

POLITICAL ECOLOGY OF PEAT LANDSCAPE DYNAMICS IN INDONESIA: ACCESS, VALUES, AND COLLECTIVE ACTION

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**RURAL SOCIOLOGY STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
BOGOR AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY
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SUMMARY

ALI YANSYAH ABDURRAHIM. Political Ecology of Peat Landscape Dynamics in Indonesia: Access, Values, and Collective Action. Supervised by ARYA HADI DHARMAWAN, SOERYO ADIWIBOWO, MEINE VAN NOORDWIJK, and HERRY YOGASWARA.

Peatland management in Indonesia is a socio-political and ecological issue rooted in rural sociology and political economy, where environmental sustainability intersects with structural power and economic interests. Tropical peatlands are vital ecosystems, playing a key role in maintaining the global carbon cycle and biodiversity. However, these peatlands have suffered severe degradation due to large-scale conversion for oil palm plantations. This degradation is compounded by weak law enforcement, corruption, and conflicting interests among stakeholders, including multinational corporations, government agencies, and local communities. The interaction between ecological and social subsystems, shaped by power imbalances, highlights the complexity of addressing peatland degradation and restoration within Indonesia's political ecology framework.

This study focuses on three key aspects of peatland governance. First, it investigates how access to peatlands is negotiated, contested, and maintained among different actors, including local communities, private corporations, and government agencies. Formal mechanisms, such as government regulations and permitting systems, are often dominated by powerful actors who exploit legal loopholes to secure control of peatland resources. In contrast, marginalized communities rely on informal mechanisms rooted in traditional norms, social networks, and cultural practices to sustain their access to peatlands. These informal mechanisms are often undermined by systemic inequities, further disadvantaging local communities.

Second, the study explores the conflicts between instrumental and relational values in land-use decisions. Instrumental values, which emphasize economic benefits derived from resource extraction, are typically prioritized by corporations and government agencies. On the other hand, relational values, which reflect the cultural, spiritual, and social significance of peatlands, are deeply ingrained in local communities. These competing priorities often lead to tensions in decision-making processes and hinder collaborative restoration efforts. The clash between short-term economic goals and long-term environmental and cultural sustainability underscores the challenges of aligning diverse stakeholder values in peatland governance.

Third, the research examines the role of collective action in peatland restoration. Successful restoration efforts require equitable collaboration among stakeholders, but power imbalances, resource competition, and misaligned policies often impede these efforts. Nevertheless, the study identifies instances where strategic alliances among NGOs, local communities, and government agencies have led to effective restoration initiatives. These examples highlight the potential of collective action to foster sustainable outcomes when supported by trust, transparency, and institutional support.

To achieve these objectives, the study employs a qualitative research approach with a case study design, focusing on the Pelang Peat Landscape in West Kalimantan. This region was selected for its representation of one of the most

degraded peatlands in Indonesia and its governance complexities. The research utilized multiple data collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and participant observation, to capture diverse perspectives on power dynamics, access mechanisms, value conflicts, and collective action. The data were analyzed thematically to identify patterns and relationships that shape resource governance and restoration outcomes.

The findings of this study have significant implications for peatland governance policies. Effective restoration requires an inclusive approach that integrates environmental, social, and cultural dimensions while addressing the unequal distribution of power and resources among stakeholders. Policy reforms should prioritize the empowerment of local communities, ensuring their active participation in decision-making processes. Strengthening law enforcement and improving transparency are essential to minimize illegal access to peatlands, resolve overlapping land claims, and reduce conflicts between local and national governance systems. Furthermore, incorporating relational values into governance frameworks is critical for fostering stewardship and respecting cultural ties to the land.

A key contribution of this research is the development of the Political Ecology of Access and Collective Action (PEACA) framework, which provides an integrative approach to analyzing resource governance. The PEACA framework is structured around two pillars: Hybrid Access Mechanisms (HAM) and Value-Driven Collective Action (VDCA). HAM examines the interplay between formal governance systems, such as laws and policies, and informal systems, including traditional practices and local networks. This pillar highlights both the adaptability of governance structures and their vulnerabilities to exploitation by powerful actors. VDCA emphasizes the role of instrumental and relational values in shaping collective responses to governance challenges, offering practical pathways to align competing interests and foster sustainable collaboration.

The PEACA framework offers policymakers a systematic approach to addressing hybrid governance challenges. Its adaptability allows it to be applied across various socio-political and ecological contexts, providing actionable strategies for aligning competing stakeholder values. These strategies can also address global resource management issues, such as climate change mitigation and biodiversity conservation. By focusing on the intersection of governance structures, stakeholder values, and collective action, the PEACA framework provides a roadmap for achieving equitable and sustainable resource management.

Future research should explore the relevance of these findings in other regions of Indonesia and tropical peatlands globally. Integrating quantitative ecological data could enhance the assessment of governance decisions' long-term impacts. Additionally, deeper examination of informal access mechanisms and the roles of gender and youth in peatland governance would provide a more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder dynamics. Research on the scalability of the PEACA framework is also necessary to refine its applicability to diverse resource management challenges worldwide.

Keywords: Political ecology, Access mechanisms, Instrumental and Relational values, Collective action, Peatland governance.

RINGKASAN

ALI YANSYAH ABDURRAHIM. Ekologi Politik Dinamika Perubahan Lanskap Gambut di Indonesia: Akses, Nilai, dan Aksi Kolektif. Dibimbing oleh ARYA HADI DHARMAWAN, SOERYO ADIWIBOWO, MEINE VAN NOORDWIJK, dan HERRY YOGASWARA.

Permasalahan pengelolaan lahan gambut di Indonesia merupakan isu sosial-politik dan ekologi yang berakar pada sosiologi pedesaan dan ekonomi politik, di mana keberlanjutan lingkungan bersinggungan dengan kekuasaan struktural dan kepentingan ekonomi. Gambut tropis adalah ekosistem penting yang memainkan peran utama dalam menjaga siklus karbon global dan keanekaragaman hayati. Namun, gambut ini mengalami degradasi parah akibat konversi besar-besaran untuk perkebunan kelapa sawit. Degradasi ini diperburuk lemahnya penegakan hukum, korupsi, dan konflik kepentingan di antara para pemangku kepentingan, termasuk perusahaan multinasional, lembaga pemerintah, dan masyarakat lokal. Interaksi antara subsistem ekologi dan sosial, yang dibentuk oleh ketimpangan kekuasaan, mempertajam kompleksitas dalam menangani degradasi dan restorasi gambut dalam kerangka ekologi politik Indonesia.

Penelitian berfokus pada tiga aspek utama tata kelola lahan gambut. Pertama, penelitian ini menyelidiki bagaimana akses ke lahan gambut dinegosiasikan, diperebutkan, dan dipertahankan di antara berbagai aktor, termasuk masyarakat lokal, perusahaan swasta, dan lembaga pemerintah. Mekanisme formal, seperti regulasi pemerintah dan sistem perizinan, sering kali dikuasai oleh aktor kuat yang memanfaatkan celah hukum untuk menguasai sumber daya gambut. Sebaliknya, komunitas yang terpinggirkan bergantung pada mekanisme informal yang berakar pada norma tradisional, jaringan sosial, dan praktik budaya untuk mempertahankan akses mereka ke lahan gambut.

Kedua, penelitian mengeksplorasi konflik antara nilai instrumental dan relasional dalam keputusan penggunaan lahan. Nilai instrumental, yang menekankan manfaat ekonomi yang diperoleh dari ekstraksi sumber daya, biasanya diprioritaskan perusahaan dan lembaga pemerintah. Nilai relasional, yang mencerminkan signifikansi budaya, spiritual, dan sosial dari lahan gambut, sangat melekat pada komunitas lokal. Prioritas yang bersaing ini sering menyebabkan ketegangan dalam proses pengambilan keputusan dan menghambat upaya restorasi kolaboratif. Benturan antara tujuan ekonomi jangka pendek dan keberlanjutan lingkungan serta budaya jangka panjang menyoroti tantangan dalam menyelaraskan nilai-nilai pemangku kepentingan yang beragam dalam tata kelola lahan gambut.

Ketiga, penelitian menelaah peran aksi kolektif dalam restorasi lahan gambut. Upaya restorasi membutuhkan kolaborasi yang adil di antara para pemangku kepentingan, tetapi ketimpangan kekuasaan, persaingan sumber daya, dan kebijakan yang tidak selaras sering kali menghambat. Penelitian ini mengidentifikasi contoh di mana aliansi strategis antara LSM, komunitas lokal, dan lembaga pemerintah menghasilkan inisiatif restorasi yang efektif. Contoh-contoh ini menyoroti potensi aksi kolektif untuk mendorong hasil yang berkelanjutan ketika didukung oleh kepercayaan, transparansi, dan dukungan kelembagaan.

Untuk mencapai tujuan, penelitian menggunakan pendekatan penelitian kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, yang berfokus pada Lanskap Gambut Pelang di Kalimantan Barat. Wilayah ini dipilih karena mewakili salah satu lahan gambut

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yang paling terdegradasi di Indonesia serta kompleksitas tata kelolanya. Penelitian ini menggunakan berbagai metode pengumpulan data, termasuk wawancara semi-terstruktur, diskusi kelompok terfokus (FGD), dan observasi partisipatif untuk menangkap berbagai perspektif tentang dinamika kekuasaan, mekanisme akses, konflik nilai, dan aksi kolektif. Data dianalisis secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan hubungan yang membentuk tata kelola sumber daya.

Temuan penelitian memiliki implikasi signifikan bagi kebijakan tata kelola lahan gambut. Restorasi yang efektif membutuhkan pendekatan inklusif yang mengintegrasikan dimensi lingkungan, sosial, dan budaya sambil mengatasi distribusi kekuasaan dan sumber daya yang tidak merata di antara para pemangku kepentingan. Reformasi kebijakan harus memprioritaskan pemberdayaan masyarakat lokal. Penguatan penegakan hukum dan peningkatan transparansi sangat penting untuk meminimalkan akses ilegal ke lahan gambut, menyelesaikan klaim lahan yang tumpang tindih, dan mengurangi konflik antara sistem tata kelola lokal dan nasional. Selain itu, memasukkan nilai-nilai relasional ke dalam kerangka tata kelola sangat penting untuk mendorong pengelolaan yang berkelanjutan dan menghormati keterikatan budaya terhadap lahan.

Kontribusi utama dari penelitian ini adalah pengembangan kerangka Ekologi Politik Akses dan Aksi (PEACA) yang memberikan pendekatan integratif untuk menganalisis tata kelola sumber daya. Kerangka PEACA berstruktur pada dua pilar: Mekanisme Akses Hibrid (HAM) dan Aksi Kolektif Berbasis Nilai (VDCA). HAM mengkaji interaksi antara sistem tata kelola formal, seperti hukum dan kebijakan, dengan sistem informal, termasuk praktik tradisional dan jaringan lokal. Pilar ini menyoroti adaptabilitas struktur tata kelola serta kerentanannya terhadap eksploitasi oleh aktor kuat. VDCA menekankan peran nilai instrumental dan relasional dalam membentuk respons kolektif terhadap tantangan tata kelola, menawarkan jalur praktis untuk menyelaraskan kepentingan yang bersaing dan mendorong kolaborasi yang berkelanjutan.

Kerangka PEACA memberikan pendekatan sistematis bagi pembuat kebijakan untuk menghadapi tantangan tata kelola hibrid. Adaptabilitasnya memungkinkan penerapan di berbagai konteks sosial-politik dan ekologis, memberikan strategi yang dapat diterapkan untuk menyelaraskan nilai-nilai pemangku kepentingan yang bersaing. Strategi ini juga dapat mengatasi isu pengelolaan sumber daya global, seperti mitigasi perubahan iklim dan konservasi keanekaragaman hayati. Dengan memfokuskan pada persimpangan struktur tata kelola, nilai-nilai pemangku kepentingan, dan aksi kolektif, kerangka PEACA menyediakan peta jalan pengelolaan sumber daya yang adil dan berkelanjutan.

Penelitian di masa depan perlu mengeksplorasi relevansi temuan ini di wilayah lain di Indonesia dan lahan gambut tropis secara global. Integrasi data ekologis kuantitatif dapat meningkatkan penilaian dampak jangka panjang dari keputusan tata kelola. Selain itu, penelaahan lebih mendalam terhadap mekanisme akses informal dan peran gender serta generasi muda dalam tata kelola gambut akan memberikan pemahaman yang lebih komprehensif tentang dinamika pemangku kepentingan. Penelitian tentang skalabilitas kerangka PEACA juga diperlukan untuk menyempurnakan penerapannya pada tantangan pengelolaan sumber daya yang beragam di seluruh dunia.

Kata Kunci: Ekologi politik, Mekanisme akses, Nilai instrumental dan relasional, Aksi kolektif, Tata kelola gambut.



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ALI YANSYAH ABDURRAHIM

Dissertation
as a requirement for obtaining the Doctoral degree
in Rural Sociology Study Program

**RURAL SOCIOLOGY STUDY PROGRAM
FACULTY OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
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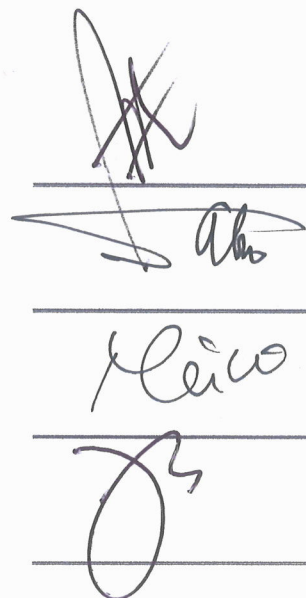
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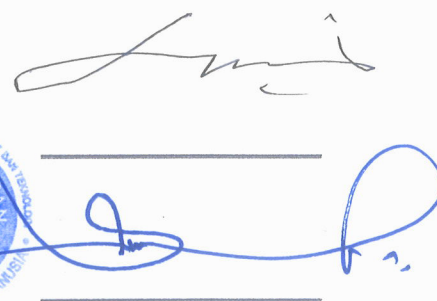
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PREFACE

As the author, I extend profound gratitude to Allah *Subhanahu wa Ta'ala* for His boundless blessings, enabling the successful completion of this scientific work. This research, conducted from September 2020 to October 2024, delves into the theme of political ecology and peatland governance, titled, *“Political Ecology of Peat Landscape Dynamics in Indonesia: Access, Values, and Collective Action.”*

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May this work serve as a beneficial resource for those seeking knowledge and contribute to the advancement of science.

Bogor, December 2024

Ali Yansyah Abdurrahim



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

No	Acronym/ Abbreviation	Description/Full Name (Indonesian/English)
1	ADD	Alokasi Dana Desa/Village Fund Allocation
2	APKASINDO	Asosiasi Petani Kelapa Sawit Indonesia/Indonesian Palm Oil Farmers Association
3	APL	Areal Penggunaan Lain/Other Use Areas
4	ATR/BPN	Kementerian Agraria dan Tata Ruang/Badan Pertanahan Nasional/Ministry of Agrarian Affairs and Spatial Planning/National Land Agency
5	BIG	Badan Informasi Geospasial/Geospatial Information Agency
6	BKSDA	Balai Konservasi Sumber Daya Alam/Natural Resources Conservation Agency
7	BPBD	Badan Penanggulangan Bencana Daerah/Regional Disaster Management Agency
8	BPK-YDBK	Badan Pemadam Kebakaran - Yayasan Dharma Bakti/Fire Department - Dharma Bakti Foundation
9	BPS	Badan Pusat Statistik/Statistics Indonesia
10	BRG	Badan Restorasi Gambut/Peatland Restoration Agency
11	BRIN	Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional/National Research and Innovation Agency
12	BWS 1 Kal	Balai Wilayah Sungai Kalimantan 1/Kalimantan River Region Center 1
13	Babinkamtibmas	Bintara Pembina Keamanan dan Ketertiban Masyarakat/Community Security and Order Supervisor
14	Babinsa	Bintara Pembina Desa/Village Supervisory Non-Commissioned Officer
15	Balitbangda	Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan Daerah/Regional Research and Development Agency
16	Bappeda	Badan Perencanaan dan Pembangunan Daerah/Regional Development Planning Agency
17	CAA	Pemodal besar yang berkedok koperasi petani/Large investors disguised as farmer cooperatives
18	CSIA	Penilaian Dampak Sosial dan Budaya/Cultural and Social Impact Assessments
19	DPMPD	Dinas Pemberdayaan Masyarakat dan Pemerintahan Desa/Community and Village Governance Empowerment Agency

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Perpustakaan IPB University

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21	Dinas Perkim LH	Dinas Permukiman dan Lingkungan Hidup/Department of Housing and Environment
22	Distannakbun	Dinas Pertanian, Peternakan, dan Perkebunan/Office of Agriculture, Livestock, and Plantations
23	FBEG	Fungsi Budidaya Ekosistem Gambut/Cultivation Peat Ecosystem
24	FFI	Flora and Fauna International/ Flora and Fauna International
25	FGD	Diskusi Kelompok Terarah/Focus Group Discussion
26	FLEG	Fungsi Lindung Ekosistem Gambut/Protected Peat Ecosystem
27	FPIC	Persetujuan Atas Dasar Informasi Awal Tanpa Paksaan/Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
28	GAPKI	Gabungan Pengusaha Kelapa Sawit Indonesia/Indonesian Palm Oil Entrepreneurs Association
29	GIS	Sistem Informasi Geografis/Geographic Information System
30	HAM	Mekanisme Akses Hibrid/Hybrid Access Mechanisms
31	HCV	Nilai Konservasi Tinggi/High Conservation Value
32	HD	Hutan Desa/Village Forest
33	HGU	Hak Guna Usaha/Cultivation Rights Title
34	HP	Hutan Produksi/Production Forest
35	HPK	Hutan Produksi Konversi/Convertible Production Forest
36	IARI	International Animal Rescue Indonesia
37	IPBES	Platform Kebijakan untuk Keanekaragaman Hayati dan Layanan Ekosistem/Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
38	IUP	Izin Usaha Perkebunan/Cultivation Plantation Business Permit
39	KH	Kawasan Hutan Negara/State Forest Area
40	KPH	Kesatuan Pengelolaan Hutan/Forest Management Unit
41	Kejari	Kejaksaan Negeri/District Attorney
42	LPHD	Lembaga Pengelola Hutan Desa/Village Forest Management Institution
43	MPA	Masyarakat Peduli Api/Fire Concerned Communities
44	MoEF	Kementerian Lingkungan Hidup dan Kehutanan/Ministry of Environment and Forestry
45	NGOs	Organisasi Non-Pemerintah/Non-Governmental Organizations

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47	PBN	Perkebunan Besar Negara/State Plantations
48	PBS	Perkebunan Besar Swasta/Private Plantations
49	PEACA	Ekologi Politik Akses dan Aksi/The Political Ecology of Access and Action
50	PMP	Perkumpulan Mitra Pembangunan/Development Partners Association
51	POLRES	Kepolisian Resor/Regional Police Department
52	POLRI	Kepolisian Republik Indonesia/Indonesian National Police
53	PPEG	Perlindungan dan Pengelolaan Ekosistem Gambut/Peat Ecosystem Protection and Management
54	PR	Perkebunan Rakyat/Independent Smallholder Plantations
55	PT	Perseroan Terbatas/Limited Liability Company (LLC)
56	PT OAA	Sebuah Perusahaan Perkebunan Sawit/An Oil Palm Plantation Company
57	PT OBB	Sebuah Perusahaan Perkebunan Sawit/An Oil Palm Plantation Company
58	PT OCC	Sebuah Perusahaan Perkebunan Sawit/An Oil Palm Plantation Company
59	PT ODD	Sebuah Perusahaan Perkebunan Sawit/An Oil Palm Plantation Company
60	PUTR	Dinas Pekerjaan Umum dan Tata Ruang/Office of Public Works and Spatial Planning
61	RTE	Spesies Langka, Terancam, dan Hampir Punah/Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species
62	SESAM-WUR	Evaluasi Skenario untuk Pengelolaan Agroforestri Berkelanjutan-Wageningen University and Research/Scenario Evaluation for Sustainable Agroforestry Management-Wageningen University and Research
63	SKT	Surat Keterangan Tanah/Land Certificate
64	STD-B	Surat Tanda Daftar-Budidaya/Plantation Business Registration Certificate for Cultivation
65	TI	Tropenbos Indonesia/Tropenbos Indonesia
66	TNGP	Taman Nasional Gunung Palung/Gunung Palung National Park
67	TNI	Tentara Nasional Indonesia/Indonesian National Army
68	VDCA	Aksi Kolektif Berbasis Nilai/Value-Driven Collective Action

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