Reality and Problems of People’s Participation in National Rehabilitation Movement of Forest and Land in Indonesia

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Background

Deforestation in Indonesia has yet been accelerating, and the last defense against vanishing forests can be found in preserving protected areas while establishing forest plantations. Decentralization in Indonesia since 2001 has brought drastic changes in forest administration and management. National Movement of Forest and Land Rehabilitation (Gerakan Nasional Rehabilitasi Hutan dan Lahan, GN-RHL) that started in 2003 and will end in 2007 is an example of new policies after decentralization. The financial source is Reforestation Fund (Dana Reboisasi) and the total target area is 3,000,000 hectares, which consist of both state forest land and private land. As per in the name, it is a nation-wide movement involving local population living around forests.

Objectives and Methods

This study focused on the effectiveness of GN-RHL particularly on the private land under high population pressure. West Java and Central Java were selected as the cases, and the implementation process and responses of local people were studied. Besides collection of official documents, direct interviews with uniformed questionnaires to local people participated in GN-RHL were conducted from 2005 to 2006.

Results

According to the regulation, the intermediaries of GN-RHL are several organizations: State Forestry Corporation (Perum Perhutani) for the production and protection forests in Java, and District Forestry Office (Dinas Kehutanan Kabupaten) for those outside Java, which management was transferred to the districts after decentralization. Since the central government still deals with conservation forest management, the Ministry of Forestry is in charge of rehabilitation of those areas. In any case, who carry out tree planting activities are the local people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land category</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Intermediary</th>
<th>Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State forest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>Java</td>
<td>State Forestry Corporation</td>
<td>Farmer groups / local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection</td>
<td>Java</td>
<td>District Forestry Office</td>
<td>Farmer groups / local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Java</td>
<td>State Forestry Corporation</td>
<td>Farmer groups / local communities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outside Java</td>
<td>District Forestry Office</td>
<td>Farmer groups / local communities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Private land</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Forestry</td>
<td>Local communities, military member</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Outside Java</td>
<td>District Forestry Office</td>
<td>Farmer groups / local communities, NGO</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Locations and target areas are selected by the Watershed Managed Office under the Ministry, and based on their planning the breakdown is allocated to the district concerned. Adjustment of such a top-down process and local reality is primarily conducted by the intermediaries concerned, and then each farmer group that undertook the project makes further arrangements: recruitment the members, organizing, allocation of the planting area to each member, and so forth. Therefore the top-down process and uniformed system can be gradually modified to diverse local conditions, but the complicated procedures among the various governmental organizations concerned can function as an obstacle that brings about a delay in decision.

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