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Contested Policy of "Forest Areas with Special Management": A Case Study of the Permit Holder in Kediri Regency, East Java

Kontestasi Kebijakan "Kawasan Hutan dengan Pengelolaan Khusus": Studi Kasus Pemegang Persetujuan di Kabupaten Kediri, Jawa Timur

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ABSTRACT

The Government of Indonesia introduced a Special Management Forest Areas policy to facilitate changes in forest governance in Java, particularly over approximately 1.1 million hectares of forestland that were previously under Perhutani's management. Therefore, this research aimed to examine the practical benefit of the policies for communities critically. The designation of forest communities as key stakeholders paradoxically risked further marginalization. This research applied a patchwork ethnography approach and relied on participant observation and in-depth interviews. Although Perhutani no longer held official authority, various strategies were implemented at site levels to maintain access to forest resources. During the transition period, forest communities struggled due to a lack of clear assistance. As a new actor, the Forestry Service Branch (CDK) could not provide intensive assistance because the communities had not yet undergone the transformation required to obtain legal recognition under the latest policies. The results showed that good intentions in policies to support marginalized communities were insufficient. For the purpose of justice, a strong commitment at the grassroots level was needed through intensive assistance to ensure that policies were not merely rhetorical but truly provided tangible benefits.

INTISARI

Pemerintah Indonesia menginisiasi kebijakan Kawasan Hutan dengan Pengelolaan Khusus untuk membawa perubahan besar dalam tata kelola hutan di Jawa, khususnya dalam proses mengambil alih sekitar 1,1 juta hektare hutan yang sebelumnya dikelola oleh Perhutani. Penelitian ini secara kritis mengkaji apakah kebijakan yang mengklaim berpihak pada masyarakat, dalam praktiknya benar-benar berpihak kepada masyarakat marginal. Penelitian ini berpendapat bahwa meskipun kebijakan tersebut menjadikan masyarakat hutan sebagai aktor utama, ternyata berpotensi meminggirkan masyarakat hutan. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan etnografi tambal sulam, penelitian ini menggunakan metode pengambilan data observasi partisipatif dan wawancara mendalam. Meskipun Perhutani tidak lagi memiliki kewenangan resmi, di tingkat tapak, Perhutani tetap menerapkan berbagai strategi untuk mempertahankan akses terhadap sumber daya hutan. Di sisi lain, selama masa transisi, masyarakat hutan mengalami kesulitan akibat kurangnya pendampingan yang jelas. Sebagai aktor baru, Cabang Dinas Kehutanan (CDK), tidak dapat mendampingi secara intensif karena masyarakat belum melakukan transformasi untuk mendapatkan legalitas berdasarkan kebijakan terbaru. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa niat baik kebijakan yang berpihak pada masyarakat marginal tidaklah cukup. Untuk memberikan keadilan bagi masyarakat marginal, diperlukan komitmen kuat hingga ke tingkat tapak melalui pendampingan intensif untuk memastikan kebijakan tidak sekadar retorika, tetapi benar-benar memberikan manfaat nyata bagi masyarakat.

Introduction

Natural resource management is inherently political, comprising issues of access, control, rights, ownership, and use of power. According to Brechin et al. (2003), despite often being dominated by technocratic views, natural resource management is shaped by a series of negotiations, discussions, persuasion, communication, and decision-making. Even practices that should be neutral or impartial may intentionally or unintentionally exclude, marginalize, or harm several groups (Raik et al. 2008). Natural resource management, including forest, cannot be separated from the political dimension. The policy-making process, implementation, and profit-sharing mechanism will be identical to negotiations, and no party, including the government, is truly neutral. A policy often has bias, such as forest resource management policies. Therefore, analyzing beneficiaries through an access and exclusion framework is crucial.

Nancy Lee Peluso's ethnographic work entitled "Rich Forest Poor People" (Peluso 2006) provides insights into the complexities of Social Forestry policy in Indonesia. The policies have undergone significant transformation over three decades after Peluso's argument to return the word "social" into Social Forestry. The transformation includes political commitments allocating approximately ±12.7 million hectares for Social Forestry areas, regulating Social Forestry in the law, and multi-stakeholder (academics, private sector, central government across ministries/institutions, local governments, and non-government organizations) engagement in policy implementation (Government of Indonesia 2023).

The issuance of the Job Creation Law in 2020 introduced a significant transformation in forest management, specifically in Java (Government of Indonesia 2020). State Forestry Public Company (Perusahaan Umum Kehutanan Negara/Perhutani), which had been the leading sector in forest management since the colonial era, was required to relinquish control over ±1.1 million hectares of the ±2.4 million hectares of forest areas in Java. This transfer of authority to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry marked a significant restructuring of governance. Through the Social Forestry program, the government entrusts communities around the forest as the primary manager of the Special Management Forest Area. Therefore, it is urgent to gather responses from stakeholders at the grassroots level to understand the impact of policy changes on Java's leading forest management sector.

The reduction of Perhutani's authority in managing Java's forests sparked controversy at the site level (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021; Ramadhan et al. 2021; Kusuma et al. 2023; Nugroho et al. 2023). In response, Perhutani filed a lawsuit against the Ministry of Environment and Forestry with the narrative that the policy contributed to the further degradation of Java forests (Hardiyanto 2022; HuMa 2022). The institution firmly justified its stance by asserting that the community is currently unprepared to assume forest management responsibilities (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021).

Special Management Forest Areas (Kawasan Hutan dengan Pengelolaan Khusus/KHDPK) policy designates the Forestry Service Branch (CDK) as the new community facilitator, replacing those from Perhutani. This designation prompts critical inquiry into how Perhutani, CDK, and the local communities respond to the changes. The redefinition of Java's leading forest management sector will affect the benefit distribution at the site level. Analyzing who benefits from natural resource management requires an access theory approach. Previous research has applied this theory to evaluate various aspects of the implementation of social forestry policy.

Budi et al. (2021) used the theory to analyze the access of Social Forestry permit holders at the pre-licensing and post-licensing stages in Lampung. Sahide et al. (2020) adopted this theory to research the implementation of Social Forestry policy by considering the beneficiaries and disadvantaged at different stages (initial formulation, formal handover, and implementation policies). The access-exclusion dynamic examines the processes shaping Social Forestry's formation. Rachmawan et al. (2021) adopted access theory, supplemented by a collaborative approach, to describe the structure and processes of implementing the Social Forestry program in Forest Village Community Institutions (Lembaga Masyarakat Desa Hutan/LMDH) Rawa Sakti, Pemalang Regency. Tridakusumah et al. (2021)

analyzed access mechanisms (efforts to increase and maintain access) and social networks formed in the Community-Based Forest Management Program in the Garut Regency. However, limited research used access theory to analyze the dynamics of power relations between actors at the site level due to policy changes to understand the mechanisms of access and distribution of benefits in forest area management.

In addition to understanding the access mechanism (how actors gain access), this research explores the exclusion mechanism embedded in KHDPK policy. Acknowledging that the policy removes part of Perhutani's work area and transfers full management rights to local forest communities is crucial. The exclusion mechanism helps identify how actors maintain power by preventing others from gaining or retaining resource access. Additionally, the transformation from Forestry Partnership Permit Holders to Social Forestry schemes in KHDPK (Community Forest/Village Forest/Community Plantation Forest) requires intensive assistance at the site level. The lack of knowledge transfer from Perhutani to the forest branch service hinders institution capacity building and delays the transformation process. Communities surrounding the forest will have the opportunity to participate and be included, provided they meet the necessary government requirements. Violating established provisions will lead to the immediate revocation of the Social Forestry permit.

Based on the problem formulation above, this research will address the following research questions: (a) How do the relevant parties in the field respond to KHDPK policy?; (b) How was the benefit-sharing mechanism changed before and after implementing this policy?; and (c) How do the access and exclusion mechanism function following the policy implementation?

Methods

Research Design

This research adopted a patchwork ethnography method, providing an alternative fieldwork approach that balanced home and field. The method was selected due to the author's limited ability to remain at the research location for an extended period at one time without compromising the scientific rigor of the process.

> Patchwork ethnography refers to ethnographic processes and protocols designed around short-term field visits using fragmentary but rigorous data. The method also incorporated innovations that resisted the fixity, holism, and certainty often demanded in publication. Patchwork ethnography did not refer to one-time, short, instrumental trips and relationships in the manner of consultants, but maintained long-term commitments, language proficiency, contextual knowledge, and slow thinking that characterized so-called traditional fieldwork (Günel et al. 2020).

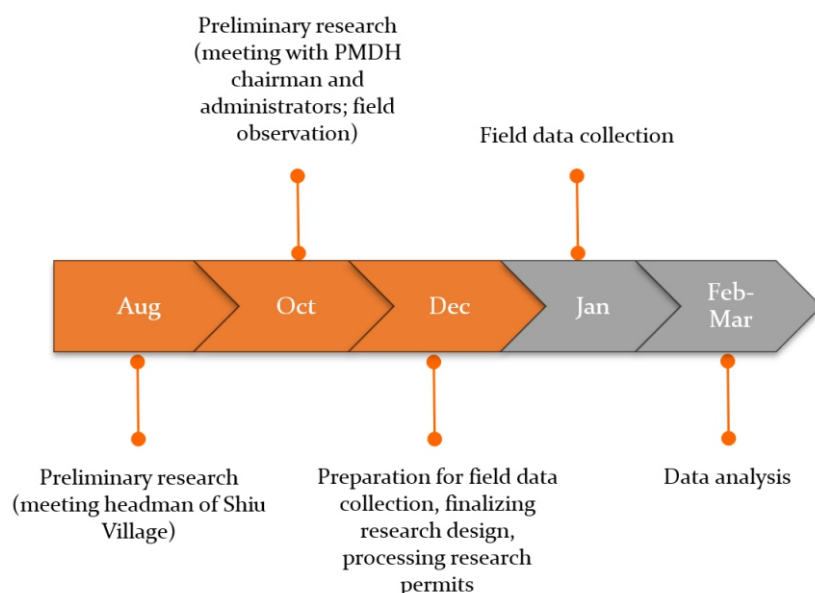This research was conducted over a period of 11 months. It started with preliminary fieldwork in the

Figure 1. Timeline of collecting data and data analysis

third week of August 2023, followed by continuous visits in the third week of October 2023 to gain an overview of the problems at the site level. The detailed timeline of the research activities is presented in Figure 1.

This research took Shiu Village, Kediri Regency, East Java Province, as the case study. The names of the locations and identities of the informants were pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality. Protecting informants' privacy through pseudonyms and data anonymization was an essential ethical consideration of qualitative research, particularly in ethnographic work (Ghimire 2021; Nur & Utami 2022). According to Polonsky (as in Ghimire 2021), "*confidentiality implied knowing the identities of the participants while ensuring zero disclosure in any form within the report*". While Gullion (as in Ghimire 2021) stated that in ethnographic research, anonymity was used to preserve "the privacy of the people" and protected people from harm, such as public discomfiture and physical menace.

According to data from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, East Java received the largest allocation of forest area designated for KHDPK compared to other provinces, accounting for 45.48% of the total allocation (Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia 2022). Shiu Village was selected as the research location because it is within KHDPK. Additionally, the Shiu village community responded relatively positively to the policy compared to resistance observed in other locations, further influencing the selection. The availability of secondary data on land management in the village over time also contributed to the decision. An overview of the research location is presented in Figure 2.

Data Collection

Refers to Spradley (2006) and Allen (2017), an ethnographer generally adopted a participatory research method to listen to and observe communities in a natural setting. Data for this study were collected through ethnographic in-depth interviews. The ethnographic interviews were conducted in a relaxed, friendly, and conversational setting (Ariani & Atmaja 2021). In January 2024, the researcher began
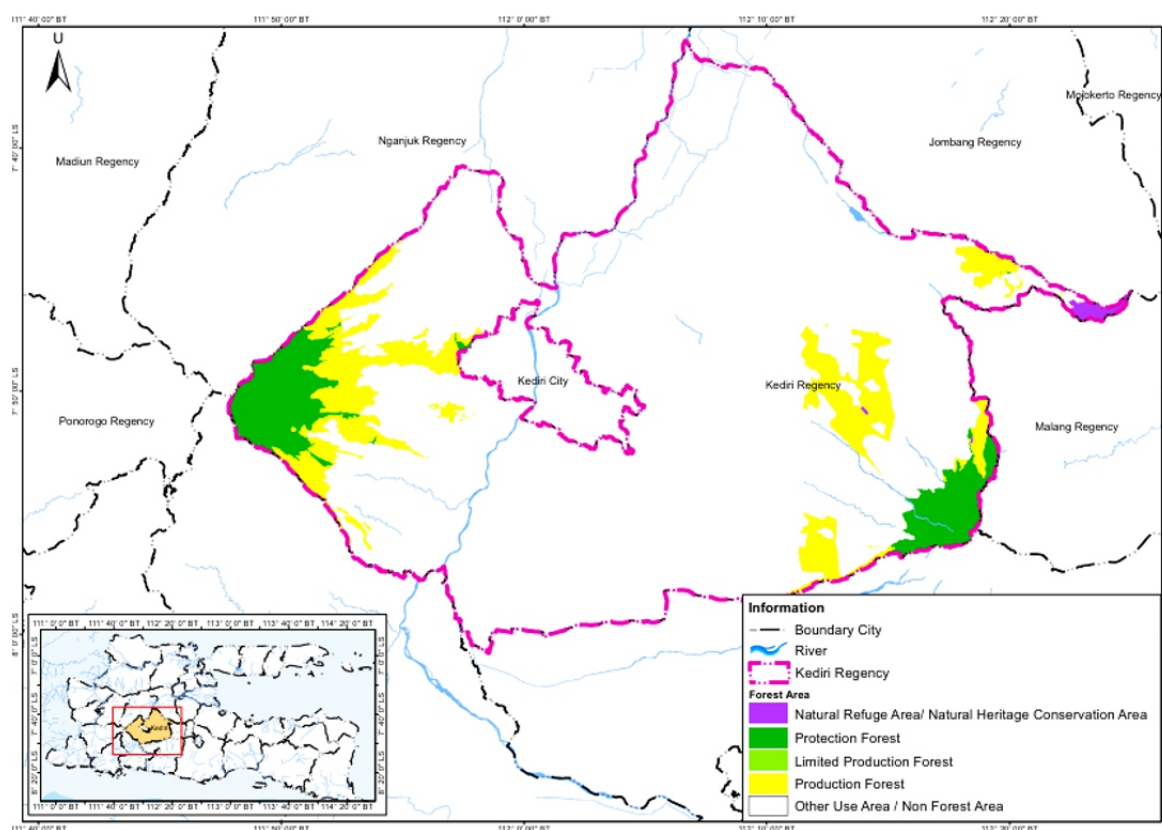

Figure 2. Administrative and forest area maps of East Java Province (Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan 2021; Badan Informasi Geospasial 2022)

participant observation by residing at the house of Social Forestry group leader for a month. Activities during this period included observation of the work area and engagement in daily interaction. In-depth interviews were conducted with 13 informants comprising administrators and members of Forest Village Community Association (Persatuan Masyarakat Desa Hutan/PMDH) Wana Tani (the name of Social Forestry group), village heads, heads of Resort Pemangkuan Hutan (RPH) (Perhutani at the site level), representatives of the land reform committee, representatives of Kelompok Sadar Wisata (Pokdarwis) as ecotourism managers, extension workers from CDK, the Community Empowerment Team under Perhutani, the Head of PMDH in the sub-district, and the Head of IPB Agrarian Study Center.

Informants were selected purposively using snowball sampling according to the research data required to address the research questions. Information gathering began with in-depth interviews with the head of PMDH and other actors, who were mentioned during each preceding interaction. Creswell & Creswell (2018) stated that snowball sampling was a method where relevant participants were initially selected. The participants were requested to recommend others who met the criteria until the information was saturated. The first informant approached was the headman of Shiu village, who then directed it to the PMDH Chair. To obtain more detailed insight into forest management activities at the site level, the chairperson directed the research analyst to Mr. Pana and Mr. Semar, both administrators of PMDH. Access to Perhutani site-level operations was possible after Mr. Pana facilitated contact with the Head of RPH.

Data Analysis

The collected data from interviews, field notes of participant observations and site visits, and various secondary documents were systematically analyzed. Interview recordings were transcribed, followed by the coding of field notes. Saldaña (2021) stated that coding was a method for abstracting field data into concepts and theories. Furthermore, secondary data were also analyzed to strengthen the field results obtained. These included PMDH establishment documents (AD/ART), Decree on Recognition and Protection of Forestry Partnerships, Agroforestry Cooperation Agreement, policy briefs published by IPB Agrarian Study Center in 2019 and 2020, and forest area management policies issued by Perhutani as well as the Ministry of Environment and Forestry after the reform era.

This research used a political ecology perspective to analyze power relations in Java's forest management. Blaikie (1987) conceptualized political ecology as a combination of ecological and political-economic concerns using the key element of marginalization. From this perspective, the conceptualization of marginality focused more on the dimensions of the political economy. Neumann (2005) conceptualized power as a central element of political ecology, presenting three key analytical lenses: actor-oriented, post-structuralist, and Neo-Marxist perspectives. This research adopted the actor-oriented perspective to analyze the varied responses of individuals in the same institutions toward policy changes. These responses reflected the various interests in forest resource management and shed light on the interrelations, negotiations, and power dynamics among actors in securing benefit distribution in forest governance. Hall et al. (2011) developed the power of exclusion theory to analyze the forms of exclusion used by actors to maintain access to forest resources. This analytical lens helped explain the resistance of certain parties to policy changes and show the double face of a policy.

Result and Discussion

History of Land Ownership and Forest Management in Shiu Village

A sign reading Mbah Diang religious tourism, placed along the roadside at the entrance to Shiu Village, immediately drew attention. Upon inquiry, Pak Semar, an elder in the community, explained that Mbah Diang was among the prominent persons who cleared the forest.

> Mbah Diang was the first person to clear the forest. In the past, people from everywhere met here to deliberate. When the others went home, Mbah Diang stayed behind and raised a family, and over time, the area grew as it is today. Many still visited his grave. (Interview with Pak Semar, 18 January 2024)
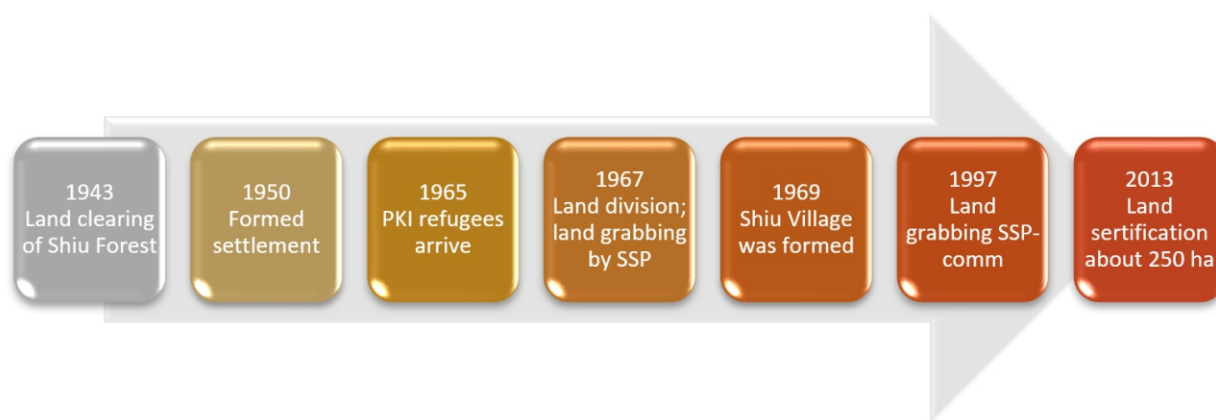
Figure 3. History of land ownership in Shiu Village

Mardiana et al. (2019) stated that forest clearing started in 1943 (the Japanese occupation). Figure 3 presents the history of land clearing until the formation of settlements in Shiu Village according to data from Mardiana et al. (2019) and information from informants in the field (Mr. Semar, Mr. Pana, and Mr. Diman).

In addition to external land, Shiu Village comprised an official forest area. Community-based management of this forest began with the formation of *Kelompok Tani Hutan,* or *KTH,* through the *Ma-Lu* (*Mantri-Lurah*) program. At that time, forest areas were not divided based on village administrative areas. The *Ma-Lu* program was a momentum for changing relations between Perhutani and forest communities. Through this program, the community surrounding the forest, which previously acted as laborers, could manage specific areas and implement a profit-sharing system between Perhutani and forest farmer groups. After the Joint Community Management program in 2001, the forest area began to recognize village administration with the existence of the *Hutan Pangkuan Desa* area and the formation of the *Lembaga Masyarakat Desa Hutan*. *Hutan Pangkuan Desa* area refers to a state forest area that is located within the administrative boundaries of a village, and is often subject to local community interaction and management. *Lembaga Masyarakat Desa Hutan* (LMDH) refers to village-based community organization involved in the collaborative manage-ment of forest resources with local communities. Its members consist of representatives from village institutions and/or local community members who demonstrate concern for, and commitment to, the sustainable management and conservation of forest resources.

The Social Forestry policy in the Perhutani area started in 2016. It opened up opportunities for the Ministry of Environment and Forestry to provide intervention in managing Java's forests. Interventions had been increasing, and Perhutani's authority in forest areas had even been eliminated with the existence of the KHDPK policy. Perhutani strongly opposed the KHDPK policy, which increased government intervention in managing Java's forests as a form of resistance. The institution's forms of resistance include filing a lawsuit to cancel the policy and holding large-scale demonstrations (Ramadhan & Amalia 2021). In the context of forest area management in Shiu Village, forestry forepersons began to patrol rarely and no longer engaged in planting activities after the felling season. The personal relationship between the community and Perhutani officers at the site level (extension officers, forepersons, heads of RPH) remained good even though the institution no longer had formal power in forest management activities. Perhutani remained the first choice for consultation in the transition period when problems arose in ongoing forest management activities.

Before the KHDPK policy, the Shiu Village community gained access to forest resources through a partnership with Perhutani. After the existence of this policy, the community became the leading actor and needed no cooperation or profit-sharing agreement. The community should transform from the Forest Partnership scheme to the Community Forestry scheme to comply with the new framework.
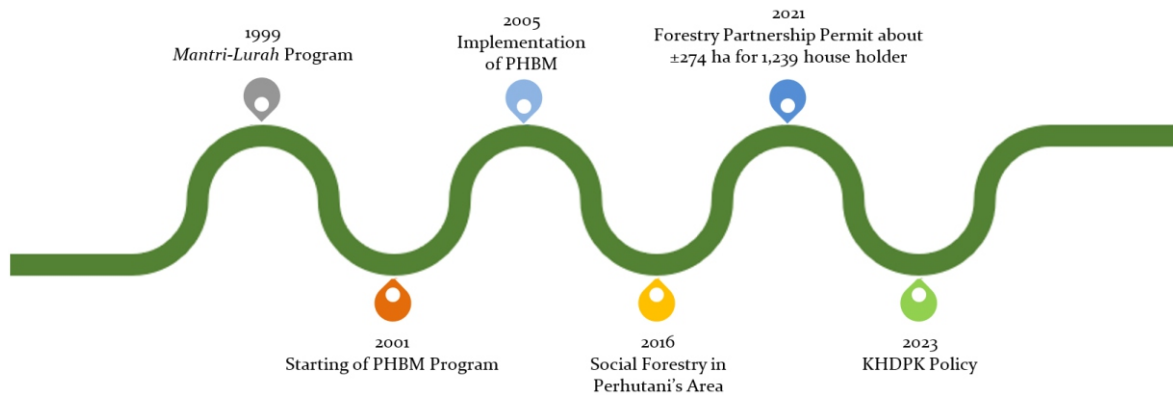
Figure 4. Forest area management history in Shiu Village (Note: PHBM = *Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat* - Joint Community Forest Management; KHDPK = *Kawasan Hutan dengan Pengelolaan Khusus* - Special Management Forest Areas)

This transformation changed the institutional structure of PMDH Wana Tani (holder of the Decree for Recognition and Protection of Forest Partnerships in Shiu Village) into the Wana Tani Forest Farmers Group. The history of forest area management in the village is presented in Figure 4.

Shiu Village is located at 600 meters above sea level and showcases a sloping topography. Its proximity to a volcanic area contributed to high soil fertility, enabling the successful cultivation of various fruits and vegetables. Pineapples and avocados were superior commodities in this area. In addition to agriculture, ecotourism was a developing sector in the village. A forested area, predominantly planted with mahogany, had been designated for ecotourism activities, offering camping grounds and off-road trails (Village Government 2023).

Dynamics of Forest Management Policy in Java

Perhutani, as a State-Owned Enterprise in the forestry sector, had been mandated to manage protected and production forest areas in Java and Madura Islands covering an area of ±2.4 million hectares based on Government Regulation No. 72/2010. The increasing pressure on forest areas in Java during the reform era and the heavy criticism from various parties towards the government in managing forests under the authority of the Perhutani had led to a collaborative management pattern through Joint Community Forest Management (*Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat*/PHBM) program. The scheme fostered partnerships between Perhutani and forest-adjacent communities in managing forest areas.

During this period, the government refrained from intervening directly in forest management activities assigned to the enterprise.

In 2016, the government required Perhutani to implement the Forestry Partnership scheme with the Minister of Environment and Forestry to empower communities (Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia 2016). When the cooperation plan was approved, the minister issued a Decree on Recognition and Protection of Forestry Partnerships. During this period, the government intended to level the position of the community surrounding the forest and Perhutani. In 2017, the government issued a policy on Social Forestry in the Perhutani working area (Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia 2016). The policy detailed the proportion of profit sharing for each type of forest area utilization activity and positioned the community as an applicant accompanied by a facilitator, in contrast to the previous regulation, which placed Perhutani as the applicant.

The intervention in Java's forest management was getting bigger, and it even changed forest governance when the KHDPK policy was issued in 2023 (Ministry of Environment and Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia 2023). This policy positioned the community around the forest as the leading actor without having to partner and share profits with Perhutani. The government removed the area designated as *KHDPK* from Perhutani's work area, limiting the authority of the enterprise. The dynamics of forest management policy on Java Island are presented in Figure 5.
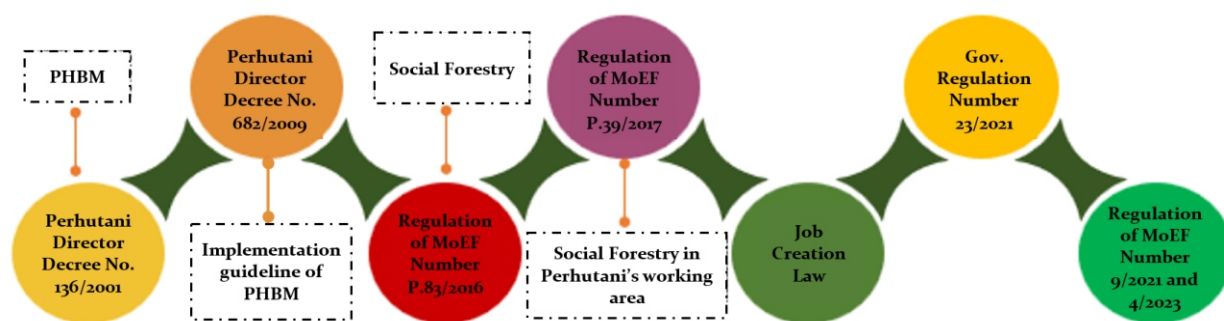
Figure 5. Dynamics of Forest Management Policy in Java (Note: PHBM = Pengelolaan Hutan Bersama Masyarakat - Joint Community Forest Management)

Responses of Perhutani, Forestry Service Branch, and the Community on KHDPK Policy

Despite operating under the same institutional framework, Perhutani's response at the site level varied. The background of the main tasks influences the response of each actor to KHDPK policy. The Head of RPH (Perhutani agency at the site level), who previously served as PHBM extension, tends to respond positively about the policy. TPM (community development team, part of Perhutani) also responded positively despite being concerned about the community's readiness to manage the forest independently. In contrast with the Head of RPH and TPM, Bagian Kesatuan Pemangkuan Hutan (BKPH) staff responded to KHDPK with negative tension because they felt great disappointment from being emasculated. These divergent views emphasized the importance of recognizing the internal complexity of actors in the same institution, not as a single entity (Svarstad et al. 2018).

Saya di Perdir nomor sekian itu kalau sudah jadi KHDPK, Perhutani lepas. Saya termasuk penonton yang kaget, karena teman-teman (masyarakat) seketika nggak bisa langsung dipasrahi gitu.
The Perdir (Perhutani regulation) elucidated that upon becoming the KHDPK, the forest areas should be released from Perhutani control. I was among the observers who were surprised because we could not immediately entrust the community with the management responsibilities. (Interview with head of RPH, 8 January 2024)

Kalau saya kan orang di tengah nggak bela sana nggak bela sini. Anggap saja Perhutani karena sudah menikmati lama, ibarat manusia kan yo gelo nduwe (ada rasa kecewa). Dulu bisa nguasai seribu hektare tapi sekarang cuma lima ratus hektare. Tapi kalau itu maunya negara kan nerima-nerima saja. Terutama di Tanah Kopi, nggak ada masyarakat yang menolak KHDPK, manut-manut

saja mereka. Kalau ada yang nolak itu kan pasti karena ada provokasi.
I position myself neutrally, without siding with either party. One could say that Perhutani, having managed the area for a long time, naturally felt a sense of loss, much like anyone would after enjoying something for years. They had control over a thousand hectares in the past, but now it had reduced to only five hundred. When such changes reflect the will of the state, they should accept without resistance. In the Tanah Kopi area, the local community had not opposed the KHDPK program. They have complied without objection. Any resistance that emerged was likely the result of external provocation. (Interview with TPM, 13 January 2024)

Ini pribadi saya. Bukan Perhutani ini yang bicara, ini yang bicara karyawan Perhutani. Karena sudah dianggap mampu, silakan jalan sendiri. Jangan ambil kami. Kan selama ini kami sudah kerja ngurus Perhutani, karena dianggap nggak mampu dilepas menjadi KHDPK. Eh Perhutani nguruso thek mu dewe, eh KHDPK silakan kan CDK. Lhoh kami belum mampu, kalau belum mampu kenapa ada. Terpaksa saya ngomong ngono.
This is my opinion, not an official statement from Perhutani, but a reflection of my perspective as one of its employees. Now that others are considered capable, they are encouraged to proceed independently but do not take us along. We have been managing Perhutani affairs for years and were now deemed unqualified and excluded when the areas become to KHDPK. Perhutani should manage its forests, while CDK should manage the KHDPK. However, CDK is not fully prepared to take on such responsibilities, and if that is the case, one must question why the program is already in place. I feel compelled to speak out of concern for this situation. (Interview with staff of BKPH, 13 January 2024)

The Head of RPH, who often interacted with the community, responded positively, provided there was intensive assistance in implementing the policy. In contrast, the response from BKPH was contradictory, with the informant's disappointment with the policy being apparent. The KHDPK policy introduced CDK as a new actor in forest management in Java. CDK organized forestry affairs in specific work areas under

the Provincial Forestry Service. The government appointed CDK as the party to realize the government's desire for the community to be able to manage forests independently. This new actor was also experiencing a transition of main tasks and functions, which required adaptation and a learning process in the implementation. As part of the process, CDK learned from the community's experience with Perhutani in managing forest areas.

> Previously, CDK worked outside the forest area, with minimal financial turnover. Activities were limited to planting, and the groups functioned as a platform for adaptation and a learning process. Within the forest area, CDK was expected to manage significant assets. It was not money-oriented, and the primary goal was to absorb the budget, unlike Perhutani, which was profit-driven. The challenge lay in managing such a vast area with limited resources. CDK's personnel consisted of only seven extension workers across Kediri Regency, who were responsible for overseeing large areas of land that needed to be profitable, environmentally sustainable, and socially balanced. (Interview with CDK Extension Officer, 27 January 2024)

PMDH Wana Tani responded to the implementation of KHDPK policy by collaborating with CDK to accelerate the transformation process. From a regulatory standpoint, PMDH Wana Tani was positioned to benefit from the policy. According to the Head of PMDH, KHDPK policy represented a welcome change, as it prevents the community from being manipulated by Perhutani. Under this new arrangement, the institution could independently regulate the profit-sharing mechanism derived from forest resource management. However, concerns remained regarding the limited institutional capacity at the site level.

Mr. Pana, a PMDH administrator actively engaged in forest management, perceived the KHDPK policy as burdensome. The policy increased responsibilities, but participation from other administrators in forest management remained minimal. As a result, the workload that should have been distributed among all members and administrators fell disproportionately on a few individuals. Mr. Pana emphasized that institutional strengthening should take priority over economic assistance, as this kind of aid often creates internal conflict when the institutional foundation is weak.

Benefit Sharing Mechanism: Before and After KHDPK Policy

The forest area in Shiu Village was more than just a collection of trees. It held considerable ecological and economic value. Shiu Forest contains mahogany with trunk circumferences of approximately two meters and teak plus trees planted since the 1970s. It also hosted the Shiu Exotic Park Ecotourism site, abundant animal fodder, and *petung bambu*, whose edible shoots (*rebung*) supplement local food supplies and offers commercial value. Furthermore, fruit-bearing species such as durian, avocado, and pineapple contributed to the forest's multiple functions. In addition to timber production, Shiu Forest provided critical food resources for the local population and wildlife, including deer and monkeys. The forest also performed an essential ecological role by functioning as a water buffer for lower-lying villages, particularly during rainfall and volcanic activity from Kelud Mountain.

Through cooperation with Perhutani under the PHBM program, forest area management allocated cultivation plots to Shiu Village community members who were part of PMDH Wana Tani. Each member received one plot of approximately 0.1 hectares. The allocation was conducted through a lottery system, preventing members from selecting specific locations for their assigned plots. PMDH administrators received a larger share than regular members. The chairman managed seven plots, while the secretary and treasurer managed six plots for each. The working group leaders and coordinator heads managed four plots each, and administrators serving as section members received three. The village head, who served on the advisory council, was assigned six plots.

PMDH administrator was given priority in selecting the plot locations, subject to the condition that adjacent plots could not exceed two in number. This land-sharing mechanism remained unchanged during the transition to the Social Forestry scheme in the Perhutani working area and under KHDPK policy. The community could cultivate understory crops, provided these activities did not interfere with Perhutani plantings. The community should pay a pre-planting fee of 185 thousand rupiah per plot for planting perennial crops in logged-over areas that Perhutani has not yet reforested. In addition, a non-

tax state revenue (PNBP) fee of 300 thousand rupiah per plot was imposed. These financial obligations were abolished under the KHDPK policy.

Another benefit received by forest-adjacent communities was profit sharing with Perhutani from using timber forest products. The proportion of the sharing was based on the production inputs contributed by each party. During the PHBM program initiated by Perhutani, PMDH Wana Tani received 25% of the profit. However, the Social Forestry scheme implemented through the Forestry Partnership program in the Perhutani working area decreased the share received to 12.5%. Even though the scheme comprised greater community participation in forest management, it reduced the proportion of profits allocated. The KHDPK policy applied no profit-sharing mechanisms because it transferred forest management authority to the community. Perhutani no longer had jurisdiction over forest areas designated as KHDPK zones nor played a role in determining benefit-sharing arrangements. Under KHDPK, the Social Forestry group assumed the primary role in managing forest resources and held the authority to establish profit-sharing proportions, with support from a facilitator.

Access and Exclusion Mechanisms for Implementing KHDPK

PHBM, initiated by Perhutani, required communities to establish LMDH to benefit from forest utilization activities. In Shiu Village, all residents had access to forest resources, as LMDH was composed of local community members. However, the degree of access to these resources varied among individuals. The disparity in the size of cultivated areas between members and administrators and between ordinary residents and village officials or heads reflected unequal access to resources shaped by social identity. The differences directly influenced the distribution of benefits. This situation supported Ribot and Peluso's (2003) argument that access constitutes a bundle of powers. Members who transferred their cultivated area to other administrators due to limited business capital experienced reduced benefits, showing how capital ownership could determine access and perpetuate inequality in forest management. The Head of the PMDH Association in Tanah Kopi District

also explained that the extent of land managed by an institution often depended on its closeness to Perhutani, reflecting the role of negotiated social relationships, such as friendship or proximity to power, in enhancing a person or group's access to resources (Ribot & Peluso 2003).

To maintain access to resources (Ribot & Peluso 2003), PMDH adopted a strategy of engaging village officials and hamlet representatives in the management structure of PMDH Wana Tani. The village head was appointed to the advisory council to facilitate cooperation with external actors. Furthermore, management allocated a portion of the cultivated area to local government officials to secure institutional support from the village administration in forest management activities. PHBM program, which positioned communities as partners, adopted a profit-sharing mechanism based on production factors. Due to limited access to capital and technology, PMDH Wana Tani primarily contributed labor, participating in land clearing, nursery establishment, maintenance, and patrols. Perhutani, by contrast, provided nursery funding, marketing, and technological and administrative support for timber production. In return for this labor contribution from planting to harvesting, PMDH Wana Tani received a 25% share of profits. Despite continuous logging activities in PMDH Wana Tani's working area, the institution received no share since 2019. Perhutani justified this by citing financial losses, although PMDH Wana Tani remains obligated to protect Perhutani's plantations. Through regulatory power (Hall et al. 2011), PMDH Wana Tani was effectively excluded from the benefits of forest resource management while expecting it to fulfill operational responsibilities.

KHDPK policy, introduced alongside the Social Forestry program, served as an oasis by offering the promise of increased access for communities living in surrounding forest areas. Before assuming a central role in forest management, PMDH Wana Tani should transform into a recognized Social Forestry scheme, either Community Forest, Village Forest, or Community Plantation Forest. While the transformation appeared straightforward in policy, implementation encountered power struggles and procedural obstacles. PMDH Wana Tani viewed the

transformation process as slow and overly complex. The absence of clear guidance during the transitional phase hindered efforts to compile the necessary application documents. Perhutani, which previously oversaw forest management, distanced from the process, citing that the area no longer fell under its jurisdiction. Meanwhile, CDK, designated as the new facilitator following KHDPK policy, could not provide adequate support due to limited personnel and the lack of an official decree assigning the extension workers to assist PMDH Wana Tani.

KHDPK policy increased access by placing forest communities at the center of management without requiring a partnership or profit-sharing arrangement with Perhutani. However, the success of this initiative hinges on continuous and comprehensive support. A sole emphasis on economic development, while institutional capacity building remains overlooked, would leave the overarching goals of KHDPK policy unmet. Limited human resource capacity in these communities further reinforced the urgency of sustained technical assistance.

The transformation process, which failed to include all PMDH members, led to an imbalance in access to information regarding the new forest management policies. The lack of inclusive participation undermined the transformation's legitimacy, excluding many members from decision-making processes and remaining unaware of KHDPK policy and its implications.

> *Kalau mau ganti anggota dan pengurus harus siap proses pengajuannya lama. Tapi kalau kalian ngikut dulu (kepengurusan yang ada sekarang), keluar SK HKm, kita bahas AD/ART yang baru, aturan mainnya apa. Waktu pembahasan AD/ ART ada usulan mengenai mekanisme pergantian pengurus, silakan.*
> Replacing members and the management board required a lengthy application process. However, they could use the current management structure to apply for the HKm permit. After the issuance of the HKm decree, they could discuss a new statute and the governing rules, including the mechanisms for the management board's alteration. (Interview with CDK extension workers, 27 January 2024)

The KHDPK policy, which enabled PMDH Wana Tani to develop ecotourism and increase the value of non-timber forest products, required personnel with technological and educational proficiency. In response, the Head of PMDH involved youth in managing Shiu Exotic Park and recruited individuals

with administrative and computer skills. This situation excluded those without technological literacy who relied on manual labor for survival, such as farm workers, or those who worked for tending others' livestock.

Perhutani's control over the timber product market presents another challenge. Previously responsible for timber administration and marketing, Perhutani's role has shifted under KHDPK, placing the responsibility on local communities. Without consistent support, independent management and sales of timber products are unrealistic for communities. Given the lack of readiness to meet forest management requirements, positioning the community as the leading actors might backfire. Rather than increasing access for marginalized groups, the policy risks further excluding those already vulnerable, offering no viable alternatives for sustaining livelihoods.

Conclusion

In conclusion, responses to KHDPK policy varied among stakeholders, even in the same institution. Perhutani had diverse reactions, ranging from strong opposition, including demonstrations, to concerns about the community's ability to manage independently without intensive support. Additionally, there had been a reluctance to withdraw from providing on-site assistance. Social Forestry Group and CDK responded positively, collaborating to accelerate the transformation process. This cooperation allowed Social Forestry Group to obtain permits for legal forest management under the new regulations. Some members had viewed KHDPK policy as burdensome due to its increased responsibilities, while not all members had actively participated. Institutional strengthening had been deemed more critical than economic assistance programs, which could have led to conflicts.

Following the issuance of the KHDPK policy, there has been a significant shift in the profit-sharing mechanism. Perhutani no longer had the authority to determine the distribution of profits, as this responsibility had been transferred to the Social Forestry group, now the primary actor in forest management. KHDPK policy promised expanded

access to communities surrounding the forest areas through the Social Forestry program. However, before gaining this increased access and assuming control over forest management, the Social Forestry group had been required to transform into either a Community Forest, Village Forest, or Community Plantation Forest.

Despite the transformation appearing simple in policy, its implementation had been fraught with power struggles. KHDPK policy had aimed to increase access but also risked excluding certain groups from forest management. During the transition, unclear regulations and inadequate guidance led to confusion and slowed the process, hindering forest utilization activities. Technology-based forest management and ecotourism also posed challenges for those who were less educated or not technologically proficient. Perhutani's withdrawal from forest utilization had further limited community engagement in timber marketing and management. This research acknowledged the limitations in obtaining information about the private sector's role in forest management in Java. Further research on this topic has been needed to address these gaps.

Acknowledgment

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