



## Model of Alas Purwo National Park Conservation Effort based on Local Wisdom

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### **Abstract**

The interaction between the community around buffer village and Alas Purwo National Park is intense because the community's reliance on natural resources is still high. Natural resources are abundant in Alas Purwo National Park and are directly bordered by residential areas. The form of community interaction around buffer villages with is the selection of forest and beach results. The problem in voting activities conducted by the community, so far is that in addition to providing economic value to the community, this activity is also likely to result in the damage of natural resources. Forests provide benefits as well as threats to the world, especially people in the area around the forest. People around the forest have their own ways to manage the forest to keep the forest sustainable, one way to save it is to re-enact the local wisdom found in the communities around the forest.

**Keywords:** *Conservation; Alas Purwo National Park; Local Wisdom*

### **Introduction**

Indonesia still ranks second in the world in terms of biodiversity wealth, after Brazil covers 10% of flowering plant species, 12% mammals, 16% reptiles and amphibians, 17% of birds and 25% of the world's fish species (KLH, 2009). Abundance and large numbers of plants and wildlife in Indonesia, placing Indonesia as the third highest level of diversity in the world (Director General of KSDAE, 2016). The Government of Indonesia has designated a conservation area of 521 units, an area of approximately 27.1 million hectares to protect biodiversity wealth (Directorate General of PHKA, 2014). One of them is the natural wealth that must be maintained as a counterweight to nature and the lungs of the earth, because in forest ecosystems there is a variety of biodiversity and non-biological. Forests are a very potential area in the socioeconomic life of people living in the area around the forest. Villagers around forests or so-called traditional communities are inseparable because they are part of the forest ecosystem.

As the last hamlet that borders Alas Purwo National Park, it is located in connection with Perhutani area which is also a buffer zone. Since the opening of Kutorejo area, the population has continued to grow over time. In 1942 there were only hundreds of people, but in 1953 there was an increase of about 800 people, now estimated to be about 1,200 Heads of Families. The increase in the population of Kutorejo, feared the existence of purwo forest area will face pressure. Although the forest in purwo plinth at the time was still a Wildlife Sanctuary, it did not deter outsiders from continuing to urge

entry into the area. The condition of the management and supervision of the area at the time was bad. Many poachers often go in and out of the forest to hunt wildlife in the form of bulls, birds, and other animals that can be sold. Some types of animals are diminishing and difficult to find such as bulls, leopards, *kacers*, *cucak ijo* in the past decade.

Various activities of people in the forest at that time continued to approach the area that is currently called the core zone, where they established a temporary settlement of the resting place of the earthers in search of forest products and marine biota. In fact, challenges in forest protection and management in Indonesia often come from local communities around the forest. Magdalena (2013) stated that the sustainability of forest management depends heavily on the participation of local communities in management. The relationship between forests and local communities is not separated from the concept of ecosystems which is an ecological system formed by the reciprocal relationship between living creatures and their environment (Soemarwoto, 2004). Gauthama, et al (2003) mentioned that Javanese people implement the nature of human relations with nature with the philosophy of *memayu hayuning bawana* (struggling for the safety of the world and all its contents in order to remain preserved and harmonious). It is this perception of society that can be used as a moral guide and *pranata* in regulating human relations with the use of forest natural resources in a responsible and sustainable manner.

In fact, the interaction of the community to the forest with the local wisdom has been going on long before the establishment of the forest area into a conservation area. Local wisdom that can support conservation is formed from the result of interaction between humans and their environment so that traditional communities have a deeper understanding of the environment (Beltran and Phillips, 2000). Local wisdom shows an inseparable relationship between typical human behavior and its environment, which is to form human behavior collectively in the form of norms that must be adhered to hereditary.

Efforts to study the interconnectedness of community interactions have actually been carried out, but still have not provided comprehensive results. Van Assendelf (1991) has conducted research on the human impact on the Alas Purwo National Park area, but this study only describes various human activities along the coastline, not specifically identifying the influence of human activity. A more concisting study on human interaction with national park areas has actually been conducted by Pramusanti (2001) but only limited to interacting with the public in the selection of natural resources. Some cases of failure in conservation occurred as mentioned by Iswandono (2016) in this study there has been no meeting point in joint management between forest area managers and traditional communities in conducting forest conservation, therefore forest management should integrate local wisdom with conservation principles.

The urgency of reviewing participation in participation activities in conservation activities that are top down is proven to provide no maximum results. Mendez-Lopez (2014) conducted research in Mexico also acknowledging that the low participation of people in conservation activities due to the many conditions of society that are not yet fully researched. Thaman's findings (2016) prove that rural communities' participation in conservation activities in Portugal is only 43%, making conservation ineffective. Unlike in Fiji, the bottom up approach shows 88% community involvement, making conservation activities effective. The effect of community participation on conservation success can also be seen in Costa Rica, when people participate then the private sector is involved (Aguilar-Stoen, 2015). This condition gives meaning to activities that use a participatory approach and togetherness will give good results.

From the above description it is seen that with the heterogeneity of existing society causes the emergence of variations in social and cultural behavior in the community towards the environment. With the uniqueness, cultural diversity, environmental relations and traditional communities in alas purwo national park area, make uniqueness and attraction to be researched in accordance with the problems in modern times, as has been done by previous researchers who are still related to humans and the

environment. Novelty of this research is to find a way to do biodiversity conservation by integrating the local wisdom of the communities around the Alas Purwo National Park area.

### ***Methodology***

This research uses the paradigm of constructivism as a philosophical foundation for understanding societal reality, with a qualitative approach conducted by designing case studies. Qualitative research emphasizes processes and meanings that are not rigorously tested or measured in terms of quantity or frequency (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Informants are defined with purposive techniques. Data collection using observations and interviews. This research focuses on extracting data on local community interactions around the Alas Purwo National Park area and community perception as well as the social, economic, cultural factors behind it. Data analysis using interactive models, including components, data collection, data reduction, data feed, draw conclusions.

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

Local communities in buffer zones are positioned as subjects or main actors in various models of regional management, regional care. People who live in the buffer area of Alas Purwo National Park in general still have a low socioeconomic level and have a physical dependence with the potential of natural resources in the national park area. They enter national parks to meet the daily needs of firewood, fish, animals and other natural resources.

The support and active participation of the surrounding community in maintaining forest sustainability will be difficult to realize if it is not offset by the real form of government efforts in improving the welfare of the community (Yelin et al, 2015). The above view is in line with what was expressed (Marwa et al. 2010) that good forest management should be able to provide optimal benefits for the community by taking into account the social, ecological, economic and cultural aspects of the communities surrounding the forest. Because one of the keys to the success of national park management is not separated from the attitude and support of the surrounding community (Kadir et al. 2012). There are several aspects of Alas Purwo National Park management that involve the community, one of which is a buffer area development program implemented in the buffer zone, but also carried out activities to people outside the area who care about conservation. There is also the management of buffer zones which is critical to successful conservation goals.

### **Forms of Participatory Management**

One alternative in maintaining the area of Alas Purwo National Park can be done preventively or persuasively. Bina cinta alam is a routine activity where students are invited to love the environment. Understanding is done by giving students a view of the importance of nature to human survival. One way that can be done is through prevention of the destruction of ecosystem natural resources by communities around the national park area. In line with the intention, Alas Purwo National Park Hall in its role as an institution that manages in the field of conservation pursues natural love development efforts by conducting training or coaching environmental education in the community. Through nature love development activities, it is hoped that people will care more and understand the benefits of the preservation of natural resources and their ecosystems. Nature Lovers Group as a component of the younger generation has a very important role in supporting the program of conservation activities of nature conservation and the environment.

Nature love development activities are routinely carried out in order to establish the character of themselves with the character of environmental education among students who will be expected to be agents who can and are able to disseminate and invite those around them to be able to care more about the

environment. Nature-loving development activities are carried out by coaching visitors, counseling to the surrounding community, visits to schools, and the construction of conservation cadres. The construction of conservation cadres is expected to help conservation activities with the aim of playing an active role in preserving conservation areas. Nature love development activities aim to instill a love of the environment and provide an understanding to always stick to the basics of conservation both in daily life and in activities. Environmental sustainability activities involving various elements of society, often carried out aimed at introducing the importance of ecosystems. In order to understand how to appreciate nature, on the other hand the surrounding community is embraced by participating in various activities carried out in the forest. All that is done by the Forest Police and its ranks as a form of micro-approach by embracing all parties consisting of the general public, people, lelono actors, tourists, and students to be invited in the activity of introducing forest sustainability by means of socialization, as the smallest unit approach to achieve the goal of maintaining the balance of forest ecosystems.

### **Non Participatory Management Forms**

The term myth is closely related to the problem of beliefs or the public belief system. Myths become part of the public belief system, will certainly affect the mindset and behavior that will lead to ways of environmental management. In the creation of human civilization, according to the belief of the local people around the national park area can not escape myth and nature. Regardless of the true nature of the myth, it gives a lesson to the wider public how human attitudes towards nature. Although in hereditary stories, there is an element of unseen and horror, but society can relatively follow the orders implied in the story.

The people around the national park area do various forms of respect, one of which is to the mountains and forests as a space that is believed to be an "inhabited" place in the sense that there is supernatural or haunted power. This form of respect apparently creates a way of behaving that is not far away with conservation principles. In the principle of conservation it is necessary to respect each other and look after nature. People will rethink if they do activities in a place that is considered haunted. They will guard and respect the place, although the form of the homage is in the form of certain rituals, but in this hai is able to create a wise attitude to appreciate nature. Somewhere that is considered haunted makes human activity rare in the place, it can instead maintain the balance of forest ecosystems due to reduced human activity. Myth has a strong relationship and correlation in maintaining forest sustainability, because the surrounding community is moved by its awareness by showing a friendly attitude to the life of flora and fauna. With confidence in the myth, people can understand that forests consisting of several clusters of trees are believed to have souls and can provide protection to humans.

Some myths also apply to certain animals that are considered sacred, such as snakes, crows, owls. The survival of these animals is more assured, because people consider this animal sacred. Since animals are part of the ecosystem network, it also plays its part in maintaining ecosystem balance. For example the myth of Dewi Sri who incarnates as a rice snake, in fact this myth existed long before the science about the environment developed. The surrounding community is rounding up the snake because it is considered the incarnation of the Dewi Sri who brought the blessing and fertility of rice fields. Through the glasses of science the presence of snakes will help farmers in controlling rat pests. The impurities can also be fertilizers that can maintain soil fertility.

The local community around the national park area prioritizes the *sesajen* used to honor the waiting for certain places, such as large trees. Almost all areas in Java and some other regions in Indonesia, there is a local culture that considers a place with a large banyan tree is a sacred place. This large banyan tree with long dangling roots has various kinds of abstinence, if violated it will make the infringing person will suffer bad luck. One of his abstinences is that it is forbidden to pee indiscriminately even near banyan trees. Based on the stories circulating, those who are desperate to do so will be centile by banyan tree-goers and can make people disabled for life. And whosoever dares to cut down a banyan tree, he shall have misfortune in life, and he shall be poor to seven derivatives. This abstinence is based

on the belief of javanese people who believe in banyan trees as the home of delicate creatures. When their house is disturbed, it will certainly cause outrage and will condemn anyone who dares to disturb the house.

The local wisdom has a positive impact on the environment, where if a place is considered sacred because there are banyan trees. Therefore this is one form of conservation, because by maintaining the tree maintains a water source, where the banyan tree has many roots and usually near the tree there is a source of water. In this case, the assumption of the function of the manifesto is due to the tendency of a person to see the condition will avoid logging. For those who still believe in the implementation of cultural rituals *sesajen* serves as a bridge between the human world and God. This activity is an attempt to achieve salvation in life, as well as become a ritual of community customs. The inherent value of this culture, indirectly becomes a social identity. This identity is also very inherent and is characterized by the local community, where this concept includes all aspects of life.

The ancestors created the *sesajen* ritual is a fruit of thought that is very beneficial for life because the symbol contained in the *sesajen* is a lesson that must be maintained every generation. *Sesajen* contains sustainable meaning in order to maintain values and norms in society (Adam, 2019). In the end it became clear, the local people around the buffer area of the national park area respected nature and a place of speciality. The form of respect is not limited to physical, but the meaning behind the event and place. This is a circle of life, where life is formed in harmony then peace will be realized.

## Conclusion

Some aspects of *alas purwo* national park management involving the community, one of which is a buffer area development program implemented in the buffer area, but also carried out activities to people outside the area who care about conservation. The form of participatory management consists of, *bina cinta alam*, development of conservation cadres. While the form of non-participatory management, local communities around the national park area can not escape myths and nature. Regardless of the true nature of the myth, it gives a lesson to the wider public how human attitudes towards nature. People believe that nature has a power that can benefit, but nature can also punish people if people are greedy in utilizing natural resources.

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