

Dynamics between Actors and Interest Groups in an Environmental Politics Perspective: Case Study of Food Estate Development in Kalimantan

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Abstract

This research is aimed at understanding the dynamics between actors in the national food estate project during the Joko Widodo administration in Central Kalimantan for the 2020-2023 period. Through qualitative research, the research focus was carried out by analyzing several indicators using actor and interest group theory from a political ecology perspective. This research reveals that the food estate policy carried out by the government in Central Kalimantan was carried out without clear regulations and was carried out haphazardly, the actors and interest groups involved, namely the government, the private sector, civil society alliances. Based on field findings, there is a relationship between the private sector and political elites who occupy positions in government. This research reveals the pattern of relations between government and the private sector in implementing food estate policy and also the main issues at play. Meanwhile, civil society alliance groups act as opposing groups that play an important role as critics of this policy. There are two issues on the main agenda which are strong reasons for this group to have a different attitude to the government.

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini ditujukan untuk memahami dinamika antar aktor dalam proyek lumbung pangan nasional pada masa Pemerintahan Joko Widodo di Kalimantan Tengah periode 2020-2023. Melalui penelitian kualitatif, fokus penelitian dilakukan dengan menganalisis beberapa indikator menggunakan teori aktor dan kelompok kepentingan dalam perspektif ekologi politik. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa kebijakan food estate yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah di Kalimantan Tengah dilakukan tanpa adanya aturan yang jelas dan dilakukan dengan asal-asalan, Aktor dan kelompok kepentingan yang terlibat, yaitu pemerintah, pihak swasta, Aliansi masyarakat sipil. Berdasarkan temuan lapangan adanya hubungan antara pihak swasta melalui elit politik yang menduduki jabatan di pemerintahan. Penelitian ini mengungkapkan pola relasi antara pihak pemerintahan dan swasta dalam menjalankan kebijakan food estate dan juga isu utama yang dimainkan. Sedangkan, kelompok aliansi masyarakat sipil bergerak sebagai kelompok penentang yang memainkan peran penting sebagai pengkritik dari kebijakan ini. Ada dua isu yang menjadi agenda utama yang menjadi alasan kuat kelompok ini memiliki sikap berbeda dengan pemerintah

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the largest agricultural countries, with the majority of its citizens working in agriculture. According to Ayun et al. (2020) meeting the basic needs of the Indonesian people and the country's economic growth is greatly influenced by the agricultural sector. In contrast, around 30 million people, or 14.5% of Indonesia's population, experience malnutrition (BPS Indonesia, 2020b). This very high figure shows that Indonesia is still facing a food shortage problem. This is very contradictory considering the fact that Indonesia is the largest agricultural country in Southeast Asia (Widada et al., 2017).

The food crisis in Indonesia is caused by many things, one of which is high population growth. As population increases, the need for food increases, resulting in food shortages. As the country with the fourth largest population in the world, Indonesia has around 270 million people and is included in the category of lower middle income countries. In 2021, Indonesia was ranked 73rd out of 116 countries in the Global Hunger Index, with 22.9 million people lacking food and a malnutrition rate of 8.49% of the population (World Food Program, 2021)

To overcome this problem, the Indonesian government has developed several policies and programs to increase food security. One of them is the food estate policy, which is an agricultural area developed on a large scale with the aim of producing food needed by the surrounding community. In this way, the presence of a food estate can answer Indonesia's food needs in facing the issue of an increasingly massive food crisis threatening food sovereignty (Lasminingrat & Efriza, 2020).

The history of agriculture in Indonesia was initially dominated by traditional farming systems and relied heavily on organic and integrated farming techniques. Along with technological developments and globalization, agriculture in Indonesia is also starting to experience changes. One of the changes that occurred was the emergence of a modern agricultural system, especially in the form of food estates. The history of food estates in Indonesia began in 1990s, when the Indonesian government began to promote an agricultural program called Peatland Development (PLG) intended as agricultural land for food crops in Central Kalimantan, which was known as the 1 million hectare rice field development project (Yeny et al., 2019). Through Presidential Decree Number 82 of 1995 concerning the development of Peat Land Development (PLG), this project aims to provide new agricultural land by converting one million hectares of peat and swamp land into rice land.

Currently, two new food storage plans are underway in Central Kalimantan: The first is the Ministry of Defense's plan for a 31,719 hectare cassava plantation in Gunung Mas Regency. Second, the Ministry of Agriculture's food storage project, especially the plan to plant rice on 165,000 hectares of swamp land in Kapuas and Pulang Pisau Regencies, the majority of which is former land from the Peat Land Development Project.

The Food Estate builder in Central Kalimantan has presented various interests and polemics. The government moved quickly to realize the program by violating several legal regulations. This is stated in the Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation No. 24/2020 which states that protected forest areas may be used for food estate development. In fact, if you look at the legal basis for the use of protected forests, only forests that do not produce wood can be used, this refers to Law no. 41 of 1999 (ICEL, 2020). Food estates can use protected forest land, this is of course contrary to the Forestry Law which clearly regulates limited use of protected forests.

Apart from the conversion of protected forest land which has long been a source of livelihood for indigenous communities in Central Kalimantan, agrarian conflicts also continue to increase because the inequality in land control occurs because the government also grants permits for oil palm plantations in some ex-PLG areas which are included in the food estate program. It is clear that the government has violated spatial planning regulations because of the existence of oil palm plantations in forest areas.

Besides the central government's authority to allocate land for food plantations raises important questions regarding the potential role it provides business owned or run by members of the Indonesian oligarchy. Special concern concerns the Minister of Defense, Prabowo Subianto. In July 2020, President Jokowi appointed his former rival in the last presidential election to play an important role in developing the food estate program. It was reported that swift action was needed to implement the policy and justified Prabowo's choice on the surprising grounds that food security falls under the domain of national defense.

In addition, the central government's authority to allocate land for food plantations raises important questions about the role it might play business owned or managed by Indonesian oligarchs. Defense Minister Prabowo Subianto is of particular concern. In July 2020, President Jokowi hired his rival in the previous presidential election to be responsible for establishing the food estate program. With the surprising reason that food security is a matter of national defense, it was reported that immediate action was needed to implement the policy and justify Prabowo's decision (Pantau Gambut, 2021)

This has led to the emergence of Social Movements consisting of local communities, NGOs and other organizations. To borrow a term from Karl Polanyi (2001), this movement is called a double movement. The reorganization of space in order to expand capital accumulation without stopping can lead to the emergence of competing movements from society in the form of defending themselves from market expansion and confiscation of land or other resources that have become their mainstay of life, thus creating social movements to defend land sovereignty.

But now more than a counter movement against confiscation, some movements can be an effort to fight against models of concentration of land control. The concept of the struggle for sovereignty over land includes all types of social movements that have a social basis for fighting for its mastery and use of land, both as a source of life and as territory. In relation to the food estate case, this social movement is fighting for the rights of local communities and environmental degradation that would occur if the food estate project continues to be implemented in Central Kalimantan.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research used in this research is descriptive qualitative. Descriptive research, according to Neuman, presents a specific picture of the situation, social structuring or relationships. Descriptive research studies aim to understand social phenomena from the participant's perspective and usually begin with "how" and "who" questions. In the case of policy Food Estate in Central Kalimantan, each actor has subjective considerations related to the action so that it is more appropriate to expand the meaning of the phenomenon and participants rather than make a specific categorization

3. RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Simplified Rules for Environmental Damage

In the era of the Covid-19 pandemic, the problem of the food crisis is becoming a global issue, and has directly become one of the agendas of the United Nations (UN) through an event called the UN Food System Summit 2021. The narrative of 'food system' or 'food system' is used. The UN considered this event as an effort to explain a broader shift in the food paradigm, especially in terms of production actors in the food system. Because previously, FAO through multilateral meetings was discussing food issues in the food security or food security paradigm. However, efforts from agribusiness companies through the World Economic Forum (WEF) have succeeded in influencing the UN to change the food system paradigm which previously focused on food security. The use of the phrase 'food system' is considered ideal by some parties, the reason being that there is no emphasis on finding problems and providing solutions. Therefore, the concept of the food system is considered neutral in looking at the problem of structural domination that occurs in the food industry (GNRTFN, 2021).

This Food Estate is increasingly finding a smooth path, through Job Creation (Omnibus Law) Law no. 11 of 2020 was finally signed by the President in November 2020. From the start, this regulation was intended to provide convenience for investment and national strategic programs, including food estate projects. Ease of accelerating the implementation

of PSN with planning and preparation, licensing, funding, construction and land as stated in article 122 of Law no. 11 of 2020. After making easier regulations through the Job Creation Law. The government argues that this policy responds to the statement of the world food crisis expressed by the world food institution. Responding to the issue of the global food crisis that is hitting the world. President Joko Widodo launched a food estate program in Central Kalimantan.

Currently, two new food storage plans are underway in Central Kalimantan: The first is the Ministry of Defense's plan for a 31,719 hectare cassava plantation in Gunung Mas Regency. Second, the Ministry's food barn project Agriculture, especially the plan to plant rice on 165,000 hectares of swamp land in Kapuas and Pulang Pisau Regencies, the majority of which is former land from the Peat Land Development Project. The government's decision to reactivate the opening of food estates on ex-PLG land is beyond reason. Planting rice on peatlands using the wet paddy field technique will not be suitable on peatlands. The government seems to have turned a blind eye to the failures that occurred during the New Order era and caused environmental damage that lasted for years. (interview, Bayu Herinata 2023)

In the course of the food estate policy, there will be conflicts of interest. This is proven by the lack of clear rules. There are allegations of maladministration in the large-scale food estate development program (food estate). Most importantly, the project is not included in the 2020-2020 National Medium Term Development Plan (RPJMN). 2024. The food estate project is referred to as one of the national strategic projects (PSN) in Presidential Regulation Number 109/2020 concerning Amendments to Presidential Decree Number 3/2016 concerning the Acceleration of National Strategic Projects.

The clarity of land use functions in the national food storage program in the Kapuas and Pulang Pisau areas still needs to be questioned. This is because the project land in these two areas has not yet been included in the Provincial RTRW (2015) which is targeted for completion in 2035, or the Regency RTRW. Apart from that, in the RTRW this FE area was selected and intended for clearing land for industrial crops and plantations. Since the RTRW was passed, the food barn project in this policy has not been implemented. As a result, the FE policy is not integrated into the land map in each relevant agency and bureaucracy. Apart from that, until now there has been no revision of the RTRW, which has resulted in unclear land allocation in the Kapuas and Pisang Island areas.

The main legal umbrella issue has not yet been resolved. The government doesn't seem to care and continues to issue regulations that have again invited controversy. Including regulatory facilities that are swiftly created to ensure the ease with which the project can run, including Regulation of the Minister of Environment and Forestry Number P.24/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/10/2020 concerning Provision of Forest Areas for Food Estate Development.

Changes in the rules in this policy have also had an impact on the problem of damage to resilience food itself. This could directly disrupt the livelihoods of farmers and indigenous communities, because the design of the project could potentially lead to land grabbing and forest conversion for food projects. The PP on Forestry Implementation is an example of a regulation that could actually be a loophole in the interests of this legal relaxation, including land mapping before dividing forest areas into strategic programs, of which this food barn project is one. In addition, there are amendments that could then allow for forced 'land grabbing' for the project. Meanwhile, other regulations state that permits for Production Forests and Protected Forests can enable them to be designated as areas for food security projects. The opening of protected forest permits for food security projects is called the 'Forest Area for Food Security' (KHKP) regulation, where this regulation is valid for up to 20 years, but can be tentative to indefinite.

Kopnina stated that Anthropocentrism is the theoretical basis for at least three main factors causing damage to the environment. First, environmental damage stems from what humans do to pursue their interests. Second, false prosperity has meant that environmental protection has never been included in human goals. Third, environmental protection can only be achieved if it provides benefits to humans.

State and Business Relations in the Central Kalimantan Food Estate Project

Looking at the actors and interest groups in the food estate project in Central Kalimantan which involves various parties. Bryant and Bailey (1997) classify that there are four actors and interest groups that are definitely involved in the policies taken. In this context, the author will try to explain the actors and interest groups involved and their position in viewing food estate policy. If you follow the view of Bryant and Bailey, that the growth of the modern state is associated with the development of capitalism, so the resulting policies are closely related to capitalism. In this case, the state which should be one of the guardians of the environment has instead become an environmental destroyer

This assumption is not unfounded because the state in terms of state food estate policy does not think about environmental sustainability at all and marginalizes it public local with the existence of a food estate policy. If we look at the most powerful actors and interest groups, the government, in the case of food estates, has full control.

In order to make this program a success, Jokowi appointed Minister of Defense Prabowo Subianto as the "leading sector" because he considered food security become one part of the 6 tasks of the ministry of defense is not only regarding the defense of defense equipment (main equipment for the Indonesian National Army Weapons System). Apart from that, there is the name Moeldoko who also plays an active role in this food estate project.

The government also deployed the military in it. With different arguments from one ministry to another. The PUPR Ministry said the TNI was involved to help with land clearing work. Temporary Office The Presidential Staff stated that the military was involved as support to accompany farmers. The military is considered more disciplined than farmers, and discipline is needed to run food estate projects. Whatever the arguments presented, the military's involvement in the civilian realm, including the militarization of agriculture, violates the spirit and agenda of security sector reform, where the military should return to its main function, state defense and security. Moreover, it is common knowledge that the military is involved in agrarian conflicts in Indonesia, including military business in the natural resources sector.

In accordance with the views of Bryant and Bailey which reveal that local companies often use their connections with state actors to extract natural resources in the context of Kalimantan's food estate, namely forests. This occurs because it occurs within and is also influenced by the basic reasons for capitalism to seek profits from natural resources which is suspected to be the practice of capitalism which is increasingly widespread in third world countries, including Indonesia. One of the reasons why local companies can cause environmental damage is that local companies can circumvent regulations by colluding with policy makers without a clear process regarding permits and regulations. (Bryant and Bailey, 1997)

In the case of Gunung Mas Regency, the involvement of PT National Agro Industry, aka Agrinas, at the Ministry of Defense's food storage cassava plantation. Agrinas is owned by a foundation controlled by the Minister of Defense, Prabowo Subianto, and led by a number of politicians who are the main operators of Gerindra, Prabowo's party. Internally, Gerindra itself has heard a lot about the actions of people close to Prabowo, both those who occupy strategic positions at PT Agrinas and those who are currently Prabowo's Special Staff at the

Ministry of Defense. The management of tens of billions in grant funds from abroad is a crucial issue because it is managed by Prabowo's golden children.

Agrinas also offered the South Korean government to invest in the project, according to a document discovered. The figures are staggering: Agrinas is seeking nearly \$300 million for the plantation in Gunung Mas alone. Agrinas in his presentation said that the company belonged to the Ministry of Defense and reported directly to Prabowo. It said that it aims to become the largest "end-to-end" cassava flour producer in the world, with one million hectares of plantations and 34 factories throughout Indonesia. In fact, at the start of the government's food estate policy, it was planned for national food needs.

Apart from Agrinas, there are other private companies that benefit from the food estate program, the combination of which is linked to the political elite. The company is M-Tani. On the website, M-Tani is a company present as a business management in the agricultural sector with the main aim of advancing Indonesian farmers and agriculture in the eyes of the world by developing new methods of planting and processing agricultural cultivation that are environmentally friendly. M-Tani builds a complete and comprehensive agricultural method, starting from the cultivation process, post-harvest, to marketing management of the harvest through a partnership system with farmers. M-Tani is a company owned by KSP Moeldoko who is also the chairman of the Indonesian Farmers' Harmony Association (HKTI). This was confirmed by Muhammad Habibi regarding the involvement of the KSP Moeldoko company in this Central Kalimantan food estate project.

The two actors who benefit most are the government and the local private sector, always raising issues about food security. In the context of food estates in Central Kalimantan, the government argues that this policy responds to the statement of the world food crisis expressed by the world food institution. Responding to the issue of the global food crisis that is hitting the world. President Joko Widodo launched a food estate program in Central Kalimantan. This was stated in a limited meeting held at the Palace where one of the important points was the food issue. Prabowo, as a central figure in the issue of food security, also said that the food crisis is a dangerous threat and the main solution is food estate. The government often makes mistakes in defining food security and food self-sufficiency itself. It should be noted that the definition of 'food security' in contrast to national 'food self-sufficiency' are two different domains. In the rhetoric of Indonesian political leaders, the goal of national food self-sufficiency has historically been expressed as food security, and along the way has also been linked to the belief that the government should exercise significant control over the food system, that a country should aim to produce all its food needs domestically.

The emergence of the sparring movement as a form of resistance

Bryant and Bailey (1997) state that the third (civil society organizations) and fourth (local communities) actors are actors and interest groups that usually often disadvantaged. In the context of food estates in Kalimantan, the author tries to borrow the term fighting movement from Karl Polanyi in carrying out a movement to reject the food estate program in Central Kalimantan/

On basically, major transformation or what is often called the great transformation occurred because of the crisis of capitalism, where market conditions were too dominant (Polanyi, 2001 [1944]). In essence, the economy must be part of social functions, and not the other way around. In this case, a crisis occurs when the goals of partisanship in society then change and spread to economic and political aspects. This model is called economic logic, where society only sees and is fixated on economic values.

Then, this economic logic causes the domination of fictitious commodities. Therefore, Polanyi believes that a counter movement is needed to respond to these commodification

efforts. In this sparring movement, there are two strategies for accumulating these efforts. First, resistance tends to be carried out in a closed manner, where the political component becomes visible infra politics. This closed resistance is the way challenge power in secret, such as the Scottian resistance. Second, open resistance, where this resistance is carried out openly, such as holding demonstrations, revolutions, making petitions, and other open methods.

Bryant and Bailey (1997) revealed that civil society organizations have political techniques. First, influencing state policies and corporate groups that have an influence on environmental sustainability. The two are related directly with the community, together to support environmental sustainability, third, NGOs carry out a series of actions, in this case a campaign whose aim is to invite the community to increase awareness of environmental sustainability.

In the case of the Central Kalimantan food estate, the sparring movement was born as a form of civil society resistance which continuously voiced its rejection of this food estate. There were at least four environmental organizations which firmly rejected it. The two interest group actors in the previous discussion (the government and local private companies) perhaps receive the most benefits, while the two actors and interest groups suffer the most from policy. This is a civil society organization and local communities who have been marginalized by this food estate policy. These two interest groups continue to reject it both through formal channels and through the actions they take. There are at least 65 civil society organizations that continuously provide strong resistance for the government to review or stop the Central Kalimantan food estate.

Walhi Central Kalimantan Executive Director Bayu Herinata said that before the implementation of the food estate project in Central Kalimantan, Walhi Central Kalimantan together with hundreds of organization Civil society and individuals have expressed opposition to the project. The coalition assesses that the government has not learned from past failures regarding food development projects without a clear legal basis and regulations as well as project planning and studies related to environmental impacts or land suitability (Interview, Bayu Herinata, 2023).

A number of actions were also carried out by civil society alliances to continue to voice their views and attitudes that differ from the government. In 2022, a combination of civil society organizations will hold an open action to reject the existence of food estates in Central Kalimantan. This alliance unfurled a large banner over the forest that had been cut down in the Gunung Mas area. In this action, the main message is implied that this food estate program feeds environmental damage. This is a form of protest from civil society organizations over the presence of a food estate which will damage the environment of Central Kalimantan.

In carrying out the movement there are two important issues brought up by the sparring movement. First, the problem of environmental damage that occurs. The opening of an agricultural system that is industrialized and requires large areas of land will have an impact on environmental damage, because the land that is cleared is definitely forest area. This is not in accordance with environmental sustainability. Second, customary land rights, this food estate program has never been discussed. In all FE project locations, socialization regarding the food estate program never asked about the status of the land included in the project plot according to the local population. For example, in Gunung Mas Regency, for example, the Ministry of Defense believes that the 2000 hectares that have been cleared are Convertible Production Forests which will be allocated by the Ministry of Environment and Forestry for food. Meanwhile, residents in the four villages surrounding the location claim that some of the land has certified ownership, some has SKT, in the form of residents' houses and gardens that have been occupied and managed for decades.

4. CONCLUSION

The food estate program in Central Kalimantan is one of the national strategic programs launched by the government. As a form of response to the threat of a food crisis caused by the Covid-19 virus. The running of this program has experienced many problems. Unclear rules governing how this policy is implemented. Apart from that, the government also issued fast KLHS regulations stated that permits for Production Forests and Protected Forests could make it possible to designate them as food security project areas. The opening of protected forest permits for food security projects is called the 'Forest Areas for Food Security' (KHKP) regulation, where this regulation is valid for up to 20 years, but can be tentative or indefinite. This forest can be a source of deforestation and environmental degradation in Central Kalimantan.

The first actor, namely the government, in this case there are three institutions directly involved with the food estate program, namely the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Defense, security forces. Meanwhile, private actors are agrinas and M-tani. The findings in this chapter give rise to a connection between the government and the private sector in running food tourism. In fact, Agrinas is a company staffed by people close to Prabowo Subianto who served as the Ministry of Defense. Agrinas has a large share in running the food estate in Central Kalimantan. Another private party that receives profits is M-Tani. M-Tani is an agricultural company owned by Moeldoko, head of the Presidential Staff Office. His company distributes fertilizer, seeds and agricultural equipment in the Peatland food estate program. The third and fourth groups are groups that oppose this policy, but in Bryant and Bailey's view these two interest groups are weaker. In the context of food estate policy, the Civil Society Alliance stated that they reject the government's food estate program because it has been proven to fail and does not comply with legal regulations. In carrying out their resistance, interest groups that have less influence will tend to shift the debate issue to a topic that will receive the attention of the wider public. In their rejection, the civil society alliance group played up two important issues, namely, environmental damage and community land rights which became problems after the food estate program.

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