove ecosystem. The distribution and condition of mangrove ecosystems in Indonesia are still poorly understood. “How much cover is left? Why is this effort to save mangroves not as strong as the issue of natural forests?” asked Soelthon Gussetya Nanggara, Head of the Indonesian Forest Watch Association (FWI), kicking off a lengthy discussion about the work of FWI, which is supported by Siemenpuu.

FWI itself was born from the anxiety of several non-governmental organizations because of the closed data, information, and forest governance systems in Indonesia. In 1997 a program called Pro-Bela was initiated. This program aims to monitor forest management practices in Indonesia independently. Monitoring is accomplished by establishing an independent monitoring network, which serves as the precursor to the birth of FWI.

In 2000, it evolved from an independent monitoring network that was only a program of activities into an organization in the form of a foundation. Taking into account the organization’s dynamics as well as its work as a civil society organization, FWI changed from a foundation to an association on July 18, 2014, in order to focus more on doing its work. -work involving the monitoring of forest conditions and illegal practices.

Furthermore, he conducts advocacy and campaigns to encourage improvements in forest governance, community empowerment for sustainable forest monitoring and management, and sustainable forest management.

FWI was introduced to Siemenpuu when Otto Miettinen, a Siemenpuu staff member, visited the FWI office and met with Bob Purba, the then-Executive Director of FWI. The issues raised are related to the mangrove ecosystem, which is becoming increasingly threatened with each passing year. One question that arose during the discussion became the

driving force for the formation of a coalition to save mangroves. “Seeing this condition, do we want to remain silent and close our eyes as if nothing happened?” Soelthon asked.

The outcomes of this discussion were followed by intense discussions, which eventually gave birth to Jangkar Mangrove initiative to establish a Jangkar Mangrove. This network was founded on August 29, 2016 in Bogor by six Indonesian environmental organizations. “This declaration represents a new spirit for saving mangroves in Indonesia, as well as a forum for voicing this issue so that it becomes a concern for the public and other parties,” Soelthon said.

Jangkar Mangrove was founded by people from six different Indonesian regions, each of which has an abundance of mangroves. The initiator is Blue Forest or Yayasan Hutan from South Sulawesi, which frequently carries out mangrove rehabilitation activities with an ecological approach.

Their work focuses on improving mangrove ecosystem management, improving the livelihoods of communities surrounding mangrove ecosystems, technical improvements in mangrove ecosystem restoration, and increasing local communities’ capacity to manage mangrove ecosystems.

The Natural Resources Rescue Network, or JAPESDA, is another Gorontalo initiator. Japesda is involved in socioeconomic studies of mangrove coastal communities, disaster management for coastal communities, and advocating for





Monitoring activities of mangrove ecosystems in Balikpapan Bay by FPTB – FWI



policies that promote sustainable mangrove ecosystem management.

Jangkar Mangrove was created by Forum Peduli Teluk Balikpapan in East Kalimantan. This forum works on mangrove forest rehabilitation, regular monitoring, encouraging innovation, and putting mangrove management policies into action.

Another initiator was the West Kalimantan-based Association of Friends of the Coastal Community of Kalimantan (SAMPAN). SAMPAN engages in a variety of activities to empower coastal communities and communities to manage mangrove ecosystems in a sustainable and sustainable manner.

Mitra Insani Foundation (YMI) represented Riau, which works on mangrove rehabilitation, facilitation of community management rights, capacity building of communities surrounding mangrove forest areas, and community empowerment for mangrove ecosystem management.

As the initiator and organizer of the discussion that gave birth to the Jangkar Mangrove, FWI is involved in campaigning and advocating for the preservation of mangroves, as well as maintaining an Indonesian mangrove database. FWI also helps to strengthen the network capacity of Indonesian civil society organizations.

Jangkar Mangrove is intended to carry out activities that promote better management of mangrove ecosystems through policy interventions. This is expected to ensure the long-term survival of mangroves in Indonesia. Jangkar Mangrove is also expected to intervene in policies in order for the Indonesian government to implement a moratorium on the conversion of mangrove ecosystems.

Jangkar Mangrove will also push for the establishment of mangrove conservation and ecotourism areas. As was done in Balikpapan Bay, East Kalimantan, with the FPTB, to encourage the inclusion of a

mangrove ecosystem protection policy in the East Kalimantan Regional Regulation on the Zoning Plan for Coastal Areas and Small Islands (RZWP3K)<sup>15</sup> and the Essential Ecosystem Policy<sup>16</sup>.

This coalition is also concerned with maintaining biodiversity, preserving landscapes, and allowing access to management and community ownership in peat ecosystems. "Together with Siemenpuu, FWI is attempting to facilitate a coalition to encourage sustainable and sustainable management practices with the community as an important change agent," Soelthon explained. #



*Landscape of the mangrove ecosystem in Balikpapan Bay, East Kalimantan. Given the expansion of the industrial area and the recent development of IKN, increasing the protection status is critical. – FWI*





Kaoem Telapak

# REVIEWING THE POTENTIAL UTILIZATION OF SEAWEEDS

By: Okto Yugo Setiyo



**THE COLLABORATION  
BETWEEN KAOEM TELAPAK  
AND SIEMENPUU** began in  
November 2016 after discussions  
between Zainuri Hasyim, then the  
administrator of the Kaoem Telapak  
Association, and Otto Miettinen,  
Toni Haapanen, and Risto Isomaki  
from Siemenpuu.

The four of them talked about how  
coastal ecosystems are also being  
degraded as a result of human  
activity. Siemenpuu was designing  
a new scope of topics at the time,  
aside from the terrestrial forest,  
which had been the focus of their  
work.



Dugongs are eating seagrass, which is a food source for dugongs as well as a breeding habitat for small fish and shrimp. - KKP (Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries)





Seagrass meadows off the coast of Auki, Biak, Papua. – Ridzki R Sigit/Mongabay Indonesia



Seagrass or seagrass plants found on the seafloor. – Parangtritis Geomaritime Science Park



“At the time, Risto said, ‘Zen - Zainuri’s nickname - how about doing research on the status of seagrass beds in Indonesia?’ I agreed right away if Siemenpuu wanted to help,” Zein recalled.

The collaboration between Siemenpuu and Kaoem Telapak is new in comparison to other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Indonesia, but the administrators have long worked with Siemenpuu. This is due to the fact that many members of Kaoem Telapak are former members of the Telapak Association who decided to form a new institution. This seagrass study is a collaboration between Kaoem Telapak and Siemenpuu.

Seagrass, mangrove ecosystems, and coral reefs are all important coastal ecosystems with economic, social, and environmental potential,

but they are all under threat. This typical shallow marine ecosystem exists in marine waters with a depth of less than three meters.

Some seagrasses, on the other hand, can grow at depths of more than 5 meters, even up to 90 meters. With the caveat that the environmental conditions in which the seagrass grows are favorable.

Seagrass ecosystems are found between mangrove ecosystems and coral reefs. The area is known as a seagrass meadow because it is

dominated by seagrass plants—a type of grass that grows in the sea and can flower—that adapt to salt water and are frequently used as a food source for marine mammals such as dugongs.

In Indonesia, 12 species of seagrass are found in almost all Indonesian waters, covering an area of up to 30 thousand km<sup>2</sup>. These species include: *Enhalus acoroides*, *Thalassia hemprichii*, *Cymodocea rotundata*, *Cymodocea serrulate*, *Halodule pinnifolia*, *Halodule uninervis*, *Halophila ovalis*, *Halophila minor*, *Halophila spinulosa*, *Halophil decipiens*, *Thalassodendron cyliatum*, *Siringodium isoetiolium*.

“In Indonesia, seagrass is typically found in mangrove and coral ecosystems, or near sandy beaches and coastal forests,” Zen explained.

The seagrass is commonly known as the Padang Seagrass

Community, and when the area becomes a place for interaction between marine biota, it will form a seagrass ecosystem. “In an ecosystem, there are usually several biota, such as baronang fish, crabs, and corals,” Zen explained the study’s findings.

Because it can filter harmful substances from land to coral reefs, seagrass is extremely beneficial to coral reef preservation. It can serve as a nursery for small fish and shrimp as well as a source of food for marine biota. Seagrasses also

provide a home for economically valuable marine life such as baronang fish, crowbars, various shells, crabs, and sea cucumbers.

Another function is that it can serve as a ‘fort’, retaining coastal sediments to prevent erosion caused by tidal currents. Humans benefit from seagrass because it can be processed into nutritious food, fertilizer, or paper<sup>17</sup>.

“The sustainability of this seagrass is influenced by brightness, temperature, salinity, substrate, current velocity, and sedimentation. All of this must be kept within reasonable bounds in order for seagrass to grow properly.”

Since the early twentieth century, the area of seagrass beds has been decreasing. Prior to 1940, the global area of seagrass beds decreased by 0.9% per year. In the 1990s, the rate of decline increased to 7% per year. According to Waycott et al. (2009)<sup>18</sup>, the global distribution of seagrass beds has decreased by approximately 29% since the nineteenth century.

The main cause of global seagrass loss is a decrease in water clarity, which can be caused by an increase in water turbidity or an increase in nutrient input into the waters.

The loss of seagrass beds in subtropical (temperate) areas is caused by the conversion of coastal areas to industrial areas, air compression, and flooding from the mainland. Meanwhile, the main cause of seagrass bed loss in the tropics is an increase in sediment input to coastal waters as a result



The state of Indonesia's seagrass in 2017, with some already in critical condition. - LIPI (Indonesian Institute of Sciences)



of land logging and mangrove logging, as well as the direct influence of aquaculture activities.

This valuable ecosystem is under threat due to a lack of understanding about the function of seagrass beds. Apart from the increasing development along the coast, such as the construction of ports, docks, industrial area development, and environmentally unfriendly coastal utilization activities.

Even reclamation activities, oil pollution in the sea, sand and coral mining, seaweed farming, and garbage sedimentation all contribute significantly to the destruction of seagrass beds. The total area of seagrass beds in Indonesia was originally estimated to be 30,000 km, but this has now been reduced by 30-40%.

The Kaoem Telapak ([www.kaoemtelapak.org](http://www.kaoemtelapak.org)) and Siemenpuu ([www.siemenpuu.org](http://www.siemenpuu.org)) associations determined that the seagrass ecosystem is an important coastal ecosystem that has not been widely studied or exposed to the public.

Document research, discussions with related parties such as the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), academics, and the community in various locations are used to study the condition of the seagrass ecosystem in Indonesia. The overall findings of the research are presented in the form of a study report. A study of this ecosystem will provide enough information for understanding, developing a management plan, and designing rescue activities.

Kaoem Telapak's study examines existing policies in Indonesia regarding seagrass beds. According to Minister of the Environment Decree No. 200 of 2004, the condition of seagrass beds is classified into three categories: healthy, less healthy, and poor. If the seagrass cover in an area exceeds 60%, it is considered healthy, 30-59.9% is considered less healthy, and 0-29.9% is considered unhealthy.

LIPI published in June 2017 that the percentage of seagrass cover in Indonesia calculated from 166 observation stations is 41.79%. If

this value is classified in accordance with Minister of Environment Decree 200 of 2004, the state of Indonesia's seagrass beds in 2017 is "unhealthy."

Several data sources were used to calculate seagrass conditions. The first data source comes from the Oceanographic Research Center (P20-LIPI monitoring)'s of seagrass conditions as part of the COREMAP-CTI project. The second source of data is research findings from various institutions, such as universities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Only 5% of the population is in good health (eg in Biak, Papua). Conservation areas such as Wakatobi and Lombok are also suffering. According to Tim Walidata Lamun of The Seagrass Guardian Team, there are at least 150 thousand hectares of seagrass beds spread across 423 locations in Indonesia.

"At the time, we were still in the early stages of the study and are currently conducting in-depth excavations, but this study has been temporarily suspended for one reason or another," explained Abu Meredian, the current Director of Kaoem Telapak.

Kaoem Telapak's work is primarily concerned with environmental issues such as forestry, agriculture, communities, indigenous peoples, and fishing. Farmers, fishermen, and indigenous peoples are the main constituents of this membership-based non-governmental organization.

Kaoem Telapak, which was formed following a meeting in Sarongge in 2016, actively monitors, assists, and encourages policy improvements in the use of natural resources and the environment. It is hoped that the advocacy and studies will result in justice for the sustainable use of natural resources in Indonesia. #

The study results of Kaoem Telapak's 2012 observations on Lima Island in Banten Bay. Seagrasses are still relatively healthy, albeit slightly mossy. - Kaoem Telapak







PT. RAPP's natural forest clearing and canal digging in deep peat areas in 2016. - JMGR

*Riau Peat Community Network  
(Jaringan Masyarakat Gambut  
Riau - JMGR)*

## SAVE RIAU'S PEAT WITH SIEMENPUU

By: Rina Syahputri and  
Nurul Fitria



**A SMILE APPEARED ON ISNADI'S FACE** as he recalled his work as Secretary General of the Riau Peat Community Network (JMGR). "It was a long struggle, but thank God it bore sweet fruit in 2020," he said.





RAPP cleared natural forests and built canals on deep peat in Pulau Padang in 2014. - JMGR



The Riau Community Congress resulted in the formation of JMGR on March 31, 2010. JMGR's birth was announced in front of the Riau DPRD Building at the time. Residents from 32 villages in five Riau regencies, namely Meranti Islands, Indragiri Hilir, Indragiri Hulu, Pelalawan, and Siak, were also present.

"At the time, we were very disappointed with the condition of Riau's peat. For industrial plantation forest concessions (HTI) and oil palm plantations, massive forest clearing on peat is carried out," explained Isnadi Esman. He represented the people of the Meranti Islands at the congress.

Residents of this stretch of peat in Riau have long expressed their

concerns, but the government has yet to respond positively. The environmental impact of land clearing and permit issuance continues to be negative.

Even the government continues to issue permits in peat areas and on small islands like Meranti and Bengkalis Islands. The community is concerned about the possibility of sea water entering community plantations as a result of the opening of irrigation canals for oil palm plantations and the clearing of natural forests by HTI corporations.

At the time, the community decided to establish JMGR, which would later work to achieve sustainable, equitable management of Riau's peat swamp forest ecosystem

resources and promote community welfare. JMGR will serve as a forum for the community to share information, communicate, and discussion.

"The goal is for JMGR to develop productive business units for the

long-term conservation of peat resources," Isnadi explained.

### CONFLICT AND DESTRUCTION IN RIAU'S PEATLANDS

In 2011, JMGR compiled data on Riau's community and business conflicts based on incoming complaints. It was discovered that 62 villages were in conflict with the company due to land grabbing, restricted community access to the forest, which they usually used to meet their daily needs, and border issues. These villages are spread across 22 peat bogs totaling 272,063 hectares<sup>19</sup>.

The problem with this protracted conflict stems from a lack of transparency and the government's efforts to go directly to the field to see what is going on. Land tenure overlaps between people who have lived in the area for a long time and companies that appear suddenly with government permits.

PT RAPP built a canal on Padang Island in 2016, despite the fact that it is in deep peat. - JMGR





"This is also because of the government's disregard for people's rights to use forest products to meet their needs," Isnadi explained.

As a result, JMGR, with the assistance of Siemenpuu, frequently conducts capacity building activities to deepen residents' understanding of their rights in forest management and the sustainable use of peat.

Isnadi described the community's fight against PT Rimba Rokan Lestari (RRL) in Bengkalis, which was assisted by JMGR. This HTI company, which is affiliated with the APRIL Group, frequently clashes with the community. The company obtained a permit in 1998 based on Minister of Forestry Decree No. 262/KPTS-II/1998 with a concession area of 11,069.54 hectares in Bengkalis Island located in 18 villages.

This PT RRL permit overlaps with these villages' settlements, community lands, and public facilities. According to Jikalahari Geospatial Information System (GIS) analysis data, the area of PT RRL overlaps with the following villages: Bantan Air (81.78 ha), Bantan Sari (205.1 ha), East Bantan (862.83 ha), Kelemantan (652 ha), West Kelemantan (1,982.78 ha), Kembung Baru (1,270.99 ha), Kembung Luar (433.13 ha), Ketam Putih (1, (18.21 ha).

The other 9 villages are Palkun (346,56 ha), Pematang Duku (900,02 ha), Pematang Duku Timur (818,19 ha), Penebal (73,3 ha), Sekodi (30,81 ha), Sukamaju (833,09 ha), Sungaibatang (92,47 ha), Teluklancar (1.167,29 ha) and Ulu Pulau (283,83 ha).

"Many people oppose this company's activities because they believe that converting their

natural forests, particularly in peat areas, into oil palm plantations or HTI concessions is wrong and has a negative impact on the environment," Isnadi explained.

The goal of JMGR's activities is to raise awareness about the importance of protecting peat and the environment as their homes and future generations. JMGR frequently conducts organizational strengthening for JMGR management as well as the community with which they collaborate.

Starting with training or discussions about environmental issues, understanding about peat, both knowing the peat ecosystem and its sustainable use, as well as the applicable peat regulations. JMGR also frequently provides training in community organizing and forest area management, particularly for the implementation of the Social Forestry (PS) scheme.

### **SOCIAL FORESTRY IN PEATLAND AREA**

The JMGR-assisted community recognizes that their current village is the only inheritance they can leave to their children and grandchildren. "They live there, are born there, grow up there, and even die there," Isnadi explained.

The threat of peatland conversion into HTI concessions and oil palm plantations, on the other hand, is becoming more visible in front of their eyes.

Rejection is not the only option; JMGR believes that the community

should be educated on the potentials of the management space and economic improvement of peat.

JMGR has been organizing communities to fight for their forest management space by proposing PS schemes in their communities since 2016. This can be a way for the community to save their remaining peat and forest, in addition to obtaining a management space and being able to empower forest products.

JMGR has proposed PS with three schemes in its assisted areas: Village Forest in Rawa Mekar Jaya Village, Customary Forest in Penyengat Village, and Community Forest in Meranti Islands, all of which are specifically for mangrove forests. JMGR assists the community throughout the process, beginning with the proposal process and continuing through verification from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry.

This is a time-consuming and energy-intensive process. In addition to the Village Forest proposal in Rawa Mekar Jaya, the community must 'fight' against corporations and frequently engage in dialogue with the local Forest Management Unit (KPH). Finally, the SK HD Rawa Mekar Jaya was issued in 2020 in order for the community to better manage the area.

"Definitely, this will take a long time because fighting for people's rights is not easy." We are grateful that in the process, Siemenpuu's support really helped in this movement," said Isnadi.#

*The remaining portion of the logs from the natural forest felled by PT RAPP in the Padang Island peat area in 2014. - JMGR*





Riau Women Working  
Group (RWWG)

## WOMEN ARE WILLING TO FIGHT FOR CHANGE

By: Rina Syahputri and  
Nurul Fitria



**A GROUP OF BUSY WOMEN SIT AND TALK.** Their hands are constantly working; some are peeling and cutting the pineapple skin, while others are stirring the processed pineapple that is being made into lunthead in the cauldron. Their activities that afternoon were accompanied by jokes and light stories.

The Wanalestari Women's Group initiated the formation of this group in response to the requirement for activities in Dosan Village. This group was also formed on the basis of community will and the participation of community leaders. – RWWG



These ladies live in Dosan Village, Pusako District, Siak Regency, Riau. They are members of the Wanalestari Women's Group and frequently participate in women's empowerment activities, such as processing plantation products into marketable snacks. The pineapple lunkhead, for example, will be brought to the bazaar at the Pusako sub-district office.

The Wanalestari women's group uses its garden to produce processed foods. These processed pineapples are even planted in the village's yards or vacant land. The goal, of course, is to use the space for farming, and the results of these women's creativity can help the economy of their respective families. Even the Pusako District side admired the Dosan Village women's initiative.



*Suci Handayani is an energetic woman who participates in RWWG activities and serves as the Chair of the Women's Group Wanalestari. Suci and its 20 members invite women to help manage peatlands near their homes by planting pineapples, limes, and areca nuts. - RWWG*



"This is moral support and enthusiasm for us." When enthusiasm goes up and down, activities that empower women make us more enthusiastic," said Suci Handayani, a 40-year-old Javanese woman who is trusted to chair the Wanalestari Group.

Suci is the village's woman-movers. She actively takes part in pieces of training and shares her knowledge with other women. She also became the leader of the Wanalestari Women's Group and the Dosan Farmers' Group. He has also served as Chairman of the Neighborhood Association (RT) and is a member of the Village Supervisory Board (BPD) for the 2019-2024 term.



The WANALESTARI women's group's activities after harvesting their garden produce on their demonstration plot. - RWWG



### ADVOCACY AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

The Wanalestari Women's Group is one of many women's groups supported by the Riau Women Working Group, or RWWG for short. This institution, which was founded on March 23, 2006, frequently visits villages in Riau to discuss issues of women's empowerment and the environment. Various activities were carried out with the goal of achieving ecological justice and equitable management of natural resources for women, one of which was supported by Siemenpuu.

RWWG focused on mentoring activities in Dosan Village from 2018 to 2020. This Pekanbaru-based organization conducts activities to promote peat ecosystem protection and community welfare in order to achieve the rescue and sustainable use of the Kampar Peninsula

landscape. Not only that, but they also ensure that Dosan women's groups participate actively in these activities.

"This is new for us because the women here are encouraged to be active participants," Suci explained.

RWWG interacted and lived with the Dosan residents. Follow daily activities in order to identify opportunities for women's empowerment. Starting with the formation of a structured women's group and progressing to the planning of activities that can have a positive impact.

To aid in the implementation of horticultural activities, capacity building trainings were held. The Dosan women learn to recognize the different types of plants that can grow on peatlands. The options were pineapple, areca nut, and lime. Dosan women, ranging in





One of the products derived from pineapple made by the women's group assisted by RWWG Wajik Nanas - RWWG



age from 23 to 50 years, actively manage their gardens so that produce can be cultivated. "While we can still finish the work at home or help our husbands in the garden, we gather and plan what we want to make with the RWWG team," Suci explained.

RWWG not only empowers women, but also advocates for the Dosan community's use of management space. RWWG encourages the application of Social Forestry permits under the Village Forest scheme for Dosan, involving community leaders, youth, women, and village officials.

"This management space must be fought for because the Dosan community's land has been controlled by the industrial forest plantation company (HTI) PT Arara Abadi," said RWWG Director Sri Wahyuni. The long advocacy carried out by RWWG is certainly expected to be successful.

### DOSAN AND KAMPAR PENINSULA

Dosan is a village in Siak Regency. With a land area of 10,028 km<sup>2</sup>, it is located in the Pusako District. Dosan, which is situated on a peat ecosystem, has an abundance of natural wealth and natural attractions in the form of Dragon Sakti Lake.

Dosan is one of the villages that make up the landscape of the Kampar Peninsula. With a total area of 682,511 hectares, this peat ecosystem area spans two districts, with approximately 38 percent in Siak and the remainder in Pelalawan. This Semenanjung Kampar landscape contains 14 villages in Siak and 12 villages in Pelalawan.

This peat swamp forest area is rich in biodiversity, with peat depths ranging from 15 to 20 meters. The Kampar Peninsula landscape contains four protected

areas: Danau Pulau Besar Wildlife Reserve, Tasik Belat Wildlife Sanctuary, Tasik Metas Wildlife Sanctuary, and Tasik Serkap Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Kampar Peninsula has a high timber potential of approximately 287 m<sup>3</sup>/hectare, with 58 species. Ten of these species are protected, and the average canopy cover is 76%. This area also contains 25 endemic animal species, seven of which are protected. The Kampar Peninsula is almost entirely made up of peat with a thickness of more than 4 meters. There are also several large peat domes that are more than 15 meters deep.

Unfortunately, the expansion of HTI companies for forest and land tenure is massive in this area. PT Arara Abadi, the HTI subsidiary of Asia Pulp and Paper (APP) Group—owned by the late Eka Tjipta Widjaya—has long controlled their forests and lands in Dosan. PT Arara Abadi owns a permit that allows it to cut down natural forests and convert them into acacia plantations in nearly half of Kampung Dosan.

It is impossible to avoid conflict with society. Demonstrations by members of the community opposing the company's activities are common. However, the company ignored the community's concerns and continued to operate. Acacia plants are still being planted, even destroying community lands.

However, RWWG-supported community movement began to transform. Other approaches were used to win the management space for this community, in addition to

taking action against it. "We are beginning to invite residents to understand the regulations and rules that apply, even attempting to learn licensing from this company," Sri Wahyuni said.

RWWG and the Dosan community recognized an opportunity that could be capitalized on. This is due to the fact that PT Arara Abadi's operating license is about to expire, and the push is that once the permit expires, the former permit area can be given to the community to be managed alongside the PS scheme, and the Agrarian Reform Object Land (TORA) scheme is considered a solution.

RWWG prepared a proposal for submitting a PS permit with a Village Forest scheme covering 399.32 hectares in collaboration with the residents. The proposed area is centered on Naga Sakti Lake, a natural lake encircled by the PT Arara Abadi concession. "We proposed this area because we want to save the protected forest that is included in it," Sri Wahyuni explained.

Dosan residents have long been planning to save this area. In fact, they have also drafted a Village Regulation regarding the management of Naga Sakti Lake in attempt to make it more sustainable while also improving the economy.

RWWG assists residents in forming a Village Forest Management Institution (LPHD) and provides its administrators with knowledge of sustainable and sustainable forest management. #





# Those Affected

## ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

and forestry in Indonesia continue to change every year. Deforestation and land degradation reduced land use area for community livelihood fields, and the marginalization of women in environmental protection and management efforts continues.

Various efforts were made to mitigate or even stop the damage. Siemenpuu and its Indonesian partners engage in a variety of activities that have a direct impact on the community.

Both community assistance activities, reforestation, and policymaker intervention to produce pro-nature policies are still being carried out. These efforts will almost certainly have a direct impact on the communities involved in these activities.

The following stories present various things that were felt by the communities involved and experienced the direct impact of Siemenpuu and its partners' activities.

The activities carried out can increase a region's economic value and represent an alternative source of income. Reforestation activities are expected to restore lost forest cover and encourage policy changes that reduce the impact of forest and environmental damage.

The stories that follow represent some of the impressions and hopes of people who have been working to save their forest lands. The story of this struggle will not only be remembered but it is hoped that it will inspire and inspire new shoots of the struggle to save Indonesia's forests and environment.





# Protecting Mangroves Preserving Livelihoods

*In the midst of the transition, Sony Monginsi (a Torosiaje fisherman) is repairing his trawl net.*

By: Renal Husa and  
Nurain Lapolo



**DAWN BEGINS TO RISEN**, and light shines on the wooden houses floating above the sea. The cheers of the crowd could be heard throughout the village that morning. Torosiaje Village, one of the tourist attractions in Pohuwato Regency, is frequently crowded with tourists on weekends. Tourists visit the Bajo ethnic village.

Torosiaje Village, is a floating village on the sea inhabited by the majority of the Bajo Tribe, the majority of whom work as fishermen. Aside from Torosiaje Village, the Bajo Tribe also lives in Torosiaje Jaya Village and Bumi Bahari Village. Torosiaje Serumpun is the name given to the three villages.







Several boat taxis are taking people from the land to Torosiaje Village - JAPESDA



In contrast to the previous mornings. There were no boats in a small port that didn't have outriggers—bamboo or wood mounted on either side of the boat in the shape of wings to adjust the balance so it didn't tip over easily. There is also no crowd of transactions between residents and fishermen exchanging fish for rupiah.

"Last night, the fishermen did not go out to sea because it was the transition season," said Umar Pasandre, a Torosiaje Jaya resident and community leader involved in mangrove conservation in Torosiaje Serumpun.

When we met on March 8, 2021, Umar said that the sky, which

appears clear and cloudless, will turn into disaster at any time during the transition season. Weather is a threat and natural enemy for fishermen during the transition season.

"However, the weather is beautiful today." "There is time for fishermen to rest, but there is also time for fish to lay eggs and breed," he explained.

Storms, according to Umar, were frequently unpredictable during the transition season. There is usually no fishing activity between the months of April and May. Because that is typically the time when strong winds blow, bringing high waves, and putting fishermen at risk.

The transition is currently underway on the coast of Torosiaje Serumpun. They had no choice but to rest and anchor the boat. No wonder there is no fish selling activity at the port from morning to noon. All that could be seen were dozens of sope boats neatly parked in Torosiaje Jaya's port. The Bajo tribe's traditional boat, usually without outriggers, is known as a sope.

Sony Monginsi, a 42-year-old man, chose to dock his boat in a different port at the same time. In Torosiaje Jaya, Sony works as a catch fisherman. He began fishing when he was 14 years old, as a member of the Bajo Tribe. Concerning the change in wind direction to the east, he is accustomed to it and is well aware of when it occurs. He also decided not to go out to sea today as a result of that experience.

He chose to repair his trawl and anchor his boat that afternoon, knowing that if he forced him to stay out at sea, the West wind would crush him in the open sea at any moment. Even though it will be sunny during the day, storm winds will arrive in the late afternoon. "If you are forced to go to sea at times like this, your life is at stake," he said.

Even if he is able to return and sell the fish he catches at a two to threefold increase in price, the risk of his life on the high seas is not worth it. When the transition is over, Sony will still be able to find fish and money.

The West winds and transitions destroyed coastal settlements in some places. Fortunately, this did

not occur in Torosiaje Jaya. Because the coast in this location has a stretch of mangrove forest that acts as a natural concrete fence to reduce the impact of the transition season or West wind.

The mangrove area in the coastal village of Torosiaje Serumpun is 124.5 hectares in size. This location is not only a fortress against abrasion and obstructions when strong winds hit, but it is also an alternative area for fishermen from Torosiaje Serumpun Village to catch fish.

This mangrove ecosystem is still in place and provides fish, crab, and shellfish reserves for fishermen to catch and collect. At low tide, looking for shellfish (bia), crabs, sea cucumbers, and fish, as well as another marine biota, is an option for additional income for mothers and children that is sufficient to produce or consume to meet the family's protein needs. Fishermen who use sope boats catch fish in the mangrove area with nets.

During the transition season and the west wind, some fishermen, like Umar Pasandre, choose to fish in the mangrove area to support their family's economy. "Fishermen can catch mullet, baronang, shrimp, crab, and sea cucumbers in the mangrove area," Umar explained.

Torosiaje Serumpun Village was included in the plan for the Essential Ecosystem Area (KEE) in October 2017 by the Governor of Gorontalo Decree No. 322/21/X/2017. The decree was issued after Regent Pohuwato requested that Torosiaje Serumpun be designated as a KEE in a letter





Mangrove area in Torosiaje in 2019  
seen from above - JAPESDA



to the Directorate of Essential Ecosystem Management (BPEE).

Another fundamental reason for KEE's determination is to preserve the mangrove expanse in that location<sup>20</sup>. Because, like the mangrove area in general in Pohuwato Regency, the mangrove forest appears to be a money field for fishpond entrepreneurs to use as a milkfish and shrimp pond cultivation area<sup>21</sup>.

There are 507.9 hectares of pond land openings in Popayato District. Meanwhile, 90,126 hectares of aquaculture areas are spread across two villages in Torosiaje Serumpun: Torosiaje Village (33,138 hectares) and Torosiaje Jaya Village (56,988 hectares)<sup>22</sup>. Unfortunately, only 16 people have control over the pond

in Torosiaje Serumpun. The KEE stipulation in Torosiaje Serumpun, as part of an effort to reduce the rate of mangrove damage and protect protected forest areas in this region.

### REJECTING PONDS FOR MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

On a hot afternoon on the Bonda Coast, around ten people were seen planting mangroves in Torosiaje Village. The Torosiaje Serumpun community planted 600 mangrove trees of the *Rhizophora apiculata* and *Rhizophora stylosa* species on June 30, 2020. They carry out these activities in order to restore mangroves that have been cut down.

The mangrove trees were felled in 2010. Some people intended to make the area into a pond. The residents of Torosiaje Serumpun opposed this plan because the conversion of 14 hectares of coastal land into ponds was deemed unreasonable. Umar and several other residents from the Paddakauang Environmental Awareness Group (KSL) are actively educating local residents about the plan to build a pond in the mangrove area.

They are members of the Bajo tribe, who are known as sea nomads, and they understand that they cannot escape the marine and coastal life. They must take care of both, including the existing mangrove area. The plan to construct ponds to convert coastal areas into ponds

will undoubtedly harm ecosystems and biodiversity. Mangroves, where fish lay eggs, will disappear, destroying fish savings for future catches.

Umar's face is irritated as he recalls the incident. When he rejected the plan to build a pond, he claimed that several people involved in the plan came to see him. They threatened to burn his house down if he continued to incite residents to oppose their plan. Umar, on the other hand, was unconcerned about the threat. In the end, the crowd dispersed, leaving Umar alone with his stance.

Although many residents in Torosiaje Serumpun have objected, even to the point of enacting a village regulation prohibiting the clearing of mangrove land, work on creating ponds continues. Excavators were used to clearing the mangroves and build embankments.

When Umar learned of this, he contacted the police, the village head in Torosiaje Serumpun, and the residents who had agreed to oppose the construction of the pond. They went together to the coast of Bonda, Torosiaje Village, to stop the excavator from working. After a long period of time, the excavator was forced to stop working and leave the site.

Residents and the village head in Torosiaje Serumpun asked the parties planning to build a pond to halt their plans following the incident. Finally, it was decided that the pond construction plan would be abandoned.



The residents were successful in stopping the construction of ponds on Tompe Island, but they were unable to prevent the damage to the mangroves. Several rows of mangroves were pruned to death successfully. Out of 14 hectares of planned ponds, approximately 4 hectares of mangrove area have been damaged. The embankment's excavated embankments were plastered as silent witnesses to the incident.

### ONE TREE FOR SUSTAINABILITY

There has been no opening of new pond areas in Torosiaje Serumpun since the residents' refusal. With the implementation of conservation activities such as mangrove planting, the area of mangrove forest began to expand. From 2011 to 2019, at least 26 hectares of mangrove areas were restored through planting programs carried out by local governments and non-governmental organizations<sup>23</sup>.

KSL Paddakauang and JAPESDA were successful in planting at least 10,000 mangrove seedlings in Torosiaje Serumpun through programs supported by the Siemenpuu Foundation during the first period of 2016-2017 and the second period of 2018-2021. They are also active in raising awareness among the residents of Torosiaje Jaya Village about the importance of mangrove areas for marine ecosystems, in addition to planting.

They collaborated with and invited many parties to participate in



JAPESDA mangrove planting with government-student-community in Torosiaje Jaya - JAPESDA

mangrove forest rehabilitation activities during the program. JAPESDA and KSL Paddakauang collaborated with a variety of parties, including universities, students in Popayato District, and environmentalists in Gorontalo, on some of the plantings.

In 2019, for example, two plantings were carried out, which were followed by the Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) of Gorontalo City, the NGO Biodiversity of Gorontalo (BIOTA), students from the State University of Gorontalo and the Sultan Amai Gorontalo State Islamic Institute

(IAIN) as well as students from high school and vocational schools in Gorontalo. Popayato District.

Furthermore, JAPESDA and KSL Paddakauang have begun to implement ecotourism packages in Torosiaje. The goal is to teach visitors about the mangrove ecosystem. Tourists can learn about the mangrove ecosystem directly from KSL Paddakauang as part of the ecotourism package. Tourists can firsthand experience the process of planting mangroves by circumnavigating the mangrove forest area and studying the ecosystem.

While the Torosiaje ponds only benefit a few people, the mangrove forest area provides more, such as fish reserves for fishermen and carbon sequestration for Pohuwato Regency. Through an ecotourism plan that has begun to be built and strengthened through the Essential Ecosystem Area Collaboration Forum, the mangrove forest is now promising an economic package for the residents of Torosiaje Serumpun (KEE). #





# Torosiaje Women And Coastal Poverty

By: Defri Sofyan and  
Nurain Lapolo



**“The BACK WALL** of my house was blown away by the West wind.”

Simin Santiu pointed to the back of his house, which appeared to be in disrepair. He was discovered in a tongke<sup>24</sup> behind his house. The 73-year-old woman has been a widow for decades; her husband died in 2000. Simin is on her own after leaving her husband and children, who are already married.

The scorching sun was stinging that afternoon. Simin shields herself from the hot sun with dried coconut leaf sheaths. He appeared to be serious about putting mud in polybags to be used as a medium for planting mangrove seedlings. Each polybag he was able to fill was worth one hundred rupiahs. So, how much money can he make from filling this polybag for a day? Obviously, not much.

*Simin Santiu is filling polybags in a mangrove nursery in Torosiaje*





Simin will do whatever he can to fill his stomach every day if the job of filling polybags is finished or the water is high, such as helping to sell the neighbor's cakes, washing clothes, and so on. Even the help he frequently receives from the village government will end up being food rather than capital for his business. Because, in addition to having insufficient funds, Simin lacks the necessary skills.

Women like Simin are a general illustration of how poverty and gender-based economic inequality are a problem in Indonesia's coastal residential areas, especially Torosiaje.

Even though Torosiaje is known as a beautiful and exotic place with beautiful coastal landscapes, biota-rich coral reefs and seas, mangrove trees that form a natural fortress, and the unique floating settlements of the Bajo Tribe, it cannot close another reality about typical coastal problems, namely poverty, and gender inequality.

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) and the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (KKP), 25% of the poor lived in coastal areas in 2016. Meanwhile, women in Indonesia earn less than men, according to data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (Kemenpppa)<sup>25</sup>. It is calculated by dividing per capita expenditure between men and women over a ten-year period, from 2010 to 2019.

The coastal area does have a lot of natural resources. Coral reef ecosystems, mangroves, and seagrass beds along the coast not

only function ecologically, but also serve an important economic function for the people who live nearby. As a food and income source. Unfortunately, men and women do not always use open access coastal resources equally to meet their daily needs.

Women's activities in Torosiaje utilizing coastal natural resources are not the same as meeting their families' needs.

Fishermen, mostly men, catch fish, sea cucumbers, crabs, and other marine resources in conventional ways, and the catch is usually sold directly to the catchers. This traditional way can be enhanced if women take on the following roles: Diversification refers to the diversification of a business in order to avoid reliance on a single activity, product, service, or investment.

Nurwati Pakaya, also known as Bunda Wati, is one of the Torosiaje women who recognized this potential. Her husband is a catcher, not a fisherman, which has many advantages over traditional fishermen. Bunda Wati is a retired honorary village government employee. Even though the circumstances are not the same as in most Torosiaje families, which consist of a fisherman's husband and a housewife's wife, Wati's actions demonstrate how Torosiaje women can play an important role in utilizing coastal resources.

Wati and the Torosiaje women's group have begun to see the potential of this business since the intervention of the Siemenpuu Foundation and the Natural



Nurwati Pakaya is displaying a variety of processed mangrove products - JAPESDA



Resources Management Advocacy Network (JAPESDA) through the program "Mangrove Management and Alternative Livelihoods for Coastal Communities." Mangroves, which were previously thought to be purely ecological plants, are now being used economically.

"We can make mangrove crackers, mangrove pia, and mangrove sticks; our orders come from Denmark and Finland, if I'm not mistaken," Wati explained.

According to a study, mangroves can be an alternative food source due to their high energy content. Mangrove fruit from the *Bruguiera gymnorrhiza* species contains 371 calories per 100 grams, which is more than rice (360 calories per 100 grams) and corn (360 calories per 100 grams) (307 per 100 grams).

Similarly, the carbohydrate content is 85.1 grams per 100 grams<sup>26</sup>.

Meanwhile, Torosiaje, which was designated as an Essential Ecosystem Area (KEE) in 2017, has numerous mangrove associations spanning 1,200 hectares. *Rhizophora mucronata*, *Rhizophora stylosa*, *Rhizophora apiculata*, *Ceriops tagal*, *Bruguiera* sp., *Sonneratia* sp., *Xylocarpus* sp., *Lumnitzera* sp., and *Avicennia* sp.<sup>27</sup> are among the nine species.

Wati and her group consider making use of the abundance of mangroves. They do a simple way as a solution because they have limited facilities and capital. They use mangrove fruits that can be consumed in various preparations. The first stage is boiled to remove the toxic levels, followed by



blending and finally mixing into whatever mixture they desire. They then season it with a little spice to make it more flavorful.

Wati and her colleagues process salted fish into sambal and shredded in addition to using mangroves. They are branded and well packaged before being marketed to buyers whose networks are aided by organizations such as JAPESDA.

Wati was pleased with the results of her efforts. She can make a profit of around IDR 100,000 from selling mangrove stick snack in a single production. For processed salted fish, a capitalization of two kilograms of raw salted fish is needed, which will be processed into shredded or chili sauce weighing one kilogram. Wati admitted that she did not

feel the impacts of the pandemic, despite massive layoffs and falling commodity prices. This is because the business he operates by processing food commodities still receives a lot of orders from outside and is sure to sell well when retailed in her area.

My husband did not work during of the (COVID-19) pandemic because the price of fish was dropping. "Thank God, thanks to this business, I was able to help with payment to restart the business," Wati said.

Making processed mangroves and salted fish is not an additional burden for her because the work is related to the kitchen, which is where she actually does work as a housewife on a daily. But, thanks to her new business, she no longer feels like an ordinary housewife. She has her own income and does

not rely on her husband's income, so her political position in the household is not obscured.

"Work is also normal and not overly busy. I can still cook for my family, do laundry, clean the house, and complete other housework. On the other hand, I can make my own money," Wati continued.

This promising business for Wati and the women of Torosiaje does not come without obstacles and challenges. Wati herself admitted that she still needed various kinds of help in order to establish her business.

In terms of production, she and her colleagues still lack milling equipment, cooking utensils, and packaging tools. This would be difficult if suddenly large orders happened to come in, especially since she and her group only used

their own kitchen for production. They frequently fail to obtain assistance or capital loans because one of the requirements is that they own a production facility.

"If only I used to have IDR 20 million from the government, I might be able to compete with Small and medium enterprises in the city," Wati said.

Wati then evaluates that her products are still far behind other products circulating in gift shops in shopping centers in terms of branding. Wati, a housewife who closely monitors the competition in the culinary and gift markets, is well aware of how the product does not appear cheap due to branding that is designed to market preferences. Meanwhile, in terms of marketing, Wati has so far depended on existing networks and is not heavily publicised.



Female fisherman in Torosiaje. They are known as tough sailors - Mongabay





Kirsi Chavda, an environmentalist from the Finnish Siemenpuu Foundation is planting mangroves with the community of Torosiaje Serumpun Village - JAPESDA



Economic independence is crucial for women in order to achieve gender equality. Sri Dewi Jayanti Biahimo, District Facilitator for the National Support for Local Investment Climate (NSLIC) program in Gorontalo, who assisted JAPESDA in intervening in the development of Torosiaje women's creativity, stated, "When her husband or a male member of the household

abandons her, this wife or woman can fill the economic needs without becoming overwhelmed," Dewi explained.

Dewi also stated that much work must be completed so that coastal women, such as those in Torosiaje, can truly be economically equal.

In addition to providing them with knowledge and facilities, efforts

should be made to ensure their sustainability. Because the majority of the problems that actually harm small community businesses will vanish fairly soon after the business is praised as a success by the government and related program institutions.

"This can take the form of establishing community-based cooperatives to help with capital

needs and business development. However apart from that, the most important thing is to ensure the market so that people can continue to buy the products they process "Dewi went on to explain.

In addition to economic issues, there are some fundamental issues that must be addressed. A study on the livelihoods of coastal communities in eastern Indonesia, including Sulawesi, collected data from 1998 to 2007, criticized the government and environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) for their involvement of women.

According to the study, coastal women are frequently involved in all programs, but their involvement is generally passive, — in other words, only as program objects rather than subjects who influence how programs about women run<sup>28</sup>.

Another criticism is that these programs do not attempt to challenge the patriarchal norms that exist in coastal communities. On the other hand, it is critical that women participate in order to accommodate these values.

Wati and the Torosiaje women's group took the first step toward closing the gender-based economic gap that plagues coastal communities.#





# Save The Nature Reserve for The Mangrove Forest Landscape

By: Renal Husa and  
Nurain Lapolo



**TANJUNG PANJANG NATURAL RESERVE** is in distress. The condition now is deteriorating as a result of the conversion. In this place, imagining towering trees with large diameters, or nature reserves in general, is a pipe dream. A pond has been created in the conservation area.

Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve (CATP), located in Randangan District, Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo Province, was designated as a conservation area with the function of a nature reserve in 2015 with an area of 3,174.10 hectares by Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree Number 9612/MENLHK-PKTL/KUH/2015.

*Mangrove destruction within Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve*





In this location, mangrove forests have been converted into ponds since the 1980s. The area was touched by the community before being transformed into a fishpond area for milkfish and shrimp cultivation. CATP is now the only nature reserve in Gorontalo Province that does not include a stretch of forest.

The damage to CATP has an effect until it attains the mangrove forest area, which is a protected forest area. Nature reserves, on the other hand, are the highest level of forestry-based forest conservation efforts. According to the law, it is illegal to engage in any activity arbitrarily, particularly in the core zone, especially if the land function has changed.

Weak law enforcement is assumed of being the cause of forest and conservation area encroachment. The responsibility of regional stakeholders, particularly the Ministry of Forestry, is being questioned in relation to the unorganized management of mangrove forests in the area.

According to UU No. 5 of 1990 on the Conservation of Biological Natural Resources and Their Ecosystems, a nature reserve is a nature reserve area due to the general uniqueness of plants, animals, and their ecosystems or certain ecosystems that need to be protected and their development occurs naturally.

The main reason for establishing the CATP area is that it contains large stretch of mangrove forest and one of Pohuwato Regency's carbon sequestration areas. CATP



must also protect and conserve flora, fauna, and various biota ecosystems. While the use of this area is limited to scientific research and development, education and raising awareness about nature conservation, carbon sequestration and storage, and the use of germplasm sources to support cultivation (Allo Noel Layuk, 2019).

In contrast to the Act's referenced function, and in contrast to what occurred in the CATP, CATP's fate is now in danger, groaning in the midst of changing functions. CATP's biodiversity and mangrove forest ecosystems are under threat of extinction.

When the Tanjung Panjang area was designated as a nature reserve, the Natural Resources Management

*The mangrove area in Torosiaje from above in 2019 - JAPESDA*

Advocacy Network (JAPESDA), a civil society organization focusing on environmental issues, stated that only about 600 hectares remained. While the remaining land area in 2017 was only 451.92 hectares<sup>29</sup>, the remainder has been converted into a shrimp and fish pond area.

Along with the CATP damage, various statement began to emerge to defend the conservation area. Protests were raised by non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics, and environmentalists, including JAPESDA. They demanded concern for the mangrove forest area as well as the conservation area in CATP, which is becoming increasingly critical and whose status must be maintained. They

also requested law enforcement in the conservation area.

In response to the protests, the Pohuwato Regency government issued a decree prohibiting the construction of new ponds and the renovation of existing ponds in mangrove forest areas throughout the Pohuwato Regency area. All village heads, particularly those in mangrove areas, received the Regent's Instruction Letters for 2010, 2012, and 2014.<sup>30</sup>

This decree, however, does not appear to be a solid basis for halting the construction of new ponds in Pohuwato. Mangrove habitats continue to deteriorate. New ponds are still being created in protected forests. Meanwhile, excavators can still go in and out of



CATP to repair the existing ponds<sup>31</sup>. The Regent's instructions appeared to be a ruse. The important thing was that a letter was issued, but the letter's implementation was left without any law enforcement efforts.

### FROM THE MANGROVE RESERVE TO THE POND CULTIVATION RESERVE

Gorontalo Province is divided into five regencies and one city. North Gorontalo, Boalemo, and Pohuwato Regencies are the only ones with a reasonably large stretch of mangrove forest. Mangroves are

less common in the other two districts. Meanwhile, Pohuwato Regency has the longest landscape of mangrove in Gorontalo Province.

Pohuwato Regency not only has the greatest mangrove forest area, but it is also the largest contributor to the amount of mangrove damage in Gorontalo. Over time, the mangrove landscape shrank and vanished. Many factors contribute to the loss of mangrove forest landscape. The majority of it, however, is due to the massive and illegal use of land and the conversion of functions for the opening of milkfish and shrimp ponds.

The students visit the CATP mangrove planting site - JAPESDA.



According to a 2011 study on Sustainable Coastal Livelihoods and Management (SUSCLAM), there were 13,242.33 hectares of mangrove forest in Pohuwato Regency in 1988, but half of that area had shrunk to 7,420.73 hectares by 2011. Mangrove depreciation in Pohuwato is still ongoing and occurring covertly to this day.

According to the Forest Area Stabilization Center (BPKH) records for Region XV Gorontalo, there were still 6,608 hectares of mangrove in Pohuwato in 2015, but it declined by 1,859 hectares in 2017, leaving only 4,749 hectares.

The loss of mangrove expanses in Pohuwato paints a bleak picture of Gorontalo Province's management of mangrove areas. Indeed, the expanse of mangroves is very important for coastal ecosystems and carbon sequestration, especially since Gorontalo Province is included in the Tomini Bay area, which is famous for its own biodiversity. The loss of this landscape of mangrove will undoubtedly have an impact on the ecosystem.

The area of mangrove forest that has turned into ponds in Pohuwato is spread throughout 9 of the Regency's 13 sub-districts. According to data collected by the Pohuwato Regency Department of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries (DKP) in 2017, there are shrimp and fish farming areas covering an area of 4,470.80 hectares spread across seven sub-districts. A certain landscape of mangrove forest accounts for nearly half of

the remaining mangrove forest landscape that year.

The seven sub-districts recorded as having mangrove areas are: Patilanggio has 1,051.68; Wanggarasi has 1,049.53 hectares; Paguat has 166.182 hectares; Lemito has 834.70 hectares; West Popayato has 710.10 hectares; Popayato has 507.97 hectares; and East Popayato has 151.125 hectares. The data does not include three sub-districts: Marisa, Duhiadaa, and Randangan. Meanwhile, at least 2,789.84 hectares of shrimp and fish farming pond areas are included in protected forest areas from the seven sub-districts recorded.

### THE FUTURE OF MANGROVE FORESTS

According to the results of satellite image processing performed by the Directorate General of Natural Resources and Ecosystem Conservation in 2019, there has been 93.31% land clearing in the CATP area<sup>32</sup>. The land opening is dominated by milkfish and shrimp pond cultivation areas.

Tanjung Panjang's designation as a conservation area began and has been ongoing since 1984. Tanjung Panjang was designated as a forest area in the Province of Dati I Region of North Sulawesi, with an area of 1,877.22 hectares, by Decree of the Minister of Forestry Number 250/Kpts-II/1984, dated December 20, 1984.

The Tanjung Panjang area demarcation was carried out seven years later, based on an official



report dated November 8, 1991. Decree of the Minister of Forestry Number 573/Kpts-II/1995, dated October 30, 1995, stipulating an area of 3,000 hectares.

Then, along with other forest areas, it was re-designated as a forest area with the function of a nature reserve in 1999. On June 17, 1999, the Minister of Forestry and Plantations issued Decree No. 452/Kpts-II/1999, Designating Forest and Water Areas in the Province of Dati I Region of North Sulawesi.

Tanjung Panjang was re-designated as a forest with the function of a nature reserve in 2010 by the Minister of Forestry's Decree No. 325/Menhut-II/2010 on May 29, 2010, regarding the designation of forest areas in Gorontalo Province.

Tanjung Panjang was re-established as a forest with a nature reserve function as a result of a 1999 review of the Gorontalo Provincial Spatial Plan (RTRW). It was finally determined in 2015 by Minister of Environment and Forestry Decree Number 9612/MENLHK-PKTL/KUH/2015, with an area of 3,174.10 hectares.

Encroachment happened and began to occur in CATP during the difficult journey of determining the area. The conversion of the mangrove forest into a shrimp and milkfish cultivation area coincides with the creation of a CATP conservation area. Massive encroachment on conservation areas began in the 1990s and continued rapidly until 2016<sup>33</sup>. The conservation area had completely transformed into a pond area by 2016.

Sjamsuddin Hadju, Section Head of the North Sulawesi BKSDA Region II Gorontalo, admitted that as the holder of the CATP Conservation area, he only knew that landscape of mangrove forest in Tanjung Panjang was included in the nature reserve area in their working area in 2010.

In 2014, they moved quickly and began actively patrolling and constructing a resort office in Huyula Village, Randangan District, Pohuwato Regency (Dako, 2018)<sup>34</sup>. Sjam, on the other hand, claimed that most of the CATP's boundaries had vanished.

His party then wrote to the BPKH to reconstruct the area's boundaries, and in 2010, the Minister of Forestry issued Decree Number 325/Menhut-II/2010 to arrange the area's boundaries in the CATP. The five-year process resulted in the 2015 MENLHK Letter regarding the determination of the CATP area.

After completing the reconstruction and re-installation of the area's boundaries, they began to disseminate information to the farming community that occupied the CATP conservation area. Socialization began, primarily for fishermen and village and sub-district governments.

The socialization was brief, and the community felt comfortable with the ownership of the managed land because they claimed to have worked on the ponds prior to the establishment of the nature reserve.



Collaboration between students, BKSDA, and fishermen to plant mangroves in the CATP area - JAPESDA



Baba, a 45-year-old fisherman in Siduwonge Village, Randangan District, Pohuwato, revealed this. Baba lives in Pangkep, South Sulawesi Province. Since moving to Siduwonge in 2003, he has immediately begun farming by purchasing 8 hectares of land from local residents for Rp. 20 million. He acquired the pond land by liquidating assets in his hometown. This is why he and the majority of the farmers who occupy the CATP are opposed to giving up their cultivated land<sup>35</sup>.

Another reason, they claimed, was the absence of a notice board or boundary indicating that the land was a CATP conservation area from the start. Around 2017-2018, new CATP area notice boards were installed. "My land was not previously included in the nature reserve. Why has it succeeded now,

when it has only recently entered the nature reserve?" Baba was enraged. Baba may have said this because he did not know the exact boundaries of the nature reserve area.

### RELEASING OR MAINTAINING CONSERVATION AREAS THROUGH TORA

Following the socialization, the BKSDA took repressive measures by conducting law enforcement actions against the fishers who worked the land in the CATP on October 25-26, 2016. During this time, they demolished the dam, which was a hut or small house, and opened the floodgates from the pond in the CATP conservation area.



The Gorontalo Pond Farmers Union (SPT) and the fishermen community objected and fought back. They petitioned the President of the Republic of Indonesia and the National Human Rights Commission (Komnas HAM) for protection from the evictions they were subjected to. SPT Gorontalo, through the Agrarian Reform Consortium (KPA)<sup>36</sup>, lodged a protest and complaint letter No. 290/Seknas-KPA/XI/2017 against the repressive operations that were taking place at the time.

The main point of the letter sent to Komnas HAM is to request Komnas HAM's protection regarding the plan for the forced eviction of SPT Gorontalo members who occupied the pond area in the CATP area. Because, according to them, the fishers owned and managed the ponds in Tanjung Panjang prior to the issuance of the decree establishing the nature reserve area.

They also requested in the letter that the President of the Republic of Indonesia include the fishpond land they controlled in the priority location of the Agrarian Reform Object Land (TORA).

One month later, the Regional Government of Pohuwato received a letter from Komnas HAM Number 1826/K-PMP/XII/2017, requesting responses and clarification on repressive operations carried out at the time. In the letter, Komnas HAM also requested that documents pertaining to the determination of CATP status be studied before making recommendations on the report received from SPT Gorontalo.

The Pohuwato Regency Government has categorically denied the allegations contained in the clarification letter Number 800/sep/75/I/2018 sent by the Gorontalo SPT, via the KPA, to Komnas HAM.

The Pohuwato Regency Government did not confirm whether the farmers had taken control of the shrimp and fish ponds they managed prior to Tanjung Panjang being designated as a nature reserve. They also stated that evictions must be carried out if people enter forest areas without permission and in accordance with the law's mandate.



*Shrimp and milkfish ponds threaten the mangrove forest on the coast of Tomini Bay in the Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve in Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo. Christopel Paino was the photographer for Mongabay Indonesia.*



With the letter of complaint from the Gorontalo SPT, the spirit of defending the CATP area began to fade. The Minister of Environment and Forestry issued Decree No. 8716/Menlhk-PKTL/PLA.2/XII/2018 establishing an indicative map of forest area allocation for TORA resource provision.

Meanwhile, CATP is one of the forest areas depicted on the preliminary map. An indicative map is one that can be used to determine the location of the TORA or PS area. If the permit is approved, this location will be changed in accordance with the community's permit.

TORA, as enshrined in the Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Number P.17/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/5/2018, is a government policy designed to address issues in forest areas. Meanwhile, seven points in Presidential Regulation Number 86 of 2018 explain that

TORA is a legal tool for creating justice, resolving agrarian disputes and conflicts, increasing food security and sovereignty, and improving and maintaining environmental quality.

In response to the decision letter regarding the inclusion of CATP in the TORA indicative map, JAPESDA formed a tactical organization called the Civil Society Alliance to Save the Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve in Gorontalo, along with a number of NGOs, academics, students, nature lovers, and journalist organizations.

They sent a protest letter to the Minister of Environment and Forestry, Number 001/AMSP-CATP/III/2019, objecting to the inclusion of CATP on the TORA indicative map (Paino, 2020). The civil society alliance accused the government of abandoning conflict resolution and encroaching on mangrove forest areas in CATP.

According to Nurain Lapolo, Director of JAPESDA Gorontalo, the CATP's status as a conservation area must be maintained. If released, he said, it would be an example of poor regulatory law enforcement in Gorontalo against the encroachment of mangrove forest areas. Mangrove forest loggers in Gorontalo will face impunity. He revealed, on the other hand, that the decision was not in accordance with the mandate of the law against TORA.

"Because there are many immigrant communities in CATP that control the land."



Furthermore, the land controlled by the fishermen who are present covers an area larger than 10 hectares. "There are even people who own up to 100 hectares of land," Nurain explained.

Another reason is that fishing communities in villages near CATP have lost many jobs as their catchment areas have been converted to aquaculture areas. Indeed, if the CATP area's status as a conservation area is not successfully maintained and restored, Pohuwato Regency may lose a stretch of mangrove forest, according to Nurain.

According to the Gorontalo Province Bappeda report for 2019, the percentage of poverty in Pohuwato reached 21.27 percent in 2017, making Pohuwato Regency

the second district that contributed to the province's poverty rate that year. It was 19.4 percent in 2018, and 18.16 percent in 2019. Pohuwato Regency ranked third in 2019, contributing to the percentage of poverty in Gorontalo Province. As a result, Gorontalo Province ranked fifth in terms of poverty rate in 2019<sup>37</sup>.

The TORA discussion meeting at CATP began to be discussed at the ministry level after receiving strong protests from the Civil Society Alliance for the Rescue of the Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve. The meeting's main conclusion was to continue conducting an inventory of land problems in forest areas (PTKH) in order to obtain land tenure data that would be used to solve pond problems in the CATP area,

as well as to hold closed and open meetings. The central and local governments both attend closed meetings. Meanwhile, the central government, local governments, and related parties attend open meetings.

Finally, the outcomes of the open and closed meetings held in Gorontalo were unanimous: all parties agreed to maintain the conservation area's status in CATP with activities consistent with its function and designation.

### BEGIN PLANTING IN A CONSERVATION AREA

On February 9, 2020, at around 10 a.m., dozens of students from State 1 Randangan High School (SMA), along with environmental activists

from the JAPESDA organization, Gorontalo Biodiversity (BIOTA), and BKSDA Region II Gorontalo Section, observed migratory birds and planted mangroves in the CATP conservation area<sup>38</sup>.

The students who came were smiling because it was their first time bird watching and planting mangroves. The atmosphere at the time effectively ended the dark story of conservation area conversion and ongoing tenure conflicts in CATP. On that day, they planted at least 100 mangrove trees along the embankment. It's not much, but it's enough to breathe new life and enthusiasm into the dying CATP conservation area.

On October 1, 2020, BKSDA Section II Gorontalo, JAPESDA, and dozens of students from the Department of Biology, State University of Gorontalo planted mangroves in the CATP area in the same spirit.

In contrast to previous mangrove plantings, up to 3000 mangrove seedlings of the *Rhizophora mucronata* species were planted on a 10-hectare plot in the CATP area. The mangrove planting at the time was the largest after a lengthy process of tenure conflict in CATP ended with an agreement to keep the area as a conservation area.

However, the sad story of function transfer is far from over. CATP's face is still blurry and distorted. The land clearing can still be seen there. The fate of the farmers who own the conservation area is still unknown. As a result, the tenorial conflict that exists there cannot be said to be over.#

Fishermen from the Bajo Tribe use mangroves to find fish on the coast of Tomini Bay, specifically in Torosiaje village, Pohuwato Regency, Gorontalo. Christopel Paino was the photographer for Mongabay Indonesia





# Putting Fate to the Test in the Forbidden Zone

By: Nurain Lapolo



**TANJUNG PANJANG NATURAL RESERVE (CATP)** got its name for a reason. The area is indeed very “long” for the shoreline, which is home to dozens of species of mangrove trees as well as other coastal fauna and flora. It is even thought to be Tomini Bay’s largest mangrove area. Because of the richness of the mangrove ecosystem, the government designated it as a nature reserve (CA), one of the most stringent conservation statuses in Indonesia.

However, almost simultaneously with its designation as a nature reserve, Tanjung Panjang was invaded by local residents who saw promising business opportunities, namely shrimp farming ponds and salt ponds, waiting to be visited.

*In the Siduwonge pond, mangroves die*







In a salt pond, Ambo Dale is dredging salt crystals. - JAPESDA



The “invasion,” according to residents, began in the late 1980s and early 1990s. At the time, the local residents divided themselves into groups of 20-30 people. They conduct surveys and select locations for pioneering. Previously, only human labor was used in this pioneering. Given the circumstances at the time, land transportation infrastructure was still unsupported.

It is customary for fishers to use heavy equipment to expand and maintain their ponds after the initial pioneering, but some use only human labor, depending on

the capital, the area of land to be cleared, and the mangrove stands that are a hindrance.

Djafar Papempang, a Siduwonge Village resident who witnessed the changes in the area, stated that at the time, most of the pioneering did not result in ponds; it was only limited to land where mangrove trees had been cut down, but there were no bunds for plotting. This land is then sold to South Sulawesi residents.

According to Basri Amin’s article<sup>39</sup>, local residents did not take the initiative to open the potential

ponds on their own. Many parties are involved, including the government, which approved the use of heavy equipment to clear land for a 200-hectare pond in 2009.

The conversion yielded a sizable result. Only 600 hectares<sup>40</sup> of mangrove forest remain from the previous 3000 hectares. The remainder are ponds. For example, ponds in Tanjung Panjang produced 8,965 tons of aquaculture products and 2,434 tons of salt in 2019, according to data from the Department of Marine Affairs and Fisheries (DKP) of Pohuwato.

We can still see how the mangroves died today. Almost all areas of Tanjung Panjang have a view of mangrove stands of various sizes in dry conditions in a sea of ponds. The water has become stagnant as a result of fishing.

A luxury car passing on a rocky and potholed village road will temporarily distract us from the horror scene.

This begs the question, who are the wealthy residents of this area? Roads have not been paved, electricity has not been installed in all homes, clean water facilities have not been constructed, and they are also located far from urban areas. When we arrive at the settlement, we will see not only luxury cars and motorcycles, but also magnificent houses that stand out against the swamp and pond landscape.

Residents are South Sulawesi fishpond entrepreneurs who have long lived in Siduwonge Village and its surroundings. They are “examples of success” in the Tanjung Panjang aquaculture industry. Fishermen from South Sulawesi are the dominant actors, but they are not the only ones. Because the first time the ponds were opened were local residents, which was aided by the local government and unscrupulous security forces<sup>41</sup>.

This South Sulawesi fisherman has been in Tanjung Panjang since its inception, but only a few people have begun farming salt. Over time, the influx grew and eventually dominated the Tanjung Panjang pond business.



According to sociologist Basri Amin<sup>42</sup>, South Sulawesi's dominance is successful because they have the capital, expertise, market network, and support from big businessmen. All of these things are not owned by locals who have grown accustomed to working as captured fishermen or mainland farmers.

What Basri concluded did not happen overnight, and that in the process, these newcomers were also like gamblers with fate, many of whom left their hometowns with little capital at first. Some had to return to the village because it did not work.

As a "successful" example, Ambo Dale came as a cultivator and is now the owner of a pond. "I arrived as a cultivator. I'm sorry, but I don't have any money. I'd like to purchase a pond" Ambo burst out laughing.

Ambo Dale and his wife arrived as tenants at the time, living in an uninhabitable hut with only one old motorbike as their only asset.

"My cottage has a leaking roof, a dirt floor, and porous walls. If it rains, you must be busy looking for a reservoir so that it does not become muddy, and the water will be drunk later because water is scarce. Meanwhile, I use my motorcycle to take passengers here; it's not bad for daily meals," Ambo explained.

As a result, Ambo Dale owns approximately 4,402 hectares of ponds, both cultivated and salt. As a result, Ambo can afford to build decent houses, purchase several vehicles, and establish other businesses such as swiftlet nests.

Ambo Dale and I have a lot in common. You can stay if you manage to settle down and become the "boss" of the pond. If you don't, you'll have to return to your village or find another source of income. Cultivators are manual laborers.

They only offer their services to work on other people's ponds. There isn't any set standard for cultivators' profit sharing, but it is generally 20% of the net profit from the sale of the fishpond. Their work is similar to that of mainland farm laborers, who do everything in their pond but do not have property rights.

For example, in March 2021, he left Pangkep, his hometown, to work as a laborer on two ponds in Siduwonge Village. He was desperate to come with his wife and two toddlers, armed with invitations and information from his relatives.

"What prompted me to migrate here was that I, too, did not have a permanent job there, and the income I received did not meet the needs of my life and my family," Gani explained.

Gani works odd jobs in his village, including construction work and pond cultivation. He decided to try his luck because of his low income and an invitation from a family member who works as a cultivator in Tanjung Panjang. "I'm not familiar with this boss. Only the family who invited me are aware of my presence here. I had no idea where my boss's house was until now."

Of course, Gani came with hope, hope that was similar to the hopes



*Abdul Gani is filling the pond with water and catching two fish against the current at the pond gate - JAPESDA*



of other nomad cultivators. He desires to obtain capital quickly, to work independently, and to be able to adequately support his family.

"Yes, the point is that if I have money, I can do whatever I want, whether it's buy land or grow vegetables. The important thing is that I hope to obtain capital."

But, far from the flames, the maximum monthly wage he receives from the fishpond profit sharing is only two million rupiah. He even compares it to being "out of month, out of salary." He frequently had to borrow money from his boss at the beginning of the month because his salary was insufficient to meet his needs the previous month.

The reason for this is that the ponds he cultivates frequently have issues; the embankments frequently break, allowing the seeds to be carried away by the current, reducing yields. Because he only uses simple tools, he has to patch the broken embankment every time.

According to him, the pond he manages could be in good condition if done with heavy equipment, but that is impossible because it is prohibited. With such circumstances, having the capital to start his own business is still a pipe dream for him.

The stories of Ambo Dale, Abdul Gani, and the immigrant fishers in Tanjung Panjang are about ordinary

people trying to make a living. Of course, it will differ from the motivations of large corporations when exploiting natural resources.

The impact of Tanjung Panjang's conversion causes ecological disaster, which cannot be denied, but dealing with it requires a different approach. Not to mention the government's absence from supervising the area from its designation as a nature reserve in 1984 to 2010. One of the factors that accelerated the area's function change.

According to Ambo Dale, who moved to Tanjung Panjang in Siduwonge Village in 2008, the hamlet where he lives is only inhabited by about four families. There is no information or signage indicating that the new location is a nature reserve.

"It was already open when I arrived. There were already a lot of ponds. To be honest, I had no idea this area was in CA. There were no signs, boundaries, or anything else. "No one, including the government, has provided any information," said Ambo, who is now the head of Bolongga Hamlet in Siduwonge Village.

Ambo Dale's confession may be true, in that no information about the status of CATP was given to him and other at the time. Because even Sjamsudin Hadju's, Section Head of the North Sulawesi BKSDA Region II Gorontalo, admitted that in this case, the government only recently discovered that the 3,174.10 hectare area is a forest area with a nature reserve function. According to Sjam, there were no



signposts or regional boundaries in place at the time.

With such circumstances, the government was forced to resort to repressive measures. Of course, that would not be a viable option.

The government once tried as a stakeholder, BKSDA led a repressive operation on October 25-26, 2016, demolishing tenants' huts at the pond site and destroying the pond's embankments.

As a result, the fishermen who

Information board for mangrove planting in the CATP area by BKSDA in collaboration with BPDASHL Bone Bolango - JAPESDA

formed the union (Tambak Farmers Union), aided by the Agrarian Reform Consortium (KPA), wrote to Komnas HAM, who then wrote to the Pohuwato Regional Government and the BKSDA, seeking responses and clarification on the repressive actions they had taken.

Irfan, the chairman of the Pond Farmers Union, stated that they are well aware of the problems with their ponds, especially now that

the government has dared to take repressive measures. However, they also demand a solution because they are not the only ones to blame.

"Even if it is illegal, the entire state must attend. However, the Bugis immigrants have sold everything they own in the village "Irfan stated.

The fishermen cannot be seen as foreigners who came to destroy





Mangroves have been replaced by shrimp and milkfish mines in Tomini Bay. Christopel Paino was the photographer for Mongabay Indonesia.



Tanjung Panjang forever. These fishermen, from wherever they are, have lived for a long time and have become locals. Apart from the ethnicity construction, that is not Gorontalo.

Tanjung Panjang has become their home as well as their source of income. Furthermore, they have invested significantly in both economic and social capital in living and raising fish. They've left their "comfort zone" behind. The costs of opening and managing a pond are not insignificant.

Those who open new land must rent heavy equipment, which costs between IDR 800,000 – 900,000

per hour. According to some fishers there, this range multiplied by the area and length of work can reach around IDR 30 million per five hectares.

Not to mention the money spent on "security" for a number of government officials. Meanwhile, those who buy existing ponds must pocket capital for management in addition to making purchases (buy seeds and pay for tenants if the pond is large).

Even though the profits from the pond business multiplied after that, it was precisely this that drew the fishermen to Tanjung Panjang. The fishers will not give up their ponds

in the name of the law or ecological consequences that they do not fully comprehend.

Currently, the government is collaborating with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that work on environmental issues, such as JAPESDA, to carry out ecosystem restoration efforts in Tanjung Panjang, rather than using a repressive approach, but by raising awareness and actively involving the community, particularly fishermen.

Ambo Dale became one of those involved in the recovery effort. Ambo Dale's role as village head, fisherman, and Bugis person is quite complex. With this position, Ambo has the potential to become a key figure in Tanjung Panjang's ecosystem restoration agenda.

Ambo would be the first to intercept any heavy equipment attempting to enter. The reason is straightforward: "it will make things difficult later, it will be a problem." Personally, I don't mind because, in comparison to others, only a few of my ponds enter the CA area. If the government wants to take it, I am sincere. But that is not the case. "In the future, I'll live alone here," Ambo joked.

As a result of negotiations, the prohibition of heavy equipment has become a joint commitment between the fishing community and the government. Aside from the prohibition on heavy equipment, another point of contention in this negotiation is the refusal to open new ponds and to participate in the planting of

mangroves at water inlets. Existing and productive ponds will not be demolished forcibly.

Steps like this are expected to gradually improve Tanjung Panjang's situation. Because the embankments, like the ponds that Abdul Gani is working on, are starting to thin out, using only human labor with simple tools would be difficult, and heavy equipment is prohibited. In this way, the prediction is that eventually no one will want to care for the ponds that are becoming unproductive, and once abandoned, they can become new land for planting mangroves.

Currently, BKSDA has published an ecosystem restoration plan on 10 hectares of abandoned ponds as a regional stakeholder encouraged by JAPESDA.

The chaotic state of CATP is a tragic example of how people are misled by "business opportunities" that, whether they realize it or not, have a huge ecological cost. Utilization and protection appear to be at odds in conservation efforts, which ultimately result in human versus natural consequences. This contradiction should not be possible, but it occurred in Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve.#



# Protecting the Forest Means Involving the Community

By: Defri Sofyan



**“BANG, IMAGINE OUR FISHERMEN** being kicked out of their own territory back then. That is what irritates me!” Chairman of the Kubu Village Forest Management Institute (LPHD), Ade Bagus Arjunawan said.

Ade told Ebensius Langga, a facilitator for Friends of the Coastal Community of Kalimantan (SAMPAN), about the issues they frequently face when the forest that enters their territory is annexed by other villagers that afternoon.

*Sukur Yadi, a farmer and export commodity supplier in Nipah Panjang Village.*





This is due to the villagers' job being to cut mangroves for charcoal, whereas the Kubu Village residents, who work as fishermen, refuse to accept it because it will seriously damage productivity in their catchment area.

Kubu residents, in addition to problems with other villagers, have latent problems with the company because a forestry company has a concession area in Kubu that uses approximately 17,000 hectares of forest area.

"In my opinion, this company has been inactive for decades and has made no contribution to the village, so it's amazing if we can manage it as a village forest," Ade continued the conversation.

Eben simply nodded in agreement and didn't say anything else in response to Ade's complaint. Because, according to Eben, Ade's complaint is the main issue that his organization, SAMPAN, has been attempting to resolve. There was no immediate solution for Ade and all SAMPAN-assisted residents.

What has been experienced by Ade and the Kubu residents has become a problem for SAMPAN. Conflicts between citizens and corporations are always present when dealing with shared property, which Garrett Hardin<sup>43</sup>, an ecologist, refers to as the "tragedy of common ownership." Because not everyone has the same morality, he believes that the freedom of common ownership is destructive to all.

There will always be conflicts in the case of coastal resources because their functions are critical

for everyone and everyone believes they have them. The issue is that interested parties do not understand how to use coastal resources, not to mention the power disparity between residents and businesses.

SAMPAN, a non-governmental organization founded on June 5, 2009, is tasked with overseeing a problem that has frequently been overlooked by other civil society organizations, namely the coastal issue in West Kalimantan (Kalbar).

"The problem in West Kalimantan that motivated the establishment of SAMPAN is that the coastal communities are socio-economically vulnerable. Despite the fact that the coast is rich in natural resources, the people do not have certainty—in terms of forest management rights, for example," said Fajri Nailus Subchi, one of SAMPAN's founders.

Fajri also clarified that the coast does not only refer to the seacoast, allowing Kalimantan to be overlooked as one of the world's largest landmasses. However, the coast also refers to the river's bank. SAMPAN is thought to have a critical perspective on addressing the problem of Kalimantan as a whole by using the river as a central focus.

As the Island of a Thousand Rivers, Kalimantan, particularly West Kalimantan Province, has

many rivers connecting the land and coast. This river is a natural link for humans as well as a source of life for its biodiversity. People conduct their social, economic, and cultural transactions in the river. Meanwhile, "SAMPAN" means "boat," and has been the primary tool used by the community since ancient times to maintain all of these connections.

Given the context and trends of environmental and social issues in this province, many civil society organizations are also involved. However, the majority of existing civil society organizations continue to focus on upstream issues. With their perspective, SAMPAN began

working in West Kalimantan's coastal areas, such as the Muara Kubu Landscape.

According to SAMPAN, what needs to be done is to involve interested parties, particularly local residents, in a long-term scheme. As a result, SAMPAN promotes the establishment of village forests, one type of social forestry. A plan that involves the local community directly in the sustainable use of the forest.

The village forest is intended to allow the community to use natural resources in a sustainable manner while also providing the community with a strong legal position when

*In his drying room, Sukur is drying the areca nut - JAPESDA*



faced with invasions of their forest areas by parties with great power, such as corporations.

So far, SAMPAN has promoted 6,567 ha (2015-2017) and 26,244 ha (2017-2020) of village forest in 12 villages in the Muara Kubu Landscape, which are administratively divided into three sub-districts, namely Kubu, Terentang, and Batu Ampar. These three sub-districts are geographically defined by the lower reaches of the Kapuas River, a massive river known as Indonesia's longest river.

Muara Kubu Landscape spans 362,344 ha and is divided into two sections: 235,429.52 ha of forest and 122,114.54 ha of other destination areas, which are mostly covered by secondary mangrove forest and peat swamp forest.

Natural potential exists in both types of forests, particularly from an economic standpoint. Companies that clear forests and pollute waters are being replaced by village forest management institutions that will use non-timber forest products and catch fish while paying attention to sustainability. The idea is to have a protected forest and a prosperous community.

Sabarani, a fisherman in Kubu Village, told us about the extraordinary natural potential in the river near his house for himself and the small fishermen in his village. "I catch many different kinds of fish. Taper, snapper, grouper, and other species are available" Sabarani was overjoyed.



JAPESDA is a resident who works at Sukur's betel nut shelter.

Because the fish mentioned by Sabarani are commodities that frequently enter the export market, their selling value is higher than that of other fish that only circulate in the domestic market.

Like the swimming bubble of the taper fish (*Pennahia argentata*), a Chinese export subscriber for those unfamiliar with this commodity, the price ranges from hundreds of thousands to millions of rupiah per kilogram depending on the grade specified, according to local collectors in Kubu Village, while information on the internet can



cost tens to hundreds of millions per kilogram.

However, according to Sabarani, there are still some issues that irritate him, such as the company's cargo ship traffic, which has a significant impact on his catch. Indeed, the rivers of West Kalimantan are used for company barge transportation.

"We—the fishermen—were waiting at the river's mouth to catch fish that would enter the river, but because the wooden boats passed by so frequently, the fish were

pushed out again [towards the sea]," Sabarani explained.

It has a significant impact on the catch, and for good reason. The fishermen who catch the tapered fish do not come down every day; ideally, they come down twice a month to wait for the tapered fish to breed.

However, in some cases, possibly due to ship traffic or poor river water quality, the prima donna fish are hesitant to grow and breed. According to Sabarani's experience, he could not catch anything for up to a year. "Waiting for the money to run out first, then I can get it again," he laughed.

Sabarani's story also demonstrates how fishermen who catch commodities worth millions of rupiah are never wealthy.

From Kubu Village, about 29 kilometers to the west, to Nipah Panjang Village, Batu Ampar District, there is a success story about the impact of obtaining village forest management permits on the community.

In villages with intact mangrove and peat forests, the community benefits from an abundance of commodities such as coconut, areca nut, banana, crab, and, most recently, kelulut bee honey.

Farmers in Nipah Panjang village have reaped significant benefits from planting areca nut, coconut, and banana trees. This is due to the fact that the three commodities have not only entered the domestic market, but have also entered



the export market, which is worth selling for multiple times over.

Saparudin, a resident of Nipah Panjang Village, is a farmer and rancher, as are the majority of the villagers. However, he is the initiator who dares to take new steps that other villagers generally avoid because they are afraid of risk or simply wasting time on things that are uncertain. Saparudin was the first to cultivate the kelulut bee (*Trigona* sp.).

Saparudin feels directly what environmentalists often say: “using the forest is not always by taking the wood.” He raises kelulut bees in addition to planting areca nuts, coconuts, and goats. One of the pollinators that plays an important ecological role in forest succession.

Aside from being extremely valuable ecologically, this animal also produces honey, which is more expensive than regular bee honey. At the moment, the market price for honey bee kelulut per kilogram can reach IDR 400 thousand, while ordinary honey ranges from IDR 70 thousand to IDR 100 thousand.

“I have 148 stubs” (bee colonies in the form of blocks) that can harvest around 30 kg more per month, depending on flower blooming,” Saparudin explained.

Saparudin’s cattle produce a reasonable amount of honey, especially if the market demand offered to him is 400 kg per month. However, the value of the benefits felt by Saparudin is not insignificant. Saparudin makes a IDR

9 million profit if the price of honey is IDR 300 thousand per kilogram in a month. When compared to the company’s monthly wages, this is a very reasonable price. Not to mention his earnings from areca nut, coconut, banana, and other crops.

Saparudin claims that raising kelulut bees is not as difficult or expensive as other residents believe. You only need to provide a board for the bee colony to live on. Meanwhile, food is already available in Nipah Panjang’s gardens and forests, specifically all nectar-producing plants such as coconut, areca nut, banana, mangrove, nipa palm, and ornamental flowers in the yard.

What Saparudin felt was one of the effects that SAMPAN expected from the existence of village forest management rights. Because Saparudin’s business is an example of a utilization model that benefits the community while conserving the forest. #



# EPILOGUE

## Thinking Globally and Acting Locally

*An invitation to a historical approach to geography and a critical reflection on narratives*

By: Noer Fauzi Rachman

### INTRODUCTION

First and foremost, activists for non-governmental organizations have a wealth of observation and empathy for the increasingly difficult positions, conditions, and life experiences of weak, poor, marginalized, vulnerable, or oppressed community groups.

This book contains numerous examples, such as the decline in natural services due to environmental damage, threats to people's safety and welfare, the decline in people's productivity, and so on. After that, each event whose origin is in a specific space and time is separated from the source of its concrete and specific existence.

Activists have methods for gathering, documenting, and discussing the causes of this condition's persistence. Activists learn and develop effective methodologies, from investigating

what is really going on to devising methods of working with the community.

More than simply comprehending and interpreting what is going on, these activists design strategies for collaborating with community leaders and groups, as well as those with a stake in changing relevant public policies. Being and interacting between the community and the elite of public policymakers is both a privilege and a challenge for activists.

Writing a book about an organization's successes is one way to demonstrate its success in bringing about the desired change. In the spirit of celebrating this success, the authors of this book positively document some of the work of non-governmental organizations in collaboration with Siemenpuu, as seen from the privileged position of non-

governmental organization activists.

This epilogue intends to invite readers to consider different ways of narrating the fieldwork of NGO activists, based on the documentation provided by the authors in this book.

The final, and most important, approach I would like to propose is one that emphasizes the history of geography, so that what develops actually "depends on where it develops, on what has historically settled there, on the social and spatial structures that have settled in that place" (Watts in Pred and Watts 1992:11).

### UNSUSTAINABLE FUNDING IN NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS

The North-South relationship established by the Siemenpuu Foundation as a non-profit organization in Finland, in the Northern Hemisphere, needs to be made explicit, and is not always clear in the texts discussed here, despite the markers. So, what Siemenpuu partners are doing, which is partly presented in this book, can be interpreted as a kind of relationship between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres in the field of non-governmental organization relations.

One of the relationships is the financial flow relationship, which was formed by decisions on funding source allocation; international

relations and development politics (bilateral, multilateral, or otherwise); and, last but not least, knowledge in the form of strategic plans.

Apart from being a non-profit organization in Finland that focuses on international development, it also supports local communities, environmental defenders, and threatened environments in countries in the Southern Hemisphere and the Global South, including through funding for non-governmental organizations. The main motto of Siemenpuu is "Supporting the Environment and Environmental Defenders in the South."

Siemenpuu seeks alternative community development by identifying the root causes of environmental and social problems. The selection of Indonesia as a financing destination was initiated by the application of Siemenpuu's proposal, but was later made by the Ministry of International Development.

As a Global North organization, Siemenpuu follows the Ministry of Development Cooperation's strategic direction, which means that supported projects are those that reduce emissions that cause climate change and biodiversity depletion.

Siemenpuu's funds are primarily from the Finnish Ministry of Development Cooperation, and they have been used for hundreds of projects in over 50 countries.



Siemenpuu's funding is not large, but Siemenpuu is willing to support the initiatives of partners who are often pioneers in the issue of saving the environment in Indonesia, such as the issue of peat in the rescue of the Kampar Peninsula, when the issue of peat has not received much attention.

Similarly, on the issue of mangrove restoration, Siemenpuu partners launched the Mangrove Anchor movement in 2016 with the support of Siemenpuu. Meanwhile, the government will only include mangrove restoration in the BRGM in 2020, along with research on potential damage and economic opportunities in seagrass ecosystems.

Siemenpuu's projects are funded by a specific organization based on a specific contract, which is coordinated by one of its main partners.

Local communities' roles and capacities as environmental guardians are developed at the grassroots level. The project's main partner will work in a network of partners to ensure the organizers' capacity development. In this case, the organizers will work in a network of partners to ensure their capacity development. Jikalahari-Riau Forest Rescue Network is the main partner in this case in Indonesia.

Finland is a European country that managed to get out of its position and experience as a colonized country, then managed to become a welfare state (welfare state) in

about 50 years<sup>1</sup>, which distinguishes it from many European countries that have colonized other countries, particularly in the tropics or subtropics.

Siemenpuu works in Finland to increase people's and institutions' knowledge and understanding of the environment and the challenges of sustainable development in the Global South.

Siemenpuu forms long-term partnerships with its main partners in one specific country in the Global South, with the general framework being financial support for environmental actions and support for environmental champions.

Such North-South relations did not last forever. In Indonesia, funding for Siemenpuu will end in 2021. Siemenpuu allocates funds for the 2022 program for the years 2022-2025 to five program target countries: Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Mozambique, and Myanmar.

If Siemenpuu is unable to continue financing activities in one of the target countries, the project will be funded in Nepal. The network of Siemenpuu in the Brazilian Amazon, Indonesia, and India will continue to be critical to networking and communications activities.

This is stated in the Development Cooperation Program 2022-2025 of Siemenpuu. <http://www.siemenuu.org/en/funding/>

<sup>1</sup> See Hielka Pietela for more on how Finland became a welfare state (2002).

approach is widely used in conducting case studies<sup>2</sup>.

Cases are chosen to be studied, analyzed, managed, and presented as local costs, impacts, or consequences of global causes, driving forces, or forces circulating in national, transnational, or international orbits.

Narratives based on events witnessed by nature and specific local communities are packaged as critiques of national and global forces at work, as well as campaigns to criticize global forces.

Large corporate powers, developed-country power blocs, neoliberal ideological understanding, expert network mobility, communication technology, enforced international standards and guidelines, international law, and agreements between countries to the system are commonly identified as these forces. International trade.

The assumption is that there is a binary dualism between the local and the global, as well as a unidirectional causal relationship between the two. It's fascinating to consider the attributes assigned to this binary dualism: global and local.

Global power is assigned an active and dynamic masculine characterization that penetrates the local with passive and static feminine attributions, but it is

<sup>2</sup> See Gillian Hart for a critique of the thinking behind this impact model (2002, 2004, 2016).

[programme-2022-2025](#) (accessed on July 21, 2022). What Siemenpuu's partners are currently witnessing, namely the cessation of funding flows to their Indonesian partners, is an important indicator of the unsustainable North-South relationship in funding environmental projects.

The question is, how can non-governmental organizations here continue their work if non-profit organizations in northern countries, such as The Siemenpuu Foundation, no longer provide funding?

Were we expecting this to happen? Non-governmental organizations in this region must devise new methods of funding their own operations.

Will the Northern Hemisphere's reliance on the flow and allocation of funding from non-profit organizations be maintained for their respective local activities? Is there any other way to mobilize resources for the long-term viability of social movements?

### THINK GLOBALLY AND ACT LOCALLY.

The translation is "Think Globally, Act Locally." Global Thinking, Local Action, this term is very popular among environmental activists in the Northern Hemisphere, and it has since spread to activists in the Southern Hemisphere.

The resurgence of interest in global causes began in the 1990s, with the popularity of the term "globalization." The impact model

frequently interpreted as having an allure to the global to work.

Variations in this line of thought among NGO activists take the form of treating the local as a repository for all that is good, which becomes problematic due to the operation of global forces at work at the national and international levels.

They work in specific localities and are able to make it part of a case study that presents a narrative that the community is in turmoil as a result of the penetration of global forces that come from national orbit to transnational/international.

The narrators are personally involved in local change efforts. However, because some of those involved understand it as a result of global causes, their outcomes are limited to preventing victims and erecting protective barriers. Some are non-governmental organizations that collaborate with various transnational advocacy networks and use various national and international forums to articulate criticism based on what is told<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> This approach has the motto "think locally, act globally" by strengthening transnational advocacy networks, which is a cycle that begins by raising local cases across national boundaries to international fora, with the hope that various special pressures that a certain international body can play against a power in the world will exist. This boomerang mechanism is expected to improve the local situation by altering how the government handles cases advocated internationally and transnationally (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 1999).

This approach can be found in many works, either explicitly or implicitly. What appears explicit and noticeable is the effort to demonstrate the most important reason, the main justification, or the basis for being, why a specific organization or business needs to exist. This is commonly referred to as the *raison d'être* in French.

Almost all of the writings demonstrate the existence of corporate practices that pose a significant threat to the environment and the risk of causing suffering to a group of people, and thus serve as the basis for NGO activism.

This line of thought is evident in the writings of Nurain Lapolo and Renal Husa, who claim that a number of activists suspect the existence of forest concession holders (HPH) in state forest areas in Gorontalo province of not carrying out sustainable forest management and illegal encroachment of forest areas. Because of changes in forest function, logging increases the risk of natural disasters. These activists, in turn, founded the Natural Resources Management Advocacy Network (JAPESDA).

Similarly, Renal Husa's writings stated that Friends of the Coastal Community (SAMPAN) Kalimantan is here to address the expansion of mining and industrial palm oil plantations in West Kalimantan.

SAMPAN considers this expansion to be the cause of the narrowing of small communities' living space and

the destruction of natural services in and around the company's concession area; or, in the writings of Okto Yugo Setiyo and Nurul Fitria, that Jikalahari is here to save Riau's forests and environment, which have been damaged by corporate deforestation practices, illegal logging, and forestry crimes.

Local actions from a global perspective are clearly visible in the Siemenpuu report "Indonesia: Forest Protection and Sustainable Use."

"It is critical to protect rainforests in order to protect people's livelihoods and cultures as well as to combat climate change." According to the Siemenpuu Foundation and its partner organizations, forest areas should be protected in their own way by local people. Plantation forests do not provide a long-term solution to climate change or environmental degradation. Siemenpuu advocates for comprehensive forest protection and genuine community participation.

The Siemenpuu Foundation supports organizations that promote socially and ecologically equitable land use and work with local communities to protect the environment. Community-based conservation and sustainable use of peatlands and mangroves are the main thematic areas, as are networking and capacity

building. Siemenpuu primarily supports small Indonesian NGOs with close ties to local forest-dependent communities. These organizations are active on Sumatra, Kalimantan, Java, and Sulawesi. The Jikalahari network, which promotes community-based forest administration and law enforcement, is the primary focus in Riau.

South Sumatra (Hutan Kita Institute), North Sulawesi (Japesda), West Kalimantan (Sampan), and a national network coordinated by Forest Watch Indonesia<sup>4</sup> are all working to protect mangroves.

Because of their ability to form networks and gain access to support for new policies, these activists have been able to take advantage of government program schemes such as social forestry to form local actions. According to Defri Sofyan, SAMPAN has demonstrated local success by working in Kabupaten Kubu Raya under the Village Forest scheme in 12 villages in the Muara Kubu Landscape.

Perkumpulan Elang, as demonstrated by Rina Syahputri and Nurul Fitria, has also been successful in assisting residents

<sup>4</sup> Siemenpuu (2017), "Indonesia: forest protection and sustainable use." <https://www.siemenuu.org/en/funding/old-programme/indonesia> (Effective August 1, 2022)



in obtaining the legality of the Village Forest and in working with residents to change farming methods that do not rely on burning techniques. Or, Herbet and Nurul Fitria's writings about what activists from the Mitra Insani Foundation (YMI) did in December to facilitate the acquisition of the 3,580-hectare SK HPHD Teluk Lanus.

The unique ability is also in positioning oneself as a change agent. Senarai (formerly Riau Corruption Trial), for example, has demonstrated the capacity to exercise social control and the public interest in knowing the law enforcement through the technique of making live broadcasts from courtrooms for cases of corruption in permits and environmental crimes, as written by Nurul Fitria.

In practice, activists must be able to provide successful examples. As demonstrated in Okto Yugo Setiyo's article on how the community restores the mangrove ecosystem with assistance from the Mangrove Anchor network in various locations on the Sumatra and Kalimantan islands,

Suryadi's explanation of Hutan Kita Institute's (HaKI) work in building shrimp and milkfish ponds under the Community Forest scheme in Simpang Tiga Abadi, South Sumatra. The Natural Resources Management Advocacy Network (JAPESDA) has also assisted women's groups in Torosiaje by selling salted fish processing products and processed

food ingredients derived from mangroves, as written by Defri Sofyan and Nurain Lapolo.

Typically, NGOs can demonstrate their success as organizers. However, even when carried out in a networked style, it is not always successful when applied on a large scale, such as a nature reserve area.

The complexity of the problem, the time duration, and the size of the area under management are all challenges that may be beyond its capabilities. This is what happened in Pohuwato, Gorontalo's Tanjung Panjang Nature Reserve (CATP). The conservation function of land clearing into people's ponds has not been successfully restored. There is also uncertainty about the fate of the farmers who control the conservation area, as Renal Husa and Nurain Lapolo have written.

### **CLOSING: AN INVITATION TO USE HISTORICAL GEOGRAPHY**

I recommend for an awareness of the limitations and consequences of binary dualism between the local and the global. To understand that each agrarian problem is nested in the historical geography of a specific region, I propose a more open and progressive viewpoint.

Geography looks after space, and history looks after time. Rather than viewing the local as the location where the effects of global causes manifest themselves, this understanding of historical geography is critical in providing

an understanding of the spatiality and temporality of various agrarian problems in a specific area. Any study of local problems requires an understanding of the region's historical geography in order to be successful.

Stuart Hall (2017: 280) advises on the importance of investigating the conjuncture at hand by identifying influential actors and investigating the ways in which these actors play a role, at what stage, the trajectories they pass through, and the conditions under which their presence and role play. They either continue or stop.

These actors' performances, stages, trajectories, and conditions cannot be traced linearly. The current interactions of the actors are actually in the mainstream of a specific period/period. As a result, it is necessary to define the characteristics of specific stages that differ from the previous rounds.

In my experience, combining a historical geography approach with ethnography and dramaturgy of events to find chapters is an interesting intellectual work in and of itself (Rachman, 2011, 2018, and 2019)<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Readers should then pay close attention to Hilmar Farid's (2017) introductory description in the book *History/Geography of Agrarian Indonesia* (Farid and Luthfi 2017). The book *History/Geography of Agrarian Indonesia* contains works by Razif (2017) "Capital Expansion and Manpower Deployment in Sumatra 1865-1965", M. Fauzi (2017) "Agrarian and Capital Expansion in

As a result, understanding historical geography will aid in overcoming the limitations in interpreting ongoing relationships. We do not dismiss the presence of global forces at work at the local level. Each location has its own personality, history, and geographical location. The forces at work in one location can only be comprehended by relating them to other forces and locations without feeling threatened by them.

We can use the way of thinking proposed by Doreen Massey (1994) as "power-geometry and a progressive sense of place," which allows us to understand the place not only as a passive recipient, but also as an active actor with a role to play in shaping transformation.

The events in that location are contained within and form a unit of time known as a period, in which there are knots of various forces that meet in unexpected ways. As a result, we require "a global sense of the local, a global sense of place" (Massey 1994:156).#

*Kalimantan*", Razif (2017) "History of Geography of Capitalism in Sulawesi", M. Fauzi (2017) "Agrarian and Capital Expansion in Nusa Tenggara", and Noer Fauzi Rach Examples of agrarian problem studies using a historical geography approach are available.

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# AUTHORS

## Nurain Lapolo



She is an environmentalist who enjoys conducting research on the ecology and socioeconomics of coastal and inland communities. She has been involved in community assistance work, particularly in coastal areas, since 2014. Also, several times as an expert in mangrove biodiversity surveys and training women in the processing of various mangrove fruit products. She also has government experience as a consultant for environmental program planning, monitoring, and evaluation.

In 2016-2018, she pursued postgraduate studies at the State University of Gorontalo in the population and environmental studies program. She has been the director of JAPESDA since 2019 and will serve a second term until 2026. "Always encourage yourself and those around you to be consistent and to keep learning, especially women, because I believe women have unique leadership strengths".

## Defri Sofyan



The author works as a journalist/freelance writer in Gorontalo. Personally, interested in covering issues related to the environment, human rights, gender, and culture. Also a member of the Gorontalo City Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI).

## Renal Husa



He was born on June 9, 1996, in Gorontalo, and was an active journalist in one of Gorontalo's online media. He is currently pursuing a career as a freelance journalist while finishing his undergraduate studies at the Muhammadiyah University of Gorontalo.

He was involved in the student press at LPM Merah Maron and the State University of Gorontalo before becoming a journalist. Currently researching environmental issues through the Japesda Gorontalo Association and furthering the media literacy movement through the Gorontalo City of Independent Journalists Alliance (AJI).

## Okto Yugo Setiyo



Since his time in college, he has been vocal about environmental and forestry issues. He was a member of Mapala Humendala FE UNRI and a campaigner of the environmental activist movement at the time. He joined Jikalahari in 2015 as campaign and advocacy staff after finishing his studies at FE UNRI, and he has served as Jikalahari's Deputy Coordinator since 2018.

Sapariah Saturi, Senior Editor of Mongabay Indonesia, taught he how to write strong news and features. He also received writing instruction from Harry Surjadi, Executive Director of the Indonesian Society of Environmental Journalists (SEIJ), collaboration of the KPK and the Judicial Commission (KY). [oktoyugo.blogspot.com](http://oktoyugo.blogspot.com) is also the author's personal blog.



### Nurul Fitria

When she joined LPM Bahana Mahasiswa at the University of Riau in 2011, she was studying journalism and was on her sense to becoming a member of RCT/Senarai in 2013. Since 2015, she has been a contributor to Mongabay Indonesia in the Riau region. Yaya, as she is affectionately known, enjoys writing and eternalize it on her personal blog, [yayanurulfitria.wordpress.com](http://yayanurulfitria.wordpress.com).

Environmental concerns are now her commonplace as a Research and Information Manager at Jikalahari since 2018. She actively creating creative content for the Jikalahari campaign in the hopes that the information conveyed will rally a large number of people to protect Riau's forests and environment.



### Rina Syahputri

Abah and Mak's daughters come from a family of six siblings who have always wanted to travel long distances, which they did during their college years. She enjoys writing diaries, poetry, and managing blogs in college, as well as meeting women with diverse experiences and sharing their stories through RWWG.

She still enjoys traveling and sharing her interests with her husband. Rina is eager to meet new people and share her experiences. @riina putri is her Instagram. Greetings, and always be healthy and happy.



### Suryadi M Nur

Born nearly 30 years ago at Riau Province, Sumatra Island's northern coast. I've been eating fish, shrimp, and other sea creatures since I was a child. Certainly that's not a protected animal. He enjoys swimming in the sea but also easily gets seasick. is not suitable to be a fisherman, let alone a sailor. It was landsick too. What else are he can do? It needs to be strengthened.

Since his freshman year of college, he like writing. As a result, he become editor in chief of LPM Bahana Mahasiswa, Riau University. Seven years of research resulted in more time spent at the conference table: editorial discussions, article editing, evaluating, and joking with fellow crew members. It turned out to be consistent as a journalist after college. Now writing for Mongabay Indonesia and monitoring trial of environment and corruption cases for Senarai.



### Herbet Linto Retto Panggabean

A man of Batak ancestry was born in Pekanbaru 41 years ago. assed from primary to university and chose to live in Pekanbaru, Riau Province. ompleted a bachelor's degree in marine science from the University of Riau's Faculty of Fisheries and Marine Sciences, Department of Marine Science.

Active as a member at Phylomina, the Nature Lovers' Student Organization (MAPALA). This relates to his hobbies such as going on nature adventures, observing social issues, mapping, investigating, and inventorying biodiversity. Since a students, have been active and caring for the environment and social community and bringing Herbet to Presidium Jikalahari in 2005-2007. Since 2008, he has improved and developed his skills in environmental advocacy and social issues at the Mitra Insani Foundation (YMI). Herbet's experience with YMI since now (2022) has driven to his appointment as Director of YMI.





### Veri Syardianta

Born in Kuantan Singingi as the second of three children 28 years ago, he graduated from the University of Riau in 2012. He is involved in the environmental organization Mapala Humendala at the Faculty of Economics and Business. Last year, he is graduated.

His love for adventure and learning new things makes him an ideal candidate for a nature-loving organization. For him, adventure and writing become inseparable. Since joining Jikalahari in 2019, he was developed a preference for reading, writing, and researching environmental and forestry issues. This priceless experience inspired him to encourage young people to pay more attention to and protect the environment.



### Arpiyan Sargita

On June 24, 1991, he was born in Seko Village, Lubuk Tigo. Usually called as Aldo. He has been involved in the Mapala Suluh organization at FKIP Riau University, one of Jikalahari's member institutions. After completing his studies, he has been actively involved in Jikalahari activities since 2012, beginning with events at hotels such as environmental seminars for free lunch, field investigations (free walks), mapping, and campaigns to save Riau's remaining forests.

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***Solutions to justice problems involving social, environmental, and economic issues frequently require a review of reality on the ground from various perspectives. This is necessary because the truth does not always match up to actual world. This book is essential reading for anyone interested in learning how to cultivate justice from a variety of perspectives.***

***Prof. Hariadi Kartodihardjo  
IPB Faculty of Forestry Professor.***

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Siemenpuu collaborated with Indonesian environmental institutions to initiate a grassroots movement aimed at saving the environment, forests, peatlands, and mangroves, as well as improving the community's economy.

This movement became a forerunner, inspiring or encouraging the government to 'pay attention to' the activities of Siemenpuu partners.

Not only is environmental protection important in the work of partners supported by Siemenpuu, but also encouraging government participation in its activities. Because a 'big impact' movement will be difficult to achieve without government intervention.

The stories of these partners' challenges are attempted to be presented to the readers. The hope is that the story will inspire and 'burn' the grassroots movement's spirit to continue fighting to protect Indonesia's natural resources and environment.

These are just a few of the many stories of Indonesians fighting to save the environment. Even if it's only a tiny fragment, it may spark the spirit of our similar cause.