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Penulis: Sajogyo

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**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CENTRAL KALIMANTAN BASED ON
LOCAL CULTURE AND RESOURCES**
(by Sajogyo, Center for R&D People's Economies, YAE, Bogor/Palangka Raya)
Bogor, June 30th, 2001

1. In a Draft Five Years Plan (2001-2005) for Central Kalimantan the Province Government has put these priorities :
 - a) Economic development based on existing potentials of people's economies
 - b) Enhancing the region's capacities and empowering its people in a democratic political system, under the rule of law and according guidelines of local autonomy (based on 2 Laws of 1999, being implemented starting in 2001)
 - c) Achieving higher levels of social welfare (especially health and education) in a society based on religious tenets with a resilient local culture.

In a recent People's Congress of Central Kalimantan (4-7 June 2001) in Palangka Raya the dominant call is to base "regional development" on the tenets of Dayak culture (the dominant ethnic group) with its inherent openness to accept in-migrants as welcome guests, provided they uphold the essence of local culture (as part of gestures towards reconciliation after the recent ethnic conflict involving inhabitants of Madurese ethnic origins).

2. A recent report (1998) by a Consultant Team (under JICA, Japan), a Study on Comprehensive Regional Development in Central/West Kalimantan has a specific basis for its recommendations : a needed "return to" (or "to keep") the "Kalimantan System", to build on the existing natural resources base and its local culture with its shifting cultivation pattern on forest lands (for annual upland rice crops) in which local farmers are best induced into a tree-crop farming regime, in the beginning along side the old patterns.

The new model of intensive farming, especially the transmigration model (mainly based on annual food crops with new inputs) is seen as not suited, both to existing natural resources base and the culture of local farmers. To "retain" The Kalimantan System that will become more open to market economy, the Team recommended that a special Institute for Basic and Applied Research be established (to serve Central and West Kalimantan) to guide the needed policies and practices of sustainability.

Vast tracts to open upland areas, in a "corridor" in Central Kalimantan, spanning from its western part to the eastern part of the Province (north of Palangka Raya) are to be opened with its need on transportation infrastructures, across several big river valleys.

In terms of sectoral "action plans", included are projects on forestry (to include study on management of forest fires), on smallholders tree crops (rubber, oil palm), some small irrigation works in upland areas, needed local infrastructures to improve communication among subdistrict centers and its surrounding, isolated villages, large investment in urban

infrastructures, including modern harbour facilities in Pangkalan Bun, and a selected list of small and medium business, related to farming and other non-farming enterprises, to strengthen rural-urban links.

In context of local autonomy, the list of recommended projects (action plans: from “study”, to “pilot”, and “expanding existing ones”) is useful as a guide for moving towards agreement among provinces and kabupaten/city governments on priorities and share of burdens and duties, to be put in each specific local planning, while also useful for negotiating with central government to take on specific projects on the National Budget (especially large infrastructures).

3. With its basis of the existing Kalimantan System, in the processes of modernizing its farming system, specific “essentials” are to be put in place. In a rural economy, the first essential is control over land by farmers, by household units and by the local community. Part of new thinking on Agrarian Reform, the first tenet to be observed, is one based on Basic Human Rights in which every citizen has economic rights to be protected by the state. In the current 1945 Constitution one item points to the role of the State as the Ultimate Agent “in control over land”. However, in the light of the Basic Human Rights Law this is to be spelled out to mean control by the State to mean duties of the State’s governance in land use / management matters while citizens have equal rights on natural resources, either as individuals or in a group/by community. Seen in this way relations between the State and citizens are not one of subordination but based on equality (tenets of equity).

In the New Law of Forestry (1999) local (or “adat”) community forests are part of “State Forests”. A special item (number 67) states that the rights of the local community includes rights to harvest forest products “for every day’s needs”, in which its management by the adat community is not to contradict the laws of the State (in which the Minister of Forestry has the highest authority!).

On the other hand, the same item mentions “people’s rights to be empowered by the State in achieving social welfare”. However, the latter point is divorced from management of forestlands by adat community along lines of business enterprises in which empowerment by the State (and by private business) will be then more meaningful.

Note : in a paper submitted by Luqman McKingley at the People’s Congress of Central Kalimantan 4-7 June, this line of reasoning has been developed further , in which an “adat community” (at Desa or Inter-Desa level?) is free to have business relations with a private business to develop its forest resources as a source of sustainable income, to become the basis of self-reliant community development to sustain better local education and health for its people.

4. The JICA sponsored study on Comprehensive Regional Development if it is to be continued (to decide on more concrete action plans for each priority location, choices to be made by provincial and kabupaten/town governments, also some by the Central Government) is an instance of “ a study by outsiders”, top down, in which some Indonesian bureaucrats and experts are involved.

In the new era of decentralization, especially if it is to mean democratic decentralization, a second approach will be needed, that is of participatory ways of studying needs and potentials of people (especially people’s economies, with its unknown traits : strengths and weakness). Such methods of “cooperative inquiry” (involving all stakeholders, from the bottom up to district level where government agents and private business/middlemen together insightful people from civil society institutions) are not only “participatory” but also have its “empowering impacts” on stakeholders involved.

In this learning process two targets are:

- a) Strengthening civil society organizations in specific forms of interactions and cooperation, specially involving local NGOs and members of local campuses (institutions of higher learning). On the latter, resolutions in People’s Congress of Central Kalimantan, June 2001, were recommendations that adat communities be empowered on the basis of rights over forestlands in each locality. The same opportunity is also to be opened for institutions of higher learning, not unlike a provision in the 1860’s in the USA when a start was made with developing a university campus in each State, by providing tracts of land for its initial capital and use in farm experimentations.
- b) Strengthening local government bureaucracy (not only at province and kabupaten/city levels, but also at villages , the closest units to the people) along “good governance” tenets, to build the capacity and political will in their duties to serve the people and empower them into self-reliant communities.

The problem of where to start, “the chicken or the egg” (b and a), is to be solved by one stroke, to start with action research, involving stakeholders at each level (the local levels has different layers/strata, at the bottom small groups formed by household units) that will develop into a cycle of discussion-and-actions according to agreed upon aims/targets to be achieved based on specific methods and on specific outcome indicators.

Note : Last June, the Center of R&D P3R-YAE has its local branch in Palangka Raya formally established (with due recognition by Palangka Raya’s Mayor). The unit will start to form a local consortium with local NGOs and Palangka Raya University (a State Institution) to cooperate with province government (to be expanded and include cooperation with kabupaten governments, at least two : Kapuas and Kotawaringin Timur). It will start with regional workshop, a cooperation between regional/local government and consortium of

NGOs/campus(es) to agree on next steps in the process of stakeholders's participation and empowerment in its first year (Fist Stage). This will result in a needed action plan to make the Draft Five Years Plan more operational (to be readied for approval by Regional/Local Body of Representatives/DPRDs). At the same time, the process will also push the People's Congress Committee towards drafting operational plans in each field of social-economic-cultural development on the basis of People's Congress recommendations.

For its first year involvement (2002) in New Directions in Central Kalimantan, YAE (and Consortium) will submit a proposal to get needed funds from funding resources in Jakarta which may yield decisions at relatively short notice (if needed funds are below a certain level).